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the 170 odd Swiss publications abroad. We feel cold in the back in thinking that they may have passed the Swiss Observer under close scrutiny . . . ) and had investigated into the possibilities of increasing the appeal of "Echo", which would become a "World Echo". This publication should attain the 300,000 Swiss abroad and keep them well informed and in communication with the homeland. The difficulty will reside in having to translate this journal not only in the three federal languages, but in English, Spanish and Portuguese for the grandchildren of emigrants who no longer speak the language of their forefathers.

The Congress finally discussed the all-important issue which will be brought to a head on June 7th: the immigration problem in Switzerland. The participants unanimously rejected the proposals of the Schwarzenbach initiative on the grounds that they were humanly indefensible and economically ruinous.

From a Swiss angle, it is highly encouraging to see that a strong body of Swiss citizens in France should cast their vote on a national issue, although this vote was not yet considered as valid at home. It shows that many Fifth Swiss citizens still have a keen interest in what is going on at home and certainly warrants the efforts undertaken in Berne to make them into fully-fledged Swiss citizens.

(PMB)

# SWISS NEWS

## CANTONAL

### The women of the Valais are awarded the right to vote

The last of the French-speaking canton to withhold its women the right of vote, the Valais, has now made an about turn with an 18,750 to 8,250 majority. The last time the issue was brought to the polls in the Valais was in 1959, when the federal right of vote for women was submitted to the male voters of the Canton. It was strongly rejected. Vaud was the first "Latin" canton in which women were granted the right of vote, then came Neuchâtel, Geneva, Ticino (last October) and Fribourg (last December).

### President Nixon gives a piece of moon rock to the Swiss people

The American Ambassador to Switzerland has remitted a stone from the moon and a small Swiss flag which the astronauts carried with them on their moon walk to Mr. Hans Peter Tshudi, the President of the Confederation. The stone is now exhibited in the crystallographical department of the Institute of Technology in Zurich.

### A dossier on Von Daeniken

A month after the trial of Erich Von Daeniken, a hotel keeper and science-fiction author who has been sentenced to three and a half years of jail for fraud and other offences, the

Cantonal Court of Graubünden has published a 200-page dossier on his past. Erich Von Daeniken appears in it as a non-recommendable character who liked to contract debts, a boaster and an imposter, a man constantly seeking his own pleasure regardless of moral considerations and a superficial personality. He was condemned on 25 charges covering breach of trust, professional fraud and falsification of securities. The Court further noted that Von Daeniken had not felt the slightest inhibitions in borrowing from rich persons and institutions without redemption. He had been living exclusively on this borrowed money on many occasions. Von Daeniken was no more scrupulous in his literary endeavours than in his other activities and wasn't particular in his appointed means of reaching fame. A German publisher had lodged a complaint against him for plagiarism. Despite these cumulative charges, Von Daeniken had been surprisingly arrogant with the judge of enquiry.

### The Editor-in-chief of the "Journal de Genève" leaves for TV

Mr. Bernard Béguin, Editor-in-chief of the Journal de Genève, has been appointed as director of programmes with French-speaking Swiss television. He will assume this new office next October. Aged 47, Mr. Béguin had entered the "Journal de Genève" in 1947 to become its chief Editor in 1959. He was president of the

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Swiss Press Association in 1958 and 1959. He is well known for his radio and television commentaries. He is succeeded by 32-year-old Mr. Claude Monnier, who is at present head of the foreign service of the paper. Ill-health has prevented Mr. René Payot, one of the best known commentators of Switzerland and the man who made the name of the "Journal de Genève", from writing his regular leaders recently.

### **Jacques Piccard will devote himself to the struggle against pollution**

Jacques Piccard, the oceanographer and son of August Piccard, the famed Swiss oceanographer who built the first bathysphere, has said that he wished to construct a new submarine to be used in checking the pollution of Lake Geneva. Having explored the east coast of America for many months, he is back in Lausanne where he continues to work under contract with the Grumann Corporation. But remembering that he is still Swiss, he would like to use his experience in helping to solve a growing national problem—pollution.

### **THE SAFETY OF AERIAL CABLEWAYS**

A feature which perhaps may scare a few skiers was published in a recent issue of the "Schweizerische Illustrierte" on the safety of aerial cableways. There are over 200 of them in Switzerland, not counting the "hanging seats" means of ascent, and it can be said there is far more "air traffic" on these machines than on aircraft. Despite very stringent official regulations on cableways and the optimism of official circles accidents do occur occasionally although they are still comparatively rare.

If one tried to compare the safety of mountain railways and that of an aerial cableway, one could be forever scared of using the latter at all. The railway is seated on two rails firmly anchored on their sleepers. It is prevented from slipping down the mountains by the firm meshing of its cog-wheels with a toothed rail firmly secure. Compare this with the aerial cableway where a cabin containing anything up to 130 people dangles over the void on two limp cables. These cables are not attached to their pylons but just rest upon them because they must remain free to slide in the direction of the cabin's movement. The cabin rolls on bogies over these two cables and is hauled by a third one. If one of the supporting cables snaps then the second one is supposed to be strong enough to carry the weight of the cabin, and if the cabin falls into danger, automatic sensors (or the driver of the cabin) can activate big metal claws gripping on the supporting cables and bring the cabin to a halt.

The main dangers which can be met in aerial cableways are sudden mountain storms. They can bring about situations which the designers could not have foreseen. The worst dangers come from strong gusts which make the cabin roll and crash against

the pylons. They can also make it pitch and cause the cables to spring up and down. In the worst cases this can cause the supporting cables to be "derailed" from their seats on the pylons.

Passengers have often shown a deplorable lack of discipline. They have on occasion amused themselves by rocking their cabin, they pressed the conductor to start off in spite of unfavourable weather conditions and have forced their way into overcrowded cabins.

Another unknown danger, according to a manager who has been making aerial cableways for 20 years, is the lack of training of cableway personnel. A cableway driver may in an emergency have to take quick and vital decisions. To do so he should be educated in the technicalities of his cableway and in the meteorological hazards of the surroundings. Too many potential accidents lurk behind this lack of adequately trained personnel.

In the meanwhile, the thousands of skiers who invade the Alps are only too keen to reach the summits by making use of these precious pendant machines.

### **ACCORDING TO AN AMERICAN BANKER, THE NUMBERED ACCOUNT IS NOT THE ONLY ATTRACTION OF SWISS BANKS**

Such is the contention of Mr. Franck W. Hoch, an American banker. Speaking at the Swiss Society of New York, he said that the traditional discretion of Swiss banking was but one element of the attraction of Swiss banks to Americans. What was particularly attractive was their traditions of efficiency and service, their experience, their world-wide connections and, most of all, the political and monetary stability of Switzerland.

Mr. Hoch finds that the readiness of taking care of their and other people's possessions is an important component in the psychological make-up of the Swiss. The best historical example was the massacre of the Tuileries, where 600 Swiss guards were slaughtered by the revolutionary mob while defending the King of France. But this tradition overreached the sole mercenary history of the Swiss. They were the bankers of Europe in the 18th century already and the fact that they held the vital thoroughfares between France, Germany, Austria and Italy added to their financial position.

Thousands of Swiss had left for abroad. Some made fortunes and others lost their last shirt. But in this way they had made a name and a place for themselves in the world. Mr. Hoch thinks that too much emphasis has been laid on the present Swiss-American banking disagreements. It was true that the differing legislations of the two countries were an important obstacle. Tax evasion was indictable in the United States but not illegal in Switzerland. Bank secrecy was forbidden in America, whereas the lifting of this secrecy was forbidden by law in Switz-

erland. Despite these contradictions, America and Switzerland had always co-operated very successfully in the field of banking. There was a great capital of goodwill and friendship between the business communities of the two countries which needed more than diverging national legislations to be destroyed.

### **THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW "SUPER CERN" IN GENEVA**

The countries of Western Europe have been pooling their resources in nuclear research for the past 13 years. Indeed, this seems to be the one area where European co-operation has worked flawlessly. At least, until a year ago when the decision to construct a new and bigger particle accelerator had to be taken by the countries concerned. The 28 billion eV accelerator of the European Centre for Nuclear Research at Meyrin, outside Geneva and on the western end of Cointrin airport, had hitherto been Europe's main experimental tool for investigating the heart of matter. It has rendered immeasurable services to science. However, the secret of matter having eluded scientists despite such a powerful instrument, it has become necessary to build a yet more powerful atom-smasher. The cost for such a machine (intended to impel particles with energies reaching 300eV) is such that it cannot but be built in common. Great Britain, the Netherlands and Scandinavia have balked at the price and stepped out of the project. There remained Germany, France, Italy, Belgium and Switzerland. France, Germany, Italy and Austria each wanted the new accelerator and ancillary laboratories to be built on their own soil and each were convinced that the sites they had offered were the best. However Germany, which gives a particularly large contribution to Euratom, has blackmailed the Euratom by refusing to dip in for the 300 GeV accelerator if it were not constructed on her soil.

A new way of solving this impasse has recently emerged. It is to build an accelerator with half the intended power by leaving out a number of necessary high-powered magnets in the erection of the machine. These magnets would be installed later, when so-called super-conducting magnets producing magnetic fields unattainable so far will be available. In this way the accelerator could be constructed for approximately half the former cost. Secondly, a committee of CERN scientists have said that it could be possible to use the old CERN accelerator in Geneva and branch it with a more powerful one. The particles accelerated with the 10-year-old machine would be fed into a second synchrotron of about a one mile diameter, which would necessarily overreach into neighbouring France. This interesting solution would give a new lease of life to the considerable investments already existent at Meyrin



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and would, of course, allow Geneva to remain one of the scientific centres of the world.

### A BILLY GRAHAM CONTROVERSY

Writing about religion publicly is a risky thing and often arouses strong reactions from readers. A recent criticism by Francis Boder in the "Journal de Genève" on Billy Graham's recent evangelical campaigning in Europe was no exception.

The famed evangelist was speaking from Dortmund, Germany, and his sermon was transmitted by the Eidophore television system in 30 cities of Europe. In Geneva he was seen, magnified 35 times, by 3,400 Christians who had flocked to the giant ice rink of Les Vernets.

Francis Boder had written "that the match which these faithful men had come to see was not, fortunately for sport, an ice-hockey match". Billy Graham had appeared immaculately dressed in a lounge suit with a silk fancy handkerchief. He had "gesticulated" in front of his particular "clientèle", making the maximum of massive audio-visual means to present the miracle of Golgotha and the hope of a better life to an amazed crowd of Christians. The writer also said that the Billy Graham's Christ was a "ketchup Christ" adapted to American mentality and seriously compromising the selfless efforts of Swiss pastors and priests.

He ended his article saying that Billy Graham remained a mystery to him in many respects. He couldn't believe that he was seriously hoping to bring drug addicts and alcoholics to Christianity by using such vulgar methods. Their efficiency would only be ascertained the day the churches of Geneva were less empty on Sunday mornings.

These assertions met with numerous letters all highly critical and strongly in support of Billy Graham and his work.

The paper published six letters to the Editor two days later. Two of the correspondents complained of the cheapness of the article and added that Billy Graham's message as well as his books "Peace with God" and "The World in Flames" were the expression of the faith of millions of Christians across the world. Another correspondent wrote that Billy Graham was perfectly right in taking care of his appearance (something which pastors at home had a tendency to neglect) and even more so in using the best technological means of which he could avail himself thanks to this vast organisation and his efficiency. Our churches should do likewise. Another correspondent wrote that he had met Billy Graham personally and had been greatly impressed by his sincerity and his modesty. His behaviour was perfectly normal and unassuming American behaviour. The last writer said that God used evangelists,

pastors, student chaplains and prison chaplains, theologians and even journalists to bring about his Kingdom. Every speciality had its spiritual meaning and the methods of Billy Graham were necessary and complementary to the work of the ordinary clergy, and certainly not in opposition to it.

### A new mini-theatre in Zurich

A Polish actor and stage-manager established in Zurich since three years has opened a small theatre seating 120 and devoid of stage called the "Kammertheatre" at the Leonhardstrasse. The actors evolve on an open space surrounded by the audience. The theatre was inaugurated with the play "Two on a Swing" by the American playwright William Gibson.

### Difficulties in Lucerne

The Canton of Lucerne has its own specific problems. One of them is the opposition by conservative elements to the recent creation of a new party, the Popular Party of Lucerne, the outcome of a political marriage between the Conservative and Christian Social Parties of the Canton. Many Christian Socialists disagree with the new formation and will introduce their own list in future elections at Sursee and perhaps Lucerne.

The Synode of the Roman Catholic Church of Lucerne has met to approve a budget strongly in deficit. The junior members of the 170-strong Synodal Council have refused to vote in its favour, considering that running expenses were budgeted unnecessarily highly.

The Canton closed its books for last year with a bare 100,000 francs surplus. The Commune of Ebikon has suffered from a strong loss in revenue caused by the financial difficulties of Schindler, the lift manufacturers. The company, which has moved from Lucerne to Ebikon, has been faced with stiff competition from an American firm and has been producing at a loss. This loss in profits has meant 350,000 fr. in lost revenue for the Commune of Ebikon.

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