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# COMMENT

## HOW TO INTEREST THE YOUNG IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The problem of involving the young in politics has been given prominence in several articles appearing in the Swiss Press in the past months, the most recent instance being a full-page debate in the *Basler Nachrichten* on getting young people to join a party.

If democratic institutions are to be revived and polling attendances increased, then one should start by attracting more youths. A study of the type of person who regularly votes and those who never even return their voting envelopes has doubtless been made. It would show, I'm sure, that the 20-30 age group is poorly represented.

The most available way of instilling political interest in the coming generations is at school. This is done to some extent in primary school, where children get "Civic Education". However, the influence of school, without underrating it, is not powerful enough to turn a teenager into a responsible and politically aware citizen.

What is surprising, is that political awareness, according to most authorities, has never been so strong among the young. Yet they tend to keep away from the polls. Despite their political awareness, there is a conscious lack of interest in actively participating in the life of the community, a life governed by certain institutions.

Although little is done by the parties in the way of attracting new and younger members (with the possible exception of the *Freisinnig* Party) it is doubtful that if they did increase their effort, they would get better results. There is of course an important difficulty due to the voting age lower limit of 20, which diminishes the relevance of being an active party member under that age. But in the main, the majority of young people are somewhat wary of parties. According to a girl interviewed in the *Basler Nachrichten*, parties are "*eine undurchsichtige, unselbständige Gesellschaft . . . eine sture Ideologie oder überhaupt kein klares Konzept*". If this is what the majority of the young think, parties are obviously not given much chance. Another recurring objection among the young is that all decisions, every new law in Parliament, must go "through the parties". They would favour instead direct popular rule.

(PMB)

The masters of the past wrote in a simple style that carried the scent of the country's soil. Many young people today are fascinated by the more sophisticated style of fashionable writers and tend to reject what comes under the heading of "national literature". Such an attitude would cast away Meinrad Inglin's poetry, Max Rychner's critique and Urs Martin Strub's lyric work in one large basket. Although this is shortsighted, it may have contributed to the renewal of Swiss-German literature during the past twenty years.

## Development of French-Swiss literature

There is an important difference in the recent development of French-Swiss and German-Swiss letters. Whereas the works of German-speaking writers have become political and intellectual, those of French-speaking writers are marked by an almost Baroque love of language and the visible world. Most new works currently appearing in French-speaking Switzerland are poetical and have a touch of stylistic sophistry. Whereas German-Swiss writers keep their distance with Society and the State, the French-speaker turns with a close look to the native landscape. The most prominent examples are Maurice Chappaz and Jacques Chessex. On one side, there is critical interest for social problems, on the other contemplation. To the east, a break away from tradition, to the west, a conscious return to the masters, Ramuz, Ch. A. Cingria and Gustave Roud.

The many sidedness and tensions within Swiss letters contrast with the "reasonable norm" which seems to have been generally accepted in Swiss politics, despite a multitude of parties. This is probably the most important asset of Swiss literature.

# SWISS EVENTS

## FEDERAL

### Mr. Keller's mission to the sub continent

Mr. René Keller, Head of the Division for International Organisations at the Political Department and former Ambassador in London, returned from the Indian sub-continent in the middle of April from a two week mission, during which he had talks with Mrs. Indira Gandhi and President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan. (He did not go to Bangladesh as was erroneously reported in our March 24th issue).

The purpose of his mission was two-fold. First, he had to sanction Switzerland's role as intermediary between the two formerly conflicting states, which are about to resume negotiations. Secondly, his brief was to see how Switzerland could carry out her task of "protecting" the 93,000 Pakistani prisoners-of-war detained in India. On the first score, Mr. Keller's mission

seems to have been a complete success. At a press conference held on his return, he said that Switzerland's "good offices" were highly appreciated on both sides and that Switzerland enjoyed a considerable capital of goodwill in that part of the world. Berne will therefore continue for the time being to serve as a link and "letter box" between India and Pakistan. This function, although it may not appear glamorous, is nonetheless highly important and plays its part towards the resumption of normal relations between the two countries.

Regarding the problem of Pakistani prisoners, Mr. Keller was faced with India's refusal to the idea of "outside supervision". The only outside body presently allowed to have an eye on the conditions of detention of the Pakistani army is the International Committee of the Red Cross. It is understood that India has grudgingly admitted this and is not making things easy for the international body. Although India appears to have left a few doors half open, and may agree

to put into better effect Switzerland's protective mandate towards Pakistani prisoners, she has not committed herself. In this respect, Mr. Keller's journey does not appear to have brought tangible results.

It was gratifying to note, however, that Pakistan bore no ill-feelings against the Swiss for having recognised Bangladesh.

#### New university?

Lucerne will probably become Switzerland's ninth university town. This was announced by the President of the Swiss University Conference, Mr. François Jeanneret, also a member of the Neuchatel State Council. The conference is a meeting place for the cantons and the confederation on university matters.

Mr. Jeanneret said that Lucerne would probably open with two faculties, Theology and "Naturwissenschaft" but plans still have to be finalised. They will need the approval of the Swiss Council for Science, the Department of the Interior and the Federal Council. Other cantons wishing to be endowed with universities are Tessin and Solothurn. Neither have yet laid down advanced plans and made formal announcements. Aargau does not intend at present to have a university, but only an Institute of Teaching.

The cost of universities last year amounted to 735.8 million francs, it

was disclosed. The expenditure of the various universities were as follows: Geneva, 113 million francs; Lausanne University, 55 million; Lausanne Polytechnicum, 34 million; Neuchatel, 19 million; Fribourg, 18 million Zurich University, 106 million, Zurich Polytechnicum, 206 million; Berne, 93 million; Basle, 82 million and Saint Gall 8 million.

#### Fiscal agreement with West Germany

The Council of States passed on first reading a new fiscal agreement with West Germany, which is to replace the former 1959 Convention between the two countries. According to the new law, German assets flowing into Switzerland under the attraction of a more lenient tax system will be taxed in Switzerland according to German practice.

The agreement was worked out at the prompting of West Germany, which was displeased at the loss of revenue incurred by the transfer of dividends, patents and the Deutschmarks of wealthy Germans to Switzerland. In 1969, this flow was ten times larger in the Germany-to-Switzerland direction than the other way round. The agreement also provides for a mutual exchange of information allowing both sides to apply its stipulations. Naturally, this touches on banking secrecy, but the agreement clearly states that this highly prized institution will not be violated.

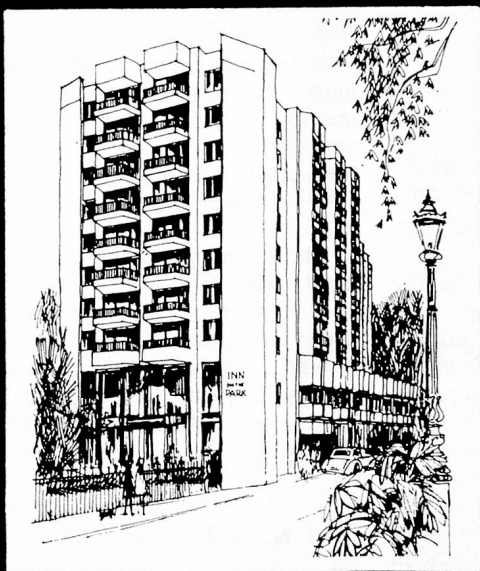
#### MODERN LIVING

#### Successful recruitment by the Women's Complementary Service

More women are enlisting in the Women's Complementary Service today than ever before since the war. While the number of male conscientious objectors never ceases to grow, the Complementary Service have registered 158 applications in 1970 and 208 in 1971. Forty-five girls had enrolled by the middle of March this year. Miss Andrée Weitzel, Head of this Service, considers that the propaganda film "Who is Barbara?" has played an important role in setting this favourable trend. "We have no conscientious objection", said Miss Weitzel, "because girls come to us of their own will. We do not have to look for them". But young girls are submitted to various influences. Some of them join up because their fiancées said that they had to do so, which shows that Swiss men know what they are looking for.

#### Jesus Christ and modern taste

The Geneva daily *La Suisse* was the prey of indignant criticism for having published an advertisement with a picture of a hippy-type Jesus described as a "wanted man", head of "an underground liberation movement", accused of practising "illegal medicine". This outlaw, also known as "The Messiah, the Son of God, the



## Vintage Room

Standing at the Piccadilly end of Park Lane, the Inn on the Park was recently named 'Hotel of the Year' by Egon Ronay. The Vintage Room, on its first floor, could equally be said to be deserving of the title 'Restaurant of the Year'. It specializes in presenting succulent steaks and traditional Ribs of Scotch Beef . . . the meat faultless . . . the service impeccable. Its subdued and intimate decor, continuous dancing from

9-0 until 3-0 a.m., and easy parking, make it an ideal after-theatre rendezvous. While at lunchtime, it is rapidly becoming a 'club' for those who appreciate good food, luxurious surroundings and today's greatest rarity - personal service.

## *Inn on the Park*

Hamilton Place, Park Lane, London W.1. Tel : 01-499 0888



King of Kings, and the Prince of Peace", had been "associated with prostitutes, well known criminals and extremists". The advert ends by describing the man as a hippy and warning that "he could be dangerous".

This wonderful layout had been originally distributed far and wide in America by members of the "Jesus Revolution". The catching and simplistic style of American evangelism however didn't conform to Swiss church-going mentality. Most readers who saw the ad were shocked. It had been placed by the "Action Commune d'Évangélisation" an organisation which had already promoted "shock Christianity" in planning the Billy Graham European campaign in 1970.

*La Suisse* carried out an enquiry among several Christian intellectuals, journalists and churchmen. All were either critical or hesitant about this type of evangelistic publicity. The only exception came from a spokesman for the World Council of Churches, a non-Swiss, who said that the Jesus Revolutionary image was "a good interpretation of the New Testament". Strongest opposition came from two Catholics interviewed and the Rabbi of Lausanne.

### The cost of skiing accidents

Now that the skiing season is practically closed, employers, doctors and insurance companies are evaluating the cost of the exceptional toll of accidents recorded this year on every slope. It was particularly heavy in the Valais, where dozens of skiers were seriously wounded or killed (fifteen of them over Easter) either by crashing against trees, falling in crevasses on glaciers, or being buried by avalanches. Conditions in January were treacherous, and skiers stumbled on rocks and stones jutting from insufficiently covered slopes.

About 80,000 people are victims of skiing accidents in Switzerland every year. Thirty thousand of them have a broken leg. One specialist reckons that the cost of these accidents is over half a billion francs (i.e. over £50m) a year. "Thirty thousand fractures a year means 120,000 months of lost work, since a fracture normally requires four months of recovery", he said. At 1,500 francs average monthly income, these accidents represent a loss of earnings of 180 million francs. The cost of medical care, hospital and special treatment also reaches 1,500 francs a month, thus the figure is brought up to 360 million francs. As this doesn't include non-insured and foreign skiers, and all those who either lose their lives or suffer from different fractures, the total easily tops the 500 million francs mark.

Ski-ing has become a mass sport. On some weekends, there are 100,000 skiers in the Valais alone (in compari-

son, the total crowds attending league football matches on a normal Sunday add up to 80,000 spectators). At the end of every sunny weekend in the Valais, about 20 broken legs have to be tended to in hospitals down the valley. Broken legs have become a profitable industry.

The principal reasons for accidents appear to be: Lack of training by those who tend to leave their offices to strap on their skis with no physical preparation; and naturally, foolhardiness.

### Where the pedestrian is master

The two large Swiss cities who have seriously considered closing their central streets to traffic are Basle who closed several streets to traffic earlier this year, and Berne who on 17th April, closed the Bundesplatz-Baerenplatz-Waisenhausplatz axis to all private traffic. Thus the old town is a sanctuary of safety where the pedestrian is master. These measures will last for six months and may be extended if the experiment proves to be conclusive.

Neuchatel has also shut off its town centre to traffic for a weekend. The police were highly satisfied with the results. Shopkeepers weren't too pleased, because many of them registered a slow-down in their business. This must however, count as a short-term effect and their business will in fact improve the day the streets are no longer clogged by traffic.

### The sad end of Basle's only elephant bull

The Basle Zoo was sadly compelled to put to sleep one of its proudest exhibits, a four-and-a-half ton elephant bull named "Katoto", which was its only bull, and also the only African bull elephant in captivity anywhere in the world.

Katoto had been captured in the Kenyan bush in 1952 together with four other young elephants, including another bull, "Omari". The zoo's veterinary surgeons and its present director took part in the hunt. After lengthy deliberations and despite the adverse advice of the world's elephant specialists, who had warned them that it was impossible to keep African elephant bulls in captivity, the two men decided to transport their catch to Basle Zoo and to proceed with the experiment.

Basle's new elephant house had just been completed. It hadn't been designed to house bulls, but this didn't prevent the experiment from being attempted. So for many years, the visitors to Switzerland's most important zoo had the unique privilege of seeing two mighty beasts master a small herd of female African elephants. The bulls

behaved well, gave rides to children and only became dangerous while crossing through recurring periods known as "must", at which time both had to be kept in confinement.

However, Omari, the larger of the two bulls became ill-tempered in 1965 and attacked its attendant, nearly killing him. After the usual expertise and consultations, it was decided that he had to be put to sleep.

Katoto continued to carry children on his back. He was docile, even though he would only accept two attendants and took umbrage whenever outsiders tended to him in replacement. The first alarming signs of a worsening temper appeared last winter, when Katoto unaccountably entered in a prolonged must period and refused to obey his keepers, eventually attacking one of them in earnest. "It was thanks to his sheer presence of mind that the attendant got away alive" said Dr. Ernst Lang, the Zoo Director.

Again the zoo's management consulted with world authorities on what to do with the bull. Early speculation appeared in the Press, followed by denials that Katoto had been put to sleep. A big game lover suggested taking him back to his native Africa and set about launching public subscriptions to this end. He was told by experts who knew better that it was impossible to transport an aggressive four-and-a-half ton elephant bull in an aeroplane. Then why not castrate him questioned other circles? This proved impossible on anatomical grounds. Thus the only recourse that remained was to put the beast to sleep and deprive the Baslers of something which no other zoo but theirs possessed: An elephant bull.

Putting Katoto to sleep required a massive injection of poison. But before the noble animal left for the long journey into the unknown, he was tapped for semen. Although Katoto had often tried to cover his female captive companions, this had yielded no results, to the dismay of the zoo's management, who had hoped that he would engender numerous offsprings and keep the herd alive. They are now hoping to achieve this by artificial insemination, something which has never been tried before in similar circumstances.

### "Television is biased"

More than half the National Council and 21 Councillors of State signed a question drafted by a Bernese Agrarian National Councillor, Mr. Fritz Krauchthaler, demanding explanations from the Federal Council on television's alleged lack of objectivity. The text of this "Postulate" was as follows:

"The news and information services of Swiss Television have come



under increasing criticism during the past few months. The lack of both objectivity and good measure apparent in certain programmes have led to considerable unease among the viewing public, which regrets the obvious absence of intervention from television's supervisory bodies. As citizens have a right to be given balanced and objective information, we ask the Federal Council to review the whole question of radio and television legislation when the new constitutional article will be drafted on the matter. We would also like the Federal Council to prepare an improvement of television supervision".

The main champion of objective information is Dr. Walter Hofer, an Agrarian Delegate and Bernese professor.

According to him, television generally slants its coverage of home news to the Left. Four examples quoted were a TV report on the Arms Industry, coverage on the "Villard Affair", a panel discussion on the creation of a Peace Institute and news-reels on a Separatist Demonstration in Berne last March.

In the first example, the arguments in favour of a more stringent control of arms exports had been given more prominence than the opposing point of view. In the second, Professor Hofer complains that only Mr. Villard, a Pacifist who was refused a seat in the Parliamentary Military Commission, was given a TV hearing, thus biasing the information on the whole affair. On the panel debate concerning a future Peace Institute, Professor Hofer was outraged by the left-wing bias of the panel, which had purveyed the point of view that such an Institute should serve as an anti-militarist platform putting society in question. Finally, the coverage of a Separatist demonstration in Berne during which tramlines were asphalted over, was according to Dr. Hofer, given excessive coverage. Moreover, this news item, appearing in the *Tagesschau*, was accompanied by a film favourable to the Separatists.

Mr. Ueli Götsch, Head of Television Information, rejected all these claims. Nevertheless, Parliament appeared to agree in the main with Professor Hofer. Rarely had a Postulate gathered so many signatures (126) in Parliamentary history.

### The Careers offered by the Swiss Navy

The Swiss Navy is a well worn subject. Most Swiss people know that their country prides itself of owning a seafaring merchant navy. For the rest of the world, the "Swiss Navy" is something of a metaphorical expression, confusing the idea of an elusive navy that exists only in the mind, or that is so small as to be the subject

of a recurring joke. The last number of the *Weltschweizer* attempted to destroy this reputation, of which it was only too well aware. It is true that with only 31 ships and a total deadweight of 291,132 metric tons it ranks only 40th of the world's merchant fleets. Yet it is intended to satisfy the minimal requirements of the country in the event of war.

It was precisely for such contingencies that the Swiss Navy was created. The *Weltschweizer* recalls that Switzerland's merchant navy was officially born on 9th April, 1941, following a Federal Council Decree. The eight ships flying a Swiss flag that operated at the time were to play an important role in supplying Switzerland with vital overseas imports. Protected by a multilateral convention respecting Swiss neutrality, these ships were allowed to go out to sea without being attacked, and constituted a life line that mainly used the ports of Marseilles, Geno and Toulon. A few were sunk by mistake, but by the end of the war, Switzerland owned nine ships of a total deadweight of 56,380 tons manned by a crew of 351, only 25 of whom were Swiss, the majority of the crews being neutral European nationals.

At the end of the war, the question arose as to whether Switzerland should continue to operate a merchant navy. Business circles were consulted and generally supported the maintenance of a navy, having in mind the problem of supplying the country in the event of another war. The Federal Council decided to fix the legal foundations of the Swiss Navy and commissioned a Neuchatel professor, Dr. Carl Ott, to work out a Maritime Code, which was written down in the Statute Book on 1st June, 1957.

The main characteristic of Swiss Navigation Law is that the fleet must be one hundred per cent in Swiss ownership and controlled by Swiss companies having their headquarters in Switzerland. The shipowner (*Reeder-Armateur*) must also be Swiss. The reason for this is hopefully that the Swiss fleet will not be mollested on the grounds that it is partly owned by parties to a conflict.

The control of ship movements abroad is entrusted to consulates. It is for this reason that matters relating to the merchant navy are handled by the Political Department. The other official body is the Shipping Registrar in Basle. It is responsible for supervising the seaworthiness of the fleet and implementation of shipping laws. There is also a Swiss Shipping Commission, which acts in a purely advisory capacity.

The sea has a steady appeal for many young Swiss. From 25 in 1947, the number of Swiss employed in the merchant navy had grown to 494 in 1969. This represented about 55 per cent of all the crews. Actually, there

were as many as 605 seamen in 1963, accounting for 61 per cent of the crews. The proportion of Swiss nationals in the merchant navy has remained more or less stable since the late fifties.

There are four main career "pipelines" in the Swiss Navy. Under the heading of "*Deckdienst oder nautischer Dienst*", the candidate can enrol at 15 as a ship's boy. Normal age of entry is 16 to 18. Twenty is too old and candidates of that age would have difficulty in adapting with fellow crewmen. Some newcomers, with former experience in the Rhine fleet, do however enrol after twenty. Beginning as ship boys, enrollees are promoted to sailors and eventually quartermasters. The next rung is that of a ship's officer and captain.

Switzerland has no navy schools, so that potential candidates are sent to such schools abroad. The system of education varies from country to country, but in Great Britain, where many Swiss cadets go, one must have at least four years experience at sea to be registered. In general it takes from eight to ten years to become a captain in the Swiss Navy. The Confederation pays a third of the fees of trainees in officer schools, in exchange for which they are pledged to remain three years in the employ of the Swiss Navy.

Another career is that of ship's engineer. Anyone with previous relevant training, such as a mechanic or machine repairer, can enrol and have a good chance of promotion within a year to the rank of 4th Engine Officer, and then 3rd Engine Officer. To work his way up to the 2nd and 1st ranks he will have to attend specialised colleges abroad, where federal assistance is given to him under the same conditions as for deck officers.

The third nautical profession is that of radio operator. Trained candidates must be 20 or over. Training facilities exist in Switzerland at the Post Office and at the "*Abendschule für Funker*" in Berne. Candidates can also be trained free by enlisting in the appropriate Army services.

Finally, there are openings in the ships' galleys, either as a cook or steward, for which the standard training afforded in several Swiss schools is adequate.

The main requirements for the first two categories of jobs outlined are mainly physical and visual. Candidates must enjoy good health and have excellent eyesight. They should be able to distinguish small variations of colour and the job is closed to them if they wear glasses. At present there are 49 Swiss nationals with a Captain's certificate and 26 Senior Ship Engineers. The five hundred Swiss out at sea have to live for several months without their families. To most of them the call of the sea is well worth this sacrifice.

## THEATRE

### Durrenmatt leaves the Schauspielhaus

Friedrich Durrenmatt, who was tipped to take over the management of the Schauspielhaus Theatre in Zurich, has abruptly notified the Supervisory Board that he has changed his mind. He would not take over at the Schauspielhaus and would relinquish his seat on the Board. This sudden decision surprised many admirers, particularly those who were about to campaign in Zurich in favour of his nomination. The forceful playwright had previously played a dominant role as co-director of Basle's theatres. He had also left this post somewhat abruptly, and there had been a few slammed doors.

One commentator had two theories: Either Durrenmatt is unpredictable and unreliable or; the "Schauspielhaus is in such a state that he had left it as a passenger bailing out of a sinking ship". One way or the other, that commentator expected the Theatre's Management Board to give an explanation.

### Theatrical highlights in Zurich

Well into spring the repertoires of the stages in German and French-speaking Switzerland are enhanced again and again by guest performances of foreign touring companies and by exchange performances of Swiss ensembles. Now and then there are large scale foreign productions for which there is not enough space in our municipal theatres.

Thus for example the "Teatro Libero di Roma" is going to perform once again in Zurich, this time with a new production of the monumental tragedy in three parts, "Orestia" by Aeschylus, to be given at the suburb of Oerlikon. This mythological drama, first performed in Athens in 485 B.C., marks the beginning of European theatre and has been given in many versions. These performances will be given from 2nd to 10th May.

In Lausanne a small operetta festival is to be held. Three masterpieces will in turn be performed at the Municipal Theatre between 13th and 29th April: "La Belle Hélène" by Jacques Offenbach; "La Fille de Madame Angot" by Charles Lecocq and "Die Fledermaus" by Johann Strauss.

At the Municipal Theatre in Berne on 26th April, there will be a performance of the little known opera "Penelope" by the Swiss composer Rolf Liebermann, and at the Municipal Theatre in Basle on 25th April there will be a performance of "Lulu", the most important work by Frank Wedekind.

(SNT0)

## DEFENCE

### Ultimate Milan-Corsair duel

At the request of the Military Department, two American-made "Corsair A 7" ground support fighters crossed the Atlantic (with three stops for refuelling) and landed at Emmen, where they will be based until May and submitted to stringent evaluation tests by Air Force pilots. A few days later, two competing "Milan" aircraft also made their landing in Switzerland. This appears to be the final series of trials before a definite choice is made between the two models. The order that will ensue will be worth 1,200 million francs.

### Two jet fighters crash

A "Hunter" and a "Venom" jet fighter collided while exercising over Spiez. Both pilots used their ejector seats but the pilot of the "Venom" was seen to fall, still attached to his seat, and was killed. The two planes respectively crashed at Hasli, near Wimmis, and Hondirch. They left wreckage on a 300 metre radius around the point of impact. It appears that the two machines touched each other in a cloud as they were flying side by side.

## COMPANIES

### Ebauches SA produces four new electronic movements

Ebauches SA, the most important single suppliers of parts to the Swiss watch industry, has announced during three simultaneous press conferences held in New York, Hong Kong and Geneva the imminent launching of a new series of electronic movements under the trademark "Swissonic Line" this service cover four generations of watch movements: The spiral spring, the tuning fork resonator, the quartz resonator and the solid state oscillating system.

This last prototype was developed by Ebauches SA in conjunction with Longines-Rotary and Texas Instruments. It doesn't present any technical advance on the similar model recently shown to the Press by Garde-Temps SA but it is the first wrist watch with a digital indicator showing the time in hours, minutes, seconds and tenths of seconds. This model may be put on sale for anything up to 12,000 francs.

### The Coop's turnover rises by 10 per cent

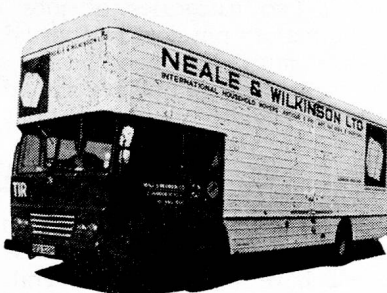
The retail turnover of the *Coop-Genossenschaften* in Switzerland has risen by 10.1 per cent in 1971 and reached 3.03 billion francs, placing it in close second position behind Migros. During that period, 155 ordinary groceries and 63 small self-service shops have been closed down and replaced by 23 new Coop centres and 30 modern self service stores. Another marked trend in Coop's policy has been to market its own food and non-food products whose sales volume reach a third of total turnover.

### Forged gold coins

The Federal Office for the Control of Precious Metals has warned numismatists to beware of forgeries. In examining 4,268 gold and silver coins,

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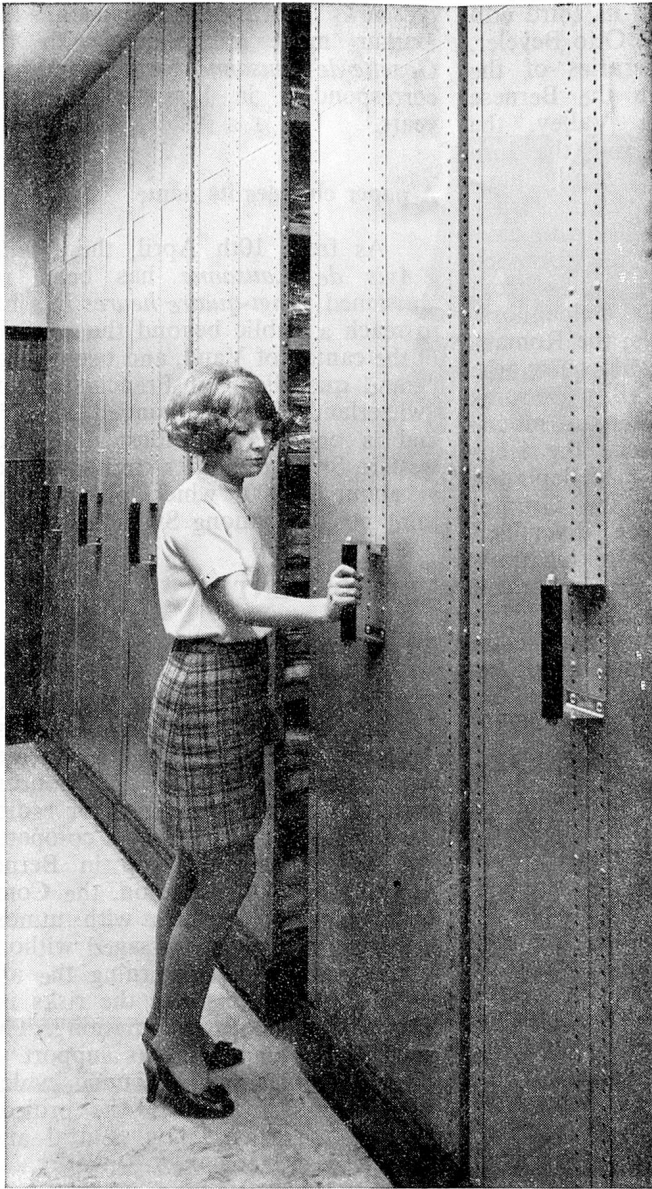
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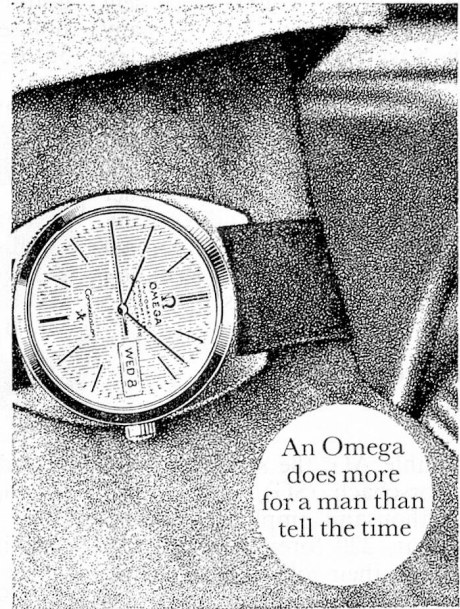
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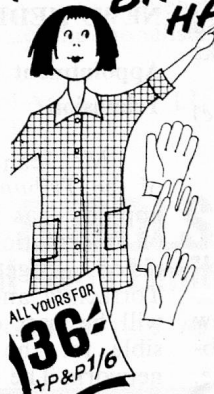
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it found that 8 out of 67 silver pieces and 4,109 out of 4,201 gold coins sent for assaying were forged. A great many American Sovereigns, Double Eagles, Swiss Vrenelis and Gold Coins commemorating the Federal Shoot at Fribourg were false. The reason is that the value of certain coin issues on the numismatic market is much higher than the value of their gold content. In fact, some forged coins contain more gold than the original, a situation naturally tempting to forgers.

### 350 workers to lose their jobs at Rorschach

Feldmühle AG, the synthetic fibre firm in Rorschach (SG), is to make 350 of its thousand employees redundant this year. 220 foreigners and 130 Swiss will lose their jobs. These redundancies are due to the company phasing out its production of polyamids. The State Council of Saint Gall has ordered the Cantonal Employment Services to help re-employ the future unemployed.

### Britain at the "Muba"

British participation at the Basle Fair was organised by the British Watch and Clock-Makers' Association. Companies exhibiting were:

*F. W. Elliot Ltd.*, West Croydon, who successfully export their reproduction grandfather clocks.

*General Time Ltd.*, Strathleven, Dumbarton.

*David Shackman & Sons Limited* who sell cases for watches abroad.

*Smith Industries*, London.

*Thwaites & Reed*, London.

*Watch Dials (Burford) Ltd.*, specialising in the manufacture of printed and decorative metal components for clocks, instruments, radios, television and domestic appliances for which there is a market abroad.

*Thomas Mercer Ltd.*, St. Albans, who specialise in the production of chronometers and recently also in the development of the 155 electronic gauging system, introducing an entirely new concept in gauging. Thomas Mercer export to over 80 countries in the world and already have manufacturing agreements in Switzerland.

Among the best selling British items in Switzerland are marine clocks and measuring instruments.

(*European Press and PR Service*)

## TOURISM

### "Hiking Trails in the Canton of Berne"

Number one in the "Yellow Series" of Bernese Hiking Books, published by Kümmerly & Frey of Berne,

a publishing house specialised in geography, has appeared in its third edition, edited by Dr. H. C. Otto Beyeler. 35 descriptions of itineraries of the most beautiful hikes in the Bernese Midlands, the Emmen Valley, the Upper Aargau, the Seeland, the Jura and the Oberland are pleasantly interlaced with impressive pictures, such as those of sandstone cliffs with cave dwellings in the Krauch Valley between Berne and Burgdorf; or a view from Mt. Eisighorn toward Mt. Doldenhorn, Mt. Balmhorn and Altels; the Romanesque church door in St. Ursanne the wildly romantic hiking trail to the ruins of Geristein near Bolligen, a suburb of Berne, or for instance the steps carved out of rock near Helleplatten on the old trail across the Grimsel Pass. The book, with a diversified selection of itineraries of hiking trails in the Canton of Berne, is decorated by a colour picture of Kleinhöchstettenau, a magnificent nature reserve on the Aare River near Bubigen, not far from the Bernese Alps.

(*SNTO*)

## SWISS ABROAD

### Membership drive in America

The Swiss of America proved by their enterprising community life that they have picked up the Spirit of America. NASA (standing for "North American Swiss Alliance") which is a fraternal benefit organisation grouping Swiss associations from all the main cities in the north of the U.S.A. organised a "membership drive" and an "insurance coverage drive".

NASA societies won 131 new members with a total of 320,000 dollars insurance coverage in 1971. The Denver Swiss Society attracted 40 new members and won first prize. Tied for second and third places were the San Francisco Helvetia Society and the Cleveland Swiss Society. The Canton Swiss Ladies' Aid Society was placed fourth. The winner of the "most members contest" managed to attract 37 new people to NASA, and the winner of the "most protection contest" sold 20,000 dollars worth of insurance protection. These figures show that Swiss life in the north of the U.S.A. is pretty buoyant.

## NEWS MEDIA

### Appointment at French-Swiss Television

Mr. Jean Dumur, Editor in Chief of the *Tribune de Lausanne* has been appointed as Head of the Department of Information of French-Swiss Television. Together with Mr. Claude Torracinta and Mr. Gaston Nicole, he will be part of a triumvirate responsible for the news coverage of this network. The job is particularly impor-

tant in view of the emphasis resting on news in Swiss Television. Mr. Dumur made his name with the *Gazette de Lausanne*, for which he was correspondent in London for many years.

### A paper changes its name

As from 10th April, the *Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne* has been rechristened *Vingt-quatre heures* in a bid to reach a public beyond the confines of the canton of Vaud, and become the "grand quotidien" of French-speaking Switzerland. It was founded in 1762 and is one of the oldest dailies of western Switzerland. Its circulation lies at about 95,000, which places it in third position among Swiss dailies.

## ENVIRONMENT

### An "atomic dustbin"

The Communal Council of Moudon has strongly rejected plans to use the vast cellar used by the former nuclear reactor at the neighbouring town of Lucens as a depot for radioactive waste, as planned by a co-operative society being set up in Berne. According to its resolution, the Communal Council "objects with utmost energy to a scheme envisaged without formal guarantees concerning the absence of side-effects and the risks incurred by the local population". The Council thus expressed its support to the Lucens Communal Council, which had already objected to the project, pending an expertise by neutral and competent specialists.

### Montana-Crans

The Communal Council of Lens whose feelings had been frayed by the claims of the "Save Crans-Montana" Committee, decided to counter-attack at cantonal and federal level. The Council considered that it has been "unfairly attacked" by members of this local conservationist organisation,

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who, it was recalled, "grossly misinterpreted the Commune's intentions" and published slanting and incomplete information. The Communal Council decided to allow the Press to look into the whole planning dossier of the Crans-Montana area and thus "prove to the public that the intentions of some of the members of the newly-created Committee were not as honourable as their official declarations would imply".

### Planning conservation: the first steps

The Federal Council has recently appointed a "Federal Delegate to Land Planning". He is Professor Martin Rotach, from the E.T.H. in Zurich. Assisted by two specialists—both appointed by the Federal Council, his task will be to co-ordinate the cantonal implementation of the Federal Decree passed by Parliament in March, asking cantons to work out and submit by February of next year the main lines of their land planning. This Decree was passed following the addition of a fourth paragraph to the 22nd Article of the Constitution as a result of a referendum in 1969 on the Confederation's role on land-planning, i.e., the detailed apportionment of land for industry, residence, tourism and natural reservations. The law based on this article is currently being worked out. The March Decree was intended to speed up the whole procedure.

Professor Rotach will supervise the land-planning of cantons and see that they abide to the principles laid down at Federal level. A consultative committee of 15 to 20 members representing the various regions and interests concerned has also been appointed. To help and harmonise this considerable preparatory work, the Federal Council has defined some key terms such as "sites", "protected monuments", "localities", etc.

### Nature protection in the Binn and Eifisch Valleys

Vissoie—The Eifisch Valley in the Canton of Valais (in French it is called Val d'Anniviers), although opened up to tourism, is among the most untouched and original scenic spots of Switzerland. Even though the population of the villages of St. Luc, Vissoie, St. Jean, Grimontz, Ayer, Chandolin and Niouc partly works in the valley's industries, it has remained true to itself and still, for instance, cultivates the community's vineyards on a communal basis.

The valley's communities, jointly with Alp Zinal, which has also been opened up to tourism, have organised a small tourist information office. Already some decades ago talk had started about the community of Grimontz because of the exemplary way in which it had preserved the village's

nucleus. It is now a pleasure to be able to state that all mayors of the valley had met to tackle the problem of nature protection. They want to go ahead and solve problems on their own which are dealt with in an urgent federal resolution. This is true to the spirit of the valley's population.

Nearly 80 years ago, during an acute water shortage the same people refused a federal collection in favour of those who had suffered damages and declared that they would first try to help themselves. The recreation zones, as a result of the debate, are to be called in French "zones d'attrait" (zones of attraction). According to a voluntary resolution of the village of Binn, the Binn Valley has put the entire widespread community area under nature and scenery protection. This is one more pleasant thing to report from touristic area.

### The Ruthi Power Station

There is mounting criticism in the Austrian province of Vorarlberg, which shares common borders with St. Gall

along the Rhine Valley, against the proposed erection of a nuclear power station at Rütli. Like the similar project at Kaiseraugst, these installations will be cooled atmospherically. The power generating plant will spew out some 40,000 tons of steam daily in the atmosphere through a 150 metre high cooling tower, 85 metres wide at the base.

Although the Swiss population of the Rhine Valley is more or less resigned to the prospect of seeing this concrete monster rise from their countryside, opposition has been mounting in the neighbouring Vorarlberg. It is not yet expressed officially because deadlines and construction schedules for Rütli's power station have yet to be finalised, but the Austrians are highly concerned that its cooling towers should upset the area's meteorological balance. They are afraid that the Rhine Valley will be covered by a perpetual mist.

Unless some serious expertise is carried out to dissipate their fears, there will be concrete demonstrations on the Austrian side in the not too distant future.

## SWISS CATHEDRALS



### CHUR: NOTRE-DAME CATHEDRAL

The "Bishop's Court" situated on the ground of the ancient Roman city, comprises the cathedral, the bishop's castle, the friary and the Catholic school. Nearby we find the seminary of St. Lucy with a beautiful church, and the cantonal school for boys and girls of both denominations. The principal part of the bishop's castle, in 18th Century style, is the construction of diverse periods. It is supported by the Marsoel Tower, which contains the bishop's private chapel, the library and the archives.

The old town, formerly encircled by walls and trenches, has, like all ancient towns, very narrow streets. Within that place are the two Protes-

tant churches of St. Martin and of St. Regula.

The most remarkable edifice is the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, whose foundation is attributed to Bishop Tells, about the year 700.

From the 11th Century to the 13th, religious architecture takes up first place and the basilica remains in all respects the actual form of other churches, but distinguishes itself by the adjunction of a more or less salient transept, with a chancel and high altar. The construction of the chancel very often had to give way to suit certain religious orders or local traditions. It is thus that we find rectangular chancels in Notre-Dame.

The actual church, erected in the 12th and 13th Centuries, offers a mixture of Roman and Gothic styles. The exterior has been repaired in the 17th Century after a fire in 1811. Today's church was consecrated in 1282. The tower is terminated with a bulb belfry. The porch is adorned with painted arch-stones.

The cathedral contains diverse art treasures, characteristic paintings of the German school by Stumm and Angela Kauffmann, native of Chur, and the tombstone of Jürg Jenatsch, the Grisons national hero; a magnificent high altar of carved wood by J. Reuss of Ravensburg, and embellished with paintings.

A splendid Gothic triptysh of the 15th Century, consecrated to Notre-Dame, is the greatest triptysh in Switzerland.

*Pierre Savoie*