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SWISS TOURIST REVENUE IN 1973

The gross receipts of Swiss tourism in 1973 amounted to 5.3 billion francs. They comprise the expenditure of foreign tourists in Switzerland — last year 33.4 million nights were recorded in hotels and other accommodation — as well as international transport. The growth in revenue, which amounted to 350 million francs (7.1 per cent) compared with the previous year, was due in the main to the increased cost of Swiss tourist facilities. As for gross tourist expenditure, i.e. the sums spent abroad by Swiss tourists for their stay and travel, it amounted to 2.66 billion francs in 1973. The growth of 260 million francs (10.8 per cent) compared with the previous year is accounted for by the fact that the rise in prices abroad was largely compensated for by the more favourable rates of exchange enjoyed by Swiss tourists. These figures show an overall balance of 2.64 billion francs in Switzerland's favour, i.e. an increase of 90 million francs or 3.5 per cent over the figures for 1972. In 1973 therefore, tourism once again came 3rd for net receipts in Switzerland's balance of revenues; on its own it made up for 40 per cent of the traditional deficit in the balance of trade, which amounted to 6.64 billion francs in 1973. On the European level, gross receipts from tourism in Switzerland placed the country 7th; per head of the population Swiss tourist revenue amounted to some 850 francs in 1973.

LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND

Do the Federal Councillors talk too much?

According to official information, given at the request of the Press Service of one of the ten officially listed political parties, 2.3 speeches are made per week by members of the Federal Council. 2.3 speeches per week corresponds to 119.6 allocutions per annum or 17 per head. In giving this information, the various Federal Departments have stressed that only the "Highly official" orations are listed in Berne, whereas unofficial short speeches and congratulatory addresses are not counted.

If the truly heavy departmental daily work of the Federal Councillors is taken into account as well as their appearances and interventions when the two chambers of the Federal Parliament are in session, the task of having to compose some 17 speeches in a year must indeed be felt as a considerable additional burden. Actual ghost- or speech-writers, such as many foreign statesmen employ, are not known in Berne. Consequently, while some departmental functionaries may be helpful in providing statistics and other raw material for magisterial speeches, the main work of shaping the

17 allocutions per Federal Councillor per annum still falls on the individual heads of department. Some of them, it is true, like to hear themselves talk and one in particular is very often the object of humorous comment on the radio as well as the victim of some cartoonists. While having to make 17 speeches may be burdensome for our Federal councillors, listening to around 120 of them per year may also be burdensome from the consumers point of view. It has once been said that a good magisterial speech should be like a beautiful young lady's bikini: short enough to be interesting, yet long enough to cover the essentials. While one or two of our Federal Magistrates seem to bear this in mind and can talk brilliantly, one or two others do not seem to realise that shortness can be a virtue and tend to carry on, and on, and on, as if they were paid by the line.

A certain amount of tension exists at present between some high functionaries of the State and the so-called media. It is obvious that in a democratic state the mass media — press, radio and television — have an important controlling function over those who represent the power of the state to fulfill — and vice-versa. Justified criticism of actions of the state should not automatically be condemned as being "anti-state activity", always provided such criticism is not only justified, but also constructive. The fact that the state must, of necessity, have a supervisory function in relation to the media, whereas the latter in their turn must remain free and unfettered to fulfill their task as "the fourth power" thus creates, at least potentially, a certain amount of tension. This is the background to a great deal of talk which is going on at present, about the need for a special article concerning the radio and television in the federal constitution. Article 55 of the

constitution regulates the freedom (and its necessary limitations) of the press, or, to put it differently, of the printed word. But as far as radio and television go, the confederation's supervisory powers are, at present, limited to their technical functioning. As far back as 1957 the population rejected, in a nation-wide plebiscite, an attempt by the federal authorities to extend these powers. The problem has, as I have mentioned, now become topical once more. Whatever the result: it appears that in a democratic state like the Swiss Confederation a certain amount of tension between politicians and media is unavoidable. Perhaps it is also healthy.

Gottfried Keller



The Army calls on data storage

A central computer system containing information on every soldier in the land is to be set up to unburden federal and cantonal military administrations. The system will initially be fed with the basic information — presently in the hands of regional military authorities — regarding incorporation, service record and age, but will in a later stage be fed with details relating to the particular competence of serving men. The idea is to enable the Military Department to pick out specialists in various fields should the need arise. This computerised storage of personal data which will virtually concern every man in the country will be regulated by various safeguards protecting the privacy of the individual. The Military Department stressed this point, and added that those with access to this information would be carefully chosen and limited in number. The system is to cost 50 million francs.

PIERRE JACCOUD FIGHTS FOR RETRIAL

Geneva lawyer Pierre Jaccoud, the central figure of one of Switzerland's most spectacular murder cases, began another stage last month in his ten-year legal battle for rehabilitation.

Mr. Jaccoud, now 69, former president of the Geneva Bar Association and prominent in local politics, was convicted in 1960 of murdering the father of his rival in love after a trial which rocked Geneva society.

He was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, but released after serving two-thirds of his term still protesting his innocence, as he did throughout the trial. In 1964, Mr. Jaccoud began legal action for a re-trial and in November 1965 a Geneva appeals court ordered an "additional inquiry". Proceedings dragged on slowly over the years, hindered sometimes by Mr. Jaccoud's ill health and

the age and deaths of experts involved in the case.

At his trial, in 1960, the prosecution alleged that Mr. Jaccoud shot and stabbed to death Charles Zumbach, a Swiss businessman, on May 1st, 1958, after a furious argument in Zumbach's villa about an affair Zumbach's son, André, 24, was having with Mr. Jaccoud's 37-year-old mistress.

The trial, lasting more than two weeks, attracted wide attention throughout Europe and detective-story writer Georges Simenon was among the spectators in court.

Mr. Jaccoud, married with two children, was brought to court from hospital and listened to the proceedings lying on a couch. He wept as love letters he wrote to his mistress were read in court and fainted when his wife gave



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evidence.

At his two-day hearing last month, before the Geneva Appeals Court, Jaccoud argued that the victim was not killed over an affair of the heart, but in connection with the Algerian Liberation War. His lawyer also contended they had evidence to prove that a Moroccan dagger could not have been the weapon used to murder the father of his rival in love. They said they had unearthed new evidence showing another man had an appointment with the victim on the night he died and claimed Zumbach, a businessman, was murdered in connection with arms trafficking linked to the Algerian war of 1954-62. They also said that medical experts at the 1960 trial were mistaken about the murder weapon and that there were grave gaps in the evidence that misled the original jury.

Now grey-haired and bearded, Jaccoud sat behind his lawyers with thick files and documents around him. He made notes briskly before the hearing began, ignoring swarming photographers, then listened with arms folded to his lawyers' speeches, nodding approvingly at some passages.

Impervious to this plea, the public prosecutor, Jean Eger, told the three judges there was no reason for a re-trial and denied that the defence team had any fresh evidence to back their claim. Mr. Jaccoud, who now works in a Geneva lawyer's office, will have to wait a few more months for the court's decision on the question of a re-trial. Legal sources said the court could reject Jaccoud's appeal, order a new inquiry, overturn the earlier decision and order a new trial, or completely acquit Jaccoud.

SWISS EVENTS

IMPORTANT VOTE ON NEW UNIVERSITY

After having been a theme of discussion for years, the "University of Central Switzerland" planned to be built in Lucerne, has now been given its first legal foundation. The Great Council of Canton Lucerne has decided by a majority of 85 to 46 to start a debate on the law that would give birth to the University and open the way to the agreement with neighbouring Cantons that would give the university a truly regional character.

The university, as its plans stand today, will cost from 65 to 77 million francs to build. It will cost 3.6 million francs to run in its first year of operation and reach a ceiling of 18.5 million francs six years later. These plans have been accepted by the State Council of Lucerne and accepted by the local parties, with the exception of the Independents.

The promoters of the project say they do not wish to compete with other Swiss universities, but only serve the interests of Central Switzerland. The future university will embody a theological faculty already existing in Lucerne, and give emphasis to teacher training, social sciences and ecology.

An intercantonal agreement (Concordat) has already been signed by Lucerne and the neighbouring Cantons. According to this agreement - which will eventually have to be ratified by the people of the cantons concerned - Lucerne would initially bear two-thirds of the costs. The remaining third would be shared by all the parties to the Concordat in the following way: Lucerne 72.55 per cent; Uri 3.83 per cent; Schwyz 10.34 per cent; Obwald 2.72 per cent; Nidwald 2.88 per cent and Zug 7.65 per cent.

It is only now that the Lucerne Parliament has begun to discuss the issue that one can talk of the possibility of a popular vote. The first to be called to the polls over the university will of course be the people of Lucerne, who, if they agree, would be followed by the citizens of the parties to the Concordat. Building can only begin with the assent of the people of Central Switzerland, and there is still some way to go before this is given. Without it, the Central Swiss University will have to remain the dream of a few.

Birds cause air crash

A flight of gulls was responsible for the crash of a Mirage 111S jet fighter at Payerne air base. Captain Peter Hulliger, from Zurich, had just become airborne and was gaining height, 15 yards above the runway, when several gulls were caught in his air intake. The reactors stopped and the aircraft glided back to the ground as Captain Hulliger attempted in vain to get them re-started. He managed to eject himself in time, but was seriously injured before the plane crashed and caught fire. It was the third of Switzerland's 55 original Mirage jets to be destroyed.

In another crash, a small C36 trainer made a belly landing on Lake Lucerne and sank immediately as its pilot swam safely to the shore at Herthenstein. The plane was later salvaged.

THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURE OF TWO HUNGARIANS

Two Hungarians were discovered on Monday, 21st October, in the municipal rubbish dump of Moutier (Jura) where they were eking out some food. They had fled their country on 2nd May.

The man and the woman, aged 54 and 62 respectively, had crossed Austria, Germany and Switzerland on foot, nearly always at night, to seek political asylum. They were discovered by the police after having puzzled a farmer who had given them a cup of coffee and who, surprised at seeing them on his land two hours later, had called the authorities. Both were dressed in rags. They weighed about 50 kilogrammes each and had sustained themselves almost exclusively by digging

through rubbish dumps. They were terrified by the approach of the police and agreed in broken German to surrender on the condition that they would not be sent back to the Soviet Union.

They explained that they were Hungarians and had escaped from a Russian forced labour camp. They had crossed into Switzerland at Basle on 8th October, without being checked by the customs. They carried with them all their savings, amounting to 800 francs, and hadn't apparently realised that they were in Switzerland at the time of their arrest. They were fed, given new clothes and detained at the Cantonal Police Headquarters in Berne while a decision was being made on their application for asylum.

THE LOT OF OLD PEOPLE TEND TO GET WORSE

Switzerland's population has tended to grow older over the past fifty years. In a report on the fate of old people, the Federal Statistical Office noted that this trend - also shared by all industrial countries - was particularly noticeable in Switzerland. Whereas only about one person in eighteen was above 65 in 1900, this proportion has risen to about one in eleven in 1970 and is expected to rise to more than one in ten at the end of the present decade. But the proportion of young people aged twenty and under has dropped from 41 per cent of the population in 1900 to 31 per cent in 1970. This trend is the opposite to that observed in the developing countries, which account for most of the world's population.

The Statistical Office believes that despite the growing efforts by the authorities to improve the life of old people, they do not enjoy all the benefits of prosperity. The report considers them as a "vulnerable" group because their "use" has become "questionable". The documents add that their lower economic utility is concurrent to a growing life-span. Old people are not considered as an important part of the electorate and tend to be forgotten by the established power groups, it says. Their rights are thus inadequately protected and so they are trapped in a marginal area of society.

To these sad reflections on our society, the report adds that there is a growing discrepancy between the dying-age of the sexes. Women outlive their men to a considerable extent. In 1900, for every thousand men over 65 there were 1,184 women in the same age group and 1,465 in 1970. For every thousand men over 80, there were 1,228 women in that group in 1900, and 1,828(!) in 1970. As no factors seem to favour a reversal of the trend, the Statistical Office reckons that the situation for men will even get worse.

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