

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

**Band:** - (1974)

**Heft:** 1678

**Artikel:** Swiss Foreign Policy - past, present and future

**Autor:** Weitnauer, Albert

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686491>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

**Download PDF:** 30.01.2025

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

American media despite a recent judicial cooperation agreement shows how badly the Swiss image is dented in some countries as far as banking is concerned.

### The Swiss double their consumption of tobacco

The Swiss smoke twice as many cigarettes today as they did ten years ago and the number of deaths by lung cancer have doubled during the same period. 1,887 people (1,680 men and 207 women) died of this illness in 1972 against 980 (870 men and 110 women) in 1960. These figures published by the Swiss anti-alcoholic secretariat show that the cancer scare which was triggered off in 1964 in America by the book "Smoking and Health" has abated. This is due in part to the arrival of a new generation of young smokers. It is also true that scientific improvements in the manufacture and content of tobacco have diminished the risk. After their initial impact, anti-cancer campaigns have lost in efficiency and smokers seem immune nowadays to the graphic posters and health-warnings being published in certain countries.

Banning cigarettes can't obviously be seriously considered. The solution to the problem consists in devising sure tests determining those people who are prone to lung cancer through the effect of tobacco, and those who are not. It is a well known fact that many people die of lung cancer who have never touched a cigarette in their lives, and that some who smoke three packets a day live to be ninety. On a statistical basis, however, it has been abundantly proved that heavy smoking can reduce up to ten years in an average life. About 45 per cent of the human population have an inherited resistance to lung cancer. To determine who these fortunate people are, a team in Houston, Texas, have devised a test based on the reaction of a blood ferment with benzoprene. But we will still have to wait some time before this and other tests are failsafe.

While the cigarette industry puts new products on the market at fairly regular intervals, certain brands on the other hand are withdrawn from the assortment made by the factories. This phenomenon is bound up with the evolution in smokers' tastes, but also to a certain extent with changing fashions. During these changes the filter has become well established for all types of cigarettes; at present over 95% of the cigarettes sold in Switzerland are filter-tipped. On the Swiss market today there are 109 brands of cigarettes offered in 174 different versions, an absolute record for Europe. In 1965, there were 140 brands presented in 192 different ways. While there is an appreciable reduction in "Oriental" type brands, there is, on the other hand, a considerable increase in the number of American blend type cigarettes. Another fact to be noted is the ratio of brands to versions. In 1965 there was a greater variety of brands, but fewer versions. The present trend is

towards the multiplication of presentations per brand. The tendency of

firms to merge is obviously not without influence on this phenomenon.

# SWISS FOREIGN POLICY— Past, Present and Future

by Ambassador Albert Weitnauer

*Thanking the Swiss Ambassador to Great Britain, Dr. Albert Weitnauer, for his speech at the January Meeting of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, the President of this Society, Mrs. Mariann Meier, praised him for what he had done for the Colony. It is also appropriate for us to praise the Ambassador here for what he has done for the Swiss Observer. With an Interview and a previous article, this is his third major contribution to our*

*publication. The following exposé on Swiss foreign policy gives a concise and complete account of the meaning and purpose of neutrality. Dr. Weitnauer's roundup of something so fundamental to Swiss history leaves nothing unsaid. This has the advantage of leaving us no excuse for touching on the theme of neutrality again. We should like to thank Dr. Weitnauer for sparing us this trouble for a long time to come.*

Whoever is called upon to give a talk on Swiss foreign policy is immediately faced with a very fundamental question, namely: is there really any such thing as a Swiss foreign policy? Taking a rather superficial view one might assume that a country committed to permanent neutrality has, in fact, abdicated as a politically active member of the family of nations.

Let me dispel any such misconception — if it should exist — from the very beginning. It is true that Switzerland has maintained — almost without interruption — the status of permanent and armed neutrality. It is also true that at the Vienna Peace Conference of 1815 Swiss neutrality was officially recognized and, on top of that, stated to be in the best interests of the European nations. But the very fact that Switzerland is a neutral country is a political phenomenon; it entails a very specific policy, the policy of neutrality, which our country has upheld to the present day.

I shall have much more to say about the policy of neutrality later in my talk. For the moment let us accept that neutrality is a form of foreign policy. In our own case it means that we carefully abstain from meddling in other people's affairs, that we do not join (and do not intend to join) any political or military alliances and, as a corollary to this, provide for our own defence through a well-trained, well-equipped militia-type army.

### Neutrality: a question of survival

With your permission, I would like to recall why, from the beginning of the 16th century onwards, Switzerland has resorted to neutrality as the policy best suited to her own needs as well as those of her neighbours. We are a multilingual country, two major religions are professed in Switzerland, and we are geographically situated at the cross-roads of Europe in the very centre of the old continent. Our powerful neighbours —

whose languages we speak — were often engaged in bitter and exhausting wars with one another. Quite generally, Europe was far from being an area of peace and quiet. Any other policy than neutrality would have involved, directly and unmistakably, the danger of our country's collapse, since we would have been torn apart by conflicting political, religious and perhaps other equally powerful allegiances. Switzerland held together through neutrality, but also through the political will of the Swiss to be a nation. Switzerland certainly has developed enormously since the first pact of the three cantons of primitive Switzerland was concluded in 1291. The fundamental inspiration, however, has remained the same: common defence against the outside world on the one hand, peaceful settlement of any conflicts arising within on the other. The second element developed, over the years and the centuries, into the very complex organization of our life as a nation as we all know it.

Switzerland's existence as a neutral country is in no way disputed by the community of nations. If the Swiss want to remain neutral, let them remain neutral: this is the reaction we get from abroad. This attitude very rightly implies that it is of our own free will that we are a neutral country. We may give up neutrality any day, join an alliance or otherwise conduct a "committed" foreign policy of our own. I think it is essential to make this point since exaggerated views are sometimes held in Switzerland itself according to which Switzerland, through the Vienna Treaties of 1815 and its long practice of neutrality, has an obligation to remain neutral and any departure from that attitude would be a violation of international public law. Let me stress that this assumption is totally wrong and has no foundation whatever, legal or political. We were neutral in the past because it suited us, and we have remained neutral up to the present day because it continues to suit us.

If this is so, the question quite

naturally arises whether a situation is conceivable in which another and better formula might induce us to give up our time-honoured status of permanent and armed neutrality. Two temptations – if I may use this term – have arisen so far that have made Swiss public opinion at least ponder seriously the question of a possible abandonment of neutrality.

### Differential Neutrality

The first was the establishment of the League of Nations after the First World War, a time when highly idealistic views were held by vast sections of the population of the civilized world. There seemed to be a real hope that an end had been put to the era of ever-recurrent wars, large and small, that the world had been made safe for democracy and humanity could start its life all over again on an entirely new footing. So strong was this movement that Switzerland applied for membership of the League of Nations – after a popular vote by the Swiss citizens had cleared the way – and was duly admitted. One problem, however, had to be settled first: the problem of sanctions against any peace-breakers. The League of Nations' covenant indeed provided that the League as such would take military and economic action against any country disturbing world peace. After long negotiations which led up to the London Protocol of 1920, Switzerland was dispensed from participating in military sanctions but was bound – like any other member of the League – to apply economic sanctions whenever common action was decided upon by the organization to restore peace.

This formula initiated the period of Switzerland's so-called "differential" neutrality. It was put to a severe test in the period 1935–37, when Italy invaded Ethiopia and made it into an Italian colony. The League of Nations was then already so much weakened for many reasons – among others the upsurge of fascism in Italy, national socialism in Germany and the conquest by Japan of large parts of China – that any idea of military sanctions had to be ruled out from the very beginning. Economic sanctions were applied in full by the remaining members of the League, from which two great powers, Japan and Germany, had just withdrawn. Since the United States had never joined it, its action was to remain limited in any event.

Our country was confronted with a difficult situation. Italy was a neighbour and – on the face of it – a friend. A high percentage of our supplies reached us through Italian ports. On top of that the danger of a new great war was already looming in the distance. Under these circumstances the Swiss government, whose leading figure was the Foreign Minister, Federal Councillor Giuseppe Motta, adopted an attitude which could be considered a fair compromise between conflicting interests. Our imports from Italy and our exports to that country were limited to "courant normal" –

"normal trade" – which meant that the Federal Council guaranteed to the League of Nations that Switzerland would not be a loophole in the system of sanctions set up by the Geneva organization. On the other hand, our relations with Mussolini's Italy were not subjected to undue strain. As it happened, this formula was grudgingly accepted by both sides.

Still, Switzerland had learnt a lesson. It had become clear to everybody in our country that the experiment with differential neutrality had failed. In 1938, the Second World War seemed imminent (it broke out, as you know, on 1st September, 1939). So a whole diplomatic machinery was set in motion to make the League of Nations agree to our return to integral neutrality, excluding any obligation to participate in sanctions, be they only economic. This operation was successfully concluded by the end of 1938. We also got solemn assurances, just in time before the new great war started, from our two neighbours who had left the League, Germany and Italy, that they would respect unreservedly our neutral position in the event of conflict.

### The new "temptations"

Switzerland's neutrality has remained integral ever since. It is true that we have not joined the United Nations and are now the only country of any importance outside it. But the UN does not bear any resemblance to the defunct League of Nations. The veto power of the members of the Security Council and the obvious inability of the UN General Assembly to make any military or economic sanctions really work would enable us, without any danger to our neutral status, to participate fully in the work of the United Nations. The example of Sweden and Austria, countries in a similar position, has shown that clearly. Austria is even at the present moment providing the UN with its Secretary General. It is true that formally the United Nations could not admit any reservations made by a neutral country joining the organization. The only way of asserting our neutral position, if we were to become a member, would be a unilateral declaration by the Swiss government, stating our intention fully to maintain our permanent and armed neutrality, which the UN would tacitly accept by just not reacting to it. The problem is not really there; it lies with the Swiss people. Admittedly, Switzerland has joined most of the special agencies of the UN and plays a very active part in them. The post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was twice filled by Swiss, my colleagues, Ambassador Lindt and Ambassador Schnyder. Moreover, the European headquarters of the UN is in Geneva. Still, Swiss public opinion seems reluctant to contemplate our country's actually joining the UN. I do not think that I am betraying any secrets when I say that our government is moving in the direction of membership. But since any decision on that matter would have to be

put to a popular vote, a large measure of confidence should exist that our sovereign – the Swiss people, men and women – would agree to such a move. In my personal opinion the situation is maturing quickly, so that possibly in a few years the Swiss Permanent Observer of the United Nations will become the Swiss Delegate.

The other "temptation", luring us away from our traditional neutrality, might have been "Europe" and the attempts to reorganise it into a forceful new entity after the Second World War. To put things briefly, Europe, which was in 1914 the undisputed master of the world, had, through the two wars, committed suicide, leaving the real power on this earth in the hands of just two super-powers: the United States and the Soviet Union. In terms of pure power there is not much difference today between the European countries this side of the so-called Iron Curtain. As recent events have shown, nobody is really consulted or even informed by either America or Russia when the peace of the world hangs in the balance. Since this impotence of the Western European family of nations has been so very obvious since the war ended in 1945, it quite naturally occurred to high-minded men to do something drastic about it by creating a new state, a powerful European federation with unified policies in all important fields: economy, finance, agriculture, monetary policy and foreign policy proper. It is not my intention to relate the long and sad story of the failure to achieve this lofty objective. The summit conference of the enlarged Community of the Nine of October, 1972 in Paris, with its lengthy communiqué once more solemnly committing all member states to the great things to be done, may stand as an example of how empty words can be if the political will and the absolute determination to achieve what they say are lacking. Black pessimism is wide-spread at the very moment I am talking to you about the future of Europe. Since I never shared the high hopes – held also by quite a few of our own countrymen – I do not feel either that the situation is all that gloomy now. The Community of the Nine is not about to break up. But if we are not moving towards European *Union* in 1980, as the Paris Summit Conference of 1972 proclaimed, we might very well be moving towards a new European *System*.

Such a System would be – and here I am expressing an entirely personal opinion – much looser, but also more flexible than a real federation. It would not do away completely with existing national sovereignties, but rather combine national efforts for the common good of all of Western Europe. It would at the same time finally – and hopefully! – constitute an opposite number for the United States of America to talk to. This is a very essential point, since there is really no alternative to what we are used to calling the Atlantic Community.



## No share in the community's political aims

What I have just said is obviously to a large extent mere speculation, since I do not claim to foresee the future in any detail. Retrospectively, however, it is very apparent now how well advised we were over the last roughly twenty years to be prudent in our dealings with the European problem. Although a state of tension existed between the political reality in Europe and the ambitious aspirations of those who might be described as the spiritual fathers of the European Community, these aspirations had to be taken seriously. To many people, a fair chance seemed to exist that Western Europe would, in actual fact, move by stages, but rather quickly, to the formation of a new federal state with supra-national authorities, a responsible, democratically elected European Parliament and common policies towards the outside world. Assuming that this concept would in the end materialize, the opposition between permanent neutrality and Switzerland's participation as a full member of the community was absolute. And it would not have been like Switzerland to give up neutrality which had served us so well for centuries in the mere hope that one day a powerful European state would exist which would protect us much better than our time-honoured policy had done so far. The Swiss people would simply not have accepted any departure from neutrality on such insecure grounds. That is why Switzerland, which had been a

very active member of the old OEEC, had to stay away when the Treaty of Rome was signed on 25th March, 1957, and implemented during the subsequent years, at least as far as the Customs Union of the Six and the Common Agricultural Policy were concerned. Switzerland helped — in 1959 — to establish EFTA instead, which is, as you know, a simple industrial free trade zone. Switzerland remained in EFTA with six more countries when, in December, 1969, the French veto on British membership of the European Community was lifted. It had to do so because the Summit Meeting of 2nd December, 1969 held in The Hague once more solemnly reasserted the Community's *political* objectives. And Switzerland *could* stay in EFTA because, at the same Summit Meeting, the heads of state and government of the six original members of the European Community had decided that for the EFTA countries not in a position to join the enlarged Community an industrial free trade zone arrangement should be offered as an alternative. Of course, we grasped at this opportunity, and successfully negotiated a free trade zone agreement with the Community of the Nine, as did our six partners remaining with us in EFTA. This agreement was concluded on 22nd July, 1972. Once it is fully implemented, by 1st July, 1977, free industrial trade in most of Western Europe will have been realised.

Not being endowed with the gift of prophecy, I am unable to forecast the future of our relations with the European

Community. This much is certain, that the more flexible the final organization of the Community, the easier it will be for Switzerland to find common ground for an intensive and possibly organic cooperation with it. The field is always open for imaginative thought, and constructive solutions will certainly be arrived at when the time is ripe.

In an altogether different field, namely *the policy of neutrality*, developments in Western Europe, disappointing though they may be for the idealists, have helped us a lot in evolving new attitudes and new forms of action to make our neutrality fruitful and effective not only for ourselves but also for the rest of the world.

What has been achieved in Western Europe has gone beyond the purely economic and the technical at least in one respect: Western Europe has become an *area of peace*. It seems unthinkable indeed that any of the former great powers of Europe will go to war with one another again. This is a political fact of the first order. Let me explain why it has a definite bearing on our policy of neutrality.

In the past, Switzerland's neutrality was, as I explained earlier, mostly a means of defence, a defence against a breaking up of the country through internal tensions, a defence also against any possible ambitions of our neighbours to invade our territory and conquer our country. A consistent policy of neutrality could not, in any event, provide an aggressor with a good pretext for crossing



# G.T. Whyte & Company Limited

## International Merchant Bankers

A member of the Triumph Investment Trust Group

**Domestic Banking**

**Corporate Finance**

**Capital Issues**

**Eurocurrency Loans**

**Export Finance**

**Trustee Facilities**

**Company and Investment Management**

Pinners Hall, Austin Friars, London EC2N 2HR Telephone: 01-638 0231

Telex: 883457. Forex: 885644. Telegrams: Whytebank London EC2

the Swiss frontiers. May I remind you that all the same Switzerland has suffered at least one invasion despite its neutrality, and that was in 1798, when French troops destroyed the old Confederation and made Switzerland into a satellite of France. But once the Napoleonic adventure was over, that is to say from 1815 onwards, our territory remained intact and our neutrality was respected. Obviously, a Nazi victory in the last war would not have spared Switzerland either. We may think ourselves lucky to have escaped any catastrophe despite more than one difficult moment between 1939 and 1945 when a German invasion seemed just hours away.

### Emphasis on co-operation

It was a danger-ridden world in which our traditional policy of neutrality was practiced in the past. So this really remained limited to a scrupulous observation of an entirely non-discriminatory policy vis-à-vis all countries of the globe and our neighbours in particular. This policy just left room for a sometimes quite extensive *humanitarian policy*, with the International Red Cross – established in 1864 and composed entirely of Swiss citizens – as its main focus. Apart from that, Switzerland was always ready to represent the interest of countries who were either at war with one another or had broken off diplomatic relations. Almost forty such representations were conducted by Switzerland during the last war. Even now, when peace prevails in most parts of the world, Switzerland goes on assuming similar missions. The most outstanding example may be, at the present time, the defence of American interests in Cuba, which has kept our Embassy there quite busy since 1960. During the war between India and Pakistan in 1971 each of these countries entrusted Switzerland with the defence of its interests in the other's capital, entailing, when hostilities were over, the task of supervising the repatriation of troops and refugees, which proved quite formidable. Finally, over and over again, Swiss personalities were asked to undertake difficult missions for the family of nations whenever a neutral – and only a neutral – could play such a part. I have already mentioned that Ambassadors Lindt and Schnyder became one after the other United Nations High Commissioners for Refugees. I could mention many more names and many more tasks which were, I hope, mostly fulfilled to the satisfaction of our friends abroad.

Today, Swiss foreign policy has assumed quite a new dimension. Without in any way neglecting the traditional humanitarian part of it, our country has taken a leap into a modern and active diplomacy. To illustrate what I mean, let me use two well-known slogans. Switzerland has moved over the last 30 odd years from a policy of “*neutralité et solidarité*” – a phrase coined by former Federal Councillor Max Petitpierre in

1945 and denoting a mostly humanitarian foreign policy – to a policy of “*neutralité et participation*”.

This move came through the *international trade and financial policy* in which we were involved after the war. This is, I think, the moment to stress that there is really no difference any longer between economic and political foreign policy: they have just become two sides of one coin.

The way to this new realm of economic cooperation was opened to us through participation in quite a few important organizations.

The first one was OEEC – the Organization for European Economic Cooperation – in which Switzerland participated from its very inception on 6th April, 1948. Its main task was the rebuilding of the European economy, shattered to its foundations by the war, first through the dispensation of Marshall Plan aid, followed by a liberalization of trade exchanges and the return to convertibility of European currencies. Switzerland was the only member of OEEC not to need and thus not to receive any Marshall aid. Our country remained a member of the organization succeeding OEEC in 1959, called OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – membership of which was extended to all important members of the Western capitalist world, including the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

### IMF rules too uncertain for the Swiss

Switzerland also became a member – by stages – of GATT (whose headquarters is in Geneva), the organization dealing with world trade through the instrument of tariff and trade negotiations. Provisional membership was successfully negotiated by Switzerland in 1958, till on 1st April, 1966 the great moment came when Switzerland joined as a full member, despite the fact that GATT had to concede to us the right fully to maintain our agricultural policy, which is totally at variance with the rules of GATT.

Returning to the European theatre of operations, where OEEC was, so to speak, our first love, let me state that we very much hoped that OEEC would develop into a large European free trade zone. These hopes were stifled by the inroads made by political ambition into the realm of purely economic activity. I am, of course, referring to the setting up of the European Economic Community in 1957 which, as I have already explained, had as a consequence the foundation of EFTA for all those Western European countries who could not subscribe to the political objective of the Community: the eventual creation of a European federal state. I think it is fair to say that without Switzerland's imaginative thinking to which, from the very beginning, Great Britain, Sweden, the other Scandinavian countries, Austria and Portugal responded favourably,

EFTA would not have seen the light of day.

It was undoubtedly because EFTA was such an undiluted success that in 1969 – when it came to enlarging the European Community – the way was opened for the conclusion of a free trade zone agreement with the Community of the Nine in July, 1972. One may rightly claim this to be the grand conclusion of a long drawn-out struggle to accord Switzerland its proper place in Europe.

Switzerland also joined UNCTAD – the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development – when it came into being in 1964. This organization also has its headquarters in Geneva. Whereas OEEC and, later on, OECD, the European Economic Community and EFTA can, by and large, be described as a success, UNCTAD seems to have some trouble getting off the ground, this for manifold reasons into which I would not be able to go in any detail here.

One sector is conspicuously lacking in this list of organizations in which Switzerland participates: the monetary sector. This may seem strange for a country which, according to the statisticians, has just become the richest in the world per head of the population, and which, with all our many banks, is a financial centre of the first order, a financial power as well – the third largest, as a matter of fact, after the United States and the United Kingdom. But there we really find ourselves between the devil and the deep blue sea. A definite inclination would today exist in Swiss government circles to apply for membership of the so-called Bretton Woods Institutions, that is, the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank. But even if our parliament and our people were also prepared to go along with this, our government could not very well say what the rules are by which our country would in future have to abide in the monetary field. The monetary field, as you all know, is a shambles and has been for quite some time. The Statute of the International Monetary Fund has become quite meaningless. As for the present, our ambition must remain limited to claiming to be included in any talks that might, in the end, lead to a new monetary system of the West. The day when such a system will be ready to be put into force seems, at the moment, farther away than ever.

Swiss membership of the organizations I have mentioned was, throughout the years, most active and fruitful. I would like to pay tribute here to former Federal Councillor Hans Schaffner, who really initiated this bold and all-embracing international economic policy of Switzerland's and was the embodiment of Switzerland's distinguished role in this important field for 24 long years. He started in 1945, as the Federal Council's Delegate for Trade Agreements, became Director of the Division of Commerce in 1954 and was Federal Councillor in charge of economic affairs from 1961–69. Up to this very



day he is probably, among modern Swiss statesmen, the best-known in political circles abroad. He created the image of Switzerland as an active force in international life, an image which we are certainly well advised to maintain.

This whole development was, I repeat, only possible because Europe had become an area of peace, so that a constructive, well-planned, long-term policy of cooperation could be deployed. These same conditions are at the root of a new evolution in the non-economic field, an evolution embracing the whole of Europe under the aegis of the magic word "détente". And here again Switzerland participates, and participates actively. When the idea of holding a *European Security Conference* was launched more than two years ago, Switzerland immediately agreed to join forces with the other European countries, the United States and Canada, to make the venture a success. The European Security Conference, whose first stage was held in Helsinki and which is now continuing in Geneva, is really a substitute for a European peace conference. The idea of holding such a gathering originated in Moscow, where its only aim was seen to be – and is still seen to be – to reaffirm the inviolability of existing frontiers, to guarantee the security of the Eastern European countries within their new boundaries and to ensure a permanent division between the two Germanys. In this original Russian proposal was also included a reference to the desirability of stepping up trade between the Eastern and the Western world.

If the Western countries went along with this idea at all, it was because they were firmly determined to add their own part to the Conference agenda. The West's objectives centre on the improvement of human relations between East and West. A free flow of information, uninhibited travel of persons back and forth between East and West, ample opportunity for the free – and not government-controlled – exchange of views between human beings on all topics dear to them: this was and is the Western countries' programme and also the precondition for finalizing a charter which could codify the elements of a new European system in the widest sense of the term. No wonder the East now has second thoughts on the usefulness of the Conference!

When I say that Switzerland is playing a very active part in the work of the European Security Conference, this is because it provides us with a unique opportunity to show our face as an indisputably neutral country which, at the same time, does not hesitate to fight for the values that are its own "raison d'être". A neutral country fighting for human freedom: this is the image projected by the Swiss delegation in Helsinki and now in Geneva. This fundamental attitude does not, however, prevent the Swiss delegates from playing the very typical Swiss role of a mediator whenever the positions between East and West seem too harsh, and points of view expressed too extreme to be conducive to a solution of the many tricky problems still besetting the Conference.

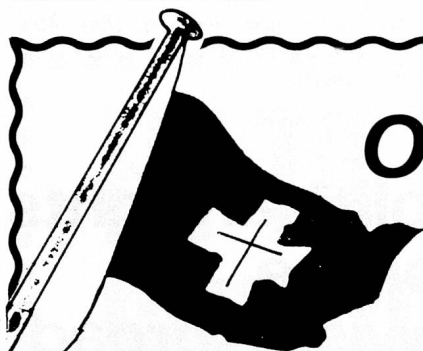
Switzerland has also ventured to put forward a proposal of its own which is in the very best Swiss tradition, namely a scheme for the compulsory arbitration of any dispute arising between the participating countries. Our ideas have met with great interest in both East and West, although their chances of being incorporated into the final act of the Conference remain doubtful.

To conclude, may I point out that here again, within the new dimension that has accrued to Swiss foreign policy, we are playing very much a part all our own, forcefully asserting what we stand for in the world and still trying to alleviate existing tensions with a view to achieving, if possible, positive results. Whether the Conference will in the end be successfully concluded is still an open question. But one can already say that it has been a wonderful opportunity for us to make our voice heard, to convince the world that we are a modest but unmistakable force in world politics, backed up by our economic strength, but equally fighting for the final achievement of the great goals of humanity.



**St. Moritz**

The most important alpine sports event of the year, the 1974 World Ski Championships have taken place at St. Moritz during the week starting on 2nd February. We shall be giving a round-up of this major event in our next issue.



# OSTERN IN SWITZERLAND

*inclusive arrangements to ZURICH & BASLE*

**from £35**

---

**FLIGHT PROGRAMME BY JET AIRCRAFT FROM GATWICK & HEATHROW AIRPORTS**

Departure . . . . 11th April  
(from London)

Return . . . . 15th April  
Or  
(from Zurich) 16th April

---

for reservations:— Keyline Travel Service Ltd.,  
53 Trinity Road,  
Wimbledon, S.W.19.  
Tel. No. 01-540-7269

Atol. 124BC