

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: - (1975)

Heft: 1712

Rubrik: The Swiss Machinery Industry - 1974

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: 15.03.2025

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

solve the problems out of their own inherent strength, and that the Swiss abroad would help wherever they were in a position to do so.

FRIENDSHIP AND COMPANIONSHIP

Riehen is one of the two villages which, together with Basle, form the Canton of Baselstadt. Though today it has over 21,000 inhabitants, it has kept a rural aspect, especially in the village centre. It was at the picturesque Wettstein Houses (inhabited by the illustrious Basle statesman Rudolf Wettstein from 1640-1666) that the Commune of Riehen gave a reception in the evening. This was followed by a

dinner-dance at the "Landgasthof". The great attraction of the evening was a performance by one of Basle's famous carnival *Cliques*, "Schnoogekerzli". Their superb drumming and fifing was as much applauded as their weird masks and costumes and the expert antics of the *Tambourmajor*.

Sunday began with an ecumenical service at the Church of St. Leonard, whose origins go back to 1118, though the new Gothic building was erected after the earthquake of 1356. The service was in French and German, the short sermons given by Pasteur Marc Kohler and Vikar Karl Freuler, a Priest who had been in the Far East for some 15 years as architect.

Then followed a coach trip to the

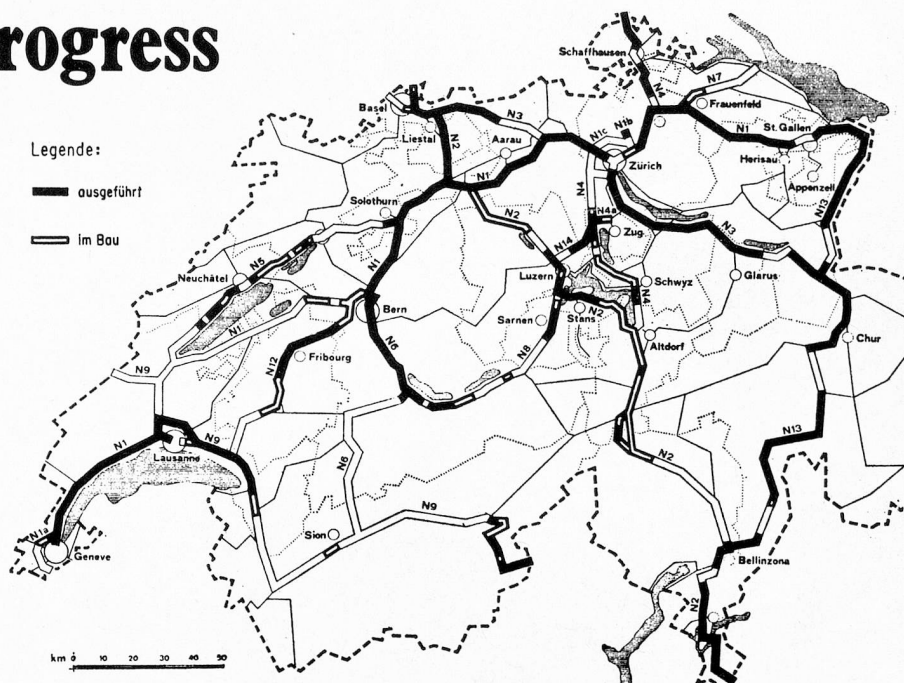
castle ruins of Dorneck. The weather was overcast, so lunch was served in a spacious hall nearby. The Commune President of Dornach reminded the party of the famous battle of Dornach in 1499, when the victory by the Confederates resulted in the separation of Switzerland from the German Reich. The afternoon was spent in happy companionship and dancing to a folklore band from Berne and some fine tossing of the flag, alphorn blowing, and yodelling by the caretaker of the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad in Berne and his wife.

Thus ended the 53rd Assembly, and the organisers may be sure of the gratitude of all those who took part.

MM

Motorways in progress in Switzerland

Federal expenditure on national highways for the current year was planned to reach 1,018 million francs, 43 million francs more than last year but 60 million francs less than what the Cantons would have wished. Total expenditure on motorways is higher than the above sum, additional revenue being raised with the help of a surcharge on petrol, and cantonal contributions. The network is definitely taking shape and over half of the planned motorways are completed. The map printed here which was published by the NZZ some time ago, indicates where the network stood at the end of last year.



THE SWISS MACHINERY INDUSTRY - 1974

The Swiss machinery and metallurgical industry, which has a labour force over 360,000 strong, succeeded in raising the value of its exports to 14.8 billion francs in 1974, as compared with 12.8 billion the year before, thus emphasising once again its position as the leading export branch in the national economy.

Of the country's total exports in 1974, 2.3 billion francs worth, ie 6.5 per cent, was accounted for by the metallurgical industry, 12.5 billion by the machinery and appliances industry, ie 35.4 per cent of Switzerland's total exports, which were valued at 35.3 billion francs in 1974.

Electrical machinery and appliances accounted for 22.1 per cent of the total

exports in this branch, textile machinery 16.6 per cent and machine tools 9.2 per cent. With the exception of the sectors related to construction, orders received, up to the second half of 1974, were slightly larger than deliveries in almost all fields of the machinery industry; order books are consequently comparatively full, for a period of 10 months on the average.

In the second half of the year, however, the recession in the world economic situation began to have an effect on the situation in the Swiss machinery industry; as a result of the downward trend and uncertain situation in many purchasing countries, demand dropped sharply towards the end of the year.

At the same time, the rise in the exchange rate of the Swiss franc continued. In periods of heavy demand, the Swiss machinery industry had always succeeded to an astonishing extent in absorbing the continual over-valuation of the Swiss franc. But the combination, within a few months, of the rise in the cost of products by as much as 20 per cent, and even more owing to uncontrollable fluctuations in exchange rates, and a sudden falling off in demand was able to unsettle an industry as sound as the machinery branch in Switzerland. In this difficult situation, many firms have to take great care to keep up output - failing which it would be impossible to maintain the production set-up - and go on financing research and development so as to ensure long-term job prospects.

SWISS SELF-PROPELLING RAILCARS FOR LYONS

The Swiss Company for the Construction of Locomotives and Engines at Winterthur recently delivered to the Lyons municipal transport service two self-propelling electric railcars for the rack railway, replacing the Croix Rousse funicular.

As the present rack railway possesses a section with a normal grip-type rail, these self-propelling railcars are equipped with a combined form of drive suitable for service on both rack and normal grip-type rails; the gripping mechanism is switched off, on the rack sections of the track, by a pneumatically controlled coupling.

The two self-propelling trains delivered by the Swiss company are equipped with a BBC electronic drive, enabling the driver to travel at a preset speed. The regulation of the current for the motor drive and braking system as well as the operation of the grip-type brakes, on rack and pinion gears and pawls, occurs automatically with the desired acceleration or deceleration.

The emergency brakes can be made to operate quite independently of the electronic system. Thus the railcar is automatically stopped by a centrifugal switch in case of any excess speed downhill on the rack section of the track. Each railcar has 24 seats and standing room for 95. Three double folding and sliding doors allow passengers to get in and out quickly, on either side of the car. In view of their use for suburban traffic, the vehicles are designed for double traction.

BIG CONTRACT WITH THE USSR

Rüti Co. Ltd, engineering works, at Rüti (Zurich), a member of the Georg Fischer group specialising in the manufacture of textile machinery has just received the biggest order ever placed by the USSR with a Swiss manufacturer in this branch; the Moscow foreign trade organisation, Technopromimport, a central purchasing office for the Russian textile industry, has signed an agreement with the Swiss firm for the supply of weaving looms valued at 30 million francs.

SWISS SEWING MACHINES EXPORT WELL

Nine out of every 10 sewing machines manufactured in Switzerland are exported. In 1974, Swiss manufacturers exported 177.7 million francs worth and their main clients were the United States, Australia, South Africa, France, New Zealand, Great Britain, Canada and Austria.

In order to assert their position on foreign markets, Swiss sewing machine manufacturers are obliged to make large investments with a view to rationalising their output in order to compensate for the continually growing production costs.

CAR RACING

The Swiss, Clay Regazzoni won the 13th Swiss Grand Prix ahead of the Frenchman Patrick Depailler and the West German Jochen Mass. This event, which took place at the end of August, was a rare occurrence because Grand Prix racing had been banned in Switzerland in the early fifties. It was therefore held at the Dijon race circuit, France, under the auspices of the Swiss Automobile Club. It didn't count for the World Championship currently led by the Austrian Nikki Lauda, but all the same attracted 25,000 spectators and the leading drivers. These included the reigning World Champion Emerson Fittipaldi, whose Ford McLaren let him down in the sixth round, and Frenchman Jean-Pierre Jarier, who led the race until very near to the end when the rupture of the left axle of his Ferrari forced him to retire.

NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS - A FOUR-YEAR BAN

Switzerland's anti-nuclear environmentalists will petition for a four-year freeze on all further work on nuclear sites in the country. This decision was taken by the General Meeting of the "Non-Violent Action against the Construction of a Nuclear Power Station at Kaiseraugst". Other similar groups will join in launching the petition which will presumably consist of collecting as many signatures as possible for the attention of the government.

The four-year period was decided because the environmentalists believed that it would take that time to "process" the anti-nuclear initiative they had launched before the summer holidays. Further discussions are scheduled in

September between the various anti-nuclear movements and the Government over the Kaiseraugst power station issue.

SWISS TECHNOLOGY AND KNOW-HOW FOR ZAMBIA

During the last 20 years, Vifor Co Ltd, in Geneva, which specialises in the manufacture of pharmaceutical products, has developed an original technology and specific plants for the production of hermetically sealable supple plastic containers, for the packaging of perfusion solutions.

Following negotiations with the Zambian government, the Geneva firm has signed a contract for the manufacture under licence of patented containers; the agreement also covers the provision of the required technology and technical know-how as well as the supply of plant for a complete independent production unit, which will be able to meet the country's needs by producing a million perfusion units a year.

The Swiss firm will also provide technical supervision for the assembly of the plant as well as train the Zambian technical personnel.

RHINE SHIPPING IN 1974: ALL RECORDS BROKEN!

Transport to Switzerland via the Rhine broke two new records in 1974; first of all, traffic through the Basle ports for the first time topped the nine million mark by reaching 9,340,192 tonnes, ie an increase of 10.56 per cent over 1973. In addition, imports of liquid fuels reached an all-time high with 4.43 million tonnes.

CASTELCO

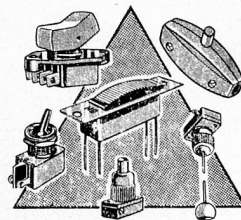
MANUFACTURERS OF PRECISION SWITCHES

Urgently require:-

Precision Toolmakers

for manufacture and maintenance of Stamping tools and moulds (injection and compression) for miniature components.

Please send curriculum vitae in confidence to:-



H. W. Schneider, Man. Dir.,
CASTELCO (Great Britain) Ltd.,
Castle Works, High Street,
OLD WOKING,
Surrey GU22 9LE.

Tel: WOKING 4172 Ext. 3

SWISS AIRCRAFT CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROTECTION OF CROPS

Eleven Swiss aircraft are taking part in the campaign carried out by the world's agricultural aviation (20,000 planes) for sowing seeds, fertilising and treating the 460 million odd acres of land which are at present cultivated from the air.

As long ago as 1928 an American flight lieutenant first used a plan for solving the problem of parasites affecting agriculture; but agricultural aviation only achieved its real expansion just after the war.

Switzerland "took to the air" in this field in November 1967 with the joint establishment by an aircraft construction company and an agricultural products firm, the Ciba-Pilatus Aerial Spraying Company Ltd.

In the course of the years, this firm played an decisive role in the progress of aerial agriculture, either by introducing improvements in flying technique (in particular, radio guidance during operations), or by developing new processes for the spraying of agrochemical products, which make possible maximum efficiency with minimum quantities of substances, without harming the ecology.

To achieve this, the substances have to be formulated in a special way; here too, the contribution of Swiss agrochemicals has been vital. Agricultural aviation has proved especially efficient for the treatment of large areas of single crops such as wheat, rice, coffee, sugarcane, cotton, etc.

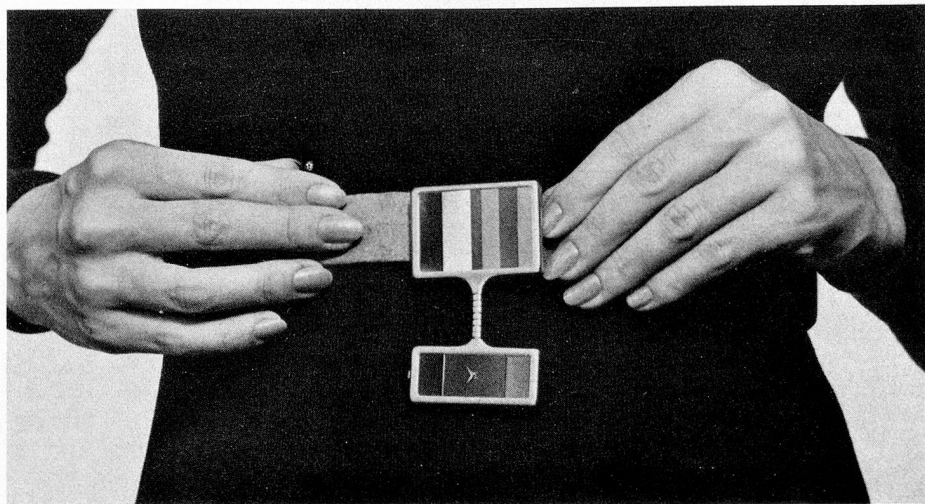
Flying at 100 mph just above ground level the plane covers a band about 20 years wide at each sweep; in this way a single plane can treat as many as 20,000 acres in a day. As treatment from the air is only profitable with very large crops, the work of Switzerland's agricultural airfleet is concentrated mainly on overseas countries.

In Asia, it is mainly a question of destroying the parasites of rice, while in Africa the protection of the cotton plantations is of greatest importance; campaigns have also been undertaken for the protection of rice, corn, coffee and sugarcane in East and Central Africa.

Health offensives have been waged in Saudi Arabia and in Egypt against mosquitoes, flies, sandfly and tsetse, and in Canada against parasites of the forests. In addition to these agricultural campaigns, various humanitarian operations have also been carried out, in particular in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

BERNE'S TOP TALENT ON SHOW

The work of Bernese artists will again go on show at two traditional year-end exhibitions at Berne's Kunsthalle from 13th December to 4th January 1976.



WHAT A GEM!

Eight in number, the Omega creations shown at Moutres et Bijoux brought together the elegance, precision and pure, sober lines which epitomize OMEGA.

Any woman of taste, combining charm and a flair for the modern, will be won over by the carefully measured originality of these pieces.

What woman doesn't dream of combining the useful with the stylish? A useful belt from two standpoints: a belt which in addition tells the time: a stylish fine suede tie with invisible clasp which delicately encloses a watch with a diamond mirror dial.

The setting and the tubular piece joining the buckle and the movement are in yellow gold.

The flexibility of the tube (it can be bent upwards) makes it possible to read the time easily.

This piece is sufficient in itself - no need to wear other jewellery; it lends an air of dignity to the wearer.

Yes - the Swiss can be proud of their watches.