

Round and about

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ROUND AND ABOUT

PARIS

Work on the construction of the Swiss hospital in Paris will probably start about the middle of December this year. The cost of construction and fitting out have been budgeted at S.Frs. 8.5 million, 6.6 million of which has already been found thanks to a direct loan of 2 million francs from the Swiss Confederation and government backing for a loan of S.Frs. 2,800,000 to be raised among a group of Swiss insurance companies, as well as to the efforts of members of the Association of the Swiss Hospital in Paris, who have been raising funds in both France and Switzerland for over 13 years. The hospital is to be built at Neuilly, on a site of some 44,000 square feet; it will be a five-storey building with two floors in the basement, and will have 148 beds, 42 in the medical ward, 26 in the maternity and 80 in the surgical ward.

ZURICH

During the first half of 1961 Swissair carried 21 per cent more passengers on all sectors of its network than in the corresponding period of 1960. The total was 692,000, compared with 571,000, or more than for the whole of 1955. Passenger ton-kilometres utilised rose by 34 per cent from 43.7 million to 58.6 million, while traffic of air freight and mail rose by 22 per cent and 15 per cent respectively.

Total capacity offered for the first six months of 1961 increased by 42 per cent to 142,536,000 ton-kilometres from 100,147,000; revenue capacity utilised during the same period increased by 29 per cent to 77,342,000 ton-kilometres from 59,941,000.

Although in itself satisfactory, this increase in capacity sold was not sufficient to offset the considerably larger capacity on offer, reflecting in particular the general situation on the North Atlantic. The average load factor on the scheduled services consequently declined from 59.9 per cent to 54.2 per cent.

BELFAST

One of the finest cargo ships of the Swiss Navy, the *Silvaplana*, docked recently in Belfast. Her crew, many of whom are Swiss, unloaded wheat from Trois Rivières (Canada). Under the command of Captain Jacob Bark, the ship left Northern Ireland again on 20th July for Port Churchill in the Hudson Bay.

ST. MORITZ

The "Big Four" of St. Moritz — the Kulm, Carlton, Palace and Suvretta hotels, which compete to cater for Top People from all corners of the globe — have united in a fight to oust economy-class tourists who have invaded this winter sports playground.

With the backing of the local Chamber of Commerce, and the help of their cantonal government, they are trying to have the recent sale of two local hotels annulled.

The Big Four wanted to buy the Stahlbad and Victoria hotels — to forestall an offer by a Swiss organisation, La Société d'Expansion Touristique. But the Graubünden Cantonal Bank took the Society's offer — and the Big Four joined to repel the invaders.

Mr. Peter Kasper, director of the local tourist board, explained the position:

"The Swiss society wants the hotels for two foreign tourist groups: for the *Club Méditerranée de Paris* and the *Mutualité Chrétienne Belge*.

"But the Stahlbad, a spa hotel, will now be closed in winter — and that's why we're against the sale," Mr. Kasper pointed out. He claimed that the influx of cheap-rate tourists was not the main reason for the fight.

"It's more or less against Swiss law to sell to foreigners," he added, "and though the society isn't a foreign one, it's pretty much a foreign affair."

He concluded on a confident note: "We think we can force them to sell to St. Moritz."

LAUSANNE

Lausanne is to be the site of the sixth Swiss National Exhibition, in 1964. This Exhibition is held once every twenty-five years.

At a cost of 87 million Frs., the city of Lausanne is preparing for the opening of the Exhibition on 30th April 1964. Work has already begun on 550,000 square metres of land on the lakeside between Vidy and Ouchy, and the construction of the first pavilions will begin in 1963.

With a full view of the Alps and surrounded by the trees and shrubs that border Lac Léman, the Exhibition will have an ideal setting. It is estimated that 18 million people will visit it between May and October, 1964.

The organisers of the Exhibition state that from time to time a nation needs to stop and consider itself. The 1964 National Exhibition will permit the people of Switzerland to take stock of their position in an ever-changing world. It will also be an illustration of the future of a nation.

In 1964, the Swiss National Exhibition will once again conflict with the New York World's Fair, as it did in 1939. It has also coincided with the beginning of each of the World Wars. Other national Exhibitions were held in Berne, Zurich, and, in 1896, at Geneva.

BASLE

Two important events will take place this coming autumn on the premises of the Swiss Industries Fair at Basle:

- (a) The International Exhibition of Water Supply, Wastewater Treatment, Refuse Disposal (30th September to 7th October 1961).
- (b) International Congress on Control of Water Pollution; Problems, Technical Possibilities, Organisation (2nd to 6th October 1961).