

Switzerland and European space research

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Over 300 specialists on the Old Testament met for their Fifth International Congress for the Study of the O.T. At the end of the month, the Tenth European Congress of "B'nai B'rith", the Jewish Lodge, took place in Geneva.

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SWISS EXPORTS IN 1964

According to the latest statistics, Swiss exports grew less fast on a *per capita* basis in 1964 than in most other industrial countries. Switzerland took fourth place after Belgium/Luxemburg, Holland and Sweden, whereas her former place was second behind Belgium. This shows that Switzerland's favourable position in export statistics due to her escaping the second world war, is gradually being reduced. At the same time, it proves that the economic boom centred particularly strongly on the home market last year.

Not included are the invisible exports (tourism, banking and insurances and revenue from licences, etc.) which have also increased considerably during the past few years.

The importance of the European Market is clearly shown, for 67% is the share of European countries in Swiss exports. This is considerably higher than immediately after the war (1946: 50%, 1955: 59%), but still below the pre-war values (1929: 70%, 1934 80% and 1939: 71%).

The effects of European integration were felt for the first time and are shown in the different rates of growth of exports to EFTA countries = +18.1% and to Common Market countries = +2.8%.

According to continents, North America is the second largest customer of Switzerland, followed by Asia, Japan being the most prominent trade partner. Next come Latin America, Africa and Australia. Invisible exports are highest in the countries to which exports are largest and in which branches of the most important Swiss industrial undertakings are situated.

Since 1939, the value of Swiss exports has been mounting steadily and has increased ninefold since then. Increases have been registered for developed as well as for developing countries.

[A.T.S.]

GLACIER AVALANCHE DISASTER

Since May 1961, a stone and earth dam has been built as a basis for the Mattmark Dam, a large-scale power project 6,500 feet up in the mountains above Saas Fee. On 30th August, a huge mass of stone and ice suddenly broke away from the Allalin Glacier and crashed down a thousand feet onto the construction camp at the foot of the dam. Over ninety men were killed, buried under the jagged masses of ice and rock. Excavators and bulldozers were hardly strong enough to get at the avalanche, and all hope had soon to be given up of finding survivors. Rescue operations were suspended on the second day so that helicopters could drop bombs on the glacier in order to dislodge a further section of the glacier which threatened the site.

SWITZERLAND AND EUROPEAN SPACE RESEARCH

One of the biggest European Associations, the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation (ITT), invited Contraves Co. Ltd. in Zurich to take part, together with foreign firms affiliated to ITT, in the competition organized by the European Space Research Organisation (ESRO) for the creation of the satellite Esro I. Meanwhile, in co-operation with other firms belonging to ITT, Contraves has drafted plans for the development and construction of this satellite intended for the study of the polar ionosphere. The Swiss firm of Contraves Co. Ltd., which has not only acquired a great reputation for itself in the field of electronic calculation but has 20 years' experience in the field of rocket construction behind it, today possesses the necessary knowhow and equipment to make a valuable contribution in the field of space technique. Co-operation between ITT and Contraves, in the execution of the Esro I project, opens up interesting possibilities to Swiss industry for its future activity in the sphere of European space research.

[O.S.E.C.]

RECENT DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND

The following deaths have been reported from Switzerland:

Guglielmo Canevascini (79), Lugano, politician and former Councillor of State.

François Chevalley (69), Sion, Canon of the Abbey of Saint-Maurice.

Luc Pont (90), Sion, Canon, formerly of Saint-Luc and Sierre.

Dr. h.c. Erwin Poeschel (80), Zurich, historian, writer and concerned with research in historic monuments.

Ami Lavanchy (83), Pully, transport expert in federal service; politician; Lt.-Colonel of Infantry.

René Alblas (69), Montreux, former Commune President of Veytaux; active in national and international tourism.

John Torcapel (84), Geneva, architect.

Albert Pulmann (72), Zurich, well-known actor and producer.

Iwan Bally (89), Schoenenwerd, former Councillor of States; grandson of the founder of the Bally Shoe Company of which he was a Director for many years.

Madame Hélène Brunet-Lecomte, née Jaques-Dalcroze (94), Geneva, sister and close collaborator of the famous Emile.

Albert Schaer (77), Basle, engaged in Rhine transport and founder of the "Spéditions A.G."; Honorary Consul of Brazil.

Louis Mayor (80), Morges, former Protestant Minister of Vaulion, Bussigny and Le Mont; Secretary of the Vaudois Synod Council and Army Padre (1. Army Corps and 1st Division); founder of one of the first boy scout groups in Switzerland — Vaulion 1911.

Dr. Robert Jucker (56), Basle, lawyer, secretary for many years of the "Autogewerbeverband".

Samuel Perret (72), Geneva, for many years Parliamentary Recording Secretary of the Geneva Council of State.

Willy Arndt (65), Zurich, well-known mycologist.

[A.T.S.]