

Switzerland and Vietnam

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SWITZERLAND AND VIETNAM

The discussion of the Vietnam war goes on unabated. The "Committee against the War in Vietnam" passes resolutions and organises protest marches on various occasions and in many Swiss towns. They are supported by students, by some political Parties and religious groups. During the "Peace March" from Bienne to Berne on 16th April, the American Embassy was put under police protection.

The Swiss Government assists help campaigns and contributes financially to the Swiss Red Cross in Vietnam and towards the keep of Vietnamese children in Switzerland.

Like in France, a corps of volunteers has been formed to go out to Vietnam and help the people in reconstruction work.

[A.T.S.]

AIRCRAASH IN CYPRUS

On Thursday, 20th April, a Bristol Britannia aircraft of the Swiss company Globe Air was struck by lightning and crashed near Nicosia in Cyprus. 117 people lost their lives, as well as the crew of nine. The aircraft had been chartered by the Swiss company Hotel-Plan. This is the worst accident Swiss aviation has suffered, followed closely by the catastrophe of the Caravelle crash at Duerrenaesch in September 1963 when 80 people were killed. Apart from these two, the highest number of victims in any one accident was twelve, when a DC-4 of Balair crashed into a mountainside in the Sudan in May 1960.

On 28th April, an ecumenical service took place in Basle Cathedral, in which seven denominations joined in the impressive memorial to the victims. Federal Councillor Gnaegi, head of the Federal Department of Communications and Energy, was present, accompanied by Dr. W. Guldemann, Director of the Federal Aviation Office.

The 50 unidentified bodies were buried in Nicosia in the presence of the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur J. de Stoutz.

The tragedy has been made worse by some irregularities regarding flying personnel. The *Statthalteramt* Arlesheim has started investigations into the crash; Globe Air have protested.

The Federal Department concerned has decreed that Globe Air's Licence will continue to be valid with reservations.

[A.T.S.]

THREE SPORTS ITEMS

Epeé: Daniel Giger (Berne) is again Swiss champion. The Swiss managed to beat all the foreign residents at the championship.

Football: The Swiss National Team lost their 320th international game when they were beaten 2:1 by Czechoslovakia in Basle early in May.

Horse-riding: The Swiss team won the *Prix des Nations* in Rome, for the first time since this prize was started in 1911. The successful team consisted of Miss Monika Bachmann on "Erbach", Mr. Arthur Blickenstorfer on "Marianka", Col. Lombard on "Page" and Capt. Weier on "Satan".

Great Britain was second and Germany third.

("Basler Nachrichten".)

DID YOU KNOW?

... that the eighteen Swiss cement works produced 4,297,583 metric tons of cement in 1966, 5.9% more than in the previous year, and that is by far more than any other country *per capita* of the population.

... that the consumption of Whisky had increased five times within 10 years, but that it went down in 1966, when the Alcohol Administration received 55m. francs in monopoly fees.

... that the emergency ration suggested by the federal authorities consist (per head) of 2kg. of sugar, 1kg. each of rice, *Teigwaren* and fat, 1l. of oil and if possible oats, semolina, barley, tinned foods, milk, coffee, tea, soap, soap powder and fuel.

... that, if every household complied with the suggested rations the 40,000 tons would fill a train 30km. long — from Berne to Thun.

... that the Hoelloch near Hitzkirch/Lucerne, is still the longest cave in the world, and that, since 1953, another 8,000 metres of new corridors have been discovered by scientists.

... that Scandinavian journalists in Switzerland have presented their Swiss colleagues in Zurich with a Sauna.

... that the Swiss security company "Securitas", now 60 years old, registered 439,603 calls during 1966, and that these included 121,000 burning lights, 67,460 open windows, 46,945 unlocked front and 42,642 inner doors, 32,220 garage doors, 6,256 shutters, 963 refrigerators, 400 railways trucks and 1,094 open safes or cashboxes, also 9,676 keys in doors, not to speak of fire, water and other damage.

... that there are over 600,000 motorised bicycles in Switzerland and 1.4m. bicycles (the same as in 1945), whereas motorised bicycles numbered only 4,000.

... that 31 million foreign cars visited Switzerland in 1966, an increase of 1.5 million over the previous year.

... that Bienne has the most modern telephone exchange installations in the world, the first with a new kind of *Edelmetall-Schnellkontaktrelais*.

[A.T.S.]

NEUENSTADT OR LA NEUVEVILLE?

In the recent "S.O." chronicle of the Canton of Berne, the attractive town of Neuenstadt was mentioned. The Editor has subsequently received a letter from a reader, the well-known singer Miss Sophie Wyss:

"A long time ago when the trains stopped at La Neuveville, they used to shout "Neuveville-Neuenstadt". As La Neuveville is the last bastion of the Suisse Romande, the Neuvevillois did not accept to have Neuenstadt shouted! My grandfather, Dr. Victor Gross, then *Grand Conseiller* for la Neuveville in Berne, but a Motion to have Neuenstadt removed, and since then we hear only La Neuveville when trains stop.

"We have hundreds of young Swiss Germans coming to La Neuveville to learn French, and La Neuveville has been known for her finishing schools for a very long time.

"But anyway, *Neuenstadt* has brought back to my mind lots of lovely memories".

Thank you, Miss Wyss, and my apologies for this error in style. Editor.