

# Federal News items

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1968)**

Heft 1556

PDF erstellt am: **16.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-695851>

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a far cry from the primeval concert of wind and water in the rugged Garden of Eden. But there is still a place in her affections for yodelling and the alpine horn. And also for the works of that remarkable artist Rudolph Töpffer, precursor of modern comic-strips, which decorate the walls of her Corbusier-built home.

Thus, if you wish to see Switzerland in its true light, imagine a pot-pourri of magnificent mountains, limpid lakes and sparkling rivers and, at the same time, of factories, dams, châteaux, suburban communities, magnificent shopping centres, fondue and air-cured ham. It is worthwhile to visit Eden, if only to see some familiar sights once again — the castle of Chillon, Tell's Chapel, the Matterhorn and the Rhine Falls.

Swiss Adam has come of age. In the words of the renowned Swiss Poet C.-F. Ramuz, he may say to his Eve: This evening, in all its beauty, is the evening of our life: you have earned a moment of repose.

Our children have departed and gone out into the world and we are alone again, we two, as we once were long ago. And here they are: Adam and Eve, two small figures sitting on a wooden bench, contemplating their world — Switzerland. They have come full circle. The way has been long but often beautiful. Two small figures who, in the twilight of their lives, can afford themselves the luxury of forgetting time.

*R. Creux and H. Chevalley.*

*(Translated by M. B. Gubitz and E. J. Crockett, and created by "Pro Helvetia" Foundation, Zurich.)*

## BRITISH WEEK IN BASLE CANCELLED

As was reported in the last issue, the British Week in Basle was stopped at the last minute. We reproduce the following from the "Weekly Tribune" in Geneva:

### Biafra row stops British Week

*The British Week due to open in Basle on Friday, 20th September, has been called off after pressures from a group demanding action against Britain in retaliation for the sending of arms to Nigeria.*

*Opposition to the trade promotions week took shape a fortnight ago when Dr. Gutzwiller, Vice-President of the organising committee and head of Basle's Tourist Office, withdrew his name on grounds that he could not be connected with anything British as long as British weapons were being used for what he called the "mass-acre" of the Ibo people.*

*With sympathy for Biafra running high, the Anti-Week campaign gathered steam as a committee formed to back Gutzwiller's position was formed. Among its sponsors were playwright Friedrich Dürrenmatt and the world-famous theologian Basle's Dr. Karl Barth.*

*On Tuesday morning anti-British Week posters adorned numerous shop fronts.*

*The same day, the "National Zeitung", initially neutral to the event though pro-Biafran, carried a call for one day of the British Week to be designated "Biafra Day", with 10 percent of the proceeds going to Biafra.*

*The threats of terrorist action were enough to make merchants think twice and the mighty ACV co-operative strengthened the opposition to the Week by backing out, and the Week was finally called off at the last minute.*

*Organisers said the event had been cancelled to "prevent any possible friction" which might have arisen were the programme to go on.*

*The statement was made the day before Her Majesty's Ambassador in Berne, H. A. F. Hohler was to have visited the city on the eve of the Week's opening — to which the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment band was to lend its talents with marches through the city and a Saturday evening concert in the Swiss Industries Fair Hall.*

To this should be mentioned a news item in the "Basler Nachrichten" of 20th September that the British Ambassador and his wife did visit the town after all. There were no anti-British demonstrations, though the visit was inevitably under the cloud of the cancellation. There was a reception at the *Regierunsratssaal*, during which the President of the Basle Government expressed his town's appreciation that H.M. Ambassador had not cancelled his visit. The Ambassador said, whilst regretting the decision, he had been in agreement with the decision not to hold the British Week under the circumstances. The reception was followed by a luncheon at the "Wild'sche Haus" and a visit to CIBA.

## FEDERAL NEWS ITEMS

In June, the Secretary-General of United Nations invited Switzerland to take part in increased sanctions against Rhodesia. Early in September, the Federal Council answered that as neutral State, Switzerland was unable to take part in any sanctions. But she had taken steps to prevent any extension of the Rhodesian Trade and of crossing the policy of sanctions of UN.

The Federal Council has worked a new draft for the tobacco law which was rejected by the Swiss electorate in May. The main alteration is that no price control limit of five years is contained. Thus, if the new draft is accepted, there will be no price control, but some relief in taxes is proposed for small tobacco dealers.

When the British Protectorate of Swaziland became independent on 6th September, Switzerland acknowledged the new State and delegated the Swiss Ambassador in South Africa to the Independence Celebrations.

The Swiss Government has made an agreement with U.S.A. regarding social insurance. A new agreement has been arrived at between Switzerland and Malaysia regarding civil aviation.

At the Interparliamentary Conference in Lima, at which parliamentarians from 70 countries took part, the Swiss delegation of nine National Councillors and two Councillors of States was under the leadership of *Ständeratspräsident* Emil Wipfli.

Among foreign Statesmen who visited Switzerland recently, were the Minister for Development and Tourism Moshe Kol from Israel, the Italian Foreign Minister Medici, German Foreign Minister Brandt and the Swedish Defence Minister Andersson.

The Federal *Fahrzeugkontrolle* has been made fully automatic. In this connection, a new form has been issued with instructions as to reporting every vehicle which now has a *Stammnummer*. This number is essential for identification.

For every 1,000 inhabitants in Switzerland, there are 20 employees in the Federal Administration. The increase between 1950 to 1967 was from 91,118 to 118,182.