

# The Swiss federal railways budget for 1968

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### ANGLO-SWISS NEWS ITEMS

When the Bank Council of the Swiss National Bank met mid-December, the devaluation of sterling was discussed. It was stated that this had increased a feeling of uncertainty in wide circles. The Swiss watch industry echoed these feelings, and attention was drawn that this latest devaluation was a disturbing element in the decreasing boom period and uncertain world markets. The Earl of Cromer, former Governor of the Bank of England, gave a talk on "The Pound and the Common Market" at the University of Zurich, sponsored by the Swiss Institute for *Auslandforschung*.

At the International Competition of the European Packaging Federation in London, J. R. Geigy AG, Basle, was awarded a "Eurostar" for their own special packaging method, i.e. polyethylene containers for powdered colours and chemicals.

Just before Christmas it was announced that Nestlé Co. Ltd. in G.B. (Findus) the Union International Co. Ltd. and Lyons & Co. Ltd. (Fropax) will combine their interests and will co-operate in the field of deep-frozen foods. Nestlé's will also join Lyons in their ice-cream manufacture.

From 22nd November to 8th December, an exhibition took place in London on modern architecture and art. The group "Artists and Architecture 1967" invited the University for Economic Sciences in St. Gall to take part. (*A pity that nothing of this was known to the "Swiss Observer" beforehand. Ed.*)

Dr. Christoph von Greyerz, Berne, has been awarded the Yorke Prize of the University of Cambridge on his legal comparison in the field of company law.

An honorary doctorate of philosophy has been awarded to the writer Erwin Schneider by the Faculty of Philosophy of Sheffield University in recognition of his great merits in education — the recipient is the founder and Central President of the Swiss Association School and Home.

Miss Marie-Louise Martin, Minister and Doctor of Philosophy from Lucerne, has been appointed Professor of Religious Sciences at the University of Roma in Lesotho, administered by London University.

The first translation into English of a work by Charles F. Ramuz is to appear this month. It is "Terror on the Mountain" (*La Grande Peur dans les Alpes*). The translation is by Milton Stansbury and published by Harcourt, Brace and World, inc. New York.

At Guemligen near Berne, the new building for the English-speaking School was opened in December. About 150 pupils attend there, mostly American, British and Canadian, but also from 14 other countries.

[A.T.S.]

### A NEW SWISS PLANE

The prototype of a new plane in the "Porter" series is nearing completion in the workshop of the Pilatus Aircraft Factory at Stans (Nidwalden). It was a twin-engined plane which, like the previous models of the same type already found all over the world, is designed for taking off and landing over very short distances. The new "Twin Porter", is designed to transport ten passengers at a cruising speed of over 160 m.p.h.

[O.S.E.C.]

### THE SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS BUDGET FOR 1968

The Swiss Federal Railways budget for 1968 allows for a small excess of receipts amounting to half-a-million francs, while the accounts for 1966 closed with a deficit of 7.6 million. The new budget contains no payment into the legal reserve fund nor any repayment of the endowment capital. The slightly favourable balance budgeted for is made possible by the increased tariffs introduced at the beginning of 1967, the probable increase in goods traffic and the rationalisation that has been continued so actively. Receipts are expected to total 1,571m. francs of which 530m. for passenger traffic and 900m. for freight.

[O.S.E.C.]

### THE FIRST SWISS INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY

The Swiss Institute of Agricultural Technology, a joint effort by the 22 Cantons, has now been officially opened after only one-and-a-half years of construction. The agricultural technicians that will be trained at this new Institute will serve as links between the practicing farmer, the engineer and the manufacturer of farm equipment. The large number of foreigners who have registered for the first two courses indicates that the new Institute will fill an important need internationally as well as on the national level. The course of study will last four semesters.

[S.N.T.O.]

### SWISS AID TO THAILAND: A HIGH VOLTAGE LABORATORY

At the end of July, a high voltage laboratory was officially inaugurated at the Faculty of Technology of the University of Chulalongkorn in Bangkok; the realisation of this laboratory is the result of the co-operation of the Swiss and Thai Governments on behalf of technical development. The Swiss share of this achievement amounts to 5 million bahts (1,037,500 Swiss francs); to this amount should be added important Thai contributions in the form of premises, material, labour, as well as of financial facilities granted to the Swiss experts. The laboratory is already attracting the attention and interest of specialists, power authorities and research bodies. This accomplishment will undoubtedly play a considerable role because it represents an important factor in the economic development of Thailand and the other countries of the Mekong.

[O.S.E.C.]

### ELECTRONIC BRAINS IN SWITZERLAND

Of the 60,000 electronic ordinator installed throughout the world, some 500 are at present to be found in Switzerland, according to an enquiry carried out by the Automation Institute of the University of Fribourg. The number of these instruments in Switzerland amounted to 5 in 1957, 30 in 1960, 195 in 1963 and 300 in 1965. For a small country like Switzerland, these ordinator represent a very big investment of about 100 million Swiss francs.

[O.S.E.C.]