

Last minute information

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DNA Basilea-Bellinzona 1-1, Lugano-Young Boys 2-0; DNB: Etoile Carouge-Chiasso 2-2, Mendrisiostar-Grenchen 2-0. — *Ice Hockey*: L'Ambri e Lugano rimangono in DNB. Perdendo in casa contro il Berna per 0-4 i leventinesi perdevano una volta ancora la possibilità d'un ritorno nella DNA. Il Lugano invece, passando a Langenthal per 3-4 evitava la discesa in I Div.

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LAST MINUTE INFORMATION

In view of the estimated deficit of 180 million francs in the Federal budget, the announcement that the accounts for 1968 closed with a surplus of 92 million was nothing short of sensational, especially since the Confederation was planning a new *Finanzordnung* in order to meet the ever-increasing commitments. When the Swiss Minister of Finance, Federal Councillor Celio explained the favourable balance to the Press on 14th March, he said the figures would have to be analysed carefully before any effect on the new plans could be evaluated.

The PTT accounts for last year show a surplus of 100 million francs, about 10m. less than budgeted. The lower figure is due to increased expenditure for personnel and material.

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. oec. publ. Hans Letsch, Secretary-General of the Federal Department of *Volkswirtschaft*, as delegate for special questions in the field of economy and finance policy. The aim of this new post is to co-ordinate the work of the Home Office (above) and the Finance Department, as well as to study general questions of finance, taxation and economic growth.

The 61st General Meeting of the Swiss National Bank accepted the annual accounts for 1968, which ended with a surplus of 6.8m., an increase of 4.5m. The balance sheet expanded by 2.8 milliard francs to the record sum of 19.3 milliard. The President of the Bank Council, National Councillor Dr. Brenno Galli (Lugano), stressed the point that long-term planning in Switzerland's currency and banking policy was essential; the times had passed when one could melt down the church bells at the last minute to forge the weapons in defence against an attacker.

The Principality of Liechtenstein has donated 50,000 francs to the Swiss National Fund for the Promotion of Scientific Research, in recognition of the fact that Swiss universities and science institutes are open to Liechtenstein students. The National Research Council has accepted the gift with gratitude, especially since it was made known that it may be repeated in the future.

Foreign Minister Spuehler named the Arab States Lebanon, Syria and Jordan as morally responsible in the El Al incident at Kloten Airport and hoped that the international contacts at work would find ways of preventing future attacks on airliners. The Zurich lawyer, Dr. R. F. Treadwell, will defend the three captured Arabs who made the attack on the Israeli plane on 18th February. The Israeli security man who killed one of the terrorists, has been released on bail and has returned to Israel.

The Federal Council has granted a further credit of 6 million francs for the Nigeria/Biafra aid campaign of the Red Cross. This is to cover the period from 1st March to the end of August.

The Government has empowered the PTT to put a sum of 5m. francs at the disposal of badly affected telephone subscribers who lost their connections in the catastrophic fire of the Hottingen Exchange. 4,000 connections out of the 30,000 were re-established by mid-March. A further 6,000 should be done by the end of the month.

The first Swiss to undergo a heart transplant operation has left for South Africa. It is Mr. Mario Lamberti who will have the operation performed by Prof. Barnard.

By courtesy of Agence Télégraphique Suisse and "Weekly Tribune" Geneva.