

Switzerland from day to day

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SWITZERLAND FROM DAY TO DAY

14th December

At the plenary session of the International Red Cross Committee its members accepted with great regret the resignation of Mr. Jacques Freymond, former Vice-President.

18th December

The Federal Council appointed Divisional Commander Colonel Kurt Bolliger as successor to the Commandant of Air Force and Anti-aircraft Troops, Corps Commander Colonel Eugen Studer.

The Chief Medical Officer of the Army, Dr. Reinhold Kaeser, will relinquish his office on 30th June, 1973. The Federal Council has asked Colonel André Huber (1926) from Mauraz VD, to take over this important office as Chief Medical Officer of the Army Health Service. At present, Dr. Huber is Chief Physician at the Cantonal Hospital in Lausanne.

19th December

The National Council accepted the supervision of incomes and dividends as proposed by the Federal Council. The voting showed a very small majority. The adherents to supervision carried the proposals by merely 87:81.

20th December

The Swiss Confederation recognized the German Democratic Republic and proposed to establish diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level.

1st January

The Federal Council decided to raise the fiscal load on spirits by an average of 45%.

3rd January

The Federal Council appointed National Councillor Dr. Leo Schürmann, President of the Swiss Cartel Commission, as executive delegate for the supervision of prices, incomes and profits. This is an *ad interim* appointment.

17th January

The Embassies of the German Democratic Republic and Switzerland began their work in Berne and East-Berlin.

22nd January

The Swiss National Bank freed the exchange rate of the Swiss franc against the dollar. This measure became necessary after the dollar rate had fallen below the lowest point of intervention and the Swiss National Bank had had to take over some 200 Million dollars.

26th January

It was made known that Federal Councillor Brugger would visit the Soviet Union from 26th March to 3rd April.

27th January

The Swiss champion skiers Collombin and Russi once again won first and second places in the Hahnenkamm race.

31st January

The Federal Council accepted the draft of a federal decree on behalf of the legislative, by proposing the purchase of 30 Hunter aircraft overhauled at the construction shops. He also accepted the proposal of a shop credit of 136 million francs.

17th February

Minister Hans Miesch was appointed Swiss Ambassador to the German Democratic Republic.

19th February

The bobsleigh team Stadler, Carmichel, Erich and Peter Schaerer won the world championship at Lake Placid.

21st February

It became known that Federal Councillor Graber would accept the invitation from the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Dr. Mohamed Hassan El Zayyat, and visit Cairo from 29th April to 6th May. Federal Councillor Graber will be the first Swiss Minister to visit the Egyptian capital since Federal Councillor Guiseppa Motta was received by King Fouad in 1937.

22nd February

The previous provisional Armament Chief, dipl. ing. ETH Charles Grossenbacher, was appointed new Armament Chief.

26th February

One of the greatest Swiss writers of French language, C. F. Landry, died. His best-known works are "Léman", "Diego", "Davel", "Les Grelots de la mule", "Provence", "Charles, dernier duc de Bourgogne" etc. He spent his childhood and youth in France: Nîmes, Avignon, Aix-en-Provence and Uzès.

Bernadette Zurbriggen won the special slalom, the giant slalom and the combination at the Swiss skiing championships. In the men's events, Willi Frommelt

(Liechtenstein) won the combination and the Swiss Adolf Roesti was the winner in the giant slalom.

3rd-4th March

In a federal plebiscite, the proposed draft for a constitutional article on education was rejected, the required majority of the States not being reached. At the same time, the electorate accepted a research article.

7th March

The Liberal-Democratic Union of Switzerland elected its new President in the person of Councillor of States Dr. Louis Guisan, President of the Commission of the Swiss Abroad. Thus Dr. Guisan became the successor of Mr. René Neig, Geneva, at the general meeting of the Union.

8th March

The National Council accepted the new law taking care of the social welfare of the Swiss abroad.

The Swiss, Bernadette Zurbriggen won the giant slalom (counting towards the world cup) at Anchorage, Alaska.



Leo Schürmann: *The Prices Watchdog*

10th-11th March

According to the decree by the Federal Council of 10th July, 1972, the temporary speed limit of 100km p.h. would no longer be signalled outside built-up areas. Supplementing this decree, the Federal Department of Justice and Police decided the following:

1. At the end of parts where the speed limit is marked, the sign "Speed limit

100mk/h" will be put up and not the sign "End of speed limit" or "Free traffic".

- The general speed limit of 100km p.h. will be marked on roads having the sign *Autostrasse* (motorway).

13th March

The photo agencies ASL (*Schweiz. Aktualitäten und Illustrationen*, Lausanne) and Photopress Zurich made an agreement on technical co-operation in order to be of better service to Swiss papers. Each agency keeps its business and financial independence. By this co-operation in the technical field, the two agencies will be able to guarantee the helvetic press complete coverage of events.

14th March

Hans Schmid became Swiss champion in ski-jumping at Langenbruck. With jumps of 72m and 68m the champion defending his title which he won for the first time in 1969, defeated Ernst von Gruenigen (23 years old) from Gstaad and Sepp Zehnder (29) from Einsiedeln. Schmid's rival Walter Steiner suffered the same bad luck as the world championships at Oberstdorf in Austria (*Skiflug*).

21st March

No few than 69% of Swiss speak one or more foreign languages. This result was published in the report by the Institute Scope in Lucerne. Extensive random checks were made with 948 German- and French-speaking Swiss, taking into account the situation in the countryside. 23% of the German-speaking Swiss know French and English. 15% speak the three national languages and a fair amount of English. 15% of the French-speaking Swiss know German, and 12% German and Italian, but only 6% speak all three national languages plus English.

26th March

The Women's Federation for the Defence of the Jura held their delegates' meeting at Delémont. In a resolution passed at the end of the meeting, the Federation stressed that they were "one of the most powerful women's organisations in Switzerland thanks to the number of members". They would "fight with force" against the proposed system to have women enrol in a compulsory civil or military service.

31st March

Austria beat Switzerland 4:8 in the "B" ice-hockey world championships at Graz.

4th April

Federal Councillor Brugger, Chief of the Federal Department of Public Economy, returned from his official visit to the Soviet Union. He had been in the USSR for a week, accompanied by Ambassador Raymond Probst, Delegate for Commercial Treaties. The Vice-President of

the Federal Council had been invited by the Soviet Minister for Foreign Trade Mr. Patolichev. Trade with the USSR has doubled in four years. Federal Councillor Brugger predicted that most likely the same would repeat itself in the next four years.

8th April

The Swiss beat Luxemburg with a goal by Karl Odermatt in the World Cup qualifying round.

10th April

A Swiss military pilot, Lieutenant Colonel Hans Stauffer, crashed a Harrier jump-jet while testing the aircraft. He escaped uninjured.

11th April

North Vietnam's first ambassador in Switzerland was accredited in Berne.

A well-known campaigner for environmental causes, the journalist Franz Weber, announced that he would launch a cantonal initiative calling for the protection of the natural sites of Lavaux, above Lausanne.

14th April

Federal Councillor Ernst Brugger is lightly wounded in a car accident near Gstaadt.

Britain accuses the Swiss pharmaceuticals firm Hoffman-La Roche of having set 500 per cent profit margins on its best-selling products "Librium" and "Valium". The firm was ordered to implement drastic cuts in the price of these products.

19th April

Solothurn opens the first public library with gramophone records on loan.

23rd April

Zurich wins against Basle by 2-0 in the Swiss football Cup Final.

24th April

According to figures just published, Switzerland exported 13,255 head of cattle during 1972, the highest figure since 1963.

25th April

The Federal Council introduced a bill on Military Service for the Swiss Abroad. Swiss nationals abroad would no longer have to pay military taxes for not submitting to military service after a period of three years.

The Federal Chancery invited cantonal governments and political parties to express their views on the reduction of the voting age from 20 to 18.

27th April

The students of Berne appealed against the Federal Court in Lausanne against a decision by the executive council of Berne to switch the management of student grants and funds from the students organisation to an official commission. This step had been taken by the

authorities following a demonstration at the university.

29th April

Assembling for a Landgemeinde, the men of Appenzell Inner Rhodes rejected proposals granting their women the right to vote in cantonal and communal matters.

2nd May

The State Council of Fribourg has extended the furloughs of Professor Stephanus Pfürtner from his teaching activities at Fribourg University by the end of July. This Dominican had caused a controversy by his stand on sexual ethics.

After having vainly sought a place to live in Geneva for four months, two young men decided to camp on Plain-palais Green, in the heart of the city. A few years ago, a family man had resorted to the same method, and found a roof that very day . . .

4th May

Hundreds of gallons exploded in a railway accident at Erstfeld (Uri). Twelve wagons caught fire and nine houses had to be evacuated. The incident fortunately caused no victims.

5th May

Federal Councillor Ernst Brugger, Head of the Department of Economics, accepts the invitation of the Swiss Society of New York to partake in their 90th Anniversary Celebration and leaves for New York. He took this opportunity to have trade and monetary talks with American leaders.

7th May

Ambassador Raymond Probst, former Delegate to Commercial Agreements at the Political Department, was elected as president of the governing body of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).

9th May

The Federal Council introduces a bill to strengthen and extend the application of existing anti-drug laws.

The Federal Council appoints Dr. Albert Weitnauer, Ambassador in Great Britain, to lead the Swiss delegation in the final stages of Swiss-American negotiations towards a judicial assistance agreement.

Returning from a visit to Sweden, Federal Councillor Rudolf Gnaegi, Head of the Military Department, claimed that co-operation with Sweden in the development of ground to air missiles was possible. There were further possibilities of co-operation in the field of communications gear and light combat weapons.

Switzerland and Turkey drew 0-0 at the first leg of their qualifying match for the 1974 World Football Cup in West Germany. The game took place in Basle.