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Switzerland and the «International Wool Secretariat»



Wool is an international textile fibre. Its production extends to the five continents and it is used throughout the world in an unparalleled diversity of forms. Man has tried in vain to give the characteristics of this natural product to the synthetic fibres of his own invention.

This wool which has been used by man for his own purposes almost since the dawn of mankind is to be found everywhere around us and put to the most varied uses without our always being clearly aware of the fact. *The International Wool Secretariat* has set itself the task of making the public aware of this importance of wool, and of working on the scientific and economic level to promote the use of wool, by propaganda and the education of the public.

Founded in 1937 by the sheep-breeders of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa — who between them supply almost half of the world's total wool production — the International Wool Secretariat has today become an organisation which covers the whole world. It constitutes a classic example of international cooperation in the economic field.

The headquarters of this organisation are situated in London. From there radiate the threads which connect it to all the countries which play a part in the international wool textile industry: the United States, France, Canada, Belgium, Sweden, Italy, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Finland and even India.

Switzerland is a member of this group, which is not directed against any other textile material but

which has put itself at the service of wool in a purely objective and neutral manner. Possessing a very highly developed wool textile industry, Switzerland has for two years now formed a link in the chain. A limited but active advisory committee marked the beginning of collaboration with the International Wool Secretariat. Meanwhile this committee was enlarged as it became necessary, and to-day the International Wool Secretariat possesses a subsidiary secretariat of its own in Zurich.

Wool promotion is the principal task of the Swiss committee of the International Wool Secretariat which is fully justified in basing its propaganda on the assertion « There is no substitute for wool! ».

But the history of the world has taught us that it is not enough simply to state a truth however obvious it may be: in order for it to be understood and accepted, it must be explained.

We must try to make the most of the products that nature offers us, but we must also help towards their propagation by our educational activities. Swiss wool promoters are faced with a considerable but highly interesting task, which they will carry out in collaboration with their South African, Australian and New Zealand friends in London, but without losing sight of the conditions peculiar to Switzerland. The International Wool Secretariat is not a commercial institution with lucrative aims. Its sole task is to put itself at the service of wool and of its use and possibilities of use in Switzerland and all over the world.

Hans Kunz



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