

L'IMPARTIAL

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NEUCHÂTEL AND JURA DAILY NEWSPAPER, EDITED IN LA CHAUX-DE-FONDS

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sports



A blow to the reputation of our sportsmen

The ruthlessness of the Swiss-German reporters hides a truth simpler than it seems.

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Diplomacy, a new way of playing

The famous board game Monopoly could be replaced by a new generation of games.

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Don Camillo in Le Noirmont

A famous Italian prelate has made an unexpected appearance at a fair. Exclusive image.

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MASKS DOWN!

Who is hiding behind this role playing game?

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TRIP AGAINST THE CLOCK

The watchmaking world is in effervescence. Buckling under the pressure of the union, the Collective Labour Agreement will be renegotiated in the Watchmaker's Train. The future of the region will play out between Tavannes and La Chaux-de-Fonds.

This historical trip will bring together the economic and political actors of the region, as well as the press. The stakes are high: the union will put up a fight and many hot topics will be debated. Each party is vying for any advantage.

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Rams want to defeat the bear!

After the creation of the *Rassemblement jurassien* (Jura Rally), a new militant faction is pounding at our door: The Ram Group, better known as the *Groupe Bélier*.

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Elections in Neuchâtel and in Bern

Tension is at its peak as voters decide who will lead their cantons.

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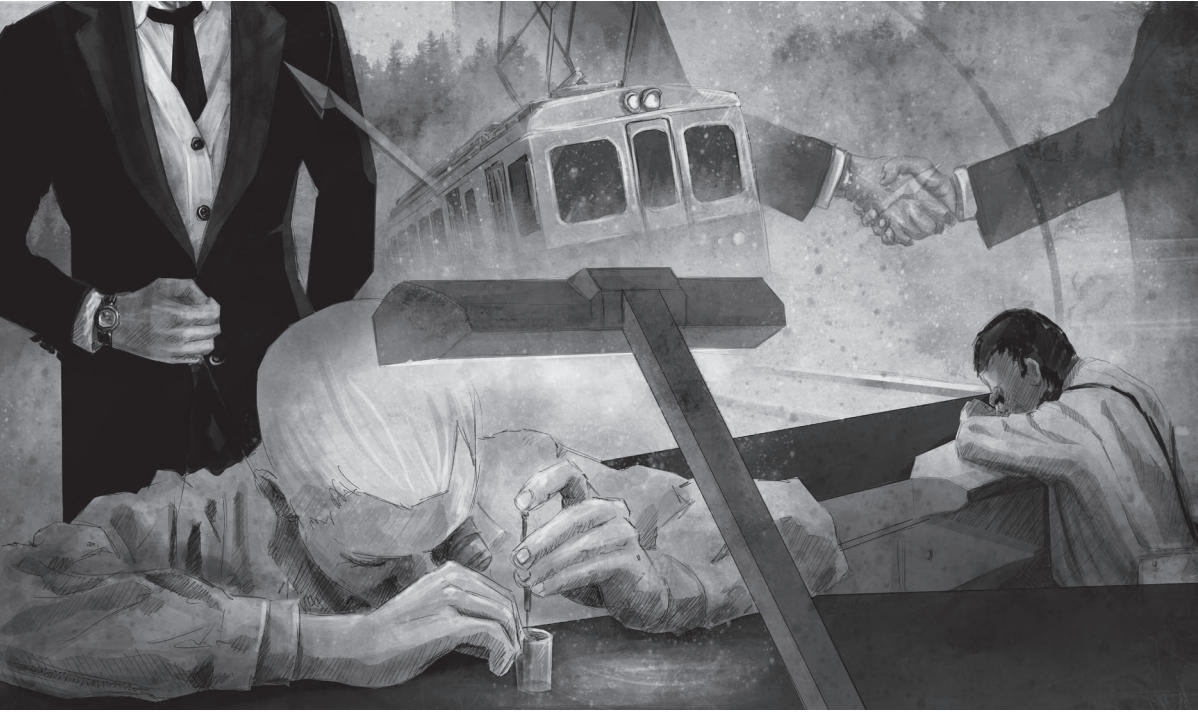
How far will women go?

Women's suffrage may have become a reality in our neighbouring countries and in most modern nations, but Switzerland remains defiantly against it.

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ECONOMY

STAKES ARE HIGH AT THE SUMMIT BETWEEN DIRECTORS AND WORKERS



THE CURRENT CLA

The Employer's Agreement and the unions promise to respect the following terms:

- There will be no strikes or lock-outs.
- The monthly minimum wage for men will be of 200 Francs. For women, the minimum wage will be of 160 Francs.
- The working week is of 45 hours.
- Employees are entitled to 3 weeks of payed vacation.

The watchmaker's train – an unexpected venue for negotiations

Even the most informed observers are surprised by the choice to hold meetings between employers and employees in a train. This decision is none the less symbolic: the railway line from Tavannes to La Chaux-de-Fonds links many villages of watchmaking tradition to La Chaux-de-Fonds, the capital of watchmaking. Every day, workers from the Jura use the valiant red and white train to reach their work bench.

At the beginning of the century, local watchmakers financed the railway line to make their commercial relationships within the region much easier. The line was modernised in the 1950s and is now exploited by the newly created "Chemins de Fer du Jura". Thus, the Watchmakers' Train is a vital link between tradition and modernity – another characteristic of Swiss watchmaking! We now understand what led to the employers' agreement and the union to choose the train as the arena for their negotiations.

The Collective Labour Agreement will be renegotiated in the Watchmaker's Train. The stakes are high for the whole of the region's economy.

Under pressure from the Worker's Union of Swiss Watchmakers, the Collective Labour Agreement (CLA) is to be renegotiated. Directors and workers are meeting today on the Chemins de Fer du Jura's railway network. Travelling on the Watchmaker's Train, they will define new rules to enhance working conditions in the watchmaking sector. Journalists are hurrying to cover the event, whose importance is heightened by the fact that these negotiations are taking place during the electoral campaigns.

In the wake of a short strike that deeply stirred public opinion and led to a historical agreement between workers and employers, the first Watchmaking Agreement was signed

on May 15th 1937. The agreement regulated working conditions and marked the beginning of peace in the factories, which, needless to say, is the greatest asset of Swiss industry.

Over the years, the original convention has been renegotiated. Up till now, the relationship between directors and workers has remained cordial, as the Collective Agreement has remained faithful to the evolution of the country's society and local economy.

Such negotiations are not unusual, but are always a source of bitter tension. In this case, the current CLA is recent, and critics have accused the union of putting social peace at risk for no particular reason. Whatever the case may be, the negotiations will be under close scrutiny. No doubt that a new and important chapter of the long and rich history of watchmaking is on the verge of being written.

The watchmaking industry today

Though our readers are well aware of the current situation of the watchmaking industry, it is important to get to know the main watchmaking actors of the region and fully understand what will be at stake during the upcoming negotiations.

Companies

The USIHS

The Swiss Union of the Watchmaking Industry (Union Suisse de l'Industrie Horlogère, Société Anonyme) is not, per say, an actual company. It is a holding company that buys out other companies without merging them together.

The USIHS was created in the 1930s thanks to an alliance between bankers and watchmaking industrials, with the help of the Swiss Confederation. Its aim was to meet head on the challenges of the time. The main concerns were to control production costs to remain competitive against foreign producers, especially America and Japan, and to prevent the loss of regional expertise by avoiding the relocation of companies abroad and the emigration of local specialists.

Today, the challenges may be slightly different, but the objectives remain the same: promote Swiss industries, especially those belonging to the group. No doubt that the input of the USIHS's representative will be most important during the negotiations.

Reussillon

In the 1870s, Albert Reussillon opened a small watchmaking workshop in Tramelan.

Today, the enterprise is hailed by the whole of the Swiss watchmaking industry. The prestigious brand sells medium range watches and is one of the region's main employers. Its current director, Mr Junod, was one of the instigators of the USIHS, at a time when the brand was having difficulty remaining competitive against the Americans.

Pivot SA

Pivot SA was established in the 1920s in Les Breuleux with the help of the local council. The company immediately specialised in low-cost watches. Its biggest strength is to produce timepieces fast, well, and in large quantities.

The enterprise joined the USIHS during the Second World War, to come to grips with the decrease in demand. Now, it is the group's most important brand in terms of quantity and production.

Mouvements SA

Mouvements SA was founded in the 1940s following the merging of small workshops in La Chaux-de-Fonds. These ateliers had already

been bought by the USIHS during the previous decades. As its name indicates, the factory is specialised in the production of watch movements.

Chalverat & Fils

This small watchcase-making workshop was established at the beginning of the century by Jean Chalverat, in Le Noirmont. It is now directed by a third generation of Chalverat sons, who firmly intend not to be the last!

The quality of its watchcases is known far and wide, and the employees are satisfied. The company still allows them to work at home. Chalverat & Fils is a well-established workshop that seems destined to last.

Lutor

Lutor is one of the most prestigious and luxurious brands in the region. It is specialised in top of the line watches, that adorn the wrists of American idols, Arab sheiks and English lords. The company was established in the 1880s in Tavannes; it soon chose a path of independence and self-sufficiency, which enabled it to instore the highest standards of quality control.

About ten years ago, impressed with the quality of Movements SA's

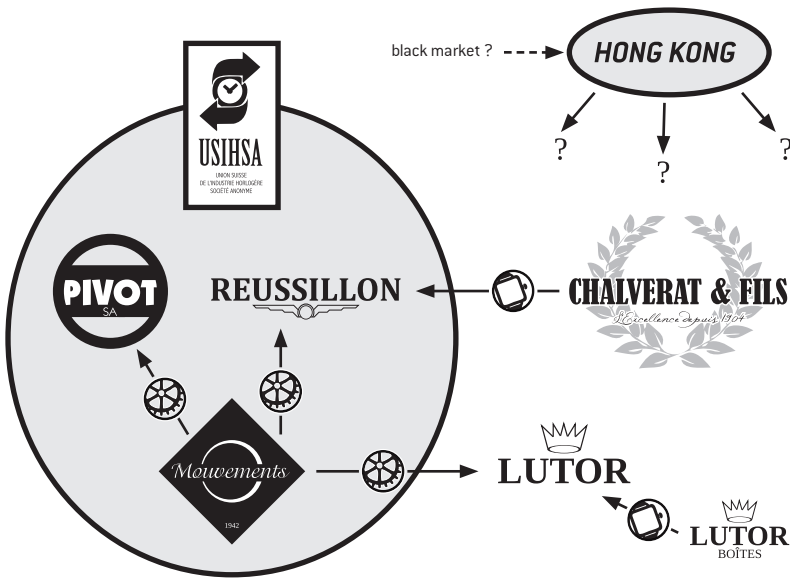
REAL DANGERS

The principal menace to our country's watchmaking industry is the same as it was before the war: the risk of foreign competition.

Producers from Hong Kong, for example, are currently able to produce good quality watchcases at much lower costs. Some even save up to 50% of production costs! Rumour has it that several unscrupulous industrials in the area have given in to temptation and supply themselves abroad.

Whether it be provoked by workers, directors or, worse, by bankruptcy, Asian competitors would be the first to benefit from a halt of Swiss production. Now, more than ever, all members of the watchmaking industry must stick together.

Rumours are also circulating about a new menace related to the production of quartz movements. Nevertheless, everyone knows that quartz movements are too bulky to equip anything other than large clocks. Swiss watches, which are marvels of miniaturisation, will simply not be affected!



products, the brand's directors decided to make the company their official supplier and to close down their own movement-making workshop.

Finance

The SBAJ

The Jura Region Bank Society (Société des Banques de l'Arc Jurassien – SBAJ) is an intercantonal bank. Though its owners are the cantons of Bern and Neuchâtel, it is managed independently. Its capital comes from small and middle-size savers established in the Jura region.

The bank is the principal shareholder of the USIHS; it is also active within the employer's association. Its influence will be of the greatest importance during the upcoming negotiations.

Foreign investors

Certain foreign groups, especially the American group Minch, have long been looking to establish themselves in the region. Thankfully, according to our sources at least, a successful protectionist economic policy has up till now prevented our enterprises from falling into foreign hands.

POLITICS

CANTONAL ELECTIONS ARE APPROACHING

For some days now, political parties have been sharpening their arguments and calling for support on every front. The electoral battle will be ruthless. This year, citizens from the cantons of Bern and Neuchâtel will go to the polls to choose their representatives. The race has never been so open, as none of the incumbents are presenting themselves for another mandate.

A decisive political power

The stakes are high as the newly elected authorities will undoubtedly influence the local economic and social balance of power. In the past, our political representatives have used their popularity to promote economic activity and to endorse the role of mediator between employers and employees. The next authorities will also be responsible for the public finances of their cantons. Because of this, electoral campaigns will not be overshadowed by the union's negotiations. To the contrary, observers have already predicted a good turnout. Candidates have even agreed to meet on the Watchmaker's Train to debate, to council and, most of all, to convince their electors.

Neuchâtel: Left wing and right wing elbow to elbow

The opposition between the left and the right wing has never been so strong in the canton of Neuchâtel. This region is one of the most progressive in Switzerland, and has recently given women the right to vote. In comparison with the last legislature, the number of voters has suddenly doubled! It is \$ difficult to predict whether this change in the electorate will influence the traditional political equilibrium. No doubt that the candidates' individual personalities will now be essential to determine the outcome of the vote.

To the left, the Socialist Party is introducing the excellent Mr Dubois. This lawyer of working-class origins can count on the support of the union and of its members. Nevertheless, the workers are not unanimous about socialism, and some of them fear the interference of the State. Dubois will have to rally everyone to his cause if he wishes to be elected.

To the right, the Radical Party has entered into the race the promising Mr Roberts. Roberts is a lawyer and a master of argument and debate. Thanks to the support of most of the region's employers, he will now doubt profit from the generosity of his electorate. Furthermore, he is close to the middle class, and he will no doubt obtain the vote of the workers are wary of socialism. Without a doubt, Roberts is the favourite of this election.

The potential running of Mr De Pourtalès, nominated by the Liberal Party, could still create a surprise. This good catholic and conservative bourgeois from Neuchâtel may gain the votes of those electors who are disappointed by the dominant Radical and Socialist parties. He will also be supported by his coreligionists, and may well rise to the top during this election.

For now, we will not hazard any guesses as to who will be elected, but watch this space, as we keep our readers informed of all the twists and turns of this exhilarating campaign.

Bern: A battle of the bourgeois is ahead

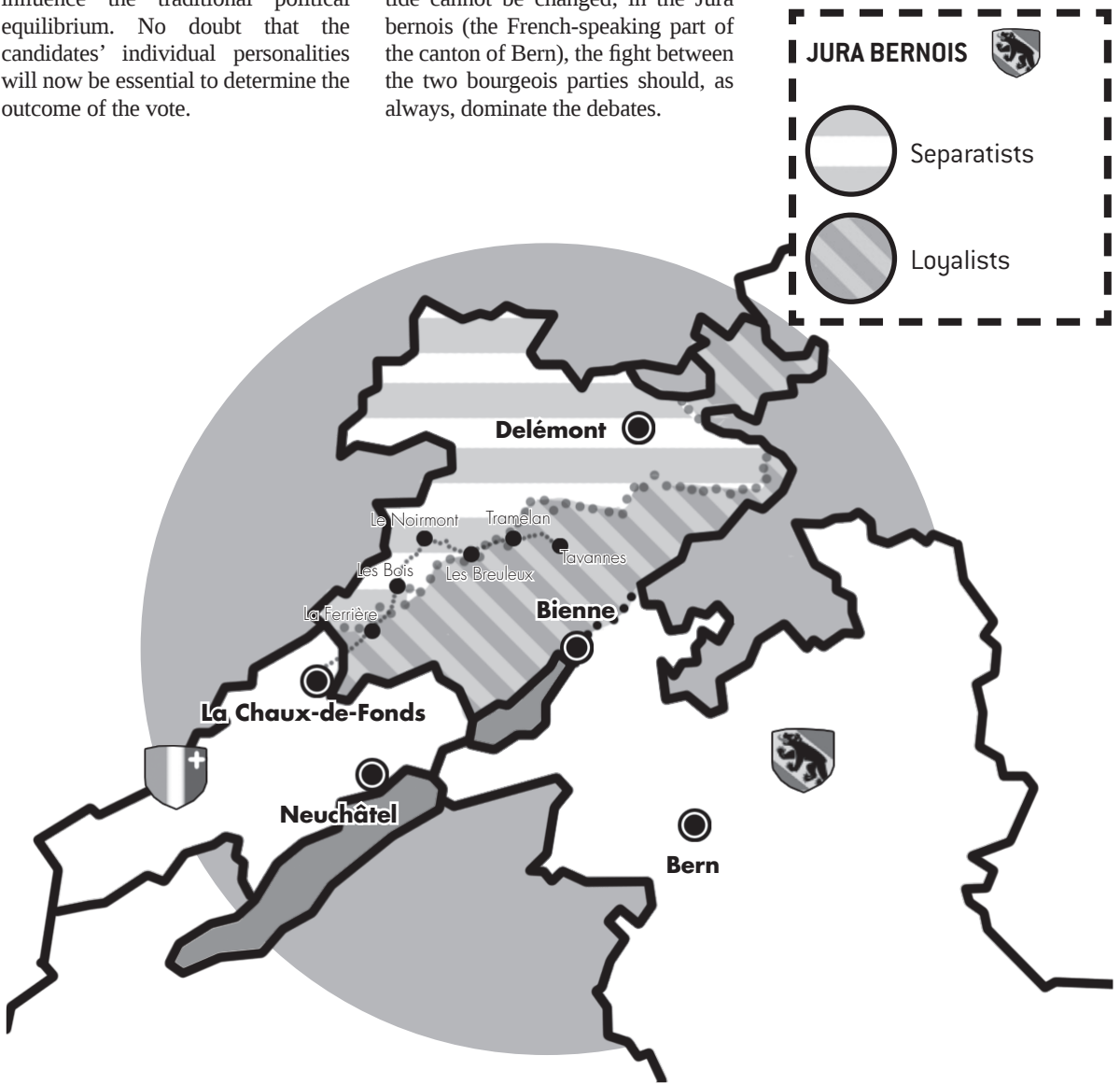
In the canton of Bern, the stakes are very different. First of all, the electorate is strictly masculine. This does not mean that the political tide cannot be changed; in the Jura bernois (the French-speaking part of the canton of Bern), the fight between the two bourgeois parties should, as always, dominate the debates.

The Radical Party has high hopes for its candidate from Bienne, Mr Egger. Egger is perfectly bilingual, and seems destined for a grand political career. He is deeply liberal and can count on the support of most of the region's employers. Despite this he will have to convince the working-class electorate if he wants to be elected. He can play on the distrust that some voters feel towards the Catholics to obtain the missing votes he needs.

The Christian Social Conservative Party is incarnated by the energetic Mr Pronguez. Though he is a moderate Catholic, he can count on the solidarity of this coreligionists. This proximity may nevertheless cost him the vote of the anticlerical working-class. For some time now, Pronguez has declared himself open to the idea of an independent Jura canton. If this electoral manoeuvre is successful, it may tip the scales in his favour.

The socialist candidate has still not been designated, but if the working-class party launches a candidate into the electoral race, it will certainly be Mr Charmillot. This repented anarchist would be an interesting candidate for many a reason. He has close connexions to the unions, and he is also in favour of women's suffrage in the canton of Bern. His chances are slim, but they are real as long as he is willing to make the necessary concessions.

As the elections draw near, we will pay close attention to every surprise and unexpected event that could influence their outcome. The Jura bernois has been through several years of unprecedented political unrest. It is possible that this people's vote will determine the future of the region.



Rams want the bearskin

A new separatist action group has been created in the Jura, in the canton of Bern. It is called the Ram Group – or *Groupe Bélier* – and it is fighting for an independent, French-speaking canton. The impetuous youth movement is determined to make its voice heard through symbolic acts destined to attract the attention of the press. They wish to make their cause know on a national and an international level. In a statement, the group claimed yesterday that it was responsible for the infamous attack against the bears in Bern. Last week, strangers infiltrated the capital's well-known bear pit. After drugging the plantigrades with sleeping-pills, they shaved the poor beasts and painted the Jura flag on their bellies. The Rams have now declared that they have in their possession the fur acquired during this felony, and that they are willing to exchange it against the "liberation" of the Jura. The Union of Jura Patriots, that remains loyal to maintaining the Jura in the canton of Bern, has firmly condemned this barbaric act that amuses nobody but its perpetrators. The event has made the headlines all over; some may smile, but most Swiss people (animal rights activists especially) are annoyed by such an act, that they consider as a village quarrel. Let us pray that the Rams' methods will not become more radical in the future.

Quick reminder about the "Jura Question"

The canton of Bern is mainly German-Speaking, but it also includes a minority of French-Speaking inhabitants that live in the Jura. For nearly 150 years, the situation never posed a problem, but since the end of the Second World War, part of the francophone community wishes to separate from the canton of Bern, and create a new Swiss canton. The "Jura Question" divides the French-speaking population in the Jura region. In general, the northern districts wish to become independent, whereas the South seems to lean towards a statu quo. The Bern authorities and the German-speaking majority firmly support those who wish to remain in the canton of Bern, even if this means muzzling the separatists. The separatists are recruiting members in most of the political parties, on all sides of the political spectrum. They are united under the banner of a common organisation, called the Jura Assembly (*Rassemblement jurassien*). Officially, the Assembly condemns any violent or terrorist act, but the Ram Group and its questionable shenanigans seem to be directly linked to the *Rassemblement jurassien*.

HOW FAR WILL WOMEN GO?

After Vaud and Neuchâtel, Geneva is the third Swiss canton to allow women the right to vote. Women's suffrage has become a reality in most of our neighbouring states and in almost all of the world's modern nations. Switzerland, nevertheless, remains resolutely opposed to this general tendency. The Swiss people clearly expressed their opinion on the subject in 1959: two thirds of the voters did not want women to enter the political arena. Many women did not with it either.

The Swiss fear, with reason, that it would be opening Pandora's box, and that it would lead to other feminist excesses such as equal pay or the questioning of the weaker sex's role as housewives. It must be said that certain European feminists with Bolshevik tendencies are already contesting the natural family model. The right to vote? Why not, but we mustn't let men be tossed into oblivion!

LOCAL NEWS



The first swiss in space is from the Franches-Montagnes!

Yesterday, at 10am local time, the stallion gamely baptised “Swiss Cheese” by the NASA took off for a couple of hours on orbit. “They were looking for a robust animal, able to undergo various tests.”, says Mr. Froidevaux, who raises horses near Saignelégier. “They came to the horse fair and chose a pony from my stable. For sure,

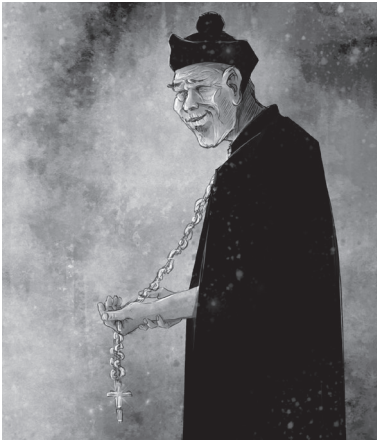
it’s strange to know that the animal flew around all away up there... I hope it won’t affect the quality of its meat!” We hope so too. In any case, the flight took place without a hitch, and the space module landed smoothly back on Earth. Our local hero must no doubt be happy to graze again on dry land.

Waste in the future

The question of waste was recently debated at the Club 44. Dr Brellaz, from the University of Lausanne and a specialist in the domain, evoked the solutions that are being envisaged in America for the riddance of domestic and industrial waste in the future. Sending waste into space may be a miracle solution, but the transport of the garbage all the way from Earth seems to be difficult and expensive. Better wait until flying cars become a reality. Another solution, the incineration of garbage in urban centres, presents insolvable problems relating to the quality of air. Furthermore, the advantage of building thermal incineration centres seems rather slim compared to the never-ending possibilities of nuclear energy. This promising technology, whose waste is inoffensive, seems much less polluting and more efficient for producing electricity and heating our towns. The conclusion of the conference was clear. Our open-air tips remain the best way to get rid of our refrigerators and old batteries. And Nothing will replace the simple pleasure of throwing our rubbish bags onto the side of the road.

Don Camillo has trodden on our land

At the local parish fair in Le Noirmont, nobody was expecting the visit of a famous Italian prelate, Don Camillo himself. Made famous by his films that accurately depict his life, Don Camillo was visiting a cousin incognito. Representatives of the Italian community, which is getting bigger and bigger in the region, suggested that he come to the fair anonymously. On the spot, he was immediately recognized and asked to speak to the crowd. This dignified prelate started his speech by encouraging the parish volunteers, who come to the aid of the poor and the frail, as all the profit from the fair is given to charity. With his usual vehemence, Don Camillo begged all assembled



to persevere in their faith and to fight against the communist and materialistic temptations that gnaw at our society. He finished with a prayer. At the fair, he acquired a superb rosary made out of noodles, daintily conceived by a parish housewife. He left for Italy this morning on a train specially chartered for the many Italian workers who seek seasonal employment in the area.

Diplomacy – an alternative to boring Monopoly

Monopoly, the world-famous board game created in 1935, is coming to the end of its lifespan. A competitor has recently appeared in the USA (since 1959), and it is named Diplomacy. No longer will you have to spend hours simply throwing a dice and enduring its consequence without a say. From now on, incarnate a leader of a great nation at the dawn of the First World War and conquer Europe! To succeed, no random throw of the dice, and no question of chance. First, discuss with your opponents to make alliances and plan battle strategies. Then, secretly give orders to your armies; when they are executed, all alliances and betrayals will be revealed. We hope that this new kind of board game will meet an eager public in our lands. It would be advantageous to welcome new kinds of games and playing in our community and parish halls and in our working-class Houses of the People.

The health tip of Dr Favre

Wash your hands when leaving your workplace!

At work, we often use different products whose effects on our health are still unknown. It is important to get into the habit of washing your hands as soon as you leave your workbench, even when taking a break or having a snack. Toxic elements may go from your hands to your sandwich, and from the sandwich to your insides. Though some chemical products make excellent condiments, it is better to be prudent and to use salt.



Missiles lack precision; blame is on the chronometers

The American Army claims that its missiles often explode before impact because of the lack of precision of the timers on the warheads. The mechanical movements seem to be unreliable in the extreme conditions ballistic missiles are put through. Despite Soviet propaganda, the Red Army is certainly faced with the same problem. Suddenly, the race for precision has started, and the winner will no doubt gain a decisive military advantage. This could be a new and exponential market for our flourishing watchmaking enterprises.

Recipe of the day

Tripe in sauce

1 kilo of tripe
5dl of sauce
Mix
Heat
Serve

sports

Suspicion of doping in La Chaux-de-Fonds

German-speaking newspapers are peddling rumours about our sportsmen and accusing them of doping. They are jealous of the extraordinary results that were recently obtained by La Chaux-de-Fonds’ hockey and football clubs. Here is a quotation from the *Neue Basler Zeitung*: “It is impossible to explain how a town as insignificant as La Chaux-de-Fonds, and French-speaking as that, can dominate both Swiss football and ice hockey. In our opinion, the Chaux-de-Fonniers do not just drink Ovomaltine in the morning.” These allegations of doping have scandalised the whole of our newspaper, who wishes to remind the public that the Chaux-de-Fonniers owe their success only to themselves. They are in no way accountable to any jealous Swiss Germans. On the other hand, we heartily thank our rich watchmaking sponsors who support our local sport! Referring to the important concentration of red cells in our sportsmen’s blood, it is not the result of any drug ingestion. May our detractors come and live in our Watchmaking Metropolis, the highest town in Europe – they will soon discover how mountain air is a natural fortifier.

PLAY IN THE RED TRAIN ON THE MOVE

Come and play on the Watchmaker’s train in a universe inspired by the 1960s. You will be directors and workers aiming to negotiate before reaching the train’s final destination. “Trip against the clock. The live action role-playing game aboard the Watchmaker’s Train” is a unique touristic activity that will immerse you into the golden age of Jura watchmaking.

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Graphic design: Julien de Jaeger

A big thank you to

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Chemin de fer du Jura

Le Train des Franches-Montagnes

SWISS MADE JDR

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