

# Mostly about People

By Wally Traling



## Lickitysplitness In Switzerland

Charming little Switzerland is taking on freeways!

And when freeways come, can billboards be far behind?

Will the clover-leaf become the new national flower?

Last week I talked to a young Swiss engineer about these things.

Eugene Jud, 26-year-old graduate of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (like our MIT) is a traffic safety and planning engineer.

He's been over here nine months absorbing good old American know-how (and boy do we know how — "SIX DIE IN FIERY FREEWAY COLLISION").

Jud is a slightly built youth, with a handsome Swiss-clean look, close cropped curly hair — and a good command of English.

He's been working with Wilbar-Smith consulting engineers of San Francisco for \$700 a month. He worked out a traffic plan for a Palm Springs shopping center and traffic studies for a Beverly Hills freeway alignment.

He came to Santa Cruz county to look over the Mt. Hermon conference grounds and while there planned for them two badly needed underground highway crossings (it's a wonder 15 kids haven't died there by now, the way some idiots drive through).

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Anyway, Jud's going back to his home in Zurich to face the changing face of his country.

Bicycles and trains have been the main means of transportation in Switzerland. Jud said "we still have the highest density of trains in the world. Every 10 miles you drive in the country you cross a railroad track."

And just until recently, Jud got around by bicycle — all the way through college — "and I'm not ashamed of it either."

"Now, every fifth Swiss citizen owns a car and our small country has become overrun with them," he said.

"The freeways have begun to appear. In fact we have a four-lane freeway running between Geneva and Lausanne."

"I can see them taking away some of the charm of Switzerland, but we can't turn back history. We must think positively about these things."

"They will be built pretty much throughout the country, and this takes space. I think they figure it will take two farms for every kilometer."

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When Jud returns, he thinks he'll be working in Zurich's city planning office, with a pay of

around \$1000 a month.

He wasn't boasting. The working people are apparently in pretty good shape there. No unemployment, he says, and they're screaming for engineers.

The unskilled worker — street sweeper, gets around \$400 a month; the skilled man — carpenter, plumber — around \$700. But living expenses are also high. For one thing gas, to a Swiss, is about \$1 a gallon.

Switzerland, which Jud said hasn't been aggressive in war since 1515 and prides itself in its neutrality, is occupied by about 10 per cent foreigners — most of them very rich foreigners who have made their wad and brought it over to Geneva to avoid paying heavy taxes on it.

And many of these rich son-of-a-guns like to play with their money by investing in industry and everything you can shake a stick at and, said Jud, "It's making us nervous."

There are still aspects of progress which the Swiss won't observe.

Neutrality is one of them.

And, of all things, the woman's vote. Swiss women can't vote. I'd like to talk to a Swiss Miss about that little item.

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