

echo : information for the Swiss abroad

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Editorial Dr. Weber



(Photo Rodo)

Information of our compatriots living abroad is becoming increasingly important. The proportion of short-term emigrants from Switzerland to any community is gradually increasing. Those who know that they will return to Switzerland again after a

certain time, are specially interested in being kept abreast of affairs and happenings at home.

In addition, the possibility of being able to take part in federal plebiscites – even though for the moment they still require a stay in Switzerland – has awakened further need for information. The Swiss abroad now wish to be able to follow closely developments at home as fully responsible voting citizens.

The Organization of the Swiss Abroad is pleased to put its service increasingly towards such information by means of this quarterly publication.

*Alfred Weber
President of the Organization
of the Swiss Abroad*



Information for the Swiss abroad

At the end of 1980 and the beginning of the new year, a change has come in the service of information for the Swiss abroad. Their Secretariat in Berne was obliged to cease publication of the periodical «echo» with the December issue. This decision was not taken lightly. After all, this publication could look back over 61 full years and enjoyed great popularity with readers in Europe and overseas. The «echo», in three Swiss languages, with its richly illustrated articles, its carefully selected coloured covers and its topical summaries of internal problems and events, formed a welcome bridge to the home country; old and young subscribers affirmed this again and again. For us as publishers it was a valuable visiting card for the activities

and the existence of the Organization of the Swiss Abroad. At the same time, it represented serious involvement in the political life of the Swiss abroad and also a contribution to the presence of Switzerland abroad of which we were proud and – as we were assured from competent quarters again and again – had every reason to be so. Yet, the reasons which were the cause of ceasing publication of our monthly magazine were compelling:

Firstly, the increasing cost of production which could not be passed on to the rate of subscription due to the high exchange rate of the Swiss Franc, the deterioration of postal services near and far and the ever increasing administrative work

across the frontiers. Secondly, and above all, the concentration of forces.

For a number of years, we have had a quarterly publication which we have been able to produce in close co-operation with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs which has handsomely supported it financially. This quarterly we are able to send to all Swiss nationals registered at Swiss Embassies and Consulates abroad. This publication is now well established. We shall endeavour to instil something of the spirit of the «echo» into its columns. This is the reason why we have changed the name and have

now put it under the title «echo» which we shall keep for future issues. In view of the restricted space at our disposal, we shall have to make a specially attractive selection of our communications. On the other hand, we have the advantage that we reach all Swiss abroad with this publication four times a year, and amongst them also the loyal subscribers of the former «echo». This fact makes up for our loss and regret somewhat, and we are looking forward to the continuation of our contacts.

In addition it is pleasing for us to see that our quarterly provides a valuable supplement to the publi-

cations of their own in some of the Swiss communities abroad. We trust that this will remain the case also in the future.

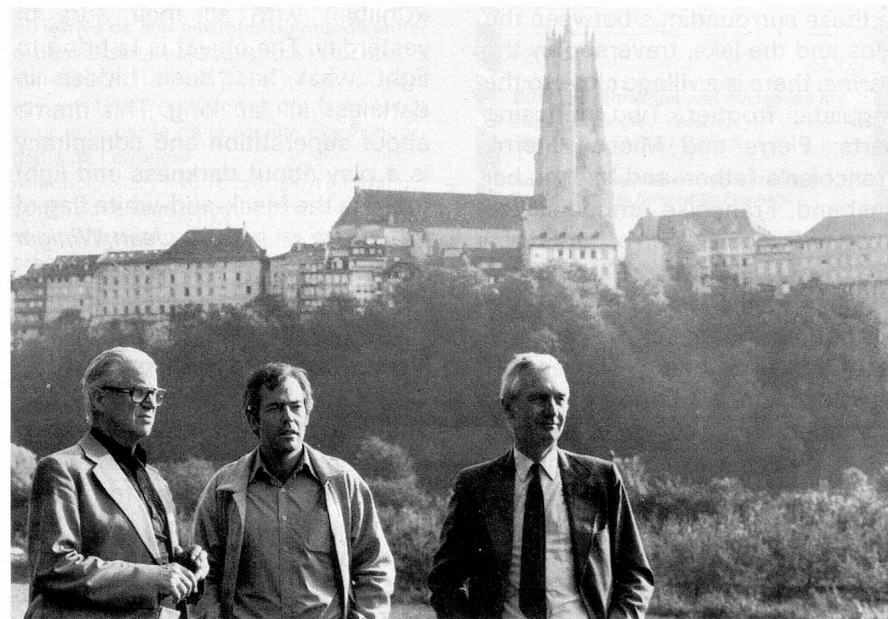
We should like to take this opportunity of thanking sincerely the Service of the Swiss Abroad at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, led by Minister Maurice Jaccard, for their continued support. Our warm thanks go equally to the various personalities in Swiss communities abroad who look after the local and regional pages of the quarterly publication. *Marcel Ney*

«Terres de Fribourg»

A few Notes on the Drama

It is a kind of pageant representing the seven regions of the Canton. It has been created to celebrate in style the quincentenary of joining the Confederation. «A presentation of high artistic character, which includes folklore and recalls history, yet at the same time brings into view the present and even dares take a look into the future.» These were the main tasks put to the producer.

The Fribourgeois is an amateur; let us first look at singing: for every 1000 inhabitants there are 44 singers. He also loves play: his field is the comical aspect of his existence, possibly sometimes with a trace of the tragic. Comedy and tragedy, the main forms of occidental theatre; social and religious forms of expression. The «Terres de Fribourg» is a lyrical work with dramatic action, in the course of which the onlooker should recognize himself



Organizers from left to right: clergyman Pierre Kaelin, Jean Winiger and Thierry Vernet

and be able to laugh, to become pensive and possibly find comfort. But the Fribourgeois is diverse. His

seven regions spread from the Pre-Alps over gentle hills to the lake. The daily light appears high above