

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1964)
Heft: 1460

Artikel: Manifesto of the Paris Group for Swiss Studies
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-695361>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 16.05.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

MANIFESTO OF THE PARIS GROUP FOR SWISS STUDIES

*"Inside and outside the valleys, and at their own expense"
Act of alliance in perpetuity of the Confederates of 1291.*

Swiss nationals, living abroad, are finding that, in their capacity as expatriates, their thoughts are turning more and more often to the situation of their country.

Confronted by the currents of thought, the political, economic and social forces which are influencing the world, they wonder how Switzerland is receiving these movements; how she is reacting to them, how she may be contributing to their enrichment, or to their redirection according to her own particular character. Yet, there is no evidence that, in such restless waters, Switzerland is remaining in complete control of her destiny.

At times in the past the example has been quoted of the civic spirit of her citizens, and of herself as a political community within which three different cultures harmonised. In the recent hour of danger when Europe was a prey to destruction, Switzerland instinctively re-awoke to a sense of her cohesion and of her vocation. In the peace and abundance of today, at the heart of a resurgent Europe, she is finding it difficult to give a new definition to this cohesion and vocation.

REASON FOR MAKING JUDGMENTS

We Swiss of Paris, or of any part of the world, we bear witness, by the very nature of the preoccupations which we feel, to our filial attachment to our country. Unable as yet to exercise our civic rights, we keep the right to exercise our judgment. In judging Switzerland, it is ourselves we judge, for Switzerland is what we are, as tomorrow she can be what we wish her to be.

From a first glance at ourselves, there is evidence of the threat of an ever-increasing desire for a "comfortable morality", which offers little opposition to the insidious advance of materialism. A weakened civic spirit is one consequence of this.

REASON FOR FEARING

There exists in Switzerland a self-complacency, acquired with little effort, and nourished by the sight of material successes, and which has the effect of making us more severe with others than with ourselves. Prosperity has the effect of an over-indulgent counsellor, hiding our weaknesses, decreasing our humility and encouraging self-satisfaction to the detriment of self-criticism.

Tending to attribute successes to merit, instead of largely to luck, which is often the case, we are also in danger of losing sight of the goal of our true destiny, as defined by the first founders of our country: contentment built on a foundation of moral values and freedom, whose true life-force is in the spirit.

For, alongside material gains and assessable realities, the spirit is often poorly served. There is no evidence that our spiritual progress is keeping step with our material progress. It is in this respect that one can speak of a "Swiss ambiguity".

REASON FOR BEING

Where is Switzerland going? Where are we going? What do we want? What forces are carrying us along? What thoughts guide us? What guise and what place must we seek to have in a Europe under construction? These are some of the questions which present themselves today to our consciousness. These questions are not often

asked. When they are, the replies are fragmentary and sometimes contradictory.

We do not care much for real discussions. We live on our experience and neglect the necessity for revision. We are more inclined to follow our destiny, rather than to precede it in order to guide it. In this general lack of interest for grave problems, in this "non-equation" of Switzerland with the rest of the world, we see what could be called "Swiss unreality".

REASON FOR HOPE

These impressions have been felt on a sufficient number of occasions and with enough force to alarm several Swiss citizens resident abroad, notably in Paris, and to arouse amongst them a preliminary awareness.

This text is one of the first signs of their existence.

Switzerland, like all other nations, is a community of men attached heart and mind to their country and their traditions.

FAITH AND WILL

But it is not the geographical harmony, nor the richness of the soil, nor the unity of race and culture which are the source and the strength of the Federal bond. Switzerland is not a gift of nature; it has been patiently constructed and elaborated and is born of the faith and the will of men and of twenty-two States, existing only through her.

The particular nature of our country thus requires from each of its citizens an enlightened consciousness, ceaselessly renewed and deepened, of the reasons for his patriotism. Switzerland is a permanent creation and looks to the civic spirit of each one to share freely in the common work.

WHAT THE CONSTITUTION SAYS:

In a few words, our Federal Constitution defines its aim: "To strengthen the alliance of the members, to maintain and increase the unity, strength and honour of the Swiss nation. The peoples of the twenty-two sovereign Cantons of Switzerland, united by this alliance, together form the Swiss Confederation. Her aim is to assure the independence of the Motherland against the foreigner, to maintain internal peace and order, to protect the freedom and the rights of members, and to increase their common prosperity".

DEMOCRACY — PARTICIPATION

The simplicity and obviousness of these propositions form a harsh contrast with the complexity of national and international realities. If Swiss democracy makes of each one of us a participant and a responsible participant — and therein lies our dignity as citizens — this means that it behoves us to ponder, to discuss with our fellow-citizens and to express an opinion on the problems arising from the necessity to harmonise the exigencies of modern life with these fundamental principles.

GENERAL INTEREST:

Swiss residents abroad have so far not been able to share with their fellow-citizens living at home the honour of participating in the civic life of their country. If they feel hurt at being deprived of the exercise of political rights the claim they make is not intended to satisfy a personal interest.

They did not wait for the granting of this claim before making their contribution, in the spirit of the alliance of the Confederates, to the maintenance and increase of the unity, strength and honour of the Swiss people, and some of them have done so with distinction.

If they claim the exercise of their political rights, it is in order to participate and to serve. At a time when the solving of grave problems calls for the co-operation of all citizens, their co-operation can be useful to our country.

SOLIDARITY AND PATRIOTISM

It is with a view to participating in the study and the solving of all these problems that certain Swiss living abroad have felt the need to create, under the auspices of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, study groups, the first of which was instituted in Paris on the 7th December 1963. Their aim, within a political and religious neutrality, is to bring together compatriots of varying opinions, formation and professions, animated by the desire to be informed and to exchange views on all matters of interest to their country. They explore together all means capable of strengthening amongst themselves and with their fellow-citizens at home, a confederal solidarity and a civic spirit. They feel that, in an age characterised by the intensity and the rapidity of an exchange of ideas, of knowledge and of goods, their experience and their ideas can constitute a not-negligible contribution to the civic life of their country.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

Fifty years ago, at a time which could offer many analogies with our own time, some compatriots founded within our frontiers groups for civic studies which were instrumental in the formation of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique.

TOMORROW

Within relative proportions, it is in the same spirit that the Group for Swiss Studies in Paris hopes that in all Swiss communities abroad other groups will be formed and that there will thus be created a network through which will circulate a flow of ideas useful to the common good.

*Paris, April 1964. Group for Swiss Studies, Paris.
(Kindly translated by Mrs. J. Eusebio.)*

TWO PRESIDENTS FLY SWISSAIR

Two African presidents used Swissair Coronado jets on 16th July, to travel to a pan-African summit conference in Cairo. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, of Ghana, left London, where he had been attending the Commonwealth Conference, in a Coronado chartered by Ghana Airways and Mr. W. V. S. Tubman, of Liberia, flew from Monrovia for the Cairo meeting. Both presidents plan to return to their capitals later this month by Swissair Coronados.

ZURICH'S MOST MODERN HOTEL

Swissair is part-owner of the new Zurich Airport Hotel, which is a five-minute car ride from the airport and fifteen minutes from the city. Prices, which include Continental breakfast, range from £2 7s. 0d. for a single room with shower to £5 for a twin-bedded room with bath.

SWISS DELEGATION AT INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS IN LONDON

The Twentieth International Geographical Congress took place at the Imperial College in London from 20th to 28th July, followed by the Cartographic Congress in Edinburgh. About twenty Swiss attended the Congress in London and the Symposia preceding it, and half a dozen went on to Edinburgh.

The International Geographical Congress takes place every four years, the last one having been held in Stockholm and the next one being planned for 1968 in Delhi. About three thousand delegates from all over the world attended the London Congress. The International Geographical Union has now about twenty permanent commissions, and the Secretary-Treasurer is a Swiss, Prof. Dr. Hans Boesch of Zurich University.

The Swiss delegation included professors of the ETH (Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich), such as Prof. Dr. H. Gutersohn, representatives of well-known cartographic firms, of the *Eidgenössische Landestopographie*, and a number of Swiss resident abroad (U.S.A. and Canada).

Three Swiss from abroad gave addresses on the following subjects: Canada, the Term "Region", and Depopulation. Other subjects dealt with by members of the Swiss delegation were Cameroon, Karst Phenomena, and Seasonal Migration.

A NEW ROAD MAP OF SWITZERLAND

Foreign tourists driving to Lausanne this year to visit the Swiss National Exhibition will not be in any danger of losing their way: signposts marked "Exhibition" and showing the Exhibition badge have been put up all over Switzerland and will lead motorists direct to the capital of the Canton of Vaud without any trouble. However, those who do not wish to follow the main roads or who want to visit the main districts of the country would do well to get the new official road map, produced by the Swiss Touring Club in close co-operation with Kümmerly & Frey, the well-known Map Makers in Berne. This map is undoubtedly a masterpiece of modern cartography. All the information it contains — road conditions, distances, etc. — has been checked with the greatest care. Sights and places of interest are also indicated as well as camping grounds and motels. Although planned mainly for motorists, this map will also be of use to all tourists in Switzerland, whether travelling by car, train or plane.

The new map, which is technically outstanding for the harmony of the colours, the precision of the printing and the accuracy of its detail, took some 10,000 man-hours to produce.

[O.S.E.C.]

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

In 1963 the CIBA group, Basle, devoted 125.4 million Swiss Francs to scientific research, i.e. 8.4% of its total turnover. The parent firm alone invested 78 million for the same purpose, i.e. 15% of the proceeds of its sales. The requirements of the market and the scientific and technical progress to which products continually have to be adapted call for increasing investments.

[O.S.E.C.]