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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS ACTIVITIES IN YORKSHIRE

The Annual Dinner and Dance of the Bradford Publicity Association held on Saturday, 5th December, 1970, at the Midland Hotel, in Bradford, had as a theme "Switzerland", and as such turned out to be a brilliant and extremely well-directed function. It was attended by the Lord Mayor of Bradford, indication enough of the importance of this Association and the place it takes in the busy communities of Bradford and Leeds. The President, Mr. Horrox, and the Chairman, Mr. Rushworth, can be most sincerely complimented for an extremely complex and difficult job well done. There was the Reception at the French Restaurant, the arrival of the Lord Mayor with the official guests. The guest of honour, in the absence of Consul Rolf Born, was the Vice-Consul of Manchester, Mr. Zellweger and some representatives of the Swiss Community of Bradford and the Yorkshire Swiss Club.

The dinner was served in the Prince's Ballroom, which was well-decorated with Swiss flags, national and cantonal, with Swiss posters, flower arrangements in the colours of our country, even the menu card, an example of high artistry and good taste, reflected in many ways the image of Switzerland and promised us such specialities as "Oeuf poché Davos", "Filet de sole Matterhorn", "Escalope de Veau William Tell", "Pommes Lucerne", "Pomme Basle", etc. Everything was accompanied by appropriate and well chosen aperitifs, wines and liqueurs, other drinks, and all that goes with it.

The toast and speeches—as could be expected—were of a very high standard, of great human interest and quality, and sometimes I was left wondering if we were all that good as our British friends made us out to be. Certainly to the few Swiss present it was a stimulus that we may live up to their expectations.

Dancing started to the tunes of the excellent combination provided by Bert Bentley and his music. At 11 o'clock we were surprised by a cabaret, if we could call it such. It was the appearance of our compatriot, Mr. Bertulett from Elland, Yorkshire, well known in the North under the name of "Hans of Switzerland". His songs, accompanied by the most perfect accordion playing, held the audience spellbound. In his songs was the very soul of Switzerland, which spoke to us in all its moods; sometimes sad, other times happy and boisterous, from a whisper to a crescendo, but always very direct and very moving. One little modest song where mention is made of Lucerne and Weggis, the whole audience joined in most wholeheartedly and in some of its more

physical consequences even the Lord Mayor gave his support.

A lovely evening indeed, to be remembered and treasured for a long time.

On Tuesday, 5th January, 1971, the Swiss of Bradford and Leeds flocked together at the Leeds Council House, Social Centre, in Leeds where the Yorkshire Swiss Club had organised its "Swiss Supper and Specialities" thus opening most fittingly our 1971 activities. Thanks to the efforts of our joint Secretaries, Mrs. Edith Lerch and Mrs. Ruth Leathly, and some other ladies of our Club, it proved to be a great success. Several members of our Club contributed most generously towards the creation of a superb buffet-table, decorations, illuminations, etc. It was a home-made affair consisting of a great and appetising variety of salads, meats, cakes, Swiss Christmas and other specialities. Thanks to a "Military style" operation all this was most happily complimented with a good supply of "Bartholdi Schueblig" straight from London. Our President, Professor Inebnit, presented us with some drinks which were well received by everyone present.

We were particularly pleased to welcome amongst us some very good friends from the Manchester Swiss Club and in particular Mr. S. Hanna, whose name is gradually becoming famous in the educational field all over the world. His film records are of an educational nature, dealing also with the records of local crafts which are gradually becoming extinct. This time of year such a journey is neither pleasant nor particularly safe and we could only hope that they did not regret the long, hazardous road to reach us.

For this type of evening it was our great fortune to have been able to engage the support of "Hans of Switzerland" and he contributed with his accordion, his songs and vitality, to the great success of our evening and the audience tried to follow him in some of the tunes as best they could. This was particularly the case when by special request he led us in the song of "Lahaut sur la Montagne", almost in memory of Henry Money who left us many years ago.

In the New Year Message to us, our President, Professor J. Ph. Inebnit, reminded us of the life and activities of some of our departed friends who in the past had influenced the activities of our Northern Clubs: Henry Money being one, and in the case of the Yorkshire Clubs, the honorary President J. Jenny who reached a very great age. The words of our President were very warmly applauded, especially as we knew that he practically tore himself from the warm shelter of his home, not having fully recovered from an attack of influenza which had struck the whole

household. Since then I have heard that he has been admitted to hospital for further treatment and all our thoughts and good wishes for a speedy and complete recovery go with him.

As for us, inevitably the evening neared its end, and our regrets at having to leave mingled with the hope that thanks to the efforts of our committee we may meet soon again, in good health and under similar circumstances.

(Ermanno Berner)

RECEPTION IN HONOUR OF A SWISS STORY TELLER

Most of the first English editions of the works of Swiss authors are celebrated by a cocktail in the Embassy's Reception. This time, the happy beneficiary of such an honour was the Swiss writer from Solothurn, Peter Bichsel, whose "*Stories for Children*" was published in English and on the stalls in February. Mr. Bichsel has written other books, the first of which, "*Eigentlich möchte Frau Blum den Milchmann kennenlernen*", earned him, according to the blurb of the English version, some measure of international fame and the "Gruppe 47" award. The title reads in English: "And really Frau Blum would very much like to meet the milkman", which sounds even more unusual than in German. Two other books of Bichsel's are "*Die Jahreszeiten*" (1967) and "*Des Schweizers Schweiz*", two political essays published in 1969. Peter Bichsel was a schoolmaster for 15 years and has his own children. This, he told me, had some influence in prompting him to try to write a book for children. He had heard of the great Enid Blyton but, judging from his "*Stories for Children*", did not look towards her and her "Famous Five" for inspiration. The seven stories

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contained in his book are really the least childlike that have probably ever been printed under such a heading. They are not conventional tales, or even stories, but rather curt epigrams which play on words and meanings and which achieve a rather doubtful effect. The translator obviously must have found it hard to frame the jagged and rocky Swiss-style German of these stories in the English language. We are told on the jacket of the book that "the fairy tale simplicity of these seven stories belies the often cantankerous and always incredulous nature of Peter Bichsel's characters". On first reading it is rather the cantankerous and the incredulous of this work which belies everything else. It is difficult to understand how a simple and natural child could even enjoy such an Art Nouveau experiment. But it will doubtless interest the experts on infantile bibliography. For their benefit, the book is published by Calder & Boyars at the cost of £1.25.

(PMB)

A FORMER AMBASSADOR IN LONDON SPEAKS IN GENEVA

The "Tribune de Genève" eloquently reported on a conference held in the *Athénée* fine arts museum by Dr. Béat de Fischer, our last ambassador in London but one. The theme of his conference "A few great Swiss feminine figures abroad", fitted appropriately with the favourable results of the recent national referendum on the right of vote for women. His audience must have learnt with some interest and pride that Catherine of Grandson, who was to become the Countess of Salisbury, was probably the originator of the Order of the Garter. Among the heroic gallery portrayed by Dr. de Fischer, there was the Countess Edda, wife of King Ferdinand II of Portugal, who was a singer from La Chaux-de-Fonds, the Marquise of Cavour, mother of the founder of modern Italy, formally a Geneva lady. He spoke of Mme. Eynard, who saved the interests of Geneva at the Vienna Congress, of Adèle d'Affry, Germaine de Staël, Sibyll Terras and last, but not least, Mme. Tussaud, a modeller whose real name was Marie Groschotz and who came from the canton of Berne.

THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

The Stanhope Suite at the Dorchester Hotel was filled with a lively Anglo-Swiss philatelic party and, once more, the communications problems posed by the postal strike had obviously been overcome. After a refined dinner for which the Society had once again placed itself thankfully in the trust of Mr. Keufeler, Mr. W. Burren, the Secretary, welcomed the evening's guests. They were Mr. Ron Lee, Chairman of Phylimpia and Mrs. Goodman, Secretary of that world renowned philatelic fixture. Mr. Burren particu-

larly welcomed Mr. Langley, a friend and member of long standing of the Society and winner of a major award at Phylimpia for, as I understand, his "Danzig Collection". Mr. Burren asked Mrs. Goodman to award the 1970 prizes of the Society's competition in postal history, thematics and adhesives. Each of these items was won by Miss A. Grunberg. This was indeed the first time that a single member had accomplished the feat of sweeping all the trophies of the year. Miss Grunberg thus became the undisputed winner of the Annual Cup Competition 1970. Having congratulated her, Mr. Burren nearly forgot to give the Replica to last year's Cup winner, Mr. Jack Beken.

A raffle, for which the ladies of the Society had managed to sell £24.75 worth of tickets was then drawn by Mr. Burren and brought forth unexpected and welcome prizes for almost everybody.

The innovation of the previous Annual Dinner was repeated and a philatelic auction conducted by Mr. Uehlinger was organised after the raffle. The lots had been donated by members. This auction raised £35 which was shared by the Swiss Benevolent Society and the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. The Treasurer, Mr. M. A. Rothlisberger, thanked the attendance for its generous performance. Mr. Burren then declared the evening officially closed and a gay gathering of stamp lovers gradually dispersed with the memory of a delightful dinner to favour a good night's sleep.

(PMB)

DR. WEITNAUER PRESENTS HIS CREDENTIALS TO THE QUEEN

On Friday morning, 26th February, at 11.38 a.m. precisely, four gilt carriages arrived in front of the Residence. Our new Ambassador, Dr. Albert Weitnauer, accompanied by eight collaborators, was ready to leave for Buckingham Palace and present Her Majesty with the letters of recall of Dr. René Keller and with his own credentials. All were dressed in top hats and coat tails, trappings which find a natural place in a diplomatic wardrobe. Dr. Weitnauer and Rear Admiral Lord Cairns, Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, took their place in the first carriage. The Ambassador's suite took their places in the following two carriages, while the fourth lay empty in reserve. A police car escorted the procession as it weaved its way through the busy streets of London. The party went round Grosvenor Square, along Upper Grosvenor Street, down Park Lane, across the throng at Hyde Park Corner and engaged proudly in Constitution Hill. They arrived at the Palace, crossed the porch and alighted in the vast courtyard. They were conducted to a spacious anti-chamber overlooking the palace gardens and were instructed by the Head of Protocol into the details of their comportment before Her Majesty.

Sir Dennis Greenhill, Permanent Under Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, then went in the audience chamber to announce Dr. Weitnauer, who then entered himself, accompanied by Lord Cairns and a Household officer. The doors of the audience chamber were closed and our Ambassador remained alone with Her Majesty and the two diplomatic officials for some ten minutes. The doors were opened again and the eight Swiss diplomats were invited individually and in hierarchical order to enter the room, bow to the Queen, approach her and shake her hand after having been introduced by the Ambassador. The diplomats who were at this presentation of credentials were Dr. J. Iselin, Colonel Von Frisching, Mr. F. Luthi, Dr. C. Bruggmann, Dr. A. Greber, Dr. C. Jagmetti, Mr. R. Serex and Mr. Fritz Adams, who joined the party in his capacity of Attaché for Consular Affairs.

Each of them had the opportunity of exchanging a few polite words with the Queen. There was, however, no time for profound conversation and the ceremony was completed in about twenty minutes. The party boarded the coaches again and left back for the Residence by the same route, accompanied by Lord Cairns.

(PMB)

MR. PHILIP GOMIERO



It is with deep regret that we announce the death on March 2nd of Mr. Philip (Attilio Joseph) Gomiero of 76 South Hill Park Road, Hampstead, at the age of 76. Mr. Gomiero died in hospital. His funeral took place at Golders Green Crematorium on March 10th. We extend our most sincere sympathy to his family.

VICTIMS OF WINTER SPORTS

We have learnt that our former Editor, Mrs. Mariann Meier, suffered an unfortunate fall while skating on the first day of her holiday in Switzerland and broke her arm. We wish her a speedy recovery and hope that she has nonetheless enjoyed her holiday! Pastor Jean-Daniel Hostettler, of the French-speaking Swiss Church, also had the misfortune of committing a limb to plaster at the beginning of his winter holiday. He fell while skiing at La Foulie and broke his perone. We should like to assure him of our most friendly sympathy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We should like to thank the many readers and friends who have continued to support our paper with donations and gift subscriptions during the past few months. Our particular thanks go to Mr. H. J. Senn, Mr. G. Hediger, Mr. E. Crack, Mr. H. Walti, Mr. G. Bouverat, Miss H. Cotti, Mr. F. J. Meier, Mr. H. Mock, Mrs. L. A. Durg-

nat, Mr. W. Diener, Mr. W. Bion, Mr. A. P. Berti, Mr. E. Tosio, Mr. R. Pfenninger, Mr. J. K. Hofstaedter, Mr. S. M. Bruggisser, Mr. P. K. Wipf, Mr. P. B. Haberstich, Miss M. D. Ingram, Mr. J. P. Inebnit, Mr. A. Boog, Mrs. K. Carden, Mr. E. Von Bergen, Mrs. E. Friedrich, Mr. J. Stingelin, Miss B. A. Bujard, Dr. W. Preiswerk, Miss P. L. Baud and Mrs. A. E. McPeake.

NEW SWISSAIR TICKET COUNTER AT HEATHROW

Early in February Swissair opened a new ticket and information counter in Terminal 2 of Heathrow Airport, London. It is located in the centre of the main concourse, next to the British Airports Authority general inquiry desk and is staffed daily from 07.30 to 23.30 hours. A direct telephone line links the desk to the airline's computerised reservations department in town, thereby enabling staff to make immediate bookings.

THE POSTAL STRIKE

We should like to apologise to our readers for the delay with which they received the last three issues of their "Swiss Observer". The postal strike has put production schedules somewhat out of gear, but the delays were not entirely attributable to it. We expect to be delivering the paper at its prescribed delivery dates as from the beginning of April. For this issue we have chosen to produce a double number, which appeared to be the most sensible solution, and have relied for our Swiss news on the papers which found their way by messenger delivery to the Swiss Centre.

The postal strike has upset the regular activities of many Swiss societies. The Manchester Swiss Club postponed its AGM. The Swiss Mercantile Society had circulars convening members to the AGM ready for postage on the eve of the strike. The AGM had to be postponed to April and no meeting took place in March. The March monthly meeting of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique was also cancelled. Now the strike is over we can look forward to a series of lively and well-attended meetings!

"BLICK" AND THE "NZZ" MARRY

It was with a happy surprise that Swiss journalists in London learnt of the wedding of Miss Madeleine Eidam, correspondent of the Ringier group in London, and Walter Gunthard, the economic correspondent of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung". We would like to congratulate them heartily and wish them every happiness.

THE OLD LONDONERS MEET AT CRÊT-BERARD

The yearly gatherings of the former parishioners of the French-speaking Swiss Church in London were first started by Pastor Claude Reverdin. He was, as many readers may remember, Minister in London from 1947 to 1960. He is now a minister at St. Peter's in Geneva.

He was on his holidays in Switzerland in 1951 and decided to take part in the biblical camp at Vaumarcus (Neuchâtel). He used this opportunity of inviting his former parishioners to join him there. These included many au pair girls who had returned home. It was decided to repeat this highly successful reunion the following year, and many old Londoners met again in Lausanne. They joined a Lausanne community for service and spent the afternoon together. A few years later they chose the newly-built church centre of Crêt Bérard as their yearly meeting place. The original gatherings began with a service on a Sunday morning in September and ended with a visit to Vevey's art exhibition. But later on the visits to the art exhibition were abandoned in favour of various communal activities at Crêt Bérard.

Thus it was that 130 former Londoners, including their children and friends, gathered on Sunday, 13th September last, for one more annual gathering at Crêt Bérard. Seventy-five of them had already arrived on Saturday evening. They had had supper together and attended evening service, to be later entertained by a puppet show.

The following day the Old Londoners gathered for an original kind of worship. A former minister in London, Pastor J. Nicole, now a youth chaplain in the Jura, separated the congregation into various groups who were told to "express themselves" by drawing posters conjuring the theme of the Service, which was "SOS Nature". Each of these panels were commented on by the leaders of the respective groups during the service, which was celebrated in the main hall of the Crêt Bérard jointly by pastors Payer, Nicod, Reverdin and two other Old Londoners. The animator of this new-styled service was Pastor Nicole. His task was facilitated by the liturgical booklets already available and left over from the previous Crêt Bérard gathering.

Service was followed by lunch, following which the participants dispersed in the gardens of the Crêt Bérard and took part in a "rally" which was rewarded by traditional chocolate bars.

At tea time Mr. G. Genton invited all the friends present to come again the following year, asking them to make firm bookings well in advance. He welcomed the presence of two doyens, Miss L. Chapuis, who was in London during 1919 and from 1919 to 1924 and Pastor R. Fiaux, who first came to London in 1913 and was Minister at

the Swiss Church from 1919 to 1924. He greeted two visitors from London, Mrs. Jamieson and Miss Marcuzzi. Other Old Londoners present were Mr. and Mrs. Puidoux Chevalier, the Mathey-Nicod families, Mr. J. Barbey, Mrs. Secrétan, and Pastor A. Cochand. The future suffragan minister who will replace Mr. Hostettler, Mr. Denis Müller, was there with his wife too. Mr. Nicod brought news from London and from old friends at Endell Street. A collection raised money to buy a present to the first-born child of Mr. and Mrs. Payer, who were in London up to 1969.

(PMB)

SWISS TV FILMS CHELSEA

French-speaking Swiss television found that English football was a subject sufficiently dear to the hearts of their sports-fan viewers to send a team of three reporters for 9 days to produce a half-hour feature on the daily life of an important English club. The club chosen was Chelsea. Not that Chelsea was a unique club — there are many equally deserving clubs — but Chelsea had the advantage of being in London, it had a half-Swiss goalkeeper and, probably the most important single element, it was closely associated with the Montana Hotel and Mr. Edgar Bonber of the Swiss Colony in London, known to many. It has become a regular practise for Swiss television, radio and Press teams to stay at the Montana whenever they come to London. The journalists don't even choose this, the reservation at the Montana is automatically booked for them by their travel accountants.

The leader of the trio was Swiss TV's principal football commentator Jean-Jacques Tillmann. He was accompanied by a cameraman toting a French 16mm Angemieux-Eclair camera worth £3,000 and was "plugged" during work to the third member of the party, the sound technician who trundled an £800 Magra tape-recorder and microphones of varying shapes attached to collapsible rods. An absolutely minimum outfit. No doubt that an important television organisation such as the BBC would have sent at least three more men to accomplish a similar task. But French-speaking Swiss TV serves a market of barely a million and its quality is remarkable in consideration of its necessarily small means.

The work began with a talk in the office of Chelsea's manager Dave Sexton. There had already been an exchange of correspondence between him and Mr. Tillmann. It was confirmed during this conversation that the Swiss TV crew could shoot "The Blues" in training every day and assist at the week-end match. There was only one thing which they were not authorised to do, and that was to take shots of the team in the cloakroom after the match. It is a perk of football managers never to let the Press and television into the

team cloakrooms after a match.

The next day was pouring with rain. Our valiant reporters took a hired car to the national training ground at Crystal Palace and followed the Cup Holders practising gymnastics, struggling in relay races on the Olympic track, practising the wing attack on a soaked pitch and ending this training bout with a vicious five-a-side match in a very small hangar.

The following day was much the same routine. Chelsea's first team and reserves went for training on their grounds in Mitcham and worked under the supervision of Dave Sexton and his assistant Ron Stuart. It was interesting to see how these two bosses, both ex-footballers, took part physically in the exercises of their lads. Some of these exercises were quite strenuous. There was a practise in heading the ball while wearing a 12 lb. sand-filled jacket. Winger Peter Houseman turned out more exhausted than the others from this exercise. The manager gracefully accepted to clip a microphone on his lapel while he was coaching. This produced a vivid effect thanks to which the Swiss viewers must have learnt a few healthy swear-words as they saw the film on February 26th.

Professional footballers enjoy a relatively easy life when they are not pressed by crowded fixtures or the psychological stresses of always satisfying their club. They train every morning from 10.30 to 12.30 and their afternoons are free. On the Friday The Blues, as the Chelsea boys are called, have practice matches on the car park at their Stamford Bridge stadium. The simplicity of this improvisation stunned Jean-Jacques Tillman, who was obviously expecting a higher degree of sophistication in the training methods of a prestigious club like Chelsea. He was also interested to see the infirmary and the TV crew was invited by the genial and amicable club physiotherapist, Harry Medhurst (the same man who rushes with a first aid kit on the pitch when a player gets wounded during a match) and Swiss viewers saw Chelsea reserves with cartilage and tendon trouble work on the infirmary's pedalling, stretching and weight-lifting devices. Tillmann was most surprised to learn that massage was not practised in England as it was on the continent, where players are expertly worked upon before every match.

The cameraman and the sound technician rigged a battery of high-powered lamps in the cloakrooms and the showers to catch the players as they came back from training. They were filmed singing together in a vast communal bath. One player, the half-back Paddy Mulligan, insisted on remaining in the camera's field of view with his towel round his neck for half-an-hour, which must have given some delicate problems to the film cutters.

The last sequence before real action was shot at the Montana Hotel,

where the players have their usual pre-match meals. The inside corner of the "Ermitage" Restaurant, where the team was seated, was filled with a blinding light. The players felt the heat of the projectors on their necks as they munched away with sodden faces. The cameraman took prolonged shots at each one of them. Then Dave Sexton kindly accepted to be interviewed in the Montana's bar, where projectors had already been installed.

The match of the afternoon was a league event against West Bromwich Albion. As the game was to be televised, the BBC had to be placated by some explanations before it was in order for the outsiders from Switzerland to squat behind Bonetti's goal and film a rather uninspiring match in which Chelsea were the easy winners. It drizzled throughout the 90 minutes of the game and the crew envied the Evening and Sunday Press photographers beside them who had brought little boxes on which to squat.

In order to give a balanced picture of the installations of an English club to their Swiss football-fan viewers, Tillmann and his companions toured the stadiums of Arsenal, Tottenham, West Ham and Crystal Palace. They found that Arsenal's installations at Highbury were the most glamorous but they tried in vain to make useful shots of its famous pitch-warming and draining installations, which had, however, failed the night before for Arsenal's 4th round Cup-tie replay against Portsmouth.

Their work was finished with two days yet to run. The Swiss three now set free decided to make the best of the cultural opportunities of London. They went to see "Oh Calcutta!". They later complained of having had difficulties at understanding the jokes. It was fortunate that this "play" was intended for the eyes more than for anything else.

SWISS RADIO COMES TO REPORT ON DECIMALISATION

Hardly had Tillman and his crew left for Geneva with several thousand yards of film on Chelsea Football Club than the "Montana" had a new customer in the person of Daniel Favre, French-speaking Swiss Radio's economic specialist. He had come to make a series of features on the English way of life and, more particularly, on the impending decimalisation.

He had paved his way to London by sending a circular letter to the Embassy and a number of Swiss companies in London. Arrangements had been made for him to meet various Swiss in positions of economic responsibility in London. In the end, Mr. Favre only met and interviewed two French-speaking personalities in London, Mr. A. Jaccard, of the Swiss Bank Corporation, and Mr. F. Burri, importer of Record watches. He received invaluable help from the Central Office of In-

formation. This official organisation is known and appreciated by most foreign correspondents in London, who receive its regular handouts and publications. The COI gave Mr. Favre a list of addresses of interviewable people. Their main requisite was, of course, that they should be able to speak French. Daniel Favre was thus put into contact with the "Evening Standard" fashion reporter, with an economics professor and with the French management of the "Galleries Lafayette" in Regent Street. Other contacts, not sponsored by the COI, were not difficult to make and Favre had more than enough material to furnish the seven reports which he was asked to produce for the evening "magazine" of Geneva and Lausanne Radio.

Considering quite rightly that the "English Pub" was a fundamental feature of English life, he asked the COI for guidance. He was issued with an impressive list of famous and historic pubs and left, one evening, on a pub-exploration outing with your Editor. It unfortunately failed dismally. One of the pubs standing prominently on the list was Fleet Street's famed "Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese", the tavern where Dr. Johnson used to recuperate. It happens to close at 9 p.m. and Favre and his companions were arrogantly told to go before they had time to capture the atmosphere. Two other pubs indicated on the COI list had wrong addresses and one of them, supposed to be a unique establishment with a music hall entertainment, turned out to be a drab and ale-reeking pot-house. The Central Office of Information will just have to update its list of commendable London pubs! In the end, the frustrated reporters wound up in an anonymous "local" somewhere in Camden Town, where a juke-box was blaring pop music and chubby girls were jiving to its rhythm. Favre took out his microphone and interviewed me (although in a definite state of ebriety) on the virtues of the English Pub. I defended the English pub as the best thing in England and encouraged all the young

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Swiss coming to England as au pairs or students to go to the pub, as this was the best way of communicating with the English people.

Daniel Favre was accompanied by the Radio's scientific specialist, Eric Schaelrig, who had come to investigate the technical aspects of decimalisation. He had obtained contacts with such firms as the National Cash Register Company in Switzerland already. He joined us in another expedition to probe into the British way of life: We set out to visit a condemned house inhabited by squatters. Rather fearful over the possible fate of their valuable recording equipment, the two reporters preferred to keep it locked up in the boot of the car and first feel the way. We found ourselves in a derelict room furnished with a table and a mattress in which five hippies were quietly palavering. They welcomed us and were civil enough, but they turned down an interview, asking to be left in peace by the society from which they had opted out. We spent an entertaining evening but unfortunately left with no live record for the benefit of Swiss listeners. The late hours of the same evening (which was the eve of D-Day) were spent on the pavements of South Kensington halting pedestrians for their views on decimalisation. It was not easy because over three-quarters of potential interviewees actually happened to be continental! But in the end Favre and his colleague managed to get a few yards of tape containing the opinion of the man in the street on decimalisation.

(PMB)

MILITARY CONTROL

On 1st July, 1970 certain simplifications relating to military control came into force. They can be summarised as follows:

—Swiss abroad who are of military service age receive a service booklet only if they register voluntarily for military service in Switzerland or if they have to pay military exemption tax.

—In future, only those Swiss abroad who have been accepted and assigned to a unit, or who have to pay military exemption tax, are in principle obliged to register for military control.

—Leave of absence abroad is now normally valid for the whole period of residence abroad. The requirement to renew leave of absence abroad has been dropped.

—Swiss abroad who visit Switzerland temporarily and without taking up domicile there are exempted from the obligation to register and from military duties provided the visit does not last longer than one month. On application, dispensation from the obligation to register can be granted for up to three months.

Swiss abroad who have hitherto neglected their military obligations now have an opportunity to regularise their administrative position by registering not later than 31st December, 1970.

The Consular Section will willingly provide further information if required.

EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR YOUNG SWISS ABROAD

The "Association pour la formation des jeunes Suisses à l'étranger—Ausbildungswerk für junge Ausland-

schweizer" is an association which not only provides funds for young Swiss to be educated in Switzerland, but also advises as to the method most suited to the applicants' abilities and background. Where financial support is needed, scholarships can be granted. The scheme aims at introducing young Swiss from abroad to their homeland by choosing suitable training centres, by fostering relations between the student and young people in Switzerland, and by arranging special meetings and functions at which the Swiss from abroad can get to know and love Switzerland.

Founded in 1961, it is the joint concern of Pro Juventute, the "Aide aux Suisses" Foundation and the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique. The services of the scheme are available to young Swiss between the ages of 10 and 25 and, in exceptional cases, to older people also.

Information and application forms may be obtained at the Embassy.

SWISS WITH OCCUPATIONS OF A CULTURAL NATURE

The Cultural Attaché at the Embassy is endeavouring to establish a register of Swiss residents in this country whose occupations are of a cultural nature. He would therefore welcome hearing from: teachers (especially those in higher education); scientists; writers; chartered architects and engineers; artists; designers; photographers; musicians; those engaged in stage, screen or broadcasting professions; publishers and booksellers; or anyone else pursuing an artistic, intellectual or



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scientific career. He would like to receive from them brief biographical notes, which include present address and date of birth.

TEST YOUR SKILL IN SOLVING THE FOLLOWING ANAGRAMS OF WELL-KNOWN SWISS TOWNS

1. ANTI PERSON
2. "BLUE, ANN TURNER?"
3. BONDED ALE
4. e.g. WIGS!
5. GREEK STAND
6. "I'M IN GREEN!"
7. "RING LEW LADD"
8. SAD, TAG
9. "STORK, LES?"
10. ZIM'S TROT

ANSWERS

1. PONTRESINA
2. LAUTERBRUNNEN
3. ADELBODEN
4. WEGGIS
5. KANDERSTEG
6. MEIRINGEN
7. GRINDELWALD
8. GSTAAD
9. KLOSTERS
10. ST. MORITZ

(Anagrams devised by Mr. Jack Kosky)

(continued from page 6)

movements who have launched the initiatives on this subject are in effect trying to free the individual citizen from the responsibility of caring for his old days. The guaranteed comfort of Old Age was very much a question of wisdom and foresight. At least for those who could afford to practise such wisdom. For the others, there were days when children took their old parents in their care. Now this role is incumbent upon the State. But for those who are trying to improve the welfare of old people, the home of rest is just not good enough.

(PMB)

WELFARE OFFICE

for

SWISS GIRLS IN GREAT BRITAIN

(For Information, Advice or Help)

31 Conway Street, London W.1.

(Nearest Underground Station:
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HOW DO THE BRITISH SEE THE SWISS?

by Martin Drayton

What do the British think of the Swiss? In the following article a young English journalist reports on his interviews with the "man in the street" on this topic.

For good or ill, people think of foreign countries in terms of images. And in no case is the image more predictable—or more potentially misleading—than in the case of Switzerland.

"It's a postcard country—it looks like something off a calendar". "All I can remember is mountains covered in snow and those funny little houses that look like cuckoo clocks". Ask any Englishman what he remembers about Switzerland and he will invariably come out with something of this sort.

Part of the reason is, of course, that the only motive the average Briton has for going to Switzerland is to take a holiday. He goes here expecting it to look like a postcard, and he is not disappointed. The ski resorts are, after all, postcard country nulli secundus.

But the "picture postcard" image goes deeper than that. Switzerland has been a neutral country for centuries—it has none of the outward-looking force of the politically committed countries around it. It has none of the evangelical hysteria of America, none of the long-established colonial interests of Britain. It has no propaganda drum to beat; it has never been a hotbed of insurrection or the target of invasion like many of its neighbours.

The result of this is that its image is very much a passive one. It is a setting, a place where people go to convalesce or to ski, to hold conferences or deposit their money or, if they are rich enough, to build their third houses for tax purposes. To the English at least it is a country of hosts, and what limelight it enjoys is reflected from its more important guests—it has many—and from its dramatic scenery.

It is not surprising, then, that the British Press did not devote much attention to the news that the women of what is in fact one of the oldest democracies have for the first time gained the right to vote. And the news raised correspondingly little interest among the British people.

The British are, after all, remarkably complacent about their own democratic structure, and they tend to take their own rights and freedoms for granted. Women have had the vote in this country for as long as most of its inhabitants can remember, and it comes as no great surprise to them that women are allowed to vote elsewhere.

But now that Britain is seeing the beginning of what promises to be a noisy (if ineffectual) revolt of second-generation Emily Pankhursts in the

form of the Women's Liberation Movement, they at least profess to a certain sense of triumph at the enfranchisement of the women of Switzerland.

"I think it's about time Swiss women got the vote—it's a very good thing", said one British housewife. "I think it's awful that they were given only second-class citizenship for so long".

But the same lady, who had spent some time in Switzerland on holiday, was far from flattering about their political awareness: "The mentality of the Swiss women I met seemed to be restricted to their homes and families. I didn't get the impression that they were at all interested in outside power, and I doubt that many of them will use it now they've got it".

Many people were surprised to learn that Swiss women did not have the right to vote—which is a reflection of British insularity as much as anything. But several suggested very coherent reasons for the absence of the franchise. One woman felt that the reason lay in Switzerland's neutrality: "In a neutral country which has been at peace for such a long time you wouldn't expect women to be a significant force politically. It's only when a country goes to war that it realises the potential of its female population—or that the women themselves realise it. As soon as women are obliged to work in munitions factories and do what in peacetime are regarded as men's jobs they start demanding men's rights".

The effects of Swiss neutrality—and its accompanying social stability—were touched upon by an English student who had lived in Switzerland for a short time:

"Switzerland seems to me to be a very regulated country with a very well-oiled social and political system. And in a country where you have this stability, coupled with a high standard of living and an apparently total absence of real poverty and unemployment you don't need to give women the vote. I don't think Swiss women felt the need for the right to vote because they were very comfortably installed in a well-regulated social structure".

One English woman sounded a note of warning on the subject with typical feminine insight: "It's great that they have been given the right. But once you've given it to them, you'll have the devil's own job if you want to take it away from them again".

Her opinion of the Swiss in general was unusually articulate: "They are a fairly passive race. They are very serious—I think they are very high-principled too. Their standard of living is