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Soirée familiale – a new and popular event

A new event in the calendar of the Swiss Churches (Catholic and Protestant) was the Soirée Familiale held on Saturday, 24th January, at the John Southworth Centre, Westminster, normally the haunt of the Swiss Youth Club.

Undeterred by the cold weather, 100 people or more gathered to meet old friends and make new ones. Warmed up and fortified by drinks at the Bar, where Bruno Frei and helpers officiated, we went in staggered (not "staggering") groups to the ballroom where tables were arranged for a buffet-style meal, which had been partly provided on a "Bring and Eat" basis by the guests, and augmented by the Youth Club, whose members, under the guiding hand of the new social helper, Mrs. Beatrice Itten, looked after out physical well-being.

Fr. Bossard bid us welcome, and soon the record player was put in motion and dancing began. Others retired back to the bar, and there was much lively activity. There was just one break – for the showing of a new Swiss National

Tourist Office film about the crossing of the Diavolezza and Morteratsch Glaciers.

All too soon it was time to again brave the elements, and a successful evening came to a close. May we say "thank you" to Pastor and Mrs. Udi Stefan and Fr. Bossard for their work in

arranging the event, and to the members of the Youth Club who looked after us and who, behind the scenes, had the hard job of clearing up.

The Soirée was greatly appreciated by the resident community, and we look forward to the next date. EC



The happy smiles on these faces bear witness to the fact that the soirée familiale described left was a success!

Watchmaking rendezvous

The 4th European Watch and Jewellery Fair will be held in Basle from 24th April to 3rd May, 1976. It will be more important than ever this year, not only because of the large increase in the number of exhibitors and the exhibition area, but also because of its influence on the year's sales in this period of recession. Compared with the first Fair, in 1973, which numbered 712 exhibitors, the figure will be 80 per cent higher this year. Although the three sectors of the Fair – watchmaking, jewellery and allied branches – have all increased the number of their exhibitors, their relative importance has changed somewhat. Whereas the percentage of exhibitors in the watch sector amounted to 54 per cent in 1973, it will be 41 per cent this year, while the figure for jewellery will rise from 33 to 44 per cent and for the allied branches from 12.5 to 14.5 per cent. The five main countries exhibiting in Basle – Switzerland, West Germany, France, Great Britain and Italy – alone account for 90 per cent of the total number of exhibitors, Switzerland's share coming to 36.5 per cent (compared with 50 per cent in 1973).

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LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND

by **Gottfried Keller**

On 21st March the people of Switzerland are, once again, invited to vote. The problem this time is whether to vote for (or against) a Co-determination Initiative launched by the Trade Unions or for a counter proposal as elaborated by the Federal Council and the two chambers of parliament. The Trade Unions go very far in their Initiative in

demanding co-determination on a basis of parity, which means that half the number of members on the board of a private company and in the public administration should consist of employees as well as of members of their respective Trade Unions.

Those who oppose the Trade Union Initiative contend that it is nothing less than an attempt on the Unions' part to extend their power and that co-determination, as proposed by the Federal Authorities, prevents dangerous experiments. They also say that the best protection the Trade Unions can afford their members is in their capacity as outside organisations, and without co-responsibility for the conduct of individual enterprises.

The Trade Unions, on the other hand, use the argument that their model of co-determination would not only increase the job security of their

members, but could also prevent the closure of enterprises. This, say their opponents, is nonsense, because job security and the necessity to close enterprises do not depend on the wishes of the employed, but on hard economic facts quite outside the control of management. In the Federal German Republic co-determination on a parity basis exists in quite a number of large enterprises — yet parity co-determination in the Volkswagen-Werke was, a few months ago, unable to prevent the termination of employment for 25,000 workers. Nor is parity co-determination a guarantee for orders flowing in.

As always before an important vote is held on a nationwide scale, a great deal of propaganda pro and contra is made in the mass media. It would be difficult to forecast how this particular vote will go, but personally I would still be surprised if the Trade Union model would be adopted. While it is true that the Unions and the Left in general are slowly gaining strength in Switzerland, I nevertheless don't expect this particular demand to go through yet. Perhaps in a few years time, if repeated. But, who knows, maybe the result of 21st March will prove me wrong.

Switzerland in Britain's cultural life

Till 15th April — Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore: Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. — May — School of Geography, University of Oxford — June and July — Cambridge University Library — *Swiss Cartography Exhibition*.

Till 28th March — Victoria and Albert Museum — 10th April to 8th May — Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museum — 19th May to 6th June — Third Eye Centre, Glasgow — *Otto Künzli* is among the 25 leading artists participating in the Jewellery in Europe touring exhibition.

WEDNESDAY, 7th April — Purcell Room, 7.30 p.m. — *Ballade* by *Frank Martin* is in the programme presented by Ank Mulder (flute) and Jan Gruit-Huyzen (piano).

THURSDAY, 8th April — Wigmore Hall, 7.30 p.m. — The guitarist Forbes Henderson plays, among other works, 4 *Pièces brèves* by *Frank Martin*.

TUESDAY, 13th April — Royal Festival Hall, 8 p.m. — *Tamas Vasary* plays Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by David Atherton.

SATURDAY, 24th April — Royal Festival Hall, 2.45 p.m. — *Charles Dutoit* conducts the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain in a Berlioz, Brahms, and Stravinsky programme.

WEDNESDAY, 28th April — Royal Festival Hall, 8 p.m. — *Tamas Vasary* plays Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 in G with the London Mozart Players conducted by Harry Blech.

25th May to 11th June — Leeds University Art Gallery — 24th June to 24th July — Derby Museums and Art Gallery — Exhibition of *Prints and Drawings* by *Felix Vallotton*.



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