

# Switzerland and American public opinion

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Members throughout New Zealand will realise the difficulties in finding patriotic minded fellow-members to take charge of the Committee, particularly in these times when almost everyone works long hours. However, the Auckland group has always willingly sacrificed time and efforts, and is again ready to do its share.

The following nominations are now put before the members of the Society:

|                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| F. Steyer :     | President         |
| A. Peyer :      | Vice-President    |
| E. Merz :       | Secretary         |
| W. Ungemuth :   | Treasurer         |
| A. Mossberger : | Executive Member. |

We now request every member to write to the Secretary, Mr. Schlatter of Wellington, whether he approves of these nominations or not. Those not recording their vote before September 30th, shall be taken as supporters.

The newly proposed Committee pledge their wholehearted co-operation to foster the welfare of the Society and to strengthen the bond of friendship in our community. This, however, is considered possible only provided they are given better support by their fellow-members. This refers in particular to the prompt payment of the annual subscription fee. In every issue of the "Helvetia", the Secretary has to request defaulting members to forward the fee. This should not be necessary as it is known that every member, almost without exception, can well afford to "sacrifice" the few shillings every 12 months. The new Committee, if elected, proposes to allow three months' time to pay the subscription, after which period all names of defaulters will be published in this paper. Moreover, non-financial compatriots will then be deleted from the membership list. No doubt everyone will agree that such a procedure is proper, as evidently it is only negligence in failing to pay this small amount.

A further important consideration is the formation of numerous "Collection Agents" throughout the Country. To facilitate the task of the Committee, particularly the Secretary, we should have one to three members in each locality where Swiss are more numerous, to take care of collecting the fee. For instance, Taranaki and Waikato should appoint, say three each, with the specific duty to collect among the more intimate compatriots. The same time such "Agents" would also make it their business to enrol every Swiss residing within a reasonable boundary. Surely, a small number of willing compatriots can be induced to take on this task once every 12 months?

Written comments on this subject, or any other useful suggestion, are encouraged and everyone may communicate with the Secretary at any time.

In conclusion, the Auckland group wishes to thank our Patron, Dr. Schmid, most heartily for the special interest he has taken as intermediary between the Wellington and Auckland Associates.

Auckland, 13th September, 1943.

#### SWITZERLAND AND AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION.

As a reply to certain attacks of American newspapers which accused Switzerland of having made a business out of the war, The "New York Times" has published an article entitled "Invincible Switzerland", containing the highest praise of the determination and the courage with which the Swiss Government and the Swiss people defend their traditions and their independence in these difficult times.

This article denies that Switzerland is doing a flourishing business with the belligerents; it reveals the privations which the Swiss people have to take upon themselves and their efforts to maintain their independence. It quotes the opinion of influential American journalists, among them Walter Lippmann, who commend very highly the intelligence of the Government and the discipline of the Swiss people. The Americans who are submitting a second time to the difficulties of a world war cannot help admiring the foresight and the practical spirit which

enabled Switzerland to put their house in order a long time ago, politically, economically and morally. One must admire this little country which, being a long distance from the sea and surrounded by the war, has mastered these difficulties. This spirit is similar to the old American pioneer spirit.

The question whether democracy can continue in its present form is much discussed in America. To this question Switzerland gives an eloquent answer; her democracy has remained alive under the most trying war conditions. One must admire her absolute impartiality, her true neutrality and her humanitarian activities. Every child in America knows that Switzerland represents American interests. Further, the Swiss Government has done very much for the belligerents in all countries and especially for the prisoners of war. This latter activity is gratefully acknowledged by the Americans which Switzerland will perceive when, after the war, thousands of Americans once more will travel across the world.

As the red cross on white ground is an intangible sign here, the white cross on red ground has become for America the symbol of good will towards mankind.

AUCKLAND 1ST AUGUST CELEBRATION.

The Auckland Social Committee wishes to thank all friends for their support in helping to make the 1st of August celebrations in Auckland a success and for the many generous donations. Even though the date was omitted from the notice in the "Helvetia", it didn't stop Auckland from having a record crowd on their evening.

Stepping into the room when coats and hats were taken by younger members, attractively dressed in National Costume, much interest was taken in the pictures arranged around the walls and decorations, also of the scroll that held the signatures of the various friends who attended the 650th anniversary of Switzerland's Day of Independence in 1941.

Songs, recitations and music rendered by several members were greatly appreciated by their audience and S'Handoerglei put everyone on their toes, the supper also was a success and waitresses being the younger members, did their job efficiently. Besides the supper, creamed meranges with liquid refreshments, were in evidence, to which nobody made any objection.

Once again, we thank those people from country districts for coming along and also those participating in the programme.

SECRETARY.

MESSAGE OF THANKS RECEIVED FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION.

In the August number of the "Helvetia" we informed members of a cable sent to Dr. Enrico Celio, President of the Swiss Confederation, on the occasion of the 652nd anniversary of our homeland and we have the pleasure to quote below a translation of a reply received from the Swiss Foreign Office on behalf of the President of the Swiss Confederation:

"Please pass on to the Swiss people in New Zealand heartiest thanks for their patriotic message."

Swiss Foreign Office.

OBITUARY.

We regret to have to inform members of the death of Mr. Arthur Hochstrasser, aged 59, at Springdale, Waitoa. The late Mr. Hochstrasser arrived in New Zealand in 1922 and was engaged in farming in the Waikato. He was taken ill a few weeks ago and died on 31st August in the Waikato Hospital. Mr. Hochstrasser was unmarried and the only relative known of is a brother in Switzerland.