

Farewell message to the Swiss Community in New Zealand of the former Swiss Federal Councillor and foreign Minister Monsieur Marcel Pilet-Golaz

Autor(en): **Schmid, W. / Pilet-Golaz, Marcel**

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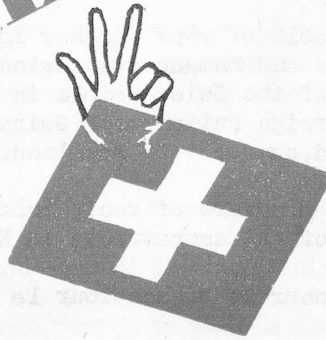
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FAREWELL MESSAGE TO THE SWISS COMMUNITY IN NEW ZEALAND
OF THE FORMER SWISS FEDERAL COUNCILLOR AND FOREIGN MINISTER
MONSIEUR MARCEL PILET - GOLAZ.

The December issue of "Helvetia" contained an article on the resignation of our Foreign Minister, Federal Councillor Pilet-Golaz.

Mr. Pilet-Golaz has been good enough to send the following cable to the Swiss Consulate in Wellington:

"AT THE END OF THE YEAR WHICH MARKS THE TERMINATION OF MY ACTIVITIES AS HEAD OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, I BEG TO EXPRESS TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF SWITZERLAND ABROAD, THEIR COLLABORATORS, AND ALL SWISS COMMUNITIES ABROAD, MY APPRECIATION FOR THEIR WORK, THEIR FINE ATTITUDE, AND THEIR UNWAVERING PATRIOTISM. I AM ADDING MY SINCERE WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR, AND WISH TO ASSURE THEM OF MY FURTHER FAITHFUL ENDEAVOURS FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF AN INDEPENDANT, FREE, AND HUMANE SWITZERLAND.

PILET GOLAZ."

In reply to this message, Dr. W. Schmid, the Swiss Consul, has sent a letter of thanks to Mr. Pilet-Golaz, which in English translation reads as follows:

Monsieur le Conseiller Federal,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your cable dated 23rd December 1944 which you were good enough to address to the representatives of Switzerland abroad, their collaborators and to the Swiss Communities all over the world, on the occasion of your resignation from your high office at the end of 1944.

It was my privilege to make known to the Swiss people in New Zealand the appreciation expressed in your cable of their collaboration, their fine attitude towards our country and their unwavering patriotism, and I wish to convey to you my deep felt thanks in the name of all concerned.

In this Consular District, so far away from our homeland, nearly two hundred compatriots are united in the "Swiss Benevolent Society in New Zealand". During the trying years, when you, as a member of the Swiss Federal Council, and especially as head of the Swiss Foreign Office, were directing and watching over the destiny of Switzerland, my fellow-countrymen in New Zealand were kept informed on current affairs of their homeland through their monthly publication, "HELVETIA". My compatriots, to whom your message is addressed, are therefore in a position to appreciate the great work you have done for Switzerland and join wholeheartedly in the expression of thanks which the Swiss Nation owes you.

The assurances given in your cable of your further faithful endeavours for maintaining an independent, free and humane Switzerland are deeply appreciated. Such will also remain the aim of the Swiss people in New Zealand who realise that thereby the respect of foreign nations for Switzerland, as well as the Swiss people at home and abroad, can best be retained.

In conclusion, I also have the pleasure of reciprocating your kind wishes for a happy New Year, in the name of all compatriots in New Zealand.

I have the honour to be, Monsieur le Conseiller Federal,

Yours faithfully,

W. Schmid

Consul of Switzerland.

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SWITZERLAND'S NEUTRALITY AND PRESENT TRADE RELATIONS.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

This statement was prepared for "The Dominion" of Wellington by the Swiss Consul and published there in full on the 9th of January, 1945. The article was also placed at the disposal of 40 odd New Zealand newspapers and was widely publicised, mostly however in a greatly abbreviated form, and we think that our fellow-countrymen in New Zealand should know the full text. This is the reason for publishing it in this month's "HELVETIA". Further, we are pleased to say that shortly after the press campaign of a number of American newspapers, against the commercial policy of Switzerland as a neutral, had been made known in the New Zealand Press, it was learned from the Swiss Radio that the United States Department of State (Foreign Office) in Washington had made a statement over the U.S. radio network to the effect that the United States did not intend to change its traditional friendly policy towards Switzerland whose services as Protecting Power of the United States in Japan, Germany and elsewhere were fully appreciated by the U.S. Government. It also emphasised that the traditional bonds of friendship between the Swiss and American peoples were firmly based upon similar democratic ideals. In conclusion, the U.S. Department of State observed that as a belligerent America naturally would like to see Switzerland curb as much as possible her exports to the countries with which the U.S. were at war. Since then it was further learned from the Swiss radio that transport communications between Switzerland and Marseille as well as between Switzerland and the Spanish border have been re-established, although probably not yet satisfactorily.

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From a message published in "The Dominion" on January 5, dated Washington, January 3, 1945, it appears that a new press campaign has been started overseas in order to make neutral countries stop trade with Germany, especially as regards merchandise which might be of any help to the latter's war effort. This time Switzerland is the target, whereas in similar previous press campaigns in Allied Nations newspapers, Switzerland was never cited, neither did any official declarations refer to her, and it was therefore generally assumed in Switzerland at the time that such actions were not meant for her. The Federal authorities, however, did not share this optimism. In a speech which the President of the Swiss Confederation made in May 1944, he declared that surprises in this connection were still possible, and it was to be expected that Switzerland's turn would also come. This speech had a double purpose: first of all it wanted to show that our attitude is absolutely correct and that we have scrupulously observed all our duties as a neutral as they are defined by international agreements and by the universal principles of human rights; on the other hand the President wanted to make it clear that if pressure should be brought to bear on us, or if any suggestion should be made which might threaten the basis of our economy, we would know how to defend our right to