

Swiss aid to underdeveloped countries

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Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **24 (1961)**

Heft [5]

PDF erstellt am: **29.05.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942414>

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HELVETIA

Monthly Publication of the Swiss Society of New Zealand (Inc)

GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

24th Year

MAY 1961

Hamilton

Swiss Aid to Underdeveloped Countries

By RUDOLF FREI

(Part I)

SWITZERLAND'S main contribution of aid to underdeveloped countries is in the field of "technical assistance," a term that originated with President Truman's "Point Four" programme. There is no fixed definition for "technical assistance," but generally it may be said to mean the passing on of knowledge and experience, of "know-how," on the principle of "helping others to help themselves." It is thus distinguished from purely charitable or humanitarian aid. The construction and operation of a hospital, for example, is part of technical assistance only if citizens of the recipient underdeveloped country are at the same time being trained as nurses, etc. The same slogan, "helping others to help themselves" differentiates technical assistance from purely financial aid: capital investments are included only when they serve directly for utilising technical assistance.

In some cases free technical assistance may be the immediate and principle aim (as in the case of the Swiss Association for Technical Assistance); in other cases the assistance given is less disinterested, as when apprentice workshops are established by branches of Swiss companies operating in underdeveloped countries. In a class by themselves are projects with a denominational basis, which as a rule subordinate technical assistance to a superior spiritual aim. In all these cases technical assistance, to be sure, is given, but for ulterior motives.

What countries are to be classified as "underdeveloped?" In this respect, a common usage has evolved. The United Nations and other international organisations agree in describing the following countries as underdeveloped: all those of Latin America, all those of Asia, excepting Japan, of Africa, excepting the Union of South Africa, and, in Europe, Greece, Yugoslavia, Spain and Turkey. It is these countries, therefore, that are referred to

when the term "underdeveloped" is used in the following.

Technical Assistance by the Federal Government

THE Swiss Federal Government's aid to underdeveloped countries consists mainly of technical assistance, that is, of financial contributions to international organisations extending technical assistance, as detailed in the following table.

The average annual contribution during this period, therefore, was about 2.1 million francs.

A further distinction to be made is that between contributions given to the technical assistance programme of the United Nations—so-called multilateral aid—which at present amounts to 4 million francs a year, and the technical assistance given individual countries directly, so-called bilateral aid. At the present this amounts to 1 million francs a year. Altogether therefore the Federal Government spends 5 million francs a year on technical assistance, which means about 1 franc per capita of the Swiss population. By comparison, the Netherlands spends about 2 francs per capita (not including the contributions to its associated overseas areas) as does Sweden.

Swiss Government Contributions to International Organisations Engaged in Technical Assistance, 1950 to 1959

	million francs
International Labour Organisation	4.57
UNESCO	5.03
Food and Agricultural Organisation	3.97
World Health Organisation	7.31
Total	20.88

The United Nations and various of its special organisations have carried out an extensive programme of technical assistance during the past ten years. To this multilateral aid Switzerland contri-

buted 1 million francs annually from 1951 to 1956, and 1.5 million francs in 1957 and 1958. The establishment of a special UN fund in 1959 for the financing of long-range projects led to the appropriation by the Swiss Government of an additional 2 million francs, raising the total for that year to 3.5 million francs. For the period 1960 to 1962 the Federal Parliament has voted to contribute 4 million francs annually, i.e., 2 million for the special fund and 2 million for the regular programme.

In connection with this multilateral aid the UN has entrusted numerous Swiss experts with various missions in underdeveloped countries. From 1950 to 1959 a total of 200 experts were thus employed, especially in agriculture, forestry, the sciences, education and public administration in several countries.

While many Swiss have thus gone to serve in underdeveloped areas, numerous nationals of such countries have been given grants to perfect their vocational or professional education in Swiss universities, plants and business organisations. Some of these students stayed for a few days only, others for weeks or months. Since 1950, 780 citizens of underdeveloped countries have come to Switzerland under this programme. Of the 56 students who came to Switzerland in 1959, 33 were from European countries, 16 from the Near East (10 of them from Israel), 3 from India and 1 from Chile.

Until 1956 Switzerland had only very insignificant funds at its disposal for bilateral aid. The programme of bilateral assistance was accordingly limited. In 1957 the amount was raised to 300,000 francs, and for the period 1960 to 1962 to 1 million francs a year. In 1957 to 1959 a large part of the funds was contributed to the Swiss Association for Technical Assistance and, especially in 1959, used for donations of educational material to an arts and crafts school at the Swiss Benedictine mission in Tanganyika.

Owing to the small size of the funds available, Swiss experts were not engaged in bilateral programmes until 1957. They have since then been employed mostly in forestry (India, Turkey), irrigation (Iran), avalanche control (Iraq), promotion of trade (Philippines), high frequency technology (Ethiopia), education and tourism (Tunisia).

Under the bilateral programme, too, a number of persons from underdeveloped countries have been awarded grants to study methods in Switzerland. Again, the preferred fields of interest were agriculture, forestry, science and engineering. At the beginning of the current year 28 persons studied in Switzerland on the basis of bilateral aid (11 from Europe, mostly Turkey, 5 from the Near East, 7 from the Far East, 2 from Latin America and 3 from North Africa).

(To be continued)

NEWS OF THE COLONY

AUCKLAND SWISS CLUB

On Sunday, March 19th, a bright sunny day saw a small group of Auckland Swiss gathered at the rifle range at Northcote College, for the Shooting Competition and Picnic. Throughout the day the various competitions progressed and in between, so to speak, one always had the opportunity either to play Boccia, a game which gave adults and children great pleasure, or alternatively the chance to just relax in the sunshine. The names of the different section winners in the Shooting Competition are listed below, and we heartily congratulate them on their successful wins.

Aucklandstich: 1st, Mr Hans Enzler, with a total of 304 points; 2nd, Mr Hans Brynner (303); 3rd, Mr Hans Fitzi (285).

Pistolentstich: 1st, Mr S. Hartmann, with a total of 63 points; 2nd, Mr H. Fitzi (62); 3rd, Mr H. Enzler (56).

Frauentstich: 1st, Mrs H. Enzler, with a total of 49 points; 2nd, Mrs J. Wildhaber (38).

The committee would like to thank all who helped to make the picnic a success, and especially Mr & Mrs Max Bachmann, who are always so willing to give their time in cooking and supplying the Bratwurst.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the Annual General Meeting of the Auckland Swiss Club, held on April 15th, the following were officers elected for the year 1961/62: President, Mr Hans Fitzi, 1 Greenfield Road, Epsom, Auckland; Vice-President, Mr Adolf Binder, 65 Balmoral Road, Mt. Eden; Secretary, Miss D. Peyer, 48 Moa Road, Pt. Chevalier; Treasurer, Mr Joe Wildhaber, 12 Porter Avenue, New Lynn; Committee, Messrs C. Rickenbach, O. Stalder, W. Peter, N. Mueller.

HAMILTON SWISS CLUB

A well attended evening in the Riverlea on May 7th combined with a bring and buy was enjoyed by everybody. The card evening held on April 22nd in the Tauwhare Hall did not have as many players as expected. So do not forget the next card evening on June 17th at Tauwhare.

Swiss Society Shooting Competition:

HAMILTON CLUB RESULTS

Weber, Joe, Morrinsville	56
Reichmuth, Oskar, Taupiri	51
Fitzi, Otto, Hamilton	50 (16)
Schuler, Arthur, Taupiri	50 (14)
Studer, Ernst, Rototuna	50 (14)
Bolli, Bruno, Hamilton	49 (18)
Imlig, Adolph, Morrinsville	49 (15)
Rust, Rinaldo, Tamahere	49 (13)
Biland, Arnold, Hamilton	48
Oettli, Henry, Rukuhia	46 (14)