

N.S.H. acute problems of foreign labour and education in Switzerland

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1964)**

Heft 1456

PDF erstellt am: **29.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-694024>

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Committee and the three Trustees of the Club House Fund jointly to negotiate and conclude an agreement regarding the use of all or part of the Club House Fund for the purpose of helping to create a multi-purpose room at the Swiss Centre. The authority to conclude such an agreement shall be subject to the following conditions: (a) that the negotiations currently being conducted with the Swiss Federal Government regarding their financial contribution towards this project are concluded to the satisfaction of the extended Committee and (b) that the City Swiss Club shall enjoy representation on the body administering the multi-purpose room commensurate with the Club's contribution."

In the ensuing vote, proposed by Mr. Bonvin and seconded by Mr. Tobler, the resolution was accepted, with 38 votes in favour and three against. The President informed the meeting that in accordance with Article 22 of the Rules — the resolution would be put forward for a second vote at the next meeting, which would take place on May 26th.

Mr. Bonvin proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Ronus and Mr. Käufeler for the very friendly hospitality extended by them to the Club during the past year. This sentiment was enthusiastically applauded.

X.Y.Z.

* * *

The second annual general meeting, preceded by dinner, took place at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, on Tuesday, 26th May. Mr. M. A. Keller was in the Chair. In opening the meeting he welcomed Monsieur M. Heimo, Counsellor of the Swiss Embassy, congratulating him on his promotion to First Counsellor of Embassy, and Mr. E. Tosio, Consul.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and accepted, and one new member was elected. The principal item on the Agenda concerned the re-submission (according to Art. 22 of the Club's Rules) of the committee's proposal regarding the use of all, or part of the Club House Fund for the purpose of helping to create a Multi-Purpose Room at the Swiss Centre.

For the benefit of those who did not attend the first meeting, the president gave some particulars about the scheme. After a short discussion the committee's proposal was accepted by a large majority.

A number of donations were proposed and accepted. Close of the meeting 9.50 p.m.

ST.

Press Reporter, C.S.C.

* * *

In the issue of April 10th it was mentioned in my report about the Meeting of the City Swiss Club (March 24th), that Messrs. Brown-Boveri would move into the "Swiss Centre" on completion.

This, I learn, is not so and I tender my apologies to Messrs. Brown-Boveri for any inconvenience this statement might have caused them.

ST.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 26th June. We shall be grateful to receive reports and articles not later than the first post on Wednesday, 17th June. Only short news items can be accepted later.

SWISS CLUB, MANCHESTER

Members and friends met at the Midland Hotel on Thursday, 14th May, for a film show. The President, Mr. Berner and Mrs. Berner greeted Mr. and Mrs. Buchmann in the lounge and, together with about a dozen more club members, first had dinner in the Grill Room. Afterwards we went upstairs, where we found more members waiting to see the films of Mr. and Mrs. Buchmann's visit to the United States.

We were made nostalgic with a beautiful scene of Berne Glockenturm, the Bundeshaus and, of course, the bear pit. Then on to Miami beach with its white sands and deep blue sea, the very modern hotels, motels and private houses with swimming pools, which were so realistic, it seemed we could jump in! As did Mr. and Mrs. Buchmann in the film. The Oceanic Pool with its performing dolphins, the leaping porpoises and a friendly-looking shark were most interesting. On then to Cherokee, the Indian Village with traditional dancing and dress. Finally to New York, which looked a little grey in the early morning light. A plane at Idlewild was the last picture of a very interesting trip to the States. Back to Switzerland with scenes of the snow-clad village of Fidaz.

Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Buchmann, for the pleasure these films gave us.

S. T.

Nouvelle Société Helvétique

London Group

Tuesday, 23rd June, at 7.45 p.m.

Swiss Hostel for Girls,

9/11, Belsize Grove, N.W.3

OPEN MEETING

devoted to an informal discussion of
current questions of interest to our colony
raised by anyone present.

It is hoped there will be plenty of time left for a
little sociability before the long summer break.

All Swiss and their friends welcome

N.S.H.

ACUTE PROBLEMS OF FOREIGN LABOUR AND EDUCATION IN SWITZERLAND

Two of the most acute present-day problems in Switzerland were the subjects of the last meetings organised by the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique: that of the excessive dependence of the Swiss economy on foreign labour and the more general problem of maintaining a good level of all-round education in a period of increasing scarcity of truly devoted teachers. For each of these talks the N.S.H. was lucky enough to secure first class lecturers from Switzerland, who happened to take

part at the international discussion groups at Wilton Park, regularly organised by the British Foreign Office.

The talk on "Labour problems and the recent measure of economic restraint in Switzerland" held at the Swiss Hostel on 12th May was given by the Director of the Cantonal Labour Exchange of Zurich, **Dr. R. Schaller**. He concentrated his attention mainly on the problems presented by the enormous increase of foreign workers in Switzerland during the last few years. It has reached a point where every third industrial worker is a foreigner, but the influx has actually extended to all other forms of employment, including even doctors and clergymen.

The greatest worry for the authorities are, of course, the very young workers admitted from the age of seventeen, who constitute an unstable element in particular moral danger as they live away from their families for the first time. The foreign workers are allowed to bring their families into Switzerland only after three years of steady employment there. This influx of families naturally aggravates the problems of living and schooling accommodation. The difficulty of tolerably decent housing conditions is not lessened by the preference of many foreign workers for the cheapest accommodation they can find, however scandalously primitive. The process of assimilating those foreigners who would like to stay, becomes more difficult the bigger their number and their proportion of the total working population. This applies of course especially to the Mediterranean immigrants. Also the quality of the work is often lowered due to the fact that few of the foreign workers have been fully trained in their craft, if they have any. They are, however, usually very willing and capable of quick learning. Based on agreements between the Governments, all foreign workers are

entitled to exactly the same conditions of pay, hours and social insurance as the Swiss, a fact which may retard the progress of improved labour conditions under collective agreements between the Swiss Trade Unions and their employers.

The many governmental appeals to the industries to moderate their expansion through the employment of foreign workers having failed, it became necessary to introduce positive measures of obligatory restraint. They have been fully reported on in the "Swiss Observer" of 24th April. No further increase of foreign labour is permitted for the time being and there may even be a diminution if the discouragement especially of building work is successful. But there is a distinct danger of a fossilizing effect on enterprise, as new firms will not be able to recruit foreign workers whom the established firms take care not to lose. The danger of Communist infection remains, though it is not too serious as the solidly educated Swiss worker sticks mostly to his better judgment.

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At a dinner at the Glendower Hotel organised by the N.S.H. in April the Director of the Gewerbeschule St. Gallen, **Dr. A. Leuzinger**, described with considerable concern the danger to the level of state education in Switzerland arising from the ever increasing prosperity and materialistic trend of attitudes. This trend is seriously affecting recruitment to the teaching profession, first because other occupations offer better chances of improving earnings with considerably less training, and second because many if not most teachers no longer regard their task as a great calling but merely as an unsatisfactory source of income. E.

CITY SWISS CLUB

DINNER DANCE

FRIDAY, 3rd JULY 1964

at

"GREAT FOSTERS," EGHAM, SURREY

COCKTAILS in the Garden at 7.30 p.m.

DINNER in the TITHE BARN at 8 p.m. · DANCING until 1 a.m.

DRESS INFORMAL

TICKETS at 2 guineas per person are available from

L. F. Jobin, 236-240 Pentonville Road, London, N.1