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this night-time skiing event, and it was the main topic of conversation for a long time. As this was my first camp for Swiss abroad as leader in charge of the whole venture, I realize that some mistakes happened both in the organization and in the running of it. These have to be eliminated in future camps. For this reason I shall be most grateful to the participants if they will write to me their positive as well as negative criticism.

The Address:  
Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad  
Camp Criticism Sedrun  
Alpenstrasse 26  
CH-3000 Berne 16  
Switzerland.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

I am already looking forward to the coming camps with you, and in the meantime I am sending you best wishes and success.

*Yours Beat Buerki*

## **Some of the activities of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad**

At its meeting in Berne on 22nd November 1980, the Executive Committee of the Commission of the Swiss Abroad studied further the theme of the 57th Assembly of the Swiss Abroad in Lugano, i.e. education and training of young Swiss abroad. According to the rules and regulations of the Nou-

# **Organization of the Swiss Abroad**

**7.3.1981**

Commission of the Swiss Abroad in Berne

**30.4.1981**

Day of «Switzerland's Work abroad» at the Muba in Basle. Anyone interested should return the application form below by 28th March 1981.

**21.-23.8.1981**

Assembly of the Swiss Abroad

Main theme: «New Forms of Swiss Emigration».

Please keep this date free; application forms will be published in the next issue.

Please return this application form duly completed to Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3000 Berne 16, Switzerland.



**Day of «Switzerland's Work abroad» at the Muba (Swiss Industries Fair). The undersigned would like to take part in the Day of the Swiss Abroad at the Muba on 30th April 1981. Would you kindly supply me with the necessary papers.**

I shall attend as private person and shall take part in the luncheon

Single room(s)

yes    no

Double room(s)

I am the representative of the following Swiss Society

Name / First name: \_\_\_\_\_

and shall be pleased to receive the necessary papers

Exact address: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number of participants \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

How many wish to attend luncheon \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Should there be any seats left, I should like to attend the Gala Evening (approximate price Fr. 100.- to 120.-).

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seats

Please reserve hotel room(s) from 30. 4. to 1. 5.1981

veille Société Helvétique's Organization of the Swiss Abroad, the Executive Committee looks after the running business and prepares the work of the Commission. The theme includes not only education and training as such, but also problems which may arise in the various countries, as well as the difficulties which may arise on return to Switzerland. In this connection, the future of the Swiss schools abroad was discussed and their special tasks. The need was stressed that the Swiss communities abroad should get involved more closely in the running of these schools.

The main theme of the Assembly of the Swiss Abroad which is taking place in Solothurn from 21st to 23rd August, will be «New Forms of Swiss Emigration». This will again give an opportunity to consider the most important aspects of education and training as these are of special significance for short-term emigrants.

Political rights of the Swiss abroad and the possibilities of a simplified manner of making use of them gave renewed cause for discussion. With the proposed more generous attitude towards foreigners resident in Switzerland, several objections held hitherto regarding postal vot-

ing from abroad might be reconsidered.

Regarding the question of citizenship of Swiss mothers and foreign fathers in the framework of equal rights between men and women, the Commission of the Swiss Abroad and its Executive Committee are awaiting with great interest the opinion of the Federal Council given to Parliament after the Initiative by the President of the Organization of the Swiss Abroad, former National Councillor Dr. Alfred Weber, Altdorf, had been accepted.

## Without comment – excerpt from a letter written by a Swiss abroad

### **I would never have believed it... but it happened**

In 1965 my family and I had been living for some time in a Latin American country, where we were getting on very well. Then one day I heard about the Solidarity Fund for the Swiss Abroad. Yes, of course, I too was a Swiss abroad, but we had no intention whatsoever of returning home for good.

All the same, I thought to myself, I ought to join for the sake of solidarity. For a small sum, an annual payment of 100 francs, for example, I could become a member of that cooperative society and help a good cause at the same time. I, together with thousands of other Swiss abroad, would be building up a fund to assist less fortunate people trying to make a fresh start in Switzerland. Fantastic! And what about me? What do I stand to lose? Nothing, because after a given period I can withdraw my contributions, they will have earned interest and will even be exempt from withholding tax. I shall also be able to claim a lump-sum as compensation if I lose my livelihood as a result of political events in my second home. But, of course, that will never happen to us.

Fifteen years later – in 1980 – I am on the run. As the representative of a foreign group of companies I am in danger of being abducted and held to ransom. Our world is in ruins. My wife is in despair. The children are disconsolate because, of course, they speak the language of our host country better than «Schwyzerdütsch» and they don't want to leave their friends and their schools... Things look black, but we shall get over it; I am full of confidence, and I'm a realist. That is to say, I try to be!

But there is worse to come. On returning to the old country I start to look for a flat – but that doesn't work; first I must have a job. I don't mind where, it can be anywhere in Switzerland, I'm so flexible! And I'm not petty-minded, so I'm prepared to accept a subordinate position. But alas, at 52 the possibilities are limited. The parent company promises me a new post – as soon as something suitable becomes vacant; but that may take years. Up to today I have written between 120 and 150 applications – all in vain. What shall I do? I am desperate. In the middle of this tough period I hear from the Solidarity Fund of the Swiss Abroad, in Berne, that I am entitled to the lump-sum compensation. The contributions I have paid annually will also be refunded to me. This is wonderful after all the disappointment I have had since I got back. It gives me fresh courage.

Swiss abroad – we live in dangerous times. I would never have believed it, but it happened... Thanks to my solidarity since 1965 I have become a beneficiary in 1980. The Solidarity Fund is fantastic. Why don't you join – who knows, one day it may turn out to your advantage – or to that of one of your friends. I shall stay in it, out of solidarity with all of you, all over the world. Perhaps I shall be one of you again one day!

N.N.

*(This letter reached the Solidarity Fund on 22th July 1980.)*

Further information from:  
*Solidarity Fund of the Swiss Abroad*  
Gutenbergstrasse 6, CH-3011 Berne