

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 8 (1981)
Heft: 1

Rubrik: Citizenship campaign

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Citizenship Campaign

An endearing gesture

A campaign is under way that Swiss mothers married abroad to foreign fathers should be able to pass on Swiss citizenship to their children the same way as those mothers resident in Switzerland at the time of birth. In order to confirm their support, a group of Swiss women in Italy, led by Mrs. Margareth Bayard, Rome, decided to give a present to members of the Federal Parliament. It was a little cotton bag with some «Guetzli», nuts and tangerines and a drawing in each, made by the child of a Swiss mother and a foreign father.

With this symbolic gift, the children concerned wanted to demonstrate that they were willing to renounce their own Santa Claus bags in favour of the Swiss Members of Parliament and at the same time to draw attention to their own discrimination. The presentation under the cupola of the Federal Palace took place in co-operation with the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad and was made by a real Santa Claus. He recited a specially written poem in Swiss-German:

Samichlaus, du liebe Maa,
mach, dass au mir ds'Schwyzer Bürgerrächt
chönnt ha.

Au üsi Mamme isch vo der Schwyz,
au mir fühlet üs ganz vo der Schwyz,
au mir hänt Schwyzer Bluet
und sind euser Helvetia doch nid gnuég.

Mir chönnt doch nüt defür wägem Domizil,
d'Schwyz verlangt vo eus gar z'viel,
ds'Mammi söllt ir Schwyz gebäre,
und au de Papi söllt det ga läbe.
Hie eifach Arbeit, Hus, ds'ganz Zält
abbräche
da git's gar viel Chöscht und e Hufe z'mache.

Warum mit eus so ungerächt,
als ob me keini Lösig anebrächt,
allei e Satz müesst gänderet wärde
und scho chönnt au mir Schwyzer wärde.
Nur das, ds'Bürgerrächt, wei mer ha,
alles Süessi tüemer de National- und
Ständerät la.

Bring all die Säckli ins Bundeshuus ganz gli,
vo üs Uslandchindli, wie mir's i der Schwyz
müend si.

Samichlaus, du liebe Maa,
gäll du tuesch üs nid verlah,
au mir händ dich doch so gärn
wenn no so wit ewäg vo Bärn.

Nur eis blibt üs no jetzt,
Dir ds'danke vo ganzem Härz
im Chor rüefet mir ganz lut mitenand,
dass es über d'Bärge tönt is Schwyzerland!
All'Uslandchindli vo Schwyzer Muetter
sind derbj.
Härzliche Dank – grazie – thank you – merci.

St. Nicolas, you dear old man,
Oh, will you please do all you can
that we, too, get Swiss citizenship.
Our mothers have it like the others,
and we ourselves feel really Swiss,
for we, too, have Swiss blood in us.
But for HELVETIA we're not good enough.

The place of residence is not our fault
as such;
in this dear Switzerland asks much too
much.

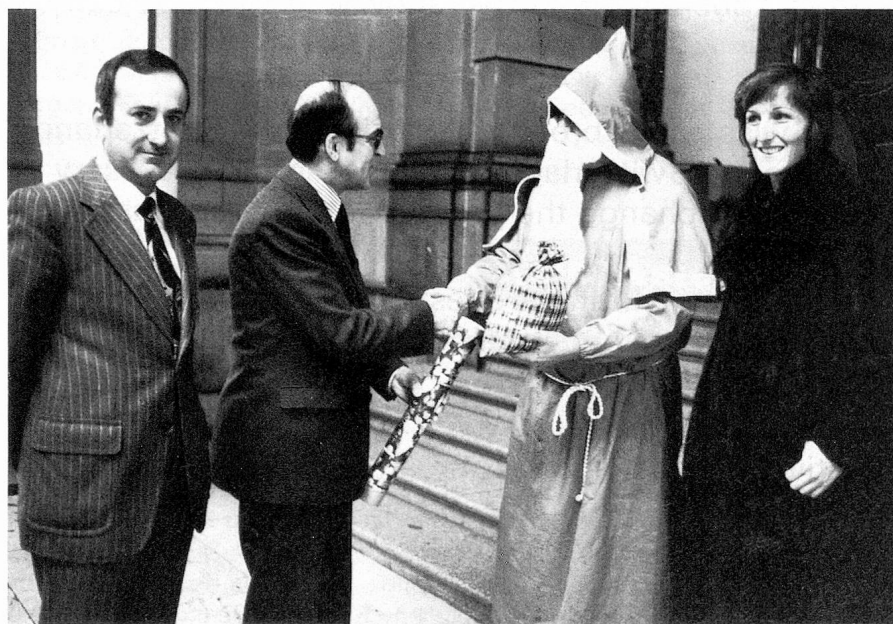
For mothers should have given birth
at home,
and fathers should have lived there, too.
To leave their work and homes for good
would mean upheaval, trouble and cost
too much.

Why should our treatment be unfair
as if there were no good solution?
A change of sentence only, and we're there,
and we could Swiss become at once.
On Swiss citizenship only we are bent –
The goodies we leave for the Members of
Parliament.

Take our bags quickly to the Chambers we
trust,
from us «foreign» children in Switzerland
be we must.

St. Nicolas, oh dear old man,
Please will you now do all you can.
Don't leave us. Love we do you as we may,
Although from Berne we are all far away.

Just one thing now that still remains:
To thank you warmly from our hearts.
In unison we sing refrains
so loud they sound in all Swiss parts:
From all foreign children and their mothers
Swiss
Dankschoen, grazie, merci and many thanks
it is.



The distribution of the presents by Santa Claus in the main hall of the Federal Palace took place in a friendly atmosphere. A number of Parliamentarians showed great interest in the problem; they will have to consider it in one of the coming parliamentary sessions.

As was announced in one of the previous issues, the campaign is

From right to left:
Margareth Bayard, Father Christmas,
Mr. Kurt Furgler, Federal President for 1981,
Mr. Lucien Paillard, Deputy-Director of the
Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad.

At the same time, a poster was shown which drew everyone's attention to the discriminatory situation as it exists at the moment.

Discrimination in pictures

Resident in Switzerland or abroad



Swiss mother + Swiss father = Swiss child

Resident in Switzerland or abroad



Swiss father + foreign mother = Swiss child

Resident in Switzerland



Swiss mother + foreign father = the child has dual nationality since 1978 (Swiss and that of his/her father)

Resident abroad



Swiss mother + foreign father = foreign child

And now a few details which should make it really attractive for you. On the first day, we shall meet at Airolo in the Canton of Ticino. From there we shall travel to Ambri-Quinto where we shall have our base camp. Then we shall spend 3 weeks together in the «Sun Parlour» of Switzerland, i.e. the Ticino. In the first week we shall get to know the Eastern side of the Leventina by walking from the Ritom Lake to the Lukmanier. In the second week we shall split up into sub-groups and devote our time to individual interests chosen by the participants themselves. The third week will again be spent walking. The tour will take us over the Cristallina Pass into the Bedretto Valley, and thus we shall get to know the Western part of the Leventina. In between we shall go sunbathing and swimming; we shall visit towns and admire monuments; altogether we shall be able to enjoy to the full the beautiful Ticino, on foot, by train, chair-lift and boat.

Only one thing is still missing – **your application.**

Write to:
Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad
Alpenstrasse 26
CH-3000 Berne 16
Switzerland

Dear Youth Service, I should like to apply for the summer youth camp from 27th July until 15th August 1981. Please let me have the necessary information and application form.

Name _____

First name: _____

Road: _____

Town: _____

Country: _____

Date of birth: _____

being deliberated by Parliament. This means that Swiss men and women abroad just have to await the Federal Council's opinion in the matter. This will be published within the next few weeks and is extremely important. We shall inform you as soon as possible so that you will be able to help us in the future work.

Lucien Paillard

Summer Camp

Dear Young Swiss Abroad
Once again, the Youth Service is organizing a summer camp. The dates are as follows:

27th July until 15th August 1981

Last date of applying: 15th June 1981.