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# Meeting of the Commission of Swiss Residents Abroad



7th March 1981

Beautiful spring weather reigned when the President of the Organization of Swiss Residents Abroad, the former National Councillor Dr Alfred Weber, opened the ordinary spring meeting of the Commission on 7th March in Berne. He welcomed the many delegates who had come from all parts of the world. He had the sad duty to inform members of the death of Mr Carlo Beeler, owner of the Hotel Savoia in Nervi, who had represented Italy for many years. He had been one of the last traditional Swiss Hoteliers in Switzerland's neighbouring country to the South.

Apart from normal business matters, it was the budget above all which needed special attention. Compared to last year, there were some changes. In spite of the cut in the federal subsidy from 215 000 to 193 000 Francs, the budget for 1981 shows a smaller deficit. This is mainly due to the fact that the «echo» is no longer being published. The accounts for 1980 and the budget for 1981 were accepted unanimously. At the same time, it was decided to inform member societies of proposals for a possible

*A note from the Secretariat of Swiss Residents Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, 3000 Berne 16, Switzerland:*

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financial contribution towards the expenses of the Organization.

Delegates were particularly interested to hear about the citizenship campaign. The Director of the Secretariat of Swiss Residents Abroad, Mr Marcel Ney, explained the statement by the Federal Council. Basically, the Government's attitude is positive. The Federal Council is willing to submit proposals to the two Chambers in 1981 still, although it won't treat this question on its own, but combined with other points of citizenship reform. Generally, members were pleased to hear of the positive

opinion of the Government with regard to equality between children of a Swiss mother abroad married to a foreigner and those born in Switzerland. There was some apprehension, though, that by coupling the changes to other points of citizenship reform, further delays might occur to which delegates were definitely opposed. (The full text of a statement is on pages 3 and 4 in this issue.)

The meeting heard with satisfaction of the signing of the second supplementary agreement on social security with Italy. The agreement which will shortly be ratified, will ensure a change-over without age limit from a Swiss to an Italian sickness insurance or *vice-versa*. With this agreement, many more Swiss will have these rights, although some 15% of Swiss residents abroad are not yet able to make such a change-over.

The meeting also took note of double-taxation agreements with New Zealand, Australia and South Korea.

The report by the President of the Auxiliary Committee for Swiss Schools Abroad, Mr Philippe Gar-

## A not unimportant detail . . .

After long discussion, the legislative assembly of our Organization decided to change the term

### «Swiss Abroad».

Please take note of the consequent changes in

- **Organization of Swiss Residents Abroad**
- **Commission of Swiss Residents Abroad**
- **Secretariat of Swiss Residents Abroad**

raux, had been eagerly expected. It was clear from his remarks that a great deal of goodwill existed and that a positive and consistent policy was being pursued with regard to the Swiss schools abroad. The proposed closing of the schools in Genova and Florence in 1983 would

present a kind of special stimulus to this policy.

Finally, comments were made regarding the traditional day of the Swiss from abroad at the Swiss Industries Fair and the forthcoming Assembly of Swiss Residents Abroad which will take place in

Solothurn from 21st to 23rd August.

As usual, the delegates met for lunch after the meeting. For many, this provided a welcome time for social intercourse and for comparing notes on many subjects.

## Varied Swiss Shooting Scene

by Paul Betschart

Large, structurally complex yet efficient, with a richly varied range of functions in sport and state – that is still the Swiss shooting scene in 1981. Besides the Swiss Rifle Association (SSV), which heads the list with its 3874 clubs and 553 379 members, there are approximately 20 nation-wide associations and other organizations engaged in official and unofficial shooting activities in Switzerland. They cover a whole field which enjoys nothing like so high a status in any other country in the world. The organizations cater for 543 592 compulsory programme shooters, about 1000 archers in 36 clubs, some 3000 crossbowmen in 125 sections and 282 participants in the sport of «combat shooting» in 19 clubs. And it should be noted, to round off the picture, that the associations have their «own» insurance, the Swiss Rifle Associations' Accident Insurance (N.B. run by unpaid workers), in which approximately 630 000 members from some 5000 clubs are insured, and which pays out about a quarter of a million francs per year for physical injuries or material damage.

Admittedly, shooting is now far less important within the framework of the Swiss state than it was in the last century, but it remains a factor to be taken into account. This is illustrated by these figures: last year about 75 million rounds were

fired on Swiss shooting ranges, not counting exercises during military refresher courses. In 1980 the Confederation contributed over 22 million francs towards the costs of compulsory shooting duty, which is conducted by the clubs, of courses and of cartridges used in exercises. When, in line with general economies, it recently wanted to fix a quota for the amount of ammunition used, it very quickly had to beat a retreat in the face of protests from the clubs and associations – to pick a fight with the marksmen, even in

1981, 157 years after the founding of the Swiss Rifle Association, is not politically advisable!

The Swiss shooting scene occasionally becomes confused because of its complex structure. Some of the national associations come under the SSV, the umbrella association; the small-bore marksmen and crossbowmen are loosely affiliated; but the archers, for example, go their own way. This often leads to complications, especially over questions of finance or of sending delegates to international

March to the federal «Feldschiessen»; with well over 200 000 participants, this is still *the* big demonstration of the strength of unofficial shooting in Switzerland. (Comet-Photo)

