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AN INTERESTING COMMUNICATION Of The New Helvetic Society (Neue Helvetische Gesellschaft) To The Swiss Abroad

AS YOU KNOW, some questions which touch directly to the Swiss abroad, are being examined now in Switzerland. Not to speak of the improvement of the Old Age Pension (AHV,AVS), at present under consideration and which will be of benefit also to the Swiss of New Zealand, a new Article of our Federal Constitution is under study. It is aimed at making possible a further improvement of the legal position of our compatriots living in foreign countries. The understanding shown to our problems abroad by the citizens in Switzerland on whose votes the fate of this constitutional Article eventually depends, will be considerably strengthened by the evidence of our determination to rely first on our own personal efforts and of our own sense of solidarity.

In this light, the New Helvetic Society has welcomed the good results of the last campaign for finding new adherents to the Solidarity Fund. The number of members of the Fund is now over 7,000. The New Helvetic Society wishes to thank all those who have adhered and contributed to reach this number of 7,000 members. This represents, however, only about 18% of all those (about 40,000) who could join. No effort must be spared to increase continually the number of members. The Fund has now paid 1,300,000 Swiss Francs to 150 co-operators. It is possible to become a member by paying only the minimum premium of 25 Fr., i.e. about £2 a year.

Those who join before January 1st, 1964, will have a right to an indemnity in case of loss of livelihood, as foreseen by the statutes, already one year after their adhesion. Those becoming members after January 1st, 1964, will have this right after two years.

It is, however, obvious that in a peaceful and stable country like New Zealand, joining the Fund is more a **proof of solidarity towards compatriots** living in less favoured countries than an insurance against present and immediate dangers. It is, therefore, not so much the material advantage enjoyed by those entering the Fund before the end of the year that should induce more and more compatriots in New Zealand to become members, but the further proof which additional adhesions will give of the self-reliance and of the feeling of solidarity of the Swiss abroad.

RED CROSS APPEAL

Since our closing date further donations have been received from Mr J. Von Holzen, Te Aroha; Mr J. Muller, Huntly; Mr Grossmann, Waihou; and Mr Zermatten, Howick.