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Insurance scheme was first expressed by the N.S.H. group of Innsbruck. The draft of this law provided that all Swiss nationals leaving Switzerland after, and all such returning home before, the passage of the law, should be included. The S.S.E. went further and asked the Government to include all Swiss residing abroad at the time of passing the law. After mature study of the question, it was declined. But it was pointed out that all Swiss returning to reside permanently in Switzerland would automatically come into the scheme by the payment of the accumulated premia during the years of their absence.

Prof. W. Friedli (Bundesamt für Sozialversicherung) speaks for the government. There are, he says, five essential points in the scheme (a) It is obligatory on every Swiss; (b) one uniform premium for all insured; (c) the contribution of the State; (d) the contribution of the employer; and (e) the special cantonal administration. The difficulties of bringing all Swiss Abroad into this scheme are easily realized; they are, in fact, insuperable. If, on the other hand, the choice is left to them, the uniform premium would have to be sacrificed. Again, contributions on the part of the employer not existing in their case, the readjustment of the premium offers difficulties. Equal difficulties are anticipated in the control, the perception of the premia and the administration generally. The examining commission therefore, but with great regret, voted against the inclusion of the Swiss Abroad. It was found possible, however, to effect an improvement for the Swiss returning home in respect of the payment of the accumulated premia, which may be converted into a deduction from the assured sum, if desired. Foreigners living in Switzerland are also included in the scheme, but lose both premia and insurance on leaving the country. The same case applies to Swiss in France and Belgium as well as the larger portion of Germany.

3.—Dr. Job, the secretary of the S.S.E., gives the conference an account of the activities of the S.S.E. The valuable services rendered to the "Auslandsschweizertum" include such serious questions as the already discussed military tax and State Insurance; war indemnities (which most important point of the Agenda had by consent been postponed for the Sunday sitting); the collections for the Swiss schools abroad and the Swiss house in the Cité Universitaire, Paris; the Ferienheim Schloss Rhäzüns; the work among foreign born recruits; das Auslandsschweizerbuch; the Swiss Echo; the film, lecture and newspaper-service; etc., etc.

4.—Discussions then followed, collected under the heading "Fürsorgeangelegenheiten" which included the desire of the Ludwigshafen Group for a larger inclusion of foreign born Swiss children in the holiday service, answered by Dr. Siegfried, of the "Stiftung Pro Juventute". The Group Troyes asked for information regarding assistance for indigenous Swiss in France, citing some cases of sickness and distress in their district being refused assistance by the local French authorities.

Dr. Rothmund, chief of the division of police, gave a most illuminating answer which made it apparent that the existing reciprocal treaty dating back to 1882 is very incomplete and leaves assistance almost entirely to the goodwill of the local (in Switzerland cantonal) authorities. The fact, however, that the draft of a new and much wider treaty to reciprocal assistance has now been submitted to France proves that the political department is taking sympathetic steps in this direction. France has accepted this project as a basis of examination and improvement of existing relations and it is hoped that a complete understanding may not be too far distant. Difficulties arising out of the reception by the hospitals of Basle of sick cases from beyond the German frontier were discussed by the Group Hünningen and Dr. Marcus Löw, President of the Basle Group.

5.—Possibilities of employment in Switzerland and abroad. Nat. Councillor Schmid-Ruedin, Central Secretary of the S.M.S., speaks of the importance of a period of employment abroad for young commercial people and deplores the difficulties which have arisen in consequence of the war. He particularly mentions the value of the S.M.S. school in London and is of opinion that the Swiss resident abroad can do much to further the possibilities of employment.

In the ensuing discussion Dr. Rothmund shows that political efforts by means of the diplomatic and consular services cannot be expected to be of much assistance. Tentative treaties of exchange in certain directions have proved abortive, the conditions and desiderata of the various States being too divergent. He agrees with the speaker that a great deal more may be effected by the Swiss abroad.

Mr. Suter, President of the London Group, emphasized the adverse conditions now existing in England, but reveals the fact that it is due to diplomatic intervention that the comparatively large number of young Swiss are permitted to enter the country for a period. Consul Neef of New York gives the outline of a convention whereby thirty young Swiss are permitted to work in the United States for a period, the consulate

guaranteeing their repatriation. Everyone laid stress on the absolute necessity of irreproachable character and qualifications of the young emigrants.

Mr. Suter, President of the London Group, in speaking of the reappearance of the volunteer system in commerce, tackled the problem from the other side. He cited numerous complaints by London members of their inability to place their sons in Switzerland otherwise than as volunteers and pointed to the deleterious effects of this form of employment. It is not practiced by English firms and is rightly regarded as an unfair exploitation of the young worker. In the discussion Schmid-Ruedin disputes the existence of the system as such in Switzerland, but is in agreement as to its bad effects.

M. Jobin, of the Ministry of Labour, then refers to the difficulty of finding employment for the returning Swiss, not only for the commercial world but also for the Swiss engineer and technician. In an interesting discussion it was again held as most important that only well qualified Swiss should think of emigrating. Good opportunities for dentists and medical men in Belgium and elsewhere, for engineers in West Africa and South America were spoken of. One participant strongly protested against the modern viewpoint of the young emigrants. They had, he said, lost all semblance of their former simplicity and tenacity and were unfit for the hard pioneer work which at one time distinguished the Swiss.

The field was now clear for the most important item on the Agenda, that of the War Indemnities. At this moment arrived a telegram from the president of the Confederation which was read to the conference amid tremendous applause.

"Empêché par une réunion importante d'assister à la journée des Suisses à l'Etranger à Bâle, j'adresse aux participants mon salut patriotique et l'expression de ma profonde reconnaissance pour l'œuvre splendide de rayonnement suisse qu'ils accomplissent à l'Etranger."

A whole series of other telegrams and letters were read out before the president of the congress welcomed the presence of Minister Dinichert and Dr. Benziger as representatives of the Federal Political Department, a number of other high dignitaries and the following Ministers from abroad:—MM. Barbey, Brussels; Dumant, Paris; Gertsch, Rio de Janeiro; Jäger, Vienna; de Stontz, Madrid; Peter, Washington; and Wagnière, Rome.

6.—Nat. Councillor Pfister gave a very clear account of the long history and the treatment of this very thorny subject of War Indemnities. He was ably seconded by Nat. Councillor Duft, the well-known protagonist. They informed the audience of the psychological changes which have lately taken place and which entitled the initiative to renewed hope of success. England had agreed to indemnify the Dutch fishing industry; France and Germany had found a basis of agreement respecting the liquidation of German property; the United States had submitted to the payment in full for the ninety-four vessels confiscated from Germany during the war. Many wrongs had been righted, only the Swiss Nation was denied the right to demand indemnification for the confiscation and damage to Swiss life and property to the amount of seventy million francs, quite apart from the loss of 750 millions accrued in Russia.

The speakers referred to the work of such jurists as Hoffmann, Zellweger, Loncle, Robin and in particular to that of de Lapradelle, who were all in agreement that the right to indemnification existed internationally as a firmly established "customary right of civilization" which is and ought to be above all existing treaties and conventions. Based simply on the natural sentiment of justice, they declared, the demand for indemnification would be granted as a natural consequence. In the event of failure through the diplomatic channels, the subject must be submitted to the International Court of Arbitration at the Hague or to the League of Nations for decision. The speaker thanks the Federal Council for their readiness to reconsider the question in the light of the later developments and closes with the words of de Lapradelle—"On ne se trompe jamais, si on suit le chemin de la justice."

These speeches were followed by the recital of the personal experiences of a number of Swiss abroad who had suffered greatly by the war and its consequences. A very vivid picture of deprivation and misery deeply impressed the meeting with the determination and tenacity of the victims to obtain redress after all these years. By the unanimous desire of the conference the following resolution was forwarded to the Federal Council:—

"Der elfte Auslandsschweizertag nimmt mit Genugthuung Kenntnis von dem in der Frage der Wiedergutmachung Schweiz. Kriegsschäden durch die Beratungen der nationalrätlichen Kommission erzielten vorläufigen Ergebnis. Die Versammlung hofft, dass es dem hohen Rate gelingen möge, durch Wiederaufnahme seiner Bemühungen im Sinne des Beschlusses der nationalrätlichen Kommission diese für das

Auslandsschweizertum grundsätzlich bedeutungsvolle Angelegenheit einem guten Ende entgegenzuführen. Sie ist insbesondere der Meinung, dass, wenn wider Erwarten die diplomatischen Mittel versagen sollten, die schiedsgerichtliche Behandlung der schweizerischen Ansprüche anzustreben ist. Für diese Erwägung spricht die Tatsache, dass die erwähnten Ansprüche sowohl völkerrechtlich als auch unter dem Gesichtspunkte der Billigkeit hinlänglich berechtigt und begründet sind."

Minister Dinichert, chief of the Foreign Division of the Federal Political Department, sounded a note of caution, when he said that, although not given to pessimism, he would have to warn the assembly against entertaining illusions. The recent failure of two international conferences, one in Paris, the other at the Hague, had clearly shown that the movement of the Völkerrecht was retrograde, especially in so far as the guarantee for life and property of foreigners in countries at war was concerned. At these two conferences Switzerland had been in the forefront of the fight for these rights, just on account of her own very severe losses during the late war. She had declared that the guarantee for these natural rights of a foreigner must be undertaken by the nations, and that no special treaties should be required for this purpose. But the expression of international jurists was not sufficient; what was required was the decision of the various governments. However, he would end his speech on a more hopeful note, assuring the congress of the determination of the Federal Council to continue the fight. "May charity become equity, and equity justice" were Minister Dinichert's closing words.

Mr. Koch, the chairman, closed the discussion with his thanks to all the speakers and reminded the audience of the force of the old Swiss proverb:—"Nid malah gwümt."

7.—Consul Biaggi from Genoa entered a plea on behalf of the emigrated Ticinesi who, according to the cantonal law, lost neither rights nor duties of citizenship. They were classed and regarded as resident citizens and taxable as such. Consequently, they were subject to double taxation, that of their host-state and that of the native canton. The president accepted the plea on behalf of the Secretariat and assured the speaker of its close examination.

8.—The Central Treasurer addressed a warm appeal for funds in favour of the Secretariat and, finally, the sincere thanks of Oberst Feldmann for the magnificent collection in favour of the Nationalspende in 1929 by the N.S.H. At the same time, he took the opportunity of warning the audience of the danger of too much charity which tends to make a people helpless.

SOCIAL SIDE.

The local committee of organization had taken great pains to receive, feed and house its guests in a highly commendable manner. The dinner on Saturday night was held in the blue room of the Mustermesse until long past midnight, and was graced with music, song and a bright little skit on the "WOBA." Needless to say the drummers were there, knocking modern jazz into a cocked hat with their snappy rattle.

At the great banquet in the Stadtcasino on Sunday we were, more than 250 of us, the guests of the hospitable town of Basle. Mr. Motta occupied the seat of honour, and his flaming oratory will be remembered to the end of our days. His speech cannot be summarised but must be given in extenso, nor can the power and charm of his delivery be imparted into an English translation. A host of other speeches delighted the senses to the enjoyment of the thoughtful gift of a "Päckli Stümpe."

Later, a short run by train to Rheinfelden, where a steamer was placed at our disposal to enjoy a pleasant hour on the splendid river. And once more to a simple repast, as the guests of the famous breweries, with more speeches, and fun and song and fraternity.

Truly, this eleventh congress of the Swiss Abroad was worth while, and has made better Swiss of those who were present.

A. FRED. SUTER.

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