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Swiss economic strength, a force which inspires us with confidence even for the gloomy future.

How many a crisis Swiss economy had to overcome! Economic upheavals, political difficulties, martial catastrophies in Foreign markets interrupted the quiet development and often raised doubts about the future. But over and over again these difficulties were mastered. That fact again gives us courage and confidence in the present grave circumstances. Discouragement or dispondency must not be allowed, neither on political nor economic grounds.

It is true that the tendency of economic restrictions which existed already before the war has caused great worries and our hopes were always directed towards greater economic fields for our markets. The liberal commercial policy under which Switzerland so pleasingly developed was gradually abandoned. High customs walls, sharp restrictions and increasing payment difficulties prevented free exchange of commodities. The bi-lateral clearing contracts reduced open communications as these were based on the equalisation of payment balances between two countries. This fact represented to a country which was adapted for a world economy a threatening crippling of its exports. We have worked for an improvement of those conditions, but with no great success. For a long time we have hoped that this improvement should be found in a return to the old liberal commercial policy. This however may prove to be a dream which might cause a rude awakening.

If therefore we wish to reach our goal, we must look for other remedies. A closer economic co-operation in Europe is the best way to do this. And as the necessity for this is felt everywhere it could perhaps be the most obvious expedient. In which manner this co-operation is to take place, based on the independence of the state, will be a problem of post-war time. We are ready to assist in this work.

But to achieve this economic co-operation reforms in the payment arrangements become a necessity. The clearing system which unfortunately will remain with us in some form or other for a long time yet must be improved in such a manner as to be able to overcome a purely bi-lateral clearing. Therein could perhaps be found a certain compensation for the one-time free trade. But co-operation in Europe alone cannot be sufficient for us, we are adapted for a world economy and we cannot bear to be cut off from the sea and from overseas, without falling back economically and culturally. Therefore, besides a greater, better and freer co-operation in Europe, our interest, our hopes and our endeavours are also towards the establishment of World trade and economic relations of Switzerland with oversea.

This is our economic program, this our economic adaptation and it must remain our program to come.

The forms may change, but the goal remains. But I would not do justice to our production if I should not remember at this moment Switzerland's agriculture. This point, however, is generally and more fully dealt with in the autumn at Lausanne. For agriculture the same is to be said as for trade and industry. To judge fairly the accomplishments of our farming one must have travelled abroad and seen for one's self how primitive the cultivation and how much smaller the actual results are in some countries compared with ours, even where conditions for agriculture are immensely better than those prevailing here. This com-

parison forces us to a greater respect for the labour which is required to achieve these results. Quality work again also in this province.

William Tell once told his boy "If one descends from our heights and goes still lower down and follows the rivers one comes to a great open country where the corn grows in wide, lovely fertile plains and the whole country appears like a garden." Tell meant a foreign country, to-day the boy Tell can find the fertile plains which look like a garden in his own country. It is Swiss soil, Helvetic territory. For that we have to thank our agriculture and the Swiss farmer. He deserves equally with the commercial man, the technician and the workman the highest recognition. And to-day doubly so, for to-day we have to get out of our soil as much as we possibly can.

For these reasons the whole of our economy can show itself with pride. The Swiss is a sober, zealous, willing and intelligent worker. He does not consider work a curse, but a blessing. This we will gratefully remember at the anniversary of the Industries Fair, at to-day's festive day of labour.

Basle commemorates to-day its jubilee. It coincides with the federal jubilee year: 650 years of Swiss Confederation. As we enter to-day with fresh energy into the second quarter of a century of Basle's Industries Fair, so we Swiss look back with thanksgiving on the past of the State and with confidence and firm trust into the future of our country and our people, for our faith in victory of good over evil is firm and our will for self-assertion is unshaken. Now and for ever.

J. J. S.

#### SCHWEIZERISCHES BUNDESFEIER-KOMITEE

Zürich, anfangs Februar 1941.

#### An die Schweizervereine im Ausland.

Sehr geehrter Herr Präsident!

Liebe Landsleute!

Seit Jahren gelangt unser Komitee regelmässig um diese Zeit an die Miteidgenossen im Ausland, um sie zur Mitwirkung an der kommenden Bundesfeier-Aktion einzuladen. Dieser Appell hat immer ein gutes Echo gefunden.

Das haben die Erfahrungen des vergangenen Jahres wiederum bewiesen; an die 1,338,000 Franken, die als Reinertrag unserer Bundesfeier-Sammlung "für unsere Soldaten" abgeliefert werden können, haben unsere Landsleute jenseits der Grenzpfähle namhaft beige-steuert; 6,158 Franken als Gegenwerte von Abzeichen und 12,000 Franken an Spenden sind uns von dorthier bis jetzt zugekommen. Wir anerkennen das um so mehr, als viele Schweizerkolonien direkt vom Kriege betroffen, und auch alle andern wirtschaftlich mehr oder weniger stark in Mitleidenschaft gezogen worden sind. Zahlreiche Sendungen von Abzeichen haben auch, wie wir nachträglich erfahren mussten, infolge der Kriegswirren ihren Bestimmungsort gar nicht oder nicht rechtzeitig erreicht.

Für diese Unterstützung, die uns auch im vergangenen Jahr wieder in so reichem Masse von den Schweizern im Ausland zuteil geworden ist, sprechen wir Ihnen allen auch an dieser Stelle unsern besten Dank aus. Dank werden Ihnen auch alle jene Soldaten und ihre Familien wissen, die von dieser Sammlung profitieren. Die kommende Bundesfeier-Aktion steht im Zeichen der Gedenkfeier an die vor 650 Jahren erfolgte Gründung unserer Schweizerischen Eidgen-

nossenschaft. Sie will mithelfen, die Erfahrungen und Lehren, die sich aus einem Rückblick auf die Geschichte unseres Landes ergeben, für die Zukunft nutzbringend und fruchtbar zu machen und sie ins Volk hinaus tragen. Die Geschichtswissenschaften, die uns diese Kenntnis vermitteln, sollen am Ertragnis der Sammlung teilhaben. Desgleichen auch die Schuljugend. Diese soll in einem kurzen, geschichtlichen Ueberblick, der allen Schulkindern als Jubiläumsgeschenk kostenlos verabfolgt wird, darüber belehrt werden, was diese sechseinhalb Jahrhunderte unserem Vaterland an Wohl und Wehe gebracht haben, was das Gedeihen des Staates fördert, was ihm schadet.

Die Zweckbestimmung der Sammlung wird so einer reinen Kulturaufgabe dienstbar gemacht.

Das mag in einem Zeitpunkt, da die materielle Not täglich grösser wird und immer weitere Kreise zieht, überraschen. Der Vorstand des Bundesfeier-Komitees verschliesst sich dieser Erkenntnis nicht; er musste sich aber sagen, dass wir ob der Sorge um die materielle Wohlfahrt unseres Landes auch die Wahrung seiner Kulturgüter nicht übersehen dürfen; sie sind für den Bestand und die Entwicklung eines modernen Staatswesens ebenso bedeutsam, wie die Befriedigung der leiblichen Bedürfnisse seiner Bewohner.

Die zahlreichen Schwierigkeiten machen im Verkehr mit vielen Schweizerkolonien die Benützung der Luftpost notwendig. Aus diesem Grunde ist es nicht möglich, dieser Sendung wie üblich ein Musterabzeichen, das ziemlich schwer ist, beizugeben. Das Abzeichen ist eine naturgetreue Wiedergabe des Schwyzer Siegels im ersten Bundesbrief von 1291. Es ist das Symbol für die vor 650 Jahren erfolgte Grundsteinlegung zu unserm Schweizerhaus. Der Preis beträgt wie gewohnt 1 Schweizerfranken.

Wenn Sie uns Ihren Bedarf an solchen Abzeichen *rechtzeitig* bekannt geben, dürfen wir wohl hoffen, dass die Sendungen ihren Bestimmungsort auch erreichen; wir werden uns angelegen sein lassen, den Versand möglichst frühzeitig vorzunehmen.

Wir sehen darum Ihrem baldigen Bericht gerne entgegen und begrüßten Sie inzwischen

mit vorzüglicher Hochachtung

SCHWEIZERISCHES BUNDESFEIER-KOMITEE  
Für den Geschäftsausschuss

Mario Musso                      Dr. J. Brandenberger  
Der Präsident:                      Der Sekretär:

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## EDITOR'S POST-BAG.

Many of our readers continue to place the Editor under an obligation and we acknowledge receipt of the following letters with grateful thanks:

\* \* \*

Johannesburg.  
April 3rd, 1941.

The Editor of the "Swiss Observer."

My dear Boehringer,

We were very pleased indeed at the reappearance of the "Swiss Observer," which we missed very much. We did not know for some time if the copies had been lost through enemy actions as a good many of our letters have been lost in that way, and it was not until the last number arrived that we heard you had been bombed almost out of existence. However, the "Swiss Observer" has apparently, fortunately, a good reserve strength of recovery, and we send you our heartiest congratulations on your safe escape, and wish you the very best for the future.

I do not notice anywhere in the paper the amount of the subscription, and I have forgotten it. (I am getting old and forget things) but I am sending you herewith a cheque for £3.0.0 which you will please credit me with for future subscriptions. I take it I shall see one of these days how far that carries me.

Our son Victor is up North. About two months ago he was at Lake Rudolph, and a month ago he wrote to us from Mogadischor, so by now I should not be surprised if he was at Addis Abbaba or in Asmara. He is in the South African Engineering Corps, and has been with the units who built the bridges over the Juba River in Italian Somaliland, therefore he follows in Father's footsteps who in his younger days was a Pontonier in the Swiss Army and was in 1914 during the mobilisation of the Swiss Army misused as a Pioneer Projecteur and stationed up in the Jura Mountains — a real insult to a Pontonier.

The younger son Rudolph has just completed a course as Platoon Sergt. in the Military School near Pretoria, and as the "Marcaronis" are now pretty well beaten it will probably not be necessary for him to go up North, as they call it here.

Hoping that you and your family as well as our friend Stauffer are all in good health.

With kindest regards from house to house.

Yours sincerely,

*Theophile Schaerer.*

P.S. — The only News we get here from Switzerland are those contained in your famous "Swiss Observer."

\* \* \*

(The large circle of devoted friends which the Editor's "double" left behind in the London Colony will wish to join us in wishing Mr. and Mrs. Schaerer continued health and happiness and the best of good luck to their two sons.)

\* \* \*

11th May, 1941.

Swiss Observer,

Dear Sir,

I am always very pleased to receive the "Swiss Observer" with all its news from the Old Country and would like therefore to send a small contribution (£1.0.0) for its upkeep. This, of course, does not include the ordinary contribution which may be sent for, any time it becomes due. I should have liked to send