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NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE.

Open Meeting.

(Tuesday, June 17th, 7p.m., Vienna Café.)

Our efforts at facilitating the formulation of views in our Colony on important Swiss questions by providing a neutral platform for open discussions amongst all Swiss in London have not remained unnoticed in Switzerland. For the first time we have been approached by the Secrétariat des Suisses à l'étranger with an invitation to contribute our views on an important question particularly concerning the Swiss abroad, before new legislation is enacted on the subject by the Federal Parliament.

Is Dual Nationality Desirable?

That is the question put before us. Is the present position, permitting a Swiss to acquire another nationality without relinquishing his Swiss nationality, satisfactory? Is it right, that children of Swiss parents born in England can pick and chose all their lives which country's privileges and obligations suit them best in any given situation? Is a divided Loyalty not a contradiction in terms? Should the legal position be maintained as it is or revised? If so, in what way? How can abuses of dual nationality be stopped without endangering the inestimable asset of the friendly disposition of so many bearers of dual nationality towards our country?

Obviously these posers are of the greatest direct interest to the Swiss Colony in England. They concern many amongst us personally and they touch on a vital interest of the colonies abroad as well as of the home-country. It is clear that we ought to be consulted in such questions and that no legislation should be passed without taking into account the views expressed by the Swiss colonies abroad. And we are being consulted in good time. We are being given the opportunity to have our say in the matter in good time. We must not fail to make proper use of it. It is our duty to give the advice asked for.

The London group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique has approached all other societies for the views of their members, which should be suitably analysed and summarised to give a faithful cross-section of opinion in our Colony. Further the N.S.H. is inviting all compatriots to an open discussion of the question at the next meeting on June 17th (details see advert.). We count on a full representation of the various opinions likely to be held. At the same meeting preparations for the next

Journée des Suisses à l'étranger

will be discussed, time permitting. It will take place at Berne, September 5-7, 1947. The main subjects

to be dealt with at the "Auslandschweizertag" are:

1. What the Swiss abroad expect from the mother-country?
2. How to rejuvenate the colonies abroad and stimulate national allegiance among the young?
3. What may the mother-country expect from the Swiss abroad?

No doubt our Colony could usefully contribute to the discussion of these important questions. We are asked, however, to suggest other questions for discussion at the Conference of the Swiss Abroad, if there is a strong desire for it. All compatriots are therefore invited to come to the next Open Meeting of the N.S.H. on June 17th if they wish to submit their views or suggestions for the Berne Conference.

Two representatives from each Colony are invited to the Berne Conference. It is hoped that suggestions as to their choice or the best method of choosing them may be forthcoming at the Open Meeting.

Helvetica.

* * *
Secrétariat des Suisses
à l'étranger.

36 Bundesgasse,
Berne, Switzerland.

Auslandschweizer-
Sekretariat.

February, 1947.

To the Swiss Clubs and Colonies in English-speaking
countries.

Dear Compatriots.

The question of the *Right of Dual Nationality* will come under discussion shortly; as a modification of the nationality Laws is planned in our mother country. We are confident that you have, in the course of time, acquired some valuable experience on this question, experience which could be of great help to the legislator in his work of drafting certain paragraphs. We would, therefore, ask you to let us know your ideas and conceptions in the matter of dual nationality, and we hereby submit several possible solutions for your consideration.

1. The present position.

Swiss citizenship and nationality are acquired either by birth, if the father is a Swiss citizen, or by naturalization. This nationality is imprescriptible; it can, however, be renounced by a written declaration of alienage and the consequent release from citizenship by the competent authorities. Deprivation of nationality by a decision of our Federal Council, was introduced several years ago in cases of serious offence against the Confederation.

Thus, a Swiss who acquires the nationality of a foreign State, retains on principle his original right

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of citizenship, unless as in the case of Great Britain, the country adopting him makes the relinquishment of his Swiss nationality a condition of naturalization. This rule holds good for all his descendants, but does not apply to the automatic acquisition of British nationality by birth on British territory.

On the other hand, Swiss women who marry foreigners can retain their Swiss citizenship only if they do not acquire the nationality of their husbands by marriage.

2. Some possibilities of modification.

(a) Inconsistency of the Swiss nationality with that of another country: Whoever acquires a foreign nationality would automatically lose Swiss nationality.

(b) Declaration of Option: Whoever acquires, or has acquired a second nationality, would have to give a written statement to the effect that he or she desires to retain Swiss nationality. By neglecting to make such a statement one would lose the Swiss nationality.

(c) The Swiss person who acquires a foreign nationality, will retain Swiss nationality if he does not formally renounce it. He should, however, be obliged to register at the competent Swiss Consulate and to renew this registration regularly. He or she who neglects to renew this registration would lose Swiss citizenship. The same would hold good for the descendants also.

(d) Legislation might also pay regard to the domicile of the person possessing two nationalities. For example, special Regulations could be laid down for nationals of two countries who are domiciled in neighbouring States (or in Europe and the Mediterranean countries). These regulations would differ from those applicable to Swiss citizens living in other countries.

With regard to this question, you may possibly consider other solutions or combinations as appropriate. We should be much obliged if you would also let us know whether you consider measures intended to prevent a further increase of cases of dual nationality or the abrogation of this phenomenon, to be in the interest of the Confederation. We could imagine, that above all in your group of countries, such measures might alienate from Switzerland a large number of well-meaning persons, who may have been citizens of another country for generations, while maintaining certain connections and sympathies, which find their expression in the retention of their hereditary citizenship.

It cannot be the purpose of Legislation to trifl with sympathies existing abroad, by clumsy procedure on the question of dual nationality. For Switzerland, as a small State, very much depends on her friends all over the world, whose comprehension of and sympathy for the principles governing our Home and Foreign Policy, may aid us in maintaining our independence and existence.

We should be grateful for a frank expression of your opinion on these problems and we can assure you that your proposals will meet with great interest in the mother country.

With our kindest regards, we remain, dear fellow Countrymen,

Yours faithfully,
Sectrétariat des Suisses à l'étranger.
E. Mörgeli. A. Briod.

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE. Childrens' Outing to Great Missenden, Bucks.

At various meetings of the N.S.H. the wish was expressed, that outings should be arranged for Swiss children, to give them a chance to get to know one another and to pass some happy hours in a Swiss atmosphere. Our compatriots, Mr. J. and Mrs. S. Dubs, of Great Missenden, Bucks., very kindly offered to receive and give tea to about 30 children, free of charge. This offer was gladly accepted by the N.S.H. and the Council charged one of its members, Mr. R. Weist, to make the necessary arrangements.

On Sunday, the 8th of June last, Baker Street Station experienced, as a result of these arrangements, an invasion of Swiss children, brought there by their parents and by the Revs. Blum, Lanfranchi and Pradervand. Here also Miss S. Bachofen joined us, who had kindly consented to look after the youngest members of the party.

It was indeed a happy throng of youngsters — full of anticipation of a good day's outing — that stormed the train at 1 o'clock. We passed through some glorious country beyond Harrow and Rickmansworth, and the sun was still shining when we arrived at our destination, Great Missenden. Half an hour's walk, through lovely wooded country, brought us to Heath Farm at South Heath, where we were received by our charming hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Dubs and their daughter. First of all the children were shown all the animals on the farm. They were especially interested in some chicks that were hatched two days previously. Also some goslings that were under the care of an old hen, as mother goose had been unkind to them. The rabbits also attracted a great deal of attention and the cow, a new arrival, was admired by all. Then there were some round games in which all joined, and presently we were told that tea was ready. And what a marvellous spread it was. The hearty appetite of the children soon made short work of the lovely sandwiches, cakes, pastries, bread and butter and jam, but still more were brought on to the tables till the children had no more room for any more. Then all had a further surprise when Mr. Wasmer, another member of the Council of the N.S.H., started playing his accordion and soon everyone was singing the songs of our beloved home country.

All too soon the time arrived when we had to take our departure from Heath Farm, but not before three resounding cheers were given to Mr. and Mrs. Dubs for their splendid hospitality. Arrived back at Baker Street the parents again took charge of their children, whose smiling faces proved what a happy time they had.

This first outing was such a great success that a whole day outing will be arranged for Saturday, July 19th, to Dorking and Box Hill, to start about 10.30 a.m. and return at about 6.30 p.m. and to which all the children of the Swiss Colony are heartily invited. Further details will be published in the next issue of the Swiss Observer.

In conclusion the writer wishes to express his thanks to all his collaborators for their untiring efforts in making the children happy and their future collaboration in such outings will be most welcome.

R. Weist.