

Reasons for the proposal to form an organisation of the Swiss abroad

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REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL TO FORM AN ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD.

1. It is an old complaint of the Swiss Abroad that they do not have sufficient influence in the home-country to ensure sufficient consideration being given to their wishes, needs and complaints, nor to their suggestions and advice. The military tax is only the most striking of many examples. How many decades old is our complaint that the military tax in its present form is antiquated and irritating, and should be speedily revised, if not eliminated, in the mutual interest of the home country and the Swiss Abroad. To this day nothing positive has been done in this matter.

2. This is, however, largely the fault of the Swiss Abroad themselves, as they have never taken the necessary steps to speak with one voice and to assert their views effectively.

3. The formation of an Organisation of the Swiss Abroad is obviously the only way to remedy this situation, an Organisation composed by the Swiss Abroad and thereby capable of speaking authoritatively on their behalf.

4. But not only for the better care of our own interests should this Organisation be formed, but also as a means of enabling the Swiss Abroad to be of the maximum usefulness to the home country, by becoming a living link between the Swiss at home and abroad, helping to cultivate patriotic feelings, lending its assistance and advice to the home country based on the intimate knowledge of the foreign countries, which so many Swiss politicians, parliamentarians and even business people are lacking.

5. The Swiss Abroad feel a stronger need than ever for the spiritual backing of the far off homeland and closer contacts. The times are desperately serious. Switzerland should no longer leave the Swiss Abroad to themselves nor neglect their value to Switzerland. They are the best friends of Switzerland — always. They need sympathetic understanding and handling and support as regards the cultivation of the love of the home country especially amongst those born abroad. Who knows whether Switzerland will not one day be glad of every good friend in the world. Many Swiss Abroad have intimately experienced the first and the second world war, from both of which the home country was happily spared. The Swiss Abroad could therefore make up for this certain lack in the treasure of

experience of those at home, if not through representatives in Parliament then by means of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad. We should like to crown the noble work for the Swiss Abroad begun by the Nouvelle Société Helvétique at home by shifting the emphasis, participation and influence more on to the Swiss Abroad themselves or rather by providing on our part an organisation as a counterpart to that existing in Switzerland for the benefit of the Swiss Abroad, as a counterweight and instrument of canalised influence.

"ICH BIN EIN SCHWEIZERKNABE."

I am a Highland laddie,
I love with all my heart
Those mountains where th'Almighty
Has traced our freedom's chart.
The glory of the mountain side,
It draws me on, in all its pride,
I am a Highland laddie,
I love my native land

I am a Highland laddie,
I'm fond of mirth and fun,
We'll let no sadness darken
The brightness of the sun.
O hear the cowbell's home'ly sound
That rings from hills and vales around.
I am a Highland laddie,
I love my native land.

I am a Highland laddie,
All mankind I befriend,
Simplicity with kindness
Within our hearts we blend
How otherwise could we contrive
To keep our joyful mood alive?
I am a Highland laddie,
I love my native land.

I am a Highland laddie,
I will not suffer shame,
For many a lance was broken
To uphold our good name.
A churl is he who'd be so bold
As to deny the rights we hold.
I am a Highland laddie,
I love my native land.

(Translated by J.J.F.S.)

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