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spite of some objection by the Military Department and some Cantons, the period during which a Swiss has to reside abroad before the tax is dropped, has been reduced from eight to three years, dating back to 1st January, 1974.

Thanks to a further chance for Swiss abroad being able to join the voluntary Old-Age Insurance and no doubt to widespread information in the *Review*, 13,000 new members had joined by the end of 1973, which represents an increase of 50%. There are now 39,000 members. Further improvements in benefits, etc. were still being studied by a special commission.

It was also reported that although thanks to the Commission of the Swiss Abroad, the Swiss in Italy had been consulted regarding a new double taxation agreement between the two countries, results were not very satisfactory. But at least the principle of consultation had been achieved, small consolation to compatriots in Italy!

An extremely interesting report was given regarding the Swiss in Eastern Europe and Russia. Their numbers are extremely small, i.e. 48 in USSR, 79 in Poland, 49 in Czechoslovakia, 55 in Hungary, 37 in Rumania, 15 in Bulgaria, 115 in Yugoslavia and none in Albania. The only community of any size is in East Germany where 1,473 Swiss are registered. In the total of 1,850 all diplomats, students, journalists and Swissair staff are included. It was agreed that the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad could not establish any contacts, but Embassies and Consulates should make it known that the Organisation is there in case of need. Incidentally, the leader of

the Youth Service reported that quite a number of young Swiss from Eastern Germany attended the Youth Camps every year, and that they were amongst the most grateful participants.

The next Assembly of the Swiss Abroad will take place in Neuchâtel from 23rd to 25th August.

M.M.

#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

**CITY SWISS CLUB:** Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, 23rd April, 6.30 for 7 p.m. at the Dorchester. The date of this function was stated incorrectly as March in the last issue. Please note correct date.

**ANGLO-SWISS SOCIETY:** Dinner on Thursday, 25th April, 7.30 for 8 p.m., at the Portman Hotel (ballroom Entrance: George St.). Sir Joh Wolfenden, former Director for the British Museum, will speak on "British's Image of Switzerland - Dream or Reality".

**SCHWEIZERBUND (SWISS CLUB):** Friday, 26th April, Presscala Club, 72 Fleet Street, London EC4. Annual General Meeting, 6.00 p.m. Dinner 7.30 p.m.

**SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY:** Wednesday, 24th April, Social Evening, Swiss Films and Refreshments.

**SWISS CLUB LIVERPOOL:** Friday, 3rd May. Card Evening at Hotel Dresden, New Chester Rd, Bromborough.

**SWISS CLUB EDINBURGH:** Friday, 26th April, 7.30 p.m. Skittle Match between Edinburgh and Dunfermline at Sheep's Heid Inn, Duddingston.

**NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE,** Thursday, 2nd May 7 p.m. Swiss Embassy, Open Meeting - Talk in English by Dr. Brigitte Geiser, Berne on "THE SWISS ALPHORN - NOT ONLY AN ATTRACTION FOR TOURISTS, BUT AN ANCIENT MUSICAL INSTRUMENT" - illustrated by slides and recordings.

Friday, 17th May - Annual General Meeting of Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK.

Sunday, 26th May - ASSEMBLY OF THE SWISS CHURCH IN LONDON - 79 Endell Street, WC2 - 10.30 a.m. Annual General Meeting - 11.15 a.m. Divine Service, The Rev. M. Pradervand. This will be followed by a meal. (Please notify one of the Ministers).

Sunday, 16th June - GOLDEN JUBILEE OF GERMAN-SPEAKING PARISH OF THE SWISS CHURCH IN LONDON - Family Outing to Ashburnham Place with a Service of Thanksgiving at the Chapel.

22nd to 25th August - ASSEMBLY OF THE SWISS ABROAD - Neuchâtel.

Saturday, 2nd November - SWISS CHURCHES BAZAAR.



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