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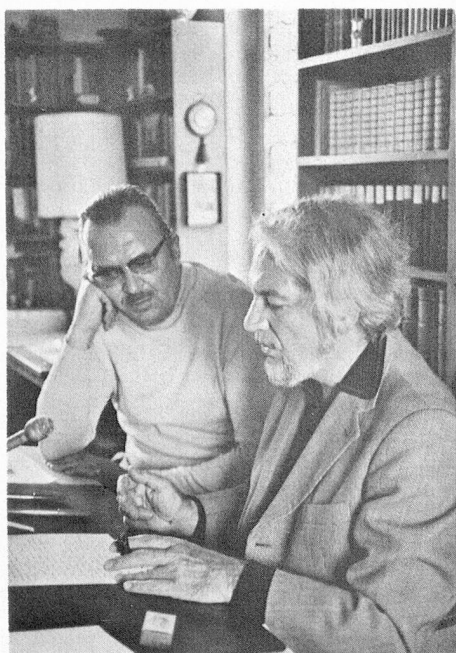
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'PAPA' BURKHARD SCORES A CHRISTMAS HIT



Paul Burkhard (right) with Lance Tschannen, head of Swiss Broadcasting Corporation's Transcription Service, at the composer's home in Zell, Kt. Zürich.

Paul Burkhard, the Swiss composer who achieved worldwide fame with his 1939 hit "O Mein Papa", is now winning an international reputation of a different kind — as a writer of religious music for children.

Last Christmas saw the release by the Transcription Service of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation in Berne of the first recorded English version of his Nativity play, "Zeller Weihnacht" — Christmas at Zell.

Written originally by Mr. Burkhard "for the children of my village", the work has since proved so popular that versions now exist in six languages. SBC's Transcription Service has distributed the recording to more than 200 radio stations

in the United States, Britain and elsewhere. Several thousand other stations around the world have broadcast excerpts. And negotiations are under way in Switzerland for the release of the English version commercially.

Taking part in SBC's English recording (under the direction of the 63-year-old composer) were more than 50 children from a dozen nations.

All of them were between eight and 13 years of age and are pupils at the Inter Community School in Zumikon, near Zürich, which has as one of its major aims the promotion of international understanding. About half the children were from the United States, and the others come from Canada, Britain, Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden, France, Austria, Israel, Cuba, Spain and Switzerland itself.

The instrumental accompaniment

was provided by musicians from the light orchestra of the German-Swiss Radio, under the direction of Hans Moeckel.

The story of the "Zeller Weihnacht" Nativity play began in 1960 when Paul Burkhard, having decided to leave behind the increasing pressures and pollution of the big city life, moved 30 miles from his native Zürich to the tiny village of Zell.

"It was a decision," he recalls, "which was to change my life-style and my work. No sooner had I moved than I was asked by the people of Zell if I could write a small Nativity play for the local children to perform in the village church that Christmas. So I wrote a simple version of the Nativity story in Swiss-German dialect. I had no big plans for "Zeller Weihnacht". It was just for the children of my village . . ."

Since then, however, the work has



The village of Zell, near Zürich.



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been translated into High German, English, French, Swedish, Spanish and even Arabic. It has been performed in churches throughout Switzerland and has also been produced on TV and on records.

Paul Burkhard has since followed up his "Zeller Weihnacht" with similar religious musical plays, all of which have been performed first by the children of Zell.

Paul Burkhard feels that "Christmas

has lost much of its original meaning. Even very early in my life the commercial aspect of Christmas made me sad. Children today see in Christmas, above all gifts, a party, good food . . . I think we must give them something more, the real deeper meaning of the birth of Christ.

"Christmas to me means exactly what I am trying to tell the children with my plays about the Nativity — the universal message of the coming of Christ and goodwill among all men!"

Too few doctors

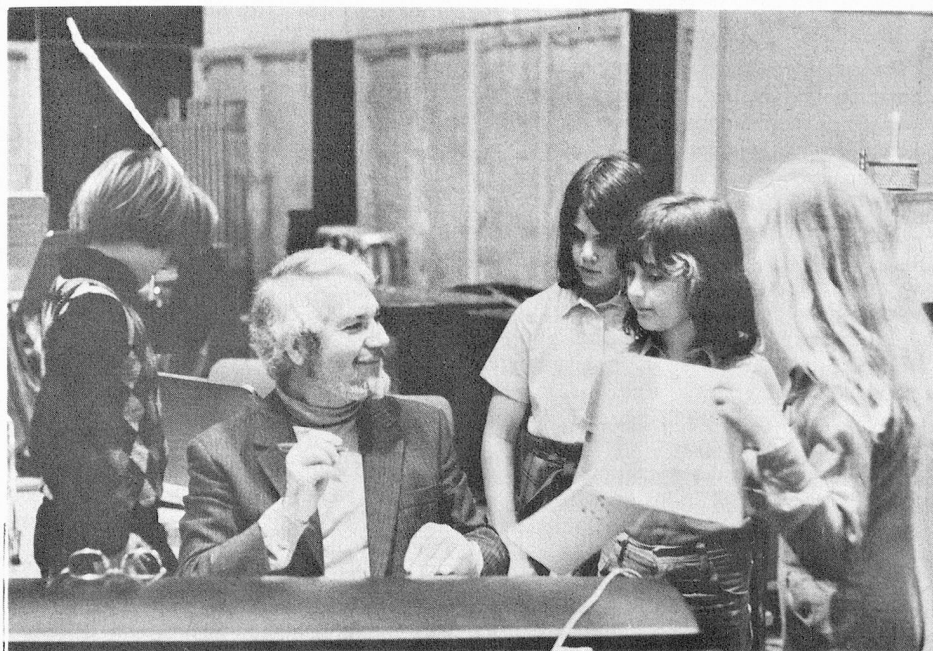
Figures issued by the Swiss Medical Federation show that 60 per cent of the country's doctors are now specialists and the trend is growing.

The Federation's president maintains that the right ratio should be 85:15 in favour of general practitioners.

Specialists, however, earn more and do not in general have the inconveniences of night calls and house visits. Hence the shortage of GPs.

Private enterprise medical centres have been opened in many of the principal cities over the last decade. They provide most forms of treatment short of admission to hospital and are staffed largely by foreign doctors who would not otherwise be allowed to work in Switzerland, except in hospitals. Perhaps therein lies some alleviation of the problem.

WGS

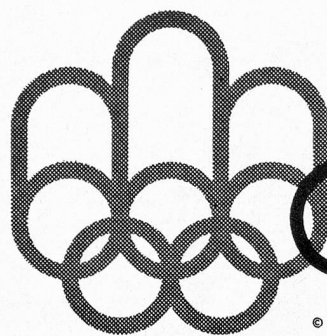


Paul Burkhard with children of the Inter-Community School of Zumikon (Zürich) during the English-language production of "A Village Christmas at Zell".

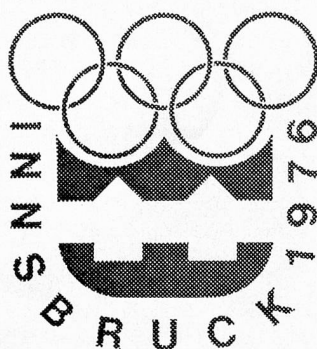
SALE OF TWO CITIES

Free Swiss cheese and chocolate proved a big crowd-puller at Hanover main station recently when the cities of Lausanne and Berne participated in a one-week promotion to publicise the West German Federal Railways' new winter programme of inter-city weekend rail tours.

Both Swiss cities are included in the programme from northern Germany this winter — Lausanne for the first time.



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