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SWISS WELFARE OFFICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE— Annual Report 1976

NEWS FROM THE COLONY

1976 has been a particularly worrying year for the President and the Committee. In January we received preliminary notice that our annual Federal Subsidy was to be reduced by more than 50 per cent to Sw.Fr. 7,500 — as part of the Swiss Government's economic measures.

Our budget for the year showed that we could survive until December 1976 by using our reserves, but what of 1977 with no reserves on which to fall back? We notified our main contributors, the "Swiss Benevolent Society", "Freundinnen Junger Mädchen" and "Pro Filia" but none was able to increase its contribution.

A meeting was arranged with the Swiss Ambassador, who was both understanding and appreciative of our anxiety. He undertook to write to the Confederation and assured us of the Embassy's continuing help and co-operation.

However worrying our financial outlook was, the work at the Welfare Office could not have been carried out without the continued support of the Federal Authorities, "Freundinnen Junger Mädchen", "Pro Filia", the "Swiss Benevolent Society", many branches of the "Schweizerischer Verband Evangelischer Frauenbund" and a generous donation from the "Schweizerischer Kirchenbund".

Thanks to the Swiss Benevolent's Society's generosity we have again had the benefit of a rent free office. We have been truly grateful for all this support. Nevertheless in spite of the rate of exchange remaining in our favour and only moderate salary increases, we have only been able to balance our accounts by falling back on our reserves which as a result have been greatly reduced.

In spite of all these problems it was still business as usual for the Welfare Office. We were very sorry to lose Miss Rose Marie Zumofen, our social worker for the past two-and-a-half years, who returned to Switzerland. We would like to express our gratitude for all her devoted work, enthusiasm and understanding which gave the Welfare Office a new dimension and sense of purpose. We wish her every success in her new job.

Fortunately we were able to find a replacement for her almost immediately, Mrs. Ursula McCarthy, a qualified doctor of Medicine married to an Englishman,

who started work in April. She quickly adapted herself to the job, established good working contacts and is enthusiastic about her work. Being a doctor has enabled her to escort medical cases back to Switzerland on several occasions, which has been a great advantage in reducing the complicated arrangements normally required by the airlines and avoiding undue delay.

We have again been able to share a secretary with the Swiss Benevolent Society which has proved a very successful arrangement and we are most grateful to Miss M. Räss for fulfilling this role so satisfactorily.

We must also express our thanks to Mrs. A. R. Sharp of the Swiss Benevolent Society who has, as always, given us help and advice whenever we have needed it, for which we are most grateful. Her kindness and wide experience are of enormous benefit to us.

We would also like to thank the staff of the Swiss Embassy, the Ministers and helpers in the Swiss Churches in London, Miss Alder, the Warden of the Swiss Hostel for Girls, the employment agencies both here and in Switzerland, the Swiss Benevolent Society, Swissair and British Airways, numerous Government Departments and the many other organisations and individuals who have helped us during the year.

During the year there has been no lack of demanding cases, usually of the kind which young people try to escape from their problems in Switzerland, only to find they have brought them with them; or parents trying to avoid responsibility by exporting their problematical children. In some of the more serious cases they have had to be escorted back to Switzerland. Others have been satisfactorily resolved by finding them more suitable environments such as a new school or a more sympathetic family.

On the whole the agencies, with which we are in close contact, have been co-operative in helping to find suitable families. They realise, as we do, that a family can be found for almost any girl, provided people are willing to search long and hard enough. The more difficult the girl the longer it takes. While the search goes on, it is often necessary to find a temporary home.

Fortunately there is usually a room in the Swiss Hostel, and we are very

grateful that the warden there is always willing to keep an eye on, or lend a hand to anyone in trouble. Mrs. McCarthy pays weekly visits to the Hostel where any of the Swiss residents can meet her.

In between the time-consuming cases there has been a vigorous and refreshing flow of enquiries about schools, accommodation, agencies, work permits and many other matters. On the whole we have the impression that the majority of young Swiss people who come to England are well able to look after themselves and enjoy their stay.

The au pairs are not as well educated as they used to be. They generally know less English and tend to stay for shorter periods, but they are more aware of their rights and therefore less open to exploitation. Probably because of the economic situation in Switzerland, more older girls now come here to look for au pair work, the only work legally open to them without a permit. Because they are more experienced and used to independence, they often have more difficulty than the younger ones in fitting into families.

We also have many visits from students who present us with a few problems and together with the many happy and successful au pairs provide encouraging evidence that Switzerland still exports clever and enterprising young people who have much to offer.

THE WORKERS WERE:

Mrs. M. Lyster
Hon. Secretary

Mrs. U. McCarthy
Social Worker

The Members of the Committee of the SWO for young people for 1976 were:

Mrs. B. Fritschi
Mrs. M. H. Ellis
Mrs. G. Gyssler
Mrs. E. R. Cottet
Mrs. M. Lyster
Mrs. R. Rast
Mrs. G. Ficker
Mrs. E. Kaeufeler
Mrs. B. Kaluza
Consul Ch. Glauser
Father P. Bossard
Reverend U. Stefan
Pasteur R. Renoud
Mr. B. Simon

Hon. President
Hon. Vice-President
President
Vice-President
Hon. Secretary
Hon. Treasurer

THOSE WHO SOUGHT THE HELP OF THE SOCIETY BREAK DOWN THUS:

	1976	1975	1974
New Cases	261	284	248
Receptions	418	628	367
Visits	40	76	134
Actions	28	62	63
Escorts	11	11	16
Letters written	681	774	667
Phone calls received	1,187	1,118	1,124
Phone calls made	618	899	1,013

The 261 new cases of which 24 were young Swiss men consisted of:
 207 German speaking of which 36 were Welfare Cases
 49 French speaking of which 14 were Welfare Cases
 3 Italian speaking of which 1 was a Welfare Case
 2 others

AND THE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS:

- 19 Difficulties with employer or agency
- 8 Financial Problems
- 5 Physical Illness
- 4 Drug Problems (1 attempted suicide)
- 3 Mental Illness (2 repatriated)
- 3 Boyfriend Problems
- 3 Moral Support
- 2 Missing People
- 1 Pregnancy (repatriated)
- 1 Matrimonial difficulty
- 1 Exploitation by Landlord
- 1 School Problem

OBITUARY

MR. F. SOMMER
 3 The Chestnuts
 66 Harestone Valley Road,
 Caterham, Surrey CR3 6HE

It is with great regret that we have to advise our readers of the death of Mr. Sommer on Friday, 24th June 1977. A full obituary will appear in our next issue.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

The following couples will be celebrating wedding anniversaries: On 1st August, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Wetter will have been married 53 years. On 5th of the month, Mr. and Mrs. Kaluza will celebrate their 29th wedding anniversary, and on 11th August, Mr. and Mrs. V. Bataillard will have been married for 58 years. The 22nd is the 56th wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. H. Suter, and Mr. and Mrs. E. Zwicky will have been married for 55 years on 28th of the month.

The 2nd August is the birthday of Miss C. Milesi, and also of Mr. V. Bataillard who will be 96. Mrs. Schmid (of Glendower fame) will have her birthday on 6th August, the same day as Dr. H. Rast who will be 86. Mr. E. Hofstetter will have his 81st birthday on 8th of the month, and Mrs. T. Senn will have her birthday on 9th August. Mrs. A. Bachofen will be 77 and Mrs. M. Meier 63 on 10th August. The 14th is the birthday of Mrs. J. Gysin (83), and Mr. F. Good has his 77th birthday on 15th August. Mr. W. Frick will be 88 on 19th August.

To all these readers and any others who will be celebrating birthdays and anniversaries in the near future, we extend best wishes and congratulations.

Inn on the Park. After dark

Apart from being quite the most beautiful hotel in London, the Inn on the Park is also quite the most perfect rendezvous. It's the place to meet after dark, after theatre, after a hard day's work, after anything. It also lets you start any evening as you mean to go on. In style.

There's the military splendour of the Vintage Bar. Or the Four Seasons Bar, just large enough to ensure that the only thing that's crushed is the ice in your drink. And speaking of comfort, the Inn on the Park has one of the few really civilised lounges left in London.

In fact, such is the attraction of

starting or concluding any evening at the Inn on the Park, that people naturally wish to spend the middle of it with us as well. For these discerning people we have a delicious alternative.

Lounge



The Vintage Room

The Vintage Room is that rare thing. A sophisticated night spot where you can dine like a king and dance with your hands around your partner, not your ears. Live music and

very much alive atmosphere till 2a.m.

For those for whom gastronomic pleasures are to be taken seriously, there is the Four Seasons Room.

Unquestionably, this is one of Europe's finest restaurants. Created by people who know about good food for the remaining few who really appreciate it. The service is pure magic and the ambience pure Inn on the Park. Try it. After dark.

The Four Seasons Room

Inn on the Park



Hamilton Place, Park Lane, London, W1A 1AZ
 For reservations telephone: 01-499 0888.
 Ample car parking available.