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One for all and all for one?

THIS year we are meeting in the calm and peace of Yverdon-les-Bains, in a setting of beauty and prosperity, in a country which is proud of its tradition and neutrality, proud of being the birthplace of the Red Cross.

One of the richest countries in the world, whose motto is, "One for all and all for one".

Sometimes, alas, we may feel regrettably that the practical application of this fine motto leaves much to be desired and that it stops short at the national boundaries. As we are all aware, our sharing and solidarity have still not reached the internationally accepted level of 1 per cent of the Gross National Product for international co-operation, Switzerland's average contribution at present being 0.19 per cent.

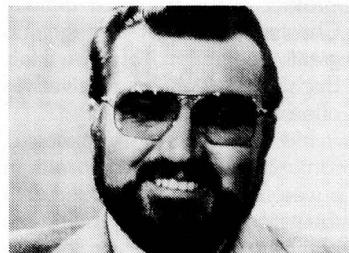
The recent failure of the "Solidarity" referendum, initiated and sponsored by groups close to the churches, which aimed to ensure juster treatment of the migrant workers who contribute so much to the prosperity of our country, has shown yet again just how difficult it is for a people to

feel and practice solidarity.

Many people in Switzerland are seriously concerned about their country's image in the international community. A wealthy country, home of the banks which harbour the capital of people who exploit the Third World; home, too, of some of the transnational corporations whose activities require constant vigilance and supervision.

A country which manufactures and sells armaments on the pretext that other countries do so too, which amounts to saying that what is normal and legal is also moral.

A country which still sends conscientious objectors to prison as common criminals; which is at



Jean Fischer of the World
Council of Churches

THE extent of Switzerland's aid to the world's needy has been attacked – and acclaimed – at an international meeting of church leaders at Yverdon. The criticism and the compliments came from a Swiss, JEAN FISCHER who heads a World Council of Churches' commission concerned with inter-church aid and refugee assistance.

This is what Mr Fischer told delegates from nearly 30 countries.

a loss to know how to respond to the aspirations of its young people who are ill at ease and calling in question the very rigid society offered to them.

Yet at the same time a hospitable country which does its best to welcome its small share of refugees. Which is capable of great generosity when a neighbouring country is devastated by an earthquake.

Which preaches the value of order and hard work. Which wishes to contribute to international peace and harmony and stands aside from all conflicts and from the United Nations.

A country made up of cantons jealously guarding their own sovereignty which has nevertheless managed to create a balance between people of very different languages, cultures, religions and traditions. And which has very diverse and democratic forms of federal, cantonal and popular government.

Switzerland is a country which is both admired and envied – depending on whether one comes from another 'rich' country or a 'poor' one.

Swiss citizens are the world's wealthiest

country theoretically owns – Switzerland led the pack for 1980 with \$14,970.

Denmark was second with \$12,940, Sweden third with \$12,820, West Germany fourth with \$12,450. Luxembourg fifth with \$11,640, Norway sixth with \$11,360, Belgium seventh with \$11,000, Iceland eighth with \$10,980, France ninth with \$10,680.

The United States barely made the top ten with \$10,650.

In per capita consumer expenditures, the Swiss again were champions, spending \$9,560 on average. Then came Denmark, Belgium, the United States, West Germany, Sweden, Iceland,

France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

Switzerland had the lowest inflation rate in 1980 among OCED countries – 4.4 per cent. It was followed by West Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, all below 7 per cent.

Infant mortality in Sweden was the lowest, with 7.3 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1980.

Although ranking 12th lowest in infant mortality rates, the United States had the most children between the ages of 15 and 19 at school – 75 per cent. Japan was second ahead of Switzerland, Finland, Norway, Netherlands and Canada.

C.F.