

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

**Band:** - (1981)

**Heft:** 1781

**Artikel:** Swiss citizens are the world's wealthiest

**Autor:** C. F.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-688195>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

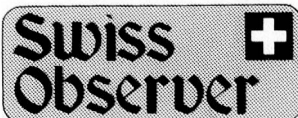
### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 18.04.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

Send the



as a gift to bring pleasure for months to come.

A subscription to the Swiss Observer is a gift that lasts and lasts.

All you need do is fill in the form below and send it to:

Swiss Observer, Europa House, 68 Chester Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 5NY.

Please send the next 12 issues of the Swiss Observer to:

Name .....  
Address .....

My name and address is:

Please enclose the following with the first issue:

This issue of the Swiss Observer (and the following 11 issues) comes with the best wishes of:

I enclose a cheque for £6.90 (for an address in the UK) £7.50 (for Switzerland or other countries overseas).

# 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 birth-place 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 regretfully 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.

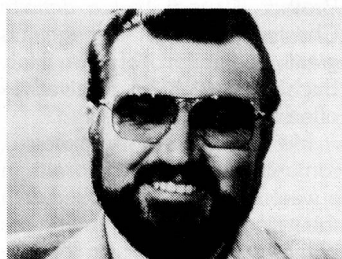
The recent failure of the "Solidarity" referendum, initiated and sponsored by groups close to the churches, which aimed to ensure juster treatment of the migrant workers who contribute so much to the prosperity of our country, has shown yet again just how difficult it is for a people to

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

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

IF you're Mr or Mrs Average and you want to be rich, be Swiss! Because, based on 1980 statistics, the citizens of Switzerland are the wealthiest in the industrialised non-Communist world.

So says the newest book on comparative data on the West published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which guides the economies of 24 nations of Western Europe and North America plus Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

The United States, once richer and healthier than the other 23 countries, fell behind in many of the latest statistics.

For per capita gross national product - the slice of the production pie that each citizen of a

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.