

Welfare Office for Swiss girls

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send to the Secretary, Mr V. Berti, a copy of their latest annual report and/or any rules or other background material in order to improve the Federation's knowledge of the individual societies' activities. Mr Asch suggested that the President of the Federation should automatically become an ex-officio member of all societies.

The President reported that the Committee had not yet selected its fifth member and he proposed that such a member need not be a President of a society. On Professor Inebnit's proposal, seconded by Mr Jaccard, the meeting agreed to this proposal unanimously.

Mr Jaccard, explaining that certain remarks in his speech at the Swiss Mercantile Society's Annual Dinner-Dance had been intended for that particular gathering, regretted that they had appeared in the *Swiss Observer* without having been placed in the correct context.

Mr Schmid stated that the Swiss National Tourist Office had not been informed or consulted about the recent Dutch Wee vat the Swiss Centre and did not consider it to be in Switzerland's interests.

Mr Berti stated that the First of August Committee were faced with serious financial problems. They did try to be Ambassadors of Swiss Culture by presenting, for example, Swiss choral groups but could not afford actually to bring one over from Switzerland. Inflation had eaten into the donations

from Swiss firms and the only society to support them regularly was the Swiss Mercantile Society. This autumn the societies would be invited to tell the Committee what its future terms of reference were to be.

Mr Burri appealed to everyone with influence to obtain more support for the *Swiss Observer*; the Presidents could help to provide material by supplying well in advance details of all their societies' meetings.

Professor Inebnit drew the attention of the meeting to the 27th Landsgemeinde (report last month) of the Swiss in the North held at Hebden Bridge on 15 June. He gave notice of his intention to use this platform to discuss Swiss political and social problems.

Dr Bolliger expressed the view that discussion on such problems would not be desirable, particularly bearing in mind the type of friendly gathering which normally included many English friends and visitors.

Furthermore, discussions of political problems of another country at an informal meeting of this kind should in his view be avoided at all costs. The meeting endorsed Dr Bolliger's view.

In closing the meeting the President reminded all representatives present of the fact that the Federation was in existence to help solve problems arising to the individual societies, but was only able to provide the assistance if the Committee of the Federation are kept informed accordingly.

WELFARE OFFICE FOR SWISS GIRLS IN GREAT BRITAIN

The Annual Report of the Welfare Office for the year 1974

During the past year a considerable number of changes have occurred in the Welfare Office. Miss Zumofen, who started work in December 1973, appreciated at an early stage the need for good public relations.

Not only were the majority of Swiss girls in England unaware of the existence of the Welfare Office but many hostels, agencies, youth centres and other social organisations for foreign girls needed reminding of our existence and as a result Miss Zumofen visited more than 50 such organisations during the year.

In co-operation with the Swiss Church a very successful competition was organised amongst the members of the Youth Club, to design a publicity card for the Welfare Office for distribution to language schools, English and Swiss au pair agencies and young people both here and in Switzerland.

These have proved a great success and we are most grateful to Father Bossard for kindly undertaking the printing of the cards.

During the year the Welfare Office was invited to join Committees of the following organisations:

International Youth Welfare: Our Co-operation with this organisation is rather limited because of Switzerland's policy towards foreign workers.

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Catholic Advisory Service for Au Pairs: As an observing member, after assisting at their Au Pair day for girls from all over the world.

Together with Father Bossard, Miss Zumofen went to Bournemouth to make contact with the people concerned with Swiss girls there and to reassure them of the Welfare Office's willingness to help and assist them in every way it can.

In September Miss Zumofen was invited by the organisation "Freundinnen Junger Maedchen" to address a meeting in Glion near Montreux on the activities of the Welfare Office and in the course of this visit to Switzerland she also visited the various agencies in Zurich with which she has most contact in her work including Frau Stichelberger of Freundinnen Junger Maedchen and Miss Schoenenberger of Pro Filia.

In the autumn, the Committee approved a scheme of redecoration for the Welfare Office and in November Miss Zumofen with the help of Reverend Stefan, Marcel Hauser and other helpers spent a weekend undertaking this voluntarily. With the addition of a new carpet and curtains, the office now has a very friendly and welcoming appearance.

For sometime now a growing need has been felt for the services of the Welfare Office to be made available to young Swiss men as well as girls but this was prevented by the Statutes.

It has, therefore, been decided to take the necessary steps to change the Statutes and the official title of the Welfare Office to enable it to assist all

young Swiss people. The only way in which this can be achieved is to dissolve the Welfare Office for Swiss Girls in Great Britain and reconstitute it with new Statutes under the name of Swiss Welfare Office for young people.

The Hon. Secretary with the guidance of the Charity Commission has taken steps to bring this about.

The Committee was very sorry to hear that Mr Zimmermann had died in August only a few months after his retirement from the Committee. His long and loyal service will be remembered gratefully for a long time.

Once again we would like to express our gratitude for receiving the Annual Federal subsidy from Berne and the continuing support of "Freundinnen Junger Maedchen", "Pro Filia", "Swiss Benevolent Society" as well as the very welcome donations received from the various branches of the "Schweizerischer Verband Evangelischer Frauenhilfe".

Other financial gifts were also greatly appreciated. Due to this loyal support and the favourable rate of exchange, it has once again been possible to maintain a satisfactory bank balance. A further reason for this is that our Social Worker is not paid a comparable salary with that paid to a social worker in Switzerland.

The work undertaken by the Social Worker included the following:

	1974	1973	Differences
Receptions	367	218	+149
Visits to girls	84	17	+ 67
New cases	248	165	+ 83
Welfare cases	46	37	+ 9

The range of problems dealt with included:

Girls under 17 sent to England by a psychologist and a Social Worker in Switzerland.

Young visitors who had run away from home.

Severe drug cases.

Divorce case.

Girl with a coloured boyfriend.

Cases of home sickness.

Repatriation.

Immigration case.

Unmarried mother.

Lesbians.

Court cases (shoplifting, damage, theft).

Hospital cases.

Car accident.

Odd behaviour.

Pregnancy.

Advice on abortion.

Disputes with employers.

Mental hospital cases.

Stolen luggage.

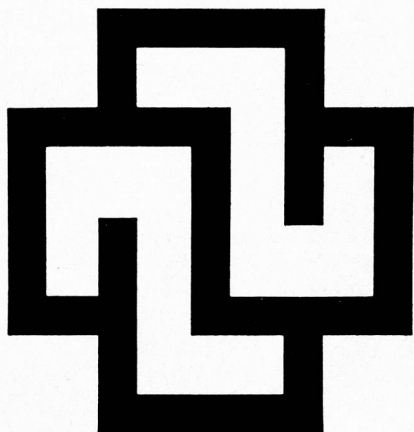
Depressions.

Financial assistance.

Accusations of theft.

"Children of God".

This might be an appropriate time to stress once again that London is not the most suitable place for unstable and depressed young people or for those with acute personal problems. The English climate, the uninteresting nature of au pairs' work, the impossibility of obtaining a work permit for a more attractive job, the difficulty of making suitable English friends and the loneliness of being in a foreign country all contribute to the strain and stress and many of these



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difficulties might be avoided if the Swiss Social Services notified the Welfare Office of such cases, in advance.

The Welfare Office would like to thank the following organisations for their continuing help, assistance and understanding. The Swiss Embassy, particularly Consul-General Adams, Consul Roberts, Miss Scherer and Miss Lustenberger, the Ministers and helpers of the Swiss Church, the Warden of the Swiss Hostel, the Swiss Benevolent Society, especially Mrs Sharp whose day-to-day help and co-operation are of invaluable benefit.

Our special thanks go to the British police who are always willing to help and advise; "Lifeline"; and in particular Crusade of Rescue for their special help during the past few months. British Airways for their co-operation with quick repatriation of patients and handicapped people, the British Red Cross, Aliens Registration Department of the Home Office and the many Citizens' Advice Bureaux, agencies, clubs, schools, hospitals and social services who have assisted us in our work during the year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SWISS CATHOLICS IN LONDON

The Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday 17 April 1975, at 6.30 pm at the John Southworth Centre, 48 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HA. After opening prayers the Chairman, Oscar Grob, KSG, extended a warm welcome to all present.

Resignations

Mrs F. Birrer, having left for Cologne, where her husband, Dr Franz Birrer has taken up a new assignment; Mrs I. R. Daetwiler, as her husband had been transferred to Geneva. The resignation of I. R. Daetwiler, Hon. Treasurer was dealt with under "Election of Committee of Management".

Finance

The Chairman, in the absence of the Hon. Treasurer, in his Finance Report said: "With the contributions from 57 donors and 22 generous donations received from Swiss Firms and Friends, the Sunday church collections, income tax recovered from covenants, the accrued bank interest, the two most generous donations received, ie £140 from the City Swiss Club and £8 from the NSH re Christmas Concert Eglise Suisse and a Grant for assistant youth worker from the Inner London Education Authority, we had a total income of £940.96 against our expenditure of

£1,353.76 leaving us with a deficit of £412.80. The share of the bazaar amounting to £695, as mentioned in the Chairman's Report, has been credited direct to the capital account.

The accounts were duly passed by the meeting with thanks to the Chairman and Hon. Auditor.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman said in his Report the following:

"The year 1974 can be recorded again as one of steady progress in the activity of the Swiss Catholic Community, in which both permanent and temporary Swiss residents in the Colony took an active part.

"On 29 May 1974 we sent the Report of our last Annual General Meeting, held on 9 May 1974 at 48 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HA to our friends, giving a record of the developments and our activities which took place in 1973.

"On 8 March 1974 we were invited by the Consistoire Eglise Suisse de Londres to participate with them in their next bi-annual Swiss Church Bazaar, to be held at Central Hall, Westminster SW1, on Saturday 2 November 1974.

"This invitation was gladly accepted, as we felt certain that the excellent relationship which exists between our two churches would only be further strengthened by this joint effort.

"The proof of our successful co-operation has been shown by the excellent financial result of this first combined bazaar, which permitted the Consistoire to allocate to us 25 per cent of the proceeds of the sale amounting to £695.

"We wish to express to the Consistoire our sincere thanks for this very generous allocation to our funds. The publicity given in the Special Issue of the *Swiss Observer* and the announcement by the BBC over the radio had probably not been without effect on the greatly increased attendance at the bazaar, which was officially opened by our Ambassador, Dr Albert Weitnauer.

Chaplain's Report

Our Chaplain, the Rev. Father Paul Bossard, reported as follows:

"With some sort of anxiety and strain on the part of the Chaplain the residence of the Swiss Catholic Mission and the Youth Club at the John Southworth Centre in 48 Great Peter Street was consolidated by a lease of 26 years and the decision to begin the most urgent renovations.

"They included part of the roof, strengthening of the first floor, new

toilets and store rooms on the ground floor. A grant from the Government and a very generous donation from the Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund promised for 1975 together with a firm financial involvement of the "Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches" and funds from other sources made it possible to meet the cost of this most urgent building programme.

"It was felt by the Bishops in Switzerland that the Swiss Youth Club and the pastoral care of the young Swiss in England was a real ecumenical work and that both the Catholics and the Protestants should be financially involved in the upkeep of this important youth and community centre which is primarily a responsibility of Westminster Cathedral but provides ample facilities for the Swiss and gives them a chance of meeting the neighbouring community.

"The pastoral work of the Chaplain was carried on as in previous years only that he was also appointed as chaplain and spiritual director of the John Southworth Centre and assistant youth leader. This means that the Swiss Catholic Mission is working in much closer co-operation with Westminster Cathedral in order to offer the young Swiss more possibilities to meet English friends in a Christian spirit.

"As before the Sunday afternoons and evenings with divine service, discussion groups, dance, table tennis and excursions are primarily reserved for the Swiss and are always well attended (average 180-230 people). During the week the office is open for consultations and advice and also for providing young people with some work around the house, be it cleaning or general repair work, for which a well-equipped workshop is available. To keep the house in a condition to welcome the young Swiss every Sunday is often a very tiresome job and takes a lot of time and manual work for which the chaplain was not exactly ordained but all the same, well trained and is grateful to all who have helped him during the year.

Without the ecumenical co-operation it would simply be impossible to do everything and this is the most important and also rewarding aspect, especially in regard to the young people and the effect it has on the life of the Swiss colony. One example was the great success of the bazaar, and there are positive signs everywhere that the tragic misunderstanding of 400 years' separation is slowly overcome by the churches.

"The Mothers' Group meets regularly on the third Wednesday of the month at the Eglise Suisse, another ecumenical activity which provides an



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