

News from the colony

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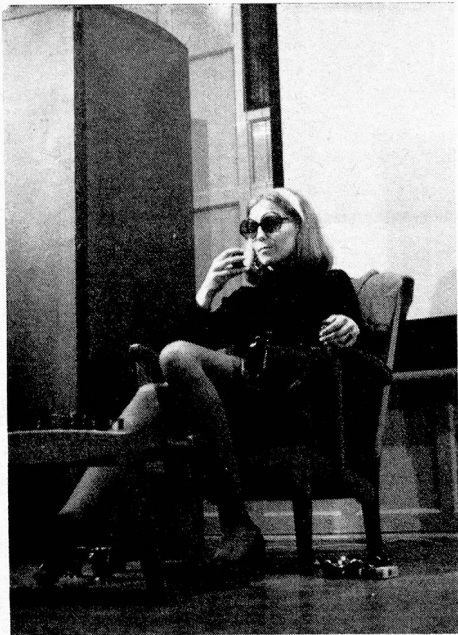
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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

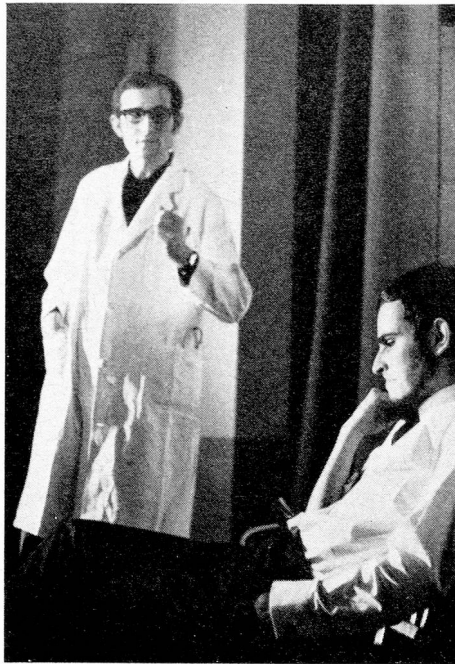
CAN WE REALLY BEGIN AGAIN?

Remarkable Swiss Première in London

One of the most exciting activities of the Swiss Protestant Youth Club "Kontakt" was the production of a play by the great Swiss writer MAX FRISCH. This play called "BIOGRAFIE" was a success on several stages such as Zurich, Munich, Frankfurt, Dusseldorf and Hamburg. It is to be expected that the play will appear on English theatre programmes as well. There is no doubt that "Biografie" requires a cast of professional actors, so that it was a great venture to produce it with an untrained team. This is perhaps the reason for certain lengthy passages in the performance. Even so there was a feeling that each one of the 32 parts was acted by the right person. It took them seven months of strenuous work to prepare the performance.



Considering that some of the actors had to study for their exams, one can imagine what efforts they had to make. Everybody gave his best. Not only were there the main actors, Kürmann, Antoinette and the Registrar who met for the rehearsals two or three times a week, but also over twenty girls and boys with smaller parts who had to amalgamate into a whole for the various group scenes. The difficulty consisted in that some of the actors were asked to join without having been members of the consisting group e.g. four boys from the Swiss Catholic Youth Club and one English boy who was needed for his English accent in German as "Krolevsky". In addition there was a considerable number of staff for jobs such as technical assistants for lighting, make-up, refreshments, advertising, advance booking,



etc. There was quite a hunt for obtaining props. How would you persuade an undertaker to lend a coffin with golden handles? Where would you get a wedding-dress for the bride? What clothes do we need for the "Magnifizens", a university rector? What kind of sound would produce the effect of marching soldiers? Where to find a gun that did not fail to go off at the right moment? It was less difficult though to get hold of two clergy robes. And we were grateful that the hall and stage of the Swedish Church in London was available for our purpose at very reasonable terms. All well that ends well. The play became an unforgettable event for everyone taking part in some way and we hope that this was so for the audience as well.

U.S.

To this we should like to say that the performance of "Biografie" was a rare experience. The standard of acting by the young people, mostly members of the Youth Group "Kontakt" (Swiss Church in London), was exceptionally high, and it was easy to forget that one had amateur actors on the stage. It was not the first time that "Kontakt" tackled a play. It was even the second time that Max Frisch was performed. "Andorra" was the first effort, though it must be said that practically all the actors in "Biografie" were new ones, seeing that "Kontakt" members come and go at fairly frequent intervals.

At a time when there is so much complaint that the young Swiss abroad show little interest, such enterprise is remarkable. In the two Ministers, the German-speaking Community has excellent leaders, and the Youth Group is very much alive. Their interests and

activities vary, but whatever it is, the young people themselves are encouraged to show initiative and to carry out their own plans. Their ideas of creating living divine services are at times outstanding.

As far as acting is concerned, they have an excellent producer in The Rev. U. Stefan, no mean actor himself. The two performances at the Swedish Church on 7th and 9th June may certainly be called an unqualified success, and there is only one regret that the performances could not be repeated in order to let many more compatriots and friends of German tongue take part in this unique experience.

MM

NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE

On 26th June, Dr. Carlo Jagmetti, until recently at the Federal Political Department in Berne, who has just joined our Embassy as Press Attaché, gave a most interesting talk in German on "International Aspects of Swiss Arms Production, Exports and Imports". An animated discussion followed, and it was gratifying to note the good attendance not only by the "regulars" of the N.S.H., but also by many young Swiss.

The Society was honoured by the presence of Counsellor of Embassy, Dr. Jörg Iselin, representing the Swiss Ambassador.

J.S.

YOUR NEXT "SWISS OBSERVER"

will be published on . . .

Friday, 25th July. We shall be glad to receive all articles and reports by Tuesday, 15th July. Short news items only can be accepted later.

The "Swiss Observer" is published every second and fourth Friday of the month, and consequently, your next copy but one will be out on 8th August. Contributions for that issue should be to hand by Tuesday, 29th July.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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Mrs. L. Bristow, Mrs. M. Dearlove, Mrs. A. U. Parkinson, Mrs. F. Schmid, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur R. Keller, Lieut.-Col. W. J. Pearce and Messrs. R. Boudry, E. Hug, Ch. de Maria, M. A. Rothlisberger.

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