

# Appeal to the Swiss people in New Zealand

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The Swiss military apparatus of to-day is such that an invader would have a hard time of it, and that he would certainly lose the gain he had counted on.

My compatriots from abroad, may this short sketch strengthen your confidence in our national defense, may you take away with you the sure knowledge that we are ready. We will always keep our flag hoisted, proud and free, and will never lower it."

Does this mean that Switzerland is selfishly self-centred and takes no interest in the fate of other nations? Certainly not.

On November 20th 1815, the Powers recognized the fact that "the neutrality and inviolability of Switzerland, and its independence of all foreign influence are in the real interest of the politics of the whole of Europe."

Moreover, Switzerland considers herself bound by her neutrality to undertake the responsibility for special philanthropic work. In the first days of September, for instance, the Swiss government opened a credit of 200,000 Swiss francs for the International Red Cross Society, in order to enable it to accomplish the task assigned to it by the new European war. The Red Cross Society has opened a central agency for Prisoners of War at Geneva, to which, as in 1914 to 1918, news concerning prisoners taken in the different countries may be sent. It is also concerned with the repatriation of members of ambulance corps who have fallen into the hands of the enemy, and with the protection of civilians of hostile nationality living in countries that are at war. It has appealed to the various governments to appoint safe zones for the protection of civilians. And finally it has sent delegates, all of them Swiss subjects, to Germany, Poland, France and England, in order to establish connections with the respective governments.

Switzerland, an island of peace and quiet, safely guarded by a well equipped army, ready for every sacrifice, can thus, thanks to its neutrality, render appreciable services to other nations.

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#### APPEAL TO THE SWISS PEOPLE IN NEW ZEALAND.

From the Swiss in Taranaki, Waikato, Manawatu and elsewhere, has come an appropriate appeal:

The Swiss people in New Zealand realise their duty to help the New Zealand Red Cross and to contribute to the comfort of New Zealand soldiers; they realise too, that something should be done in favour of the mobilised Swiss soldiers. From Taranaki, where the Swiss element is most numerous, came the suggestion to contribute the proceeds of the next Annual Swiss Ball at Manaia (usually very good results) to the New Zealand Red Cross. We hope that this splendid plan will be carried out. For the benefit of the New Zealand soldiers we have ample opportunities to contribute to local organisations, and give them our full support, and we hope that the Swiss in New Zealand will do their part generously.

As far as donations to the mobilised Swiss soldiers, given in the name of the Swiss people in New Zealand, are concerned, I would point out the following:

The Swiss army, of course, supplies the mobilised Swiss soldiers with everything in the line of ordinary food and clothing, as well as with the necessary sanitary and hygienic requisites. Further than that there are, however, many things which will add to the comfort of soldiers, such as additional woollen underwear, woollen socks, woollen gloves, pullovers, shawls, chocolate, cigarettes, tobacco and all kinds of tit-bits and what-nots.

Swiss news and pictures are now reaching us here in New Zealand, with tales of the wonderful Christmas parties, which, not so long ago, were arranged for all mobilised Swiss soldiers, following the slogan: "For every Swiss soldier a Christmas gift." Patriotic undertakings on such a huge scale can be carried out, of course, only with the generous support of the whole nation at home and abroad.

Notes from all corners of the globe speak of the generous gifts, which have been pouring in and continue to come to Switzerland from Swiss abroad. The Swiss people in New Zealand, just like those of any other part of the world, have now a splendid opportunity to demonstrate that their hearts still beat on the right spot for their old country.

So let us start doing something without further delay and collect money and new woollen clothes of above description from among our Swiss communities in New Zealand, and I suggest that they be sent either :

- (1) directly to the Consulate of Switzerland, Brandon House, Wellington; or
- (2) to entrusted fellow-countrymen in the different local districts, who are willing to take a lead in this drive; or
- (3) to the President or the Secretary of the Swiss Benevolent Society of New Zealand, Mr. Ernst Merz, British Chambers, 35, High Street, Auckland, C.1. and Mr. Werner Ungemuth, Clarence Road, Northcote, Auckland, N.4. respectively.

Every gift, small or large, will be appreciated in the spirit in which it is given. The names of the donors will be published in our monthly bulletin "HELVETIA". No mention, however, will be made regarding the size of the gift, which is in keeping with our democratic principles.

I further suggest that all those entrusted with the collection of money and new woollen clothes, forward the proceeds of their collection to the Consulate of Switzerland, Brandon House, Wellington C.1., who will issue a receipt for each and every gift and attend to the forwarding of same to Switzerland. A receipt for every gift will also be requested from the organisations in Switzerland to whom they will be delivered and such receipt later on will be handed out to the donors in New Zealand. Make your donation for "The Mobilised Swiss Soldiers" now!

Dr. Walter Schmid.

While endorsing the appeal of our respected Consul on behalf of the Swiss Benevolent Society of New Zealand, I wish to impress upon our members and friends that this is one of the few opportunities when we can give proof of our love and affection to our dear Fatherland. According to various reports, Swiss all over the world have toed the mark in a very generous manner.

Although a Society of still tender age, we do not want to lag, but show our sincere patriotism in a substantial manner.

Werner Ungemuth, Secretary.

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#### A "NEW CHUM'S" EXPERIENCE.

There are experiences and incidents in every man's life that he never forgets. They may be tragic or they may be humorous. Maybe they will be worth relating, or perhaps not.

Nevertheless I would like to relate to our readers one of my both humorous and worrying experiences when first a New Chum in this country.

It is now thirty-six years since I arrived in New Zealand, - "God's own country" as Dick Seddon, then our Prime Minister, called it. After holding a job on a farm near Pukekohe, I decided on a change of climate and obtained employment in the South Island. A neighbouring farmer at Pukekohe, hearing of my intended departure for the South Island, came to me with the request that I take his eighteen year old son Willie under my wing as far as Timaru. I was only too glad to accede to this request, and in fact I felt rather flattered to be trusted with such responsibility. Willie intended to visit his Grandparents in Timaru and to spend some months harvesting in South Canterbury. As there was no main trunk train connection with Wellington, we had to travel by the steamer "Rotoiti" from Onehunga to New Plymouth and thence to Wellington.

Willie's mother and sister saw us off at Onehunga, and when taking my steamer ticket, his mother observed my pocket wallet in