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unduly large until it is remembered that the total population of Switzerland is a bare five million!

Though I may be accused of having gone native, I maintain that the Government of Switzerland is the only type of democracy capable of functioning efficiently. The country is administered rather than governed. At the peak of the pyramid is the Federal Council of seven members, representing the major political parties in a permanent coalition. Virtually, they are elected for life, resigning—voluntarily but reluctantly—when old age sets in.

In the past twenty years only two Federal Councillors have been forced out of office by public opinion. The first (a French-Swiss) was deemed too weak a personality to stand up to Nazi arrogance during the last war; the second (a German-Swiss) was regarded as too irresolute to make a good Minister of Defence after the war ended.

Each of the seven is head of a Department, or Ministry, and one is elected President—or rather Chairman of the Federal Council—for a year, meanwhile retaining his Department. Then he goes back to the end of the line and is succeeded by the Vice-President, who usually belongs to a different party. And so it goes on. There is no ballyhoo about the annual presidential elections, no TV cheesecake, no honeyed promises, for the result is a foregone conclusion. Halfway through the year the citizen has to think hard before he can remember the current President's name.

The Federal Council submits recommendations to the two chambers—the Council of States (representing the Cantons), and the National Council (representing the constituencies). These motions are tabled in Parliament as the collective findings of the Federal Council and seven members are jointly responsible. If Parliament turns one down, back it goes to the seven with the mute reproach: "Look, boys, you can do better than that if you put your heads together." And even when a bill is passed, a petition signed by 30,000 citizens can force the Government to have the issue submitted to the vote of the people.

Despite their differences in race, language and character, all Swiss have one thing in common: An urge towards perfectionism. They advertise their products without superlatives—merely as "Swiss made," which they say is a less crude way of claiming "the best quality and craftsmanship in the world."

It would be a mistake to suppose that they will live by milking cows and putting the milk into cans, cheese or chocolate. Nowadays these products, as well as half the nation's food, are imported. Switzerland has become an industrial country, with chemicals, machines, apparatus textiles, watches and everything technical that calls for technical skill and precision as her staple products. The tourist trade (roughly ten million visitors every year) and worldwide insurance and commercial interests add the invisible exports which have raised the nation's standard of living to the highest in Europe. Industry is decentralised. There are few large plants and thus no dense concentrations of labour or city slums. Healthy contact between town and country has never broken off

—few Swiss are more than a few generations removed from the soil. At one end of Zurich's smartest shopping street, in front of the windows of the dignified Swiss National Bank building—whose vaults are rumoured to store the other half of the world's gold—the peasants of the surrounding countryside still hold their vegetable, fruit and flower market twice weekly. Nobody finds it incongruous.

When the Lord had created the first Swiss, He looked kindly upon him and spoke: "How wouldst thou like to live? I will grant thee three wishes."

"Then let me have high mountains, that I may live nearer Heaven," answered the Swiss piously.

Pleased at having created such a paragon of virtue in human form, the Lord said: "Thy first wish is granted. What else wouldst thou like?"

"Lush pastures and fine cattle that give an abundance of milk."

This wish, too, was granted and the Swiss set about tilling his fields and milking his cows.

"Is the milk good?" asked the Lord.

"It is indeed. Here, try this mugful Thyself."

The Lord quaffed from the mug, found it good and said: "Now, what is thy third wish?"

"One franc twenty, please!"

## NEWS OF THE COLONY

### NEW SWISS CLUB IN CHRISTCHURCH

We proudly announce the formation of a new Swiss Club in Christchurch. The executive of the Swiss Society wish to congratulate and warmly welcome this Club into our family of the Swiss Society.

Our thanks go to all who helped in any way to bring this achievement to fruition.

The committee of the new club is:

**President,** Mr Peter Muller,  
7 A Whareora Terrace, Cashmere,  
Christchurch.

**Vice-President,** Mr Fritz Wangler,  
180 Cashmere Road, Christchurch.

**Secretary,** Mrs Erica Grantham,  
156 Aldwins Road, Christchurch.

**Treasurer,** Miss Hilda Wangler,  
180 Cashmere Road, Christchurch.

### AUCKLAND SWISS CLUB

For the September social evening of the Auckland Swiss Club a very successful and happy meeting was organised by our Vice-President, Mr Binder. Besides the screening of a full length movie, a short coloured film entitled "Lakes of Switzerland" was also included. After supper, some people danced to the tune of good

old Swiss music and others joined in a community sing-song. It was on this note that the programme for the evening came to an end.

We are happy to announce the arrival last month of a bonny wee daughter to Mr & Mrs Joe Wildhaber. Our heartiest congratulations to this popular young couple, and may your little one provide you both with many years of joy.

#### WELLINGTON SWISS CLUB

##### CHILBI ABEND

Now, what happened? The W.S.C. finally found a new and attractive way to invite me to their evenings. Yet I would have gone to the Chilbi anyhow, since my last year's experience was so good.

But where shall I start? Haven't got a choice, as the treasurer soon sets upon me to collect the entry fee! So, that's that! But wait, I will have my turn too! Please, Mrs Messmer, let me have a beer to dampen my temper. I find myself attended to by these ladies in such a short time that I gather they are neither from Bern nor . . .

But I must have a go at the stalls, the refreshments can come later. My Swiss blood curls up properly when I try the Schiess-Stand. Messrs E. Fluehler and W. Unternahrer do their best to explain to me the proper handling of their weapons, but all the lead seems to bypass the target. No chance then to become "Schutzenkonig." What a pity, I would have so much liked to take home the three bottles of moral-booster. So I decide that the tins are a bigger target and certainly easier to dislodge. But to my surprise one of them simply refuses to leave the board. Maybe Mrs Sutherland made too great a dent in it to allow it to roll! Have another go? How could I resist such a nice invitation. So there I go, one shot . . . only four tins left, second shot . . . only one tin left, third shot . . . What would you like as a prize? A bit difficult with all these nice prizes, but give me that lovely cup, please. But must keep going as long as luck holds and try to rob Mr Matt of one of his sherry bottles. I have to wait my turn, there is much pressure on Mr Matt and to my great disappointment Mrs F. Fluehler pinches the "Martini" just in front of me. So, if I can't have the Martini, I jolly well return to the bar—there I certainly can get whatever I desire. A plate full of sweets, made by Mr Brandli, a strong cup of coffee (yes, NOT tea) still fits nicely in my programme and soon disappears.

The interval gives me time to admire the decoration of the hall. Balloons and streamers all over the place, a bar with lampions and a framework to bring the "waitresses" well into the picture. Soon my feet get itchy again and the plate empty. Oh, must see what attracts all those youngsters there. They seem to queue up for something. It is fun to watch these young members trying to fish for a present. The creator of this stall, Mrs Kaspar, certainly knows what children wish and all her customers are well satisfied. With the present then they run round in the hall to show it to Daddy, Mummy and everybody.

In the meantime the Schiess-Stand is so busy that I can't get my second chance. Ladies and gents want to secure the big prize and do not seem to realise my urge to settle it for me. So to pass the time till my turn comes at one of the stalls I surmount all shyness and ask a lady for a dance. Music from the tape-recorder and records mingles with the excitement of all present. Unfortunately, midnight soon arrives and with it the sound of the bell to announce the winners. A big cheer for Mrs Ittensohn, as Schutzenkonigin, and for Mr Fluehler, snr., as Schutzenkonig.

On leaving I scratch my head to find something to complain about. With luck I trace a fault: There were not as many members present as there should have been, the hall was rather empty, or too big. But perhaps this is no fault of the Committee . . . rather the fault of members not taking the trouble to join in the activity. So I wish to thank all who contributed to this lovely and enjoyable evening—they have done a great job exceedingly well.

— (Wellington)

**Found:** A black leather Purse, containing money and two Yale keys, was found in the hall after the Chilbi Abend. Owner please contact Bischof, Tel. 42-949.

#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

##### AUCKLAND SWISS CLUB

**Je-Ko-Mi** (Jeder kommt mit) social evening: This will be held on Saturday, November 5th, at the Professional Hall, 12 Kitchener Street, City, at 8 p.m. Je-Ko-Mi means really that everyone may contribute towards the evening's entertainment, e.g. comic sketches, songs, and social games. For the Jass enthusiasts there will be cards and slates available.

##### HAMILTON SWISS CLUB

On the 1st Sunday in November a Picnic will be held on the farm of Fritz Scheinegger, Mangawhero South Road, Matamata, near Taihoa School (about 3 miles from Hinuera turnoff on road to Tauranga).

There will be a shooting competition (please bring your own .22 rifle) and our Kegelbahn will draw a big crowd. There will also be games for children.

Ammunition, Bratwurst, soft drinks and ice cream available. No beer will be served so bring your own drinks.

If weather not suitable we will hold our usual evening on the same day in the Riverlea when the Dutch orchestra will again play for us. If picnic has to be cancelled please listen in on Sunday morning at 8 a.m. to 1XH, Hamilton.

##### WELLINGTON SWISS CLUB

The Wellington Swiss Club will celebrate its Christmas with a big Social gathering on Sunday, December 4th. Will members please keep this afternoon free. Invitations will follow.