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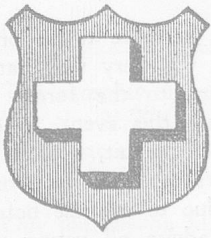
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# HELVETIA

Monthly Publication of the Swiss Society of New Zealand (Inc)

GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

23rd Year

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Hamilton

## Swiss Spotlight

By P. BEGUIN

### THE REPRESSION OF ESPIONAGE IN SWITZERLAND

TWO Soviet spies were arrested in Switzerland, very shortly after an American aircraft—on a reconnaissance flight—was shot down over Russia. Here and there, attempts have been made to build up a connection between these two incidents. It might be useful, therefore, to examine the situation more closely and to define what the attitude of the Swiss Confederation to espionage has always been.

The activities of spies, whatever they may be, are illegal activities. They are condemned by the laws of every country, and by laws which provide for very heavy sanctions. The fact remains, nevertheless, that all the countries of the world have intelligence services. In other words, they claim that they can do what they are determined to prevent others from doing in their own interests. This is one of those cases where reasons of State justify activities which elsewhere are considered illegal.

So long as there are nations attached to their independence possessing an instrument of national defence, these nations—if only in order to be up to date with their indispensable measures of precaution and security—will strive to obtain information on the armies of other countries, their strength, their material means, their technical modernity and the danger which they might represent, today or tomorrow. In order to know how best to defend oneself, one must know how one might be attacked. All this adds up finally to legitimate defence.

In the old days, espionage services were at work mainly during wars and during those periods when peace was in imminent danger. Today, these services are permanent. This is no doubt because today there are regimes where secrecy has been exalted into being the supreme principle of government, where free observation and free movement is impossible and where information, even of the simplest character, cannot be obtained except by surprise and by devious means. If totalitarianism, in all its forms, does not, of itself, explain the

existence of espionage, it nevertheless calls it forth, in the sense that totalitarianism cannot do without espionage.

These elementary truths should be borne in mind when attempting to define Switzerland's attitude to this question. Indeed, Switzerland is rigorously intolerant of all attempts at espionage, whether directed against her own national defence, or against the national defence of another country. In point of fact, Switzerland, which has no offensive military policy, which refuses to form any alliance, which does not threaten anyone, but is ready to defend herself autonomically, believes that there is no justification for any mistrust of her.

Another thing is that Switzerland does not want her territory to become a place where foreign agents can engage in espionage against other States. She wishes to remain free of all suspicion in this respect. And, she wishes this because of the fact that she is independent and neutral.

Such considerations dictate her uncompromising attitude towards espionage. It is such considerations, also, which prompt the authorities to unmask the spies, whatever the international circumstances, without troubling about any false interpretations which might be given to these measures. This attitude may sometimes prove inconvenient at the time, but, in the long run it is always found to have been right.

## NEWS OF THE COLONY

### SWISS SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A most lively Annual General Meeting took place on June 4th in Auckland. The Auckland Club, host of this year's event, had done everything possible to make the visitors welcome. There were delegates from the Wellington Club, Mr Bischof, Messrs John Steiner, Martin Steiner, Charles Schuler and Joe Dettling representing the Taranaki Society members, and Hamilton was represented by Messrs Joe Arnet, Ernst Studer and Jakob Von Holzen.

The most important motions carried were as follows:

- A. The annual subscription for *Helvetia* and Swiss Society membership fee remains the same as last year.
- B. The most debated and no doubt most important request from the Auckland Club for lending of part of the Society's funds for the purpose of a Building Fund was also carried by 50 votes to 43, including proxies. The motion carries the proviso that such funds must be sufficiently secured.