

# General meeting of Swiss Catholic

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old tin hat, gathered at the front in the last great war, and turned up in it at Broadcasting House. At length, as was to be expected, Broadcasting House itself was hit. The spacious and comfortable studios on the upper floors were knocked out, and one had to sit before an improvised microphone, in a kind of cubby-hole, well below the level of the street and to imagine that what one said was really being heard in the uttermost parts of the earth. Then came a migration to other underground dungeons, still lower down, 'somewhere in London.' I never ceased to marvel at the smoothness of these adaptations, or at the courage and cheerfulness of the hard-worked BBC staff whose members shepherded and watched over me.

The work itself was always interesting, and the echoes of it that came in made it seem more and more worth while. It was pleasant to hear from faithful listeners in New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Canada, India, the West Indies, the United States, Peru, the Argentine, and from the captains and crews of ships at sea that one had helped them not to lose faith in final victory. Hardly less pleasant was it to be cursed as a malefactor by Dr. Goebbels and his henchmen. They honoured me with a fine selection of epithets, such as 'One of the worst British warmongers,' 'A poisoner of the public mind about Germany,' 'A first-class intellectual escapist,' 'A tight-rope walker,' 'A miserable hireling, bribed and bought,' and 'The old fox of British journalism.' I felt that I had really got under the hides of those villains.

If the work was pleasant it was never quite easy. Events were moving fast, and one had to deal with them so as not to be slapped in the face by them when they took a new turn. A weekly broadcast in wartime needs constant thought, day after day, even if it is written only a few hours before it is delivered and lasts barely fifteen minutes. Yet I have loved the work and have felt it a privilege to be allowed to do it. When I reflect that each talk goes out in five separate transmissions, so as to reach different parts of the world at convenient times, and that my voice is supported by more than thirty short wavelengths, I still feel a bit startled. Then I realize that I have been a very privileged fellow."

#### † FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, 12/4/45.

The President is dead. — Can it be true  
Of him, whose vision in the throes of war  
Kindled a beacon light which, from afar,  
Shone on the world, that righteousness win through?

With ev'ry term your fame and stature grew,  
The millions hitched their waggon to your star;  
Heedless of race or creed or colour bar,  
They centred their most ardent hopes in you.

You loved mankind; whose lot was ev'rything  
To you — and how your gen'rous heart did plan  
Their uplift, comfort and security!

Now you've passed on.—O death where is thy sting?  
Let us thank God He gave us such a man,  
Saviour of Freedom and Democracy.

LONDON, April 14th 1945.

"GALLUS".

#### GENERAL MEETING OF SWISS CATHOLICS.

After the usual "Easter Service" at St. Peter's Church, Westminster, S.W.1, at which Father Lanfranchi preached and Father Würms gave Benediction, the Swiss Catholics met in good numbers at a General Meeting in the Westminster Cathedral Hall on Sunday afternoon, April 15th.

In opening the meeting the Hon. President, Colonel Bon, referred to the critical and dangerous times we have passed through since the last meeting; referred to the serious economic difficulties which are confronting our homeland now and will do so in the near future, and expressed the hope that the long desired peace bells would before long ring and bring the time nearer when we could again go amongst our lovely mountains, towns and our own folks at home.

Mr. C. Schumacher in his report dealt with the activities of the Committee since September 1943, particularly referring to the meeting with His Grace the new Archbishop of Westminster at the Christmas party of 1944 at which both the Archbishop and the Swiss Minister, Mr. P. Ruegger, were present. He dealt too with the finances and appealed to all to continue and even to extend their support for the maintenance of our Chaplain.

Father Lanfranchi reported on his manifold activities during the year and expressed regret that he could not visit every one separately or more often, but that he considered his main mission to be the visiting of the physically and morally sick and poor. He also referred to the excellent harmony and co-operation existing between the Swiss Benevolent Society, the Eglise Suisse and ourselves.

Colonel Bon thanked both Mr. Schumacher and Father Lanfranchi for the report, he also thanked the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. A. Steinmann, and the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Boos, for the work done during the past years, to which the assembly gave full accord and applause.

Mr. J. Huber then proposed and Miss Bohrer seconded that the existing Committee members be re-elected and Miss C. Abate, Mr. O. Grob and Mr. J. Regamy be also elected members of the Committee, which proposal was agreed.

Before the close of the meeting, Colonel Bon called on Mr. Mordasini the new Vice-Consul and Chancellor of the Legation, who in our three national languages expressed his pleasure to be among so many of his Swiss compatriots, in particular his Ticinesi and to find such excellent christian and patriotic spirit amongst the Swiss in London.

At the following very successful social evening the mixed choir, which under the able leadership of Mr. Hyde also sang at the Church service, rendered Swiss songs and yodels, accompanied at the piano by Miss Uden. It was past nine o'clock when the party came to a close.

J.J.B.

