

One last heave with increased federal help

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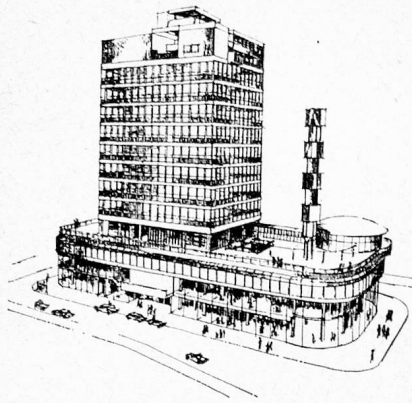
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ONE LAST HEAVE WITH INCREASED FEDERAL HELP

The realisation of the project for the establishment of a cultural and social centre in the building of the SWISS CENTRE in the British capital also serving industrial and commercial needs to be called the FORUM OF SWITZERLAND, has at last been brought within reach by a generous increase of the promised Federal assistance from 0.8 to 2.2 million Swiss francs. By an unprecedented effort of goodwill on the part of our Parliament both chambers have sanctioned this proposal of the Federal Council without any opposition in one and the same session before Christmas. The Council of States agreed to it in October and the National Council followed suit without discussion in December instead of letting the business wait, as usual, until the next session.

The proposal was put forward by the Federal Council in a "message" to Parliament of October 22nd reiterating the need and purposes of such a cultural centre and explaining the urgency of a decision, years having been lost in the vain attempt of the initiators to mobilise sufficient private financial support. The first appeal was launched in Berne over three years ago at a public meeting presided by ex-Bundesrat Wahlen. The last one in this country was issued last year by our new Ambassador Monsieur René Keller in thousands of personal letter to members of our Colony (southern area). The total collected or promised reached the respectable sum of 0.83m francs, of which 0.25m emanate from our Colony.

The collective result together with the originally offered Federal subsidy of similar amount would have nearly covered the original cost estimate of 1.9m francs. Unfortunately the estimate has since risen to 3.4m owing to rising prices and various improvements of the project to assure its complete satisfaction for all its purposes, including the addition of a special room for the Swiss Colony. The cost increase has been carefully vetted and found unavoidable by Federal building experts and a working committee comprising representatives of all interests under the chairmanship of Monsieur Maurice Jaccard, representing the Federal Council. Our Colony's spokesmen in this body are the president and the treasurer of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK, Dr. H. W. Egli and Mr. A. Kunz.

Owing to the increased cost esti-

mate, the remaining deficiency of 1.77m francs, after deducting the sums assured, became unbridgeable without further official assistance. This recognition induced the Federal Council to recommend to Parliament to cover most of the gap by the handsome contribution of 2.2m already mentioned instead of the 0.8m which the Federal Council could have granted without a special credit note of Parliament. Both the initiative of the Federal Council and the ready agreement of both chambers in record time constitute a tremendous gesture of willingness to bring this worthy project to fruition. Half the amount is regarded as a straight subsidy, the other half as a loan of unspecified duration and probably requiring no interest.

However, a gap of 0.37m francs still remains to be covered. The only condition attached to the increased Federal assistance is that this missing amount must be raised by non-governmental contributions in addition to the sum of 0.83m hitherto assured. It seems to be a sound request that at least one-third should be contributed privately by firms and individuals and other non-federal sources as against the two-thirds from the Federal Government.

In order to avoid further delay and cost increases, the balance will have to be found within the next few weeks. A renewed effort towards this end is going forward in Switzerland on a selective basis, and our representatives have undertaken to appeal urgently to the Colony at large and especially to those of its members who have not yet responded to previous appeals to help in this last heave to see the project home.

When completed and in action—it is hoped by the middle or autumn of next year—the FORUM OF SWITZERLAND will no doubt greatly enrich the life of our Colony, as well as serve its main purpose of improving the cultural image of Switzerland in this country. Apart from concerts, film shows, lectures, art and book exhibitions, the main hall and other rooms of the Forum will, of course, also be available for festivities, banquets and balls, industrial exhibitions, etc. But of particular interest for us is the provision of a special room available daily after 3 p.m. to the Colony free of charge. It will, in fact, become a continuing meeting place for our Colony

(continued on page 14)

SWISS CHURCH

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS: à l'Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, tous les dimanches à 11h15 et 19h00.

SAINTE-CENE: le premier et troisième dimanche du mois, matin et soir.

PERMANENCE: chaque jeudi de 15h00 à 18h00.

REUNION DE QUARTIER: huit veillées en automne et au printemps: voir "Le Messager"

CLUB DES JEUNES: tous les dimanches de 12h00 à 22h30, tous les jeudis de 15h00 à 22h30.

REUNION DE COUTURE: le 2^e mardi du mois.

LUNCH: tous les dimanches à 13h00.

VISITES: sur demande.

PASTEUR: A. Nicod, 7 Park View Road, London N.3. Téléphone 01-346 5281.

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SERVICES IN GERMAN: at Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, at 10 a.m. At St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street, S.W.1. at 7.30 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION: every first Sunday of the month at evening service only. On major feasts at morning and evening services.

CONSULTATIONS: every Wednesday 4-6 p.m. at Eglise Suisse.

DISTRICT GROUPS (W.4 and S.E.21) and SERVICES OUTSIDE LONDON: see "Gemeindebote".

SERVICES IN ENGLISH: every fourth Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

"KONTAKT" (Youth Group): every Wednesday 4-10 p.m. at Eglise Suisse. Supper at 6.30 p.m. Programme at 8 p.m.

SWISS Y.M.C.A.: see Forthcoming Events.

WOMEN'S CIRCLE: every first Tuesday of the Month.

MOTHERS' REUNION: 1st Wednesday in the Month, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

VISITS: by request.

MINISTER: Pfr. M. Dietler, 1. Womersley Road, N.8. Telephone 01-340 6018.

SWISS CATHOLIC MISSION

CHURCH and SERVICE: St. Ann's Catholic Church, Abbey Orchard Street (off No. 25 Victoria Street), S.W.1.

SUNDAYS: Holy Mass at 9 and 11 a.m. in English. At 6.30 p.m. for the Swiss community with regard to the different language groups.

HOLIDAYS of obligation: Holy Mass at 7.30 and 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS and THURSDAYS: Holy Mass at 1 p.m. afterwards time for consultations.

CONFESSIONS: German, French, Italian and English:
Sundays: one hour before Evening Mass.
Saturdays: 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and from 5 to 7 p.m. or by appointment.

SWISS CATHOLIC YOUTH CLUB — Meeting every Sunday after Evening Mass (8-11 p.m.) at Westminster Ball Room, 30 Strutton Ground, S.W.1.

CHAPLAIN: Paul Bossard, St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street, S.W.1. Tel.: 01-222 2895.