

# The Swiss who saved 2,000 jews

Autor(en): [s.n.]

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - (1971)

Heft 1608

PDF erstellt am: **28.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686598>

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the American Government in future cases involving tax fraud.

The ruling was given by the Swiss Supreme Court in rejecting the appeal of an unidentified American against an earlier court decision permitting the Swiss Federal Tax Commission to supply data requested by the American internal revenue service on his dealings with a Swiss bank.

The obligation on the Swiss to supply the information is part of a treaty on double taxation signed with America in 1951, the Supreme Court said.

A similar convention dealing with double income tax payments was signed between Britain and Switzerland on September 30th, 1954.

The court decision to assist in American tax fraud investigations is seen in Geneva banking circles as a result of pressure to co-operate more closely with the country's principal trading partners, and is in line with Swiss policy to seek association with the Common Market.

Negotiations are continuing between America and Switzerland on an agreement which would permit the lifting of the 1934 Bank Secrecy Act to help fight organised crime.

Hundreds of millions of dollars in Mafia funds are believed to be lodged in secret Swiss accounts.

*(Daily Telegraph)*

### THE FALL OF THE "BUNKER REPUBLIC"

The municipal council of Zurich decided last year to try an experiment with the young. It offered them the old fortress of Lindenhof. They could use it as a debating centre where they were the sole masters. The "bunker", as it came to be called, was entirely administered by the young. It could remain open all night without the interference of the police and the established authorities.

The experiment of this "autonomous centre for the young" was soon considered to have been a failure by these same authorities. Far from being a "debating centre", the place became a kind of beat club in which police found drugs and LSD. The permission to remain open all night was exploited abusively, so that up to a hundred youths, many of whom came from villages at the other end of the canton, used it as a free sleeping place. The mismanagement and disorder ruling at the bunker was in contradiction with regulations governing the good maintenance of hotels and hostels. Neither did the kind of philosophy for which the atmosphere of the bunker was an ideal ferment suit the authorities. The inmates of the Bunker marched down one night towards the luxurious "Baur Au Lac" hotel and shouted slogans against the rich. The furniture at the centre was not respected. Doors and equipment were destroyed. Furthermore, schoolchildren were found there late at night.

All this prompted the municipal council to curtail the life of total freedom at the Lindenhof bunker. They decided that from January 7th onward it was to be closed at midnight during the week, and at 2 a.m. on weekends. No schoolchildren were to be allowed in after 8 p.m. The date of January 7th was presented as an ultimatum.

The tenants of the Lindenhof, grouped in a "Bunker liberation committee", reacted most outspokenly. They held a congress in which 750 youths took part and proclaimed the "bunker republic". At an all-night session from 1st to 2nd January, they elaborated the new bunker "constitution". It was based on the tenets that the right to freedom and self-determination were smothered in a bourgeois society. The only protection against "oppression and exploitation" lay in adopting new forms of life and work in common. The "autonomous republic of the bunker" would ban every form of discrimination and racism and defend the interests of its people by acquiring or occupying centres in which they (the people) could live and work the way they wished.

There were rumours that the bunker army was going to storm and occupy the youth centre of Drahtwildi, and 139 liberal citizens—doctors, journalists and teachers—pleaded to the municipal council that the bunker should not be closed down.

It fortunately all ended very happily. On 6th January the bunker's "liberation committee" held a session and heard Dr. Sigmund Widmer, Mayor of Zurich, explain the authorities position. He told them that everything would be done to find a new formula and that the town council was on their side. He appealed to them not to make a break with the authorities and help them to seek a new solution. He was heckled and whistled, but in the end, the "republicans" voted 560 to 380 in favour of legality. The next day the bunker was closed at midnight. Fifty roofless youths found asylum in a dormitory improvised by the police, another batch found a haven at the parish of Alstetten. Only three dissidents had to be carried out. One artist staged a one-day hunger strike.

### SURPRISE PROPOSED MERGER OF NESTLE AND URSINA-FRANK

The respective boards of Nestlé and Ursina Frank AG have agreed to recommend a merger of their two companies to their shareholders. The details of the proposed merger have not yet been defined, but Nestlé will augment its capital by 20 per cent and issue one registered share for five registered or bearer shares. Nestlé introduced registered shares 12 years ago in order to maintain the Swiss ownership of the company. To keep Nestlé Swiss was one of the reasons why the group was interested in Ursina Frank in the first place. In the words of Mr. Jean-Con-

stant Corthésy, Chairman of the Board, it was imperative that Nestlé should maintain its present growth rate in order to survive in a continuous battle among the greats of the industrial world. There was a limited scope for takeovers abroad because it would have compromised the Swiss control of the group. Ursina Frank was one of the rare Swiss companies producing a similar range of products with which a merger would have been advantageous.

Mr. Corthésy added that his Board could not afford to allow such an opportunity to slip away. The only alternative was in fact to risk letting Ursina Frank to fall into the hands of a foreign group. The Nestlé empire, presently the 58th company in the world with a turnover of 9.2 million francs and a payroll of 90,000, will grow yet bigger by the absorption of a company with a turnover of 1.7 billion francs and 15,000 employees. Nestlé was the first Swiss company last year, and Ursina Frank the ninth.

This latter group was only created at the beginning of 1970 through the merger of Ursina and Inter Frank AG. Its best known groceries are Thomi and Frank products. The group also controlled the Commercial Bank in Zurich. Mr. Hans Schwarzenbac, Chairman of the company, said that Ursina had attained the limits of an independent expansion. It was necessary to seek a bigger partner with a wide sales organisation in order to penetrate the wider markets with which it could not dispense. Most of Ursina-Frank's turnover last year was achieved in West Germany. Ursina shareholders will receive a bonus of five francs above the 16 francs per share dividend planned for 1970.

Nestlé is such a giant that a breakdown of its subsidiaries is impossible here. The main companies it controls are Findus, Crosse and Blackwell and Maggi. The group furthermore holds a 30 per cent stake in Libby's, U.S.

### THE SWISS WHO SAVED 2,000 JEWS

*(continued from page 1)*

later, Paul Grüninger still firmly believes that he did the right thing and that if he were to relive it all he would act in the same way again. He is proud of the letters of gratitude he has received from individual Jews living in every part of the world. In 1953 he received a prize as a token of gratitude from Dr. Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Jewish Congress.

Paul Grüninger was not alone in suffering from the conflicts between duty and humanity during these crucial pre-war years. But he resolved this conflict more radically than any other Swiss of his time and thus will remain as a troubling reminder of a policy which, however well it can be rationalised, belongs to one of the uglier chapters of Swiss history.

*(Adapted from the Tages Anzeiger)*