

The hard times of ambassador Bucher

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stands at the top of the rink and points with his broom”.

“Oh, sort of like ‘broom at the top’!”

“Yes, exactly. That broom you treat so lightly, sir, is the sceptre of the curler. No honourable curler would ever be seen without it. Now, for your information, here are some other details: learn where the ‘hog’ is, watch out for the ‘sweeping score’ and always remember the difference between the normal side and keen side of your stone. Sweep when the skip tells you and stop when he says ‘up’ and make sure you play the stones with the right colour bubbles. If you give an ‘in handle’ when you’re told to and an ‘out’ when it’s asked for, you’ll have absolutely no trouble with the bubble. Keep your foot on the crampit by or in the hack and, whatever you do, play the broom. Now, do you think you understand a bit more?”

“I suppose so, except for one thing”.

“What’s that, Hermann?”

“Are you crazy?”

(“Switzerland”, *SNTO*)

THE HARD TIMES OF AMBASSADOR BUCHER

Mr. Giovanni Enrico Bucher, the Swiss Ambassador kidnapped in Brazil, was quoted by a West German magazine recently as saying he felt nervous and frustrated and that “my biggest problem is to overcome claustrophobia”.

Stern, the Hamburg weekly, said the ambassador had taped the interview on December 18 in response to questions submitted by the magazine’s local correspondent through his captors.

The tape recording was delivered to the correspondent with photographs showing an exhausted-looking Mr. Bucher.

The magazine reported him as saying that he was in good health despite his detention in a small room by

masked guards. The room was comfortable but the sanitary arrangements were “less so” and he was forbidden to move around the house.

Mr. Bucher, kidnapped on December 7, said in the alleged recording: “Right from the beginning I received magazines, books, playing cards and later daily newspapers. Sometimes I was allowed to listen to the radio, see television and play records”.

He had only a vague concept of the negotiations over a ransom for his release, but said he had kept his faith in the Brazilian Government.

Describing his kidnapping, Mr. Bucher said that at first he had thought it a normal car accident. But then someone had opened the door of his car and ordered him out. It had all been over in a few seconds.

Stern quoted him as saying he had heard a shot ring out but that he did not realise at the time that his bodyguard had been shot.

He had been made to wear glasses masked with cotton for the drive in the kidnappers’ car.

“I often debate with some of the kidnappers, really long discussions when one considers that the heat must be very uncomfortable for the masked men.

“They are doing their best to treat their ‘guest’ as well as possible under the circumstances”, Mr. Bucher was quoted as saying.

(*Daily Telegraph*)

A CORRECTION AND A POINT TO CLEAR UP

A monstrous error cropped up in our report of Mr. Bucher’s kidnap in the last issue. The Federal Council was alleged to have “reacted callously” to Mr. Bucher’s misfortune. It should have read “reacted calmly”! We apologise to our readers for the error—and not least to the Federal Council.

The story about the worthy Swiss of Britain has produced varying appreciations, the echoes of which have reached our ears by circuitous ways.

One reader who definitely *didn’t* like the article was its author, Miss Madeleine Eidam. Here she explains why:

Under the heading of “6 Prominent Swiss in Britain” the last issue of the *Swiss Observer* devoted more than two pages to the publication of a series of short biographies which must be qualified as a *breach of copyright*. The Editor of the *Swiss Observer*, Pierre-Michel Béguin, had been given at his own request a copy of the original article written in German, which had not yet appeared in the *Schweizer Illustrierte Zeitung*, on the author’s understanding that it was for his personal information only. The exclusive interviews of the Ringier Group were thus published in the *Swiss Observer* without their author’s knowledge or consent, and necessarily without translation rights. Despite this the *Schweizer Illustrierte Zeitung* appears to be held responsible for the absence of any pictures in the Editorial introduction of the *Swiss Observer*. They should obviously have gone with the story. Here I quote: “These pictures were unfortunately still in the hands of the *Schweizer Illustrierte* at the time of writing and the readers will have to guess their contents by reading the captions which we have reproduced”. Furthermore the Editor gives the impression of apologising to his readers for publishing these articles which in his own words are appreciated “by hundreds of thousands of unsophisticated people”, although he is himself not ashamed of using them without the consent of the author. Finally, it is worth acknowledging that the Editor, while appreciating the legitimacy of Ringier’s choice of prominent figures, feels that at least a score of other worthy Swiss in England would also have deserved to have their life stories published in the “*Schweizer Illustrierte*”. As I could not agree more with Pierre-Michel Béguin on this point, I readily apologise to the “sophisticated readers” of the *Swiss Observer* for “limiting the portrait gallery to a minimum”.

Madeleine Eidam

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