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A FAREWELL TO GOTTFRIED KELLER



As Publisher of the "Swiss Observer", Honorary Secretary of its Advisory Council as well as a personal friend of many years standing I feel that I cannot possibly let Mr. and Mrs. Gottfried Keller's forthcoming departure from the United Kingdom pass unnoticed.

Gottfried Keller—Fred to his friends—has spent 38 years in this country, all of them as the London Representative of the Swiss News Agency and 35 of them in the additional capacity of London Editor of the Basle daily newspaper "Basler Nachrichten." He has twice held the responsible office of President of the Foreign Press Association: first during two difficult war years, and then during a stretch of five years after the conclusion of hostilities. On retiring from those arduous duties "back to pure journalism", as he was wont to say, he soon became active again in a totally different field; he founded and presided over a local Tennis Club in Hampstead, which has grown from an initial membership of 40 to over

300 today. Of that club he is still an active member as well as an honorary life member.

Fred is also an honorary life member of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, on the Executive Committee of which he has served for many years, most of them as Vice-President. During the whole of the Second World War he gave informative lectures to the N.S.H., which regularly drew large audiences in spite of air raids and in appreciation of which he was unanimously elected to honorary membership for life.

Fred Keller also served the Colony as a member of the Committee of the Anglo-Swiss Society during two years, as well as the Executive Council of the Swiss Hostel for Girls.

It is, however, in the Inner Councils of the "Swiss Observer" where Fred Keller has rendered such sterling service, that I got to know him and the working of his mind really well. From the days of the creation of the Advisory Council, soon after the war, up to a few weeks ago Fred has unstintingly given much of his time to "Swiss Observer" work. He has been one of the Council's most active and industrious members, having been entrusted—or should I say saddled?—with overall responsibility and control over editorial policy.

He has been its Vice-Chairman and during the last two years its Chairman, but more than that he has also been a lively contributor of articles which he partly signed with his own name and sometimes with a pen name. He has attended innumerable Council meetings and missed very few, if any. His contributions, also those behind the scenes—and those were many—were always constructive and precise, always positive and often characterised by courage of conviction. What, after deliberation, he saw as the right course he carried through. With a mixture of tact and firmness he has been able to overcome so very many difficulties.

Together with myself he has also acted as a negotiator when it became necessary to devolve certain financial responsibilities to a benefactor who has so kindly undertaken to underwrite the Colony paper's further existence. After his recent decision to retire from "Swiss Observer" work, the Advisory Council has, in order to express its gratitude to him, unanimously elected him to be an Hon. Vice-President. To this I would like to add my personal thanks and appreciation and wish him and his wife, Mrs. Gertrud Keller, many happy and carefree years in Switzerland. May continued good health be theirs and good fortune attend all their endeavours.

Fred will, I know, not be idle—this would just not be in his character

—, as he plans to write a book about some of the many interesting contacts he has made here and aspects of life in Great Britain.

In concluding this appreciation I would like to add that Fred has, to my knowledge, never once in his long and successful career misused any information entrusted to him confidentially or "off the record". Of this he can be very proud.

We shall miss you, Fred.

Oscar F. Boehringer

(continued from page 1)

no longer represents the overspill of an excess population which the country cannot feed or employ, but the transfer of a limited population embodying a wide range of professions. This quality emigration not only reflects Switzerland's present economic context. It also serves out trade interests and our international relations".

This assertion remains true today. The Federal Council is fully aware that each of you, whatever your station in life, contributes to the esteem in which your country is held in the world. The efforts undertaken by all of you as loyal guests in your country of residence and as ambassadors of your country of origin thus play an invaluable role for us in Switzerland.

Let us look at the relations between the Swiss abroad and their motherland. These relations have known deep changes throughout history. What, over the years, were their demands of their motherland? Fifty years ago, the main demand naturally related to financial aid. In one year, Switzerland spent 1.6 million francs in assisting its national victims of war. This was a considerable sum at the time. Another important request, which was at the centre of the first Assembly's debates, was for increased help to Swiss firms and promotional organisations abroad. This led to the Federal Council noting in its Annual Management Report the necessity of strengthening links between Swiss businessmen abroad and organisations at home. The growth of official contributions in the economic field was achieved thanks to the gradual extension of the Swiss diplomatic network. There are actually 155 consular regions and 85 embassies run with the help of economic specialists. This should not make us forget the role played by Swiss chambers of commerce in defending our economic interests. Our diplomatic representations have strengthened their co-operation with these institutions. The Confederation has also shown increasing interest in the various bodies set up by the Swiss abroad and it is partly thanks to her help that they have managed to continue their activities. I am

thinking in the first place of the Solidarity Fund for the Swiss Abroad, but also of those schools, hospitals, old people's rest homes and clubs whose creation was due to your initiative and community spirit.

With time, it became necessary to review the relations between our country and the Swiss abroad, and to examine the ways of balancing their mutual rights and duties. It is significant that in several countries, those Swiss residing for a short time greatly outnumber those that have settled permanently. Thus one can speak of a constant "to and fro" movement between Switzerland and these countries.

The scope of Article 45bis

The constitutional article adopted in 1966, which is entirely devoted to the Swiss abroad, is the instrument whereby Parliament is entitled to legislate on the matter of political rights. This article explicitly provides for the special situation of Swiss abroad, a situation which necessarily differs considerably from conditions at home. A policy ignoring these differences would soon stumble on unsurmountable difficulties, as attested by the problem of military duties. It is true that Article 18 of the Constitution imposes these duties on every male Swiss at home and abroad. Since the inclusion of Article 45bis in the Con-

stitution, federal authorities have tried to work out a new military status for our compatriots abroad. Military control has been reduced to a strict minimum. Young Swiss abroad, including those living overseas, can as from this year onward accomplish their basic military training in Switzerland. Their journey, however long, is entirely paid for by the Confederation. New solutions adapted to the peculiar conditions surrounding Swiss abroad are being envisaged to the classical question of military tax. Let us hope that the Cantons, who are in the course of examining proposals made to this end by the federal council, will give their consent.

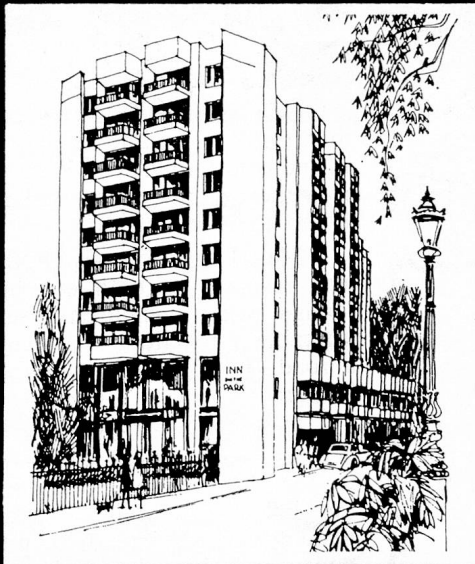
Assistance to the Swiss abroad has to be regulated in an essentially different way for citizens at home. Whatever their native canton, Swiss abroad will be considered on equal footing in the field of assistance. Benefits will be fixed in relation to economic conditions prevailing in their country of residence. It is also well known that Old Age Pension and Survivors Pension are of primary importance to the Swiss abroad, although it *must* remain voluntary. This in practice means that every Swiss abroad must decide of his own free will and responsibility whether he will subscribe to AHV. You are aware that important changes will take effect on 1st January, 1973, and that they will also concern you. New possibilities of registration have been

provided for. They are subjected to certain obligations. The Federal Council would like the Swiss abroad to examine these new possibilities carefully and draw the necessary conclusions. It is wiser to make this effort in good time than to wait until it is too late to remonstrate to the federal authorities. This also applies in the case of the Solidarity Fund.

For the first time in the history of our Federal State, Article 45bis allows for the making of a new law offering the Swiss abroad to exercise political rights in national affairs. Drafting this new legislation will by no means be easy. There again, it will be necessary to devise solutions taking into account the particular situation of our compatriots abroad. We hope that a practical way will be found through the co-operation of the Swiss abroad and the federal, cantonal and communal authorities.

Adapting to circumstances

The wish to place the relations between the Swiss abroad and the Motherland in an institutional framework, as well as the growing complexity of these problems, have led the organisations of Fifth Switzerland to consider improving the *information* of Swiss abroad. Detailed studies have produced concrete solutions. Thanks to the co-operation of the Commission for the Swiss Abroad, it is now



Vintage Room

Standing at the Piccadilly end of Park Lane, the Inn on the Park was recently named 'Hotel of the Year' by Egon Ronay. The Vintage Room, on its first floor, could equally be said to be deserving of the title 'Restaurant of the Year'. It specializes in presenting succulent steaks and traditional Ribs of Scotch Beef . . . the meat faultless . . . the service impeccable. Its subdued and intimate decor, continuous dancing from

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possible to publish a news periodical in most countries of Europe and several parts of Africa and Asia. This periodical contains communiqués by the authorities and organisations for the Swiss abroad, and gives an outline of Swiss events. This review is distributed four times a year to all compatriots registered at their nearest consular office. This new information system reaches out to about half the Swiss abroad. We have reasons to hope that it will soon be extended to other countries. This is one example of fruitful co-operation between Swiss abroad and federal authorities.

It is not surprising that, apart from informing the Swiss abroad, the federal authorities should also be concerned with informing the world at large on Swiss matters. On 13th March of this year, the Federal Council set up a Co-ordinating Committee concerned with "Switzerland's presence abroad". At this Committee are represented the Pro Helvetia Foundation, the Swiss Office for the Development of Trade, the Swiss National Tourist Office, the Swiss Broadcasting Company, Swissair, the Union of Chambers of Commerce Abroad, the Swiss Press Association, "Crossbow-Swiss Week", the Central Office for the Swiss Trade Mark and naturally the Commission for the Swiss Abroad, in the person of its President, Mr. Guisan. The task entrusted to this Committee is not easy in view of the complexity of the questions it will be called to examine and the variety of opinions it will have to consider.

I should now like to raise a few of the preoccupations of direct concern to us, Swiss living at home, all of which are highly relevant to the future.

First let us consider the international situation. The preservation of our independence within the means of a responsible policy of neutrality remains the essential aim of our for-

eign policy. On the other hand, the country upon the other compels us to growing mutual dependence of one more flexibility. It is our intention to develop and strengthen our co-operation with other states and international organisations whenever compatible with the essential goals of our policy and whenever the particularity of our political structure—federalism and direct democracy—are not put in question.

In this spirit, we have established new relations with our European neighbours, with whom we are linked in a variety of ways. You are not unaware of the recent crowning of our efforts to take part in the integration of Europe's economy. There is no doubt that 22nd July, 1972, the day when we signed a free trade agreement with the European community, has opened a new phase of European integration. Through mutual concessions, this agreement will make way for a vast market free of trade barriers for nearly all the products of industry. New avenues are open to our economy, which will however also have to adapt itself to new conditions.

We should remember that Switzerland is a member of the Council of Europe since 1963 and takes an active part in its inter-governmental activities. At present, we are in the process of joining what may well be the most significant instrument devised in Strasbourg: The Human Rights Convention. The Consultative Assembly, which is the Parliament of the Council of Europe, offers Swiss parliamentary delegates the welcome opportunity of presenting their political convictions before what remains the most representative forum of Europe.

Neutrality still actual

Fifty two years ago, Switzerland joined the League of Nations aware

of giving up her integral neutrality at the outcome of a hardly convincing vote. We have not acted in the same way when the United Nations undertook to give new expression to the founding principles of the League of Nations. During the U.N.'s formative years, neutrality didn't have a good name in U.N. circles and it was not possible for us to join the organisation while adhering to our neutrality. We have thus followed the expansion of the U.N. and its commitments as observers. In the course of time, we were admitted as full members of nearly all the U.N.'s subsidiary organisations. But circumstances have changed and the atmosphere in New York has been gradually more favourable to political neutrality. The U.N. organisation is becoming more universal all the time and with the recent Admission of Communist China, it will soon encompass the whole world. Finally, international co-operation as a whole has moved from a bilateral to a multi-lateral level. In fact, the great problems of our times are interlinked and their solution will involve mankind as a whole.

Under those circumstances, it is our duty to constantly review our policies and attune our relations with the U.N. to our better interests. The Federal Council believes that the time is not yet ripe to become candidates to the U.N. We do not know, for example, whether we could join the organisation without forfeiting our neutrality. We shall make sure to inform Swiss opinion objectively, including the Swiss abroad, on all matters pertaining to our relations with the U.N. We shall thus prepare the Swiss people for the not-so-distant day when it will be called to make its decision.

Our attitude towards developing countries is the same as that of nearly all industrial countries. We too do not deny the need of giving substantial aid to these countries.

May I mention yet another problem, relevant to both our home and foreign policy, which has excited considerable reactions among Swiss abroad. It is the problem of foreign labour.

You are well aware of the imperious reasons that have compelled us for the last few years to control the influx of foreign workers. The Federal Council intends to pursue this policy as it has already brought forth positive results. But our intention is also that foreign workers should be gradually given the same rights and job opportunities as their Swiss comrades.

The Confederation and the quality of life

I told you how the Government planned to deal with employment 50

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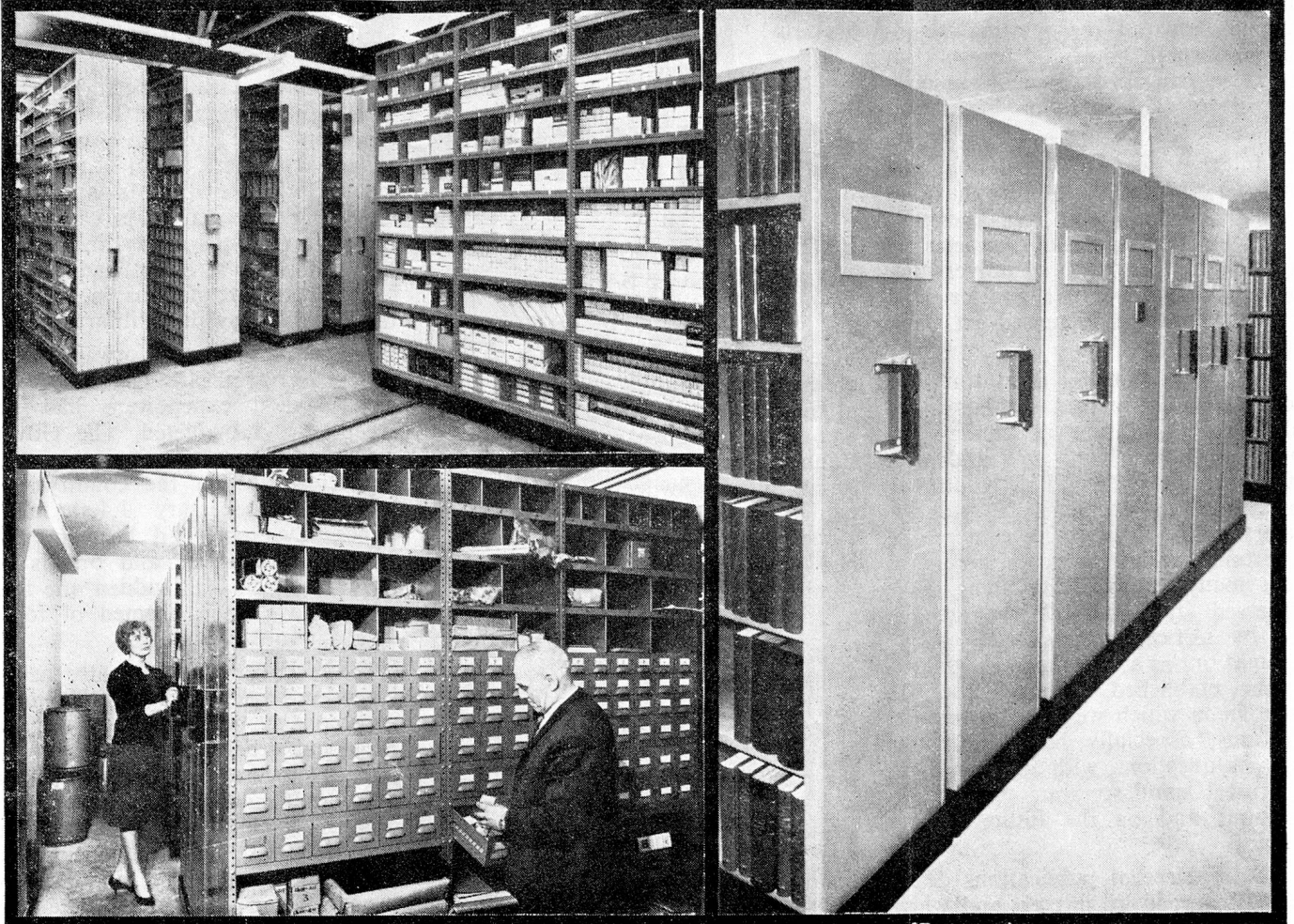
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years ago. Today, its problem is to handle over-abundance and improve the quality of life of its citizens. In the first place, we should preserve or re-create the vital spaces indispensable to our well-being. On 6th June, 1971, the Swiss people set the Confederation launching on a global environmental policy. The task of protecting our environment calls for careful planning and regional planning. This is absolutely necessary if we want to leave our children a worthwhile heritage of humane towns, regenerating landscapes, unspoilt lakes and forests. But before we can act in an efficient way, we will have to agree on basic conceptions.

In the field of education, the Confederation will in future have to assume a more active role and take initiatives. It has already undertaken to promote the growth of universities, the implementation of a goal-oriented science policy and increased art sponsorship.

When we think of the future, our thoughts naturally turn to those who will take this future in hand: The young of today. Until now and with a few regrettable exceptions, youth has not caused us problems beyond our understanding. Yet we have to realise a certain "malaise" exists among a great many young. With some, it is expressed by an indifferent attitude and by self-centredness, with others it comes out as a systematic opposition to the established order. These are phenomena which we may not ignore. We must especially help the young who ask questions, with an often highly critical mind, on our existing institutions and on the future of our country.

Several recent publications develop ideas worthy of interest and which we should take very seriously: I am thinking in particular of the latest annual pamphlet of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique entitled "Which Switzerland do we want?". We can only hail the sense of engagement and criticism of this publication.

But to solve all these problems, we need adequate financial means. We will have to find new resources. But that is not all. We also need to

have a sense of measure. In my 1st August speech, I urgently appealed to my compatriots to act and think along those lines. We cannot allow the State to degenerate into a gigantic services enterprise. Before calling on its assistance, all people concerned, whether in Switzerland or abroad, must think of the ways of solving their problems by their own means. This old truth is expressed by the popular adage: Whoever seeks a helping hand will find it at the end of his arm!

COMMENT

END OF THE MILAN-CORSAIR SAGA

Six years after it had been decided to equip the Air Force with a new ground-assault jet fighter, after years of painstaking evaluation, controversy and political upheaval, the Federal Council announced that it had made up its mind: Switzerland would buy neither the "Milan" nor the "Corsair"—the two contending aircraft which had survived a lengthy process of elimination.

The two reasons put forward were as follows: First, Mr. Rudolph Gnaegi, Head of the Military Department, explained that the deficit between federal income and expenditure has soared in the recent past. Spending the planned 1,400 million francs on a new aircraft would make the situation worse and run against the government's fight against inflation and economic overheating. Mr. Gnaegi added that the destination of 80 per cent of federal expenditure was fixed by law. This lack of flexibility made it therefore impossible to spend money on new planes at the expense of other defence and civilian commitments.

The second reason put forward by Mr. Gnaegi was that military conceptions had changed since 1966, the year when it was decided to find a replacement for the "Venom" and when the specifications of the new

machine were first laid down. He said that this about-turn fell within a general reconsideration of national strategy. The Military Department would be asked to make temporary proposals. This was understood to imply the purchase of more refurbished Hawker-Siddeley "Hunters", thirty of which have already been supplied to the Air Force.

Thus years of efforts by military experts were spent in vain. They performed their job to the best of their ability, although their final conclusions in favour of the Corsair left room for some doubt. One understands nonetheless that they should be bitter over this outcome. Early in August, Mr. Heiner Schulthess, Head of the Armaments Division of the Military Department, had resigned in protest against the Government's delay in taking a final decision after it had received formal recommendations in favour of the "Corsair" by the Military.

The reasons put forward by the Federal Council are definitely weak. The planned expenditure had been accepted and budgeted. The Government had several years during which to decide whether the country could afford the necessary 1,400 million francs. Everyone had been prepared for the expenditure and one is surprised that, all of a sudden, the figure should have been deemed of forbidding magnitude.

The Federal Council also had six years to define strategies. The minds of colonels, politicians, military experts and other pundits were set the task of elaborating new strategies for the seventies and eighties. The concept of "global defence" of national territory was evolved during that period. New military etiquette was introduced in the forces. The Swiss Little Red Book, that gem of military thinking, was distributed to every household in the land. And yet, despite all that intellectual effervescence, the Government was unable to make up its mind when it came to the crunch. We should also note that the expenditure involved was quite moderate: a ninth of the annual budget and considerably less than what other similar countries, such as Belgium, Holland and Britain, are prepared to spend, all things being equal.

The Government has therefore shown that it didn't know what it wanted.

This having been said, we should be thankful for the outcome of the Milan-Corsair saga because, as the French saying goes, "dans le doute abstiens toi". Secondly, it is true that neither of the aircraft were entirely satisfactory. The selected "Corsair" was at the end of the production line and had been withdrawn from Vietnam operations. The "Milan" had not yet proved itself with other foreign air forces. One can also argue that

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