

Activities of the Secretariat of the Swiss abroad

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short time to achieve it. Even the less privileged has untold opportunities and incredible possibilities to "develop forward and upward and reach maturity through participation in nature and art, play and friendship and in free co-responsibility in the community."

To most of the audience at the

N.S.H. Open Meeting on 4th October and to most readers of his book, Lorenz Stucki has given more than food for thought. His criticism of the present and his pointers to the future must help any thinking man and woman to re-assess their possibilities and thus lose all fear of freedom. M.M.

Activities of the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad

A year has already passed since we gave a summary of the 1971 Annual Report of the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad. This year's edition has identical chapters and signals no fundamentally new developments. Despite the generally discouraging political evolution in the world today, it has vigorously continued its work of assistance and communication with the 319.000 Swiss registered abroad.

The activities of the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad have frequently been described in this paper. We shall outline only some aspects of last year's Report.

The main event of 1972 was undoubtedly the Fiftieth Assembly of the Swiss Abroad. Its Jubilee festivities took place in Berne for almost one week in August. They were marked with exhibitions, concerts and other functions. Eight hundred Swiss from fifty countries converged on Berne to enjoy the rich programme that had been prepared for them. The Assembly's theme was the

Political Rights of Swiss Abroad. Compatriots assembled in Berne's *Kursaal* heard several impassioned speeches on this controversial issue. They heard the delegate from Great Britain, Dr. H.R. Bolliger, express his opposition to current plans which will allow Swiss abroad to vote on visits in the Motherland. The Assembly was highlighted by a well-noticed speech in the three national languages by Mr. Nello Celio, Swiss President for 1972.

A growing aspect of the Secretariat's activities is to establish and keep contact with Swiss societies abroad. That purpose was served by a three-month trip to the United States and Canada by State Councillor *Dr. Louis Guisan*, President of the Commission of the Swiss Abroad. Dr. Guisan visited no less than 83 Swiss societies representing a good cross-section of the 34,000 and 18,000 compatriots who live respectively in the US and Canada.



Mr. Nello Celio addressing the Assembly.

The Secretariat has also contributed to the cultural ties of the Swiss abroad. Among its initiatives of support, it has financed a conference tour by General Consul Berthod (Vevey) in the South of France. It has also contributed to a visit to London by Dr. Philippe Garraux, who spoke of intercantonal school co-ordination to the Nouvelle Société Helvétique. There were further contacts with the Swiss of Mulhouse (France), Copenhagen and Gex (France). Several donations were sent for various projects: buying a second-hand projector for the Swiss of Ruiz de Montoya (Argentina); building a new club house in Helsinki; developing the youth club of the Swiss churches in London; financing wind instruments for the Swiss music society of Samambaya (Argentina). There was a continued demand for films featuring at the various functions of the Swiss abroad. The demand reached a peak in summer because of the 1st August Celebration. The Secretariat has endeavoured to supply more modern films. It has innovated with a film of its own called "Invitation" and directed by Toni Rihs, the former youth organiser of the Secretariat. A circular on this film was sent to Embassies and Consulates. Within weeks, over 20 orders for it were received in Berne.

The Secretariat has continued to supply information abroad by means of the "Echo" magazine and the "Weltschweizer". The new Quarterly Reviews sent to the Swiss living in English speaking countries have gone under way. Part of their content are supplied by the Secretariat. The "Echo" continued to represent a heavy financial load to the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad. The income and expenditure account published in the Report shows that "Echo" has cost 263.000 francs and returned only 218.000 francs last year. The 45.000 franc loss is almost equal to the excess of expenditure over income shown in the 1973 accounts. The



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