

Nouvelle société helvétique

Objektyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1973)**

Heft 1653

PDF erstellt am: **12.07.2024**

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and the Jura, the quiet foothills of the Emmental—they all provide a host of the most beautiful walks and rambles. In the last mentioned district, at the start of the Emmental, we should like to visit a typical Bernese country inn which serves as an example of many similar ones.

It is the Ruttihubelbad known all along for its good cuisine as well as for its waters. This inn—how could it be otherwise in the Canton of Berne—has been in the same family for generations. We enter the inn parlour between the byre and the stables. The room is in rural style, but kept in excellent condition. We shall be served river trout, salmon coloured and of firm aromatic texture, which has nothing in common with its sisters from breeding tanks. It will be followed by a clear soup with finely cut pancake strips, “Geschnetzeltes Kalbfleisch” in a cream sauce and “Roschti” as can only be served in Berne. And what will the reader think of a sweet such as a *meringue* with fresh blackberries? If this should be too much for you, you can always drink an excellent, home-made *Schnaps* to aid digestion.

We should be pleased if this article and the accompanying pictures were to encourage you to visit Berne. We hope that you will then also pay a visit to the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad at 26 Alpenstrasse where a warm welcome awaits you.

Uf Wiederluege z'Bärn!

Marcel Ney



The Junkergasse, one of Berne's old streets

THE NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE'S ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD



The President

When, in 1916, some far-sighted personalities of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique in Switzerland founded the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, the Commission of the Swiss Abroad was formed as its legislative organ. Originally, members of this body were chosen exclusively by the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, and there was a preponderance of Swiss from inside Switzerland. This was probably due to Europe being at war at the time. According to today's regulations of the Commission, at least half the members must come from abroad, but not more than two-thirds, the rest must be resident in Switzerland.

Today's strength of the Commission stands at 38 delegates and 30 official deputies, plus 24 Swiss from home who represent the cultural, political and economic life of the country. Amongst them are several Swiss formerly resident abroad. The collaboration between the two sections *Inland/Ausland* has stood the test in the best possible way, for it is in the main personalities in Switzerland who, thanks to their positions and connections, are able to help their compatriots from abroad in solving their problems.

The members from abroad are elected by the umbrella organisations of Swiss groups recognised by the Nouvelle Société Helvétique in the various countries. Where no such federation exists, the Commission itself may, after consulting the Swiss groups concerned, appoint representatives. Members from within Switzerland are chosen by the Central Council of the N.S.H. The term of office for every member is three years, with the right to be re-elected. The Commission deals with important questions of policy regarding the Swiss abroad. It represents them in Swiss public life and with the authorities

in Switzerland. It also supervises the activities of the Secretariat of the Swiss in Berne and promotes its work.

The Commission's task includes discussion and acceptance of the Secretariat's budget and annual accounts, as well as the annual report.

The Commission meets at least twice yearly, in spring and again at the end of August on the occasion of the *Journée des Suisses de l'Étranger*. Decisions are taken by simple majority vote of members present. Representatives are under no compulsion from their societies and vote according to their own opinion formed during deliberations.

Part of the Commission is the *Arbeitsausschuss* or *Bureau*, a working group in charge between sessions of the Commission. It consists of President, Vice-President, Hon. Treasurer and one to four members of the Commission. At present, the following gentlemen are on the *Ausschuss*:

Councillor of States, Dr. Louis Guisan, Lausanne, President of the Organisation and Chairman of the Commission.

Mr. Jean Heer, Vevey, Vice-President.

Dr. David von Wyss, Basle, Hon. Treasurer.

Fürspreh Philippe Garraux, Berne.

Mr. Marcel Gehrig, Marseille, President of the Union of Swiss Societies in France.

Dr. Emilio Steffen, Milan, President of the *Collegamento* of Swiss Societies in Italy.

Mr. Ernst Ammann, Bregenz.

At the moment, there is no woman in the *Ausschuss*, but one must point out that there are four women members on the Commission of the Swiss Abroad. Female representation goes well back before official introduction of women's suffrage in Switzerland. (This serves as proof of the progressiveness of Swiss communities abroad as opposed to the Swiss at home!)

The *Arbeitsausschuss* is entitled to conclude all legal business necessary and advisable to run and finance the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad. It issues directions for the activities of the Secretariat and supervises it.

The most important work being dealt with by the Commission at the moment is legislation under the Federal Constitutional Article 45bis for the Swiss

Abroad. Although some of the respective work is already well advanced, new problems crop up again and again. So for instance concerning double taxation agreements, the effect of the withholding tax (*Verrechnungssteuer/Taxe anticipée*) on the Swiss abroad, the whole field of information, and recognition of foreign school leaving certificates for studying in Switzerland.

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SOLIDARITY FUND OF THE SWISS ABROAD

Structural Changes

At the General Meeting of the Solidarity Fund of the Swiss Abroad in Berne in August 1972, the Council presented a plan of proposed changes in the structure of the Fund, to come into force in 1974.

1) The highest lump sum compensation up to now was Fr. 40,000.-. This will be increased to Fr. 50,000.-.

2) Members will be given a chance to make higher annual contributions or one-time payments which will carry interest, and thus secure a more favourable repayment of contributions than hitherto and to make higher savings.

Up to now, the compensation payment to which one was entitled on loss of livelihood due to war, outbreak of violence or general political coercive measures always consisted of the hundred-fold sum of the annual contribution. One had to pay for 30 years in order to get a 100% repayment if no claim arose.

New System: The member, estimating his risks, selects a sum between Fr. 2,500.- and Fr. 50,000.-. Thus he decides from the beginning how much he would wish to receive in case of need.

Once he has chosen the category of compensation, he has three possibilities as to the amount of the annual contribution (or one-time payment) he wants to make. He can decide on a simple annual contribution (corresponding to a 100-fold lump sum compensation) as hitherto, or on a double contribution (50-fold compensation), or on a quadruple payment (25-fold compensation) in his category.

What effect regarding the repayment of savings will these changes have?

a) With a simple contribution (example: Fr. 100.- for a compensation of Fr. 10,000.-) one has to pay 24 years in order to claim a 100% repayment. If one leaves the Fund before 24 years are up, repayment is less.

b) With a double contribution (example: Fr. 200.- for compensation of Fr. 10,000.-) a member has to pay only for 10 years until he can claim a 100% repayment. If he remains a member for longer, he receives more than he paid in. Thus he can save capital which after, say, 20 years will have increased to 123% of his contributions.

c) If somebody pays a quadruple contribution (example: Fr. 400.- for compensation of Fr. 10,000.-) he may claim full repayment of his contributions already after five years. If he remains a member for 20 years, repayment will be 139%.

One-time contributions: Members are free to make one-time payments. According to the new system, these, unlike hitherto, will carry interest at 2, 3 or 3½% according to category.

These changes are far more favourable to the individual. We invite you to join. **The Solidarity Fund of the Swiss Abroad, Gutenbergstr. 6, 3011 Berne,** will gladly advise you on your personal requirements.

NEW FROM SWITZERLAND—THE SWISS HOLIDAY PASS

On 1st March, 1972, the Swiss Transport Undertakings introduced a new type of season ticket for tourists, the "SWISS HOLIDAY PASS". It is personal and cannot be transferred to another person.

The Swiss Holiday Pass is on sale only to residents of countries other than Switzerland at principal travel agents and branches of the Swiss National Tourist Office. It cannot be purchased or extended in Switzerland.

The Swiss Holiday Pass entitles the holder to unlimited travel on the principal rail (3,223 miles), boat (340 miles) and postal coach routes (2,053 miles) shown on a special map attached to the pass, in

addition to the purchase of unlimited numbers of reduced rate tickets—reductions vary between 25 and 50%—on lines shown on a second map (195 miles). It is thus of equal interest to tourists wanting to travel freely around as to visitors based in a holiday resort and wishing to see more of the country.

Swiss Holiday Passes are issued for the following periods of validity:

	<i>2nd class</i>	
8 days	S.Fr. 90.-	£10.35
15 days	S.Fr. 125.-	£14.40
1 month	S.Fr. 170.-	£19.55
	<i>1st class</i>	
8 days	S.Fr. 125.-	£14.40
15 days	S.Fr. 175.-	£20.15
1 month	S.Fr. 240.-	£27.60

Against payment of the respective supplement, the Swiss Holiday Pass may be used on TEE trains. It is not valid on organised excursions unless a supplement is paid.

The Swiss Holiday Pass must be produced to ticket collectors/inspectors together with the passport or identity card; a photograph is not required.

Children from 6-16 years of age pay half fare.

To obtain a Swiss Holiday Pass, a special order form must be completed and signed by the passenger.

Refund in respect of partly used Swiss Holiday Passes is possible only in cases of sickness, accident and on production of suitable evidence. Lost or stolen passes cannot be replaced.



Scenery in the Toggenburg