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# The Swiss Observer

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# COMMENT

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SWISS?

In his annual message to the Swiss living abroad, the President of the Confederation — this year it is Federal Councillor Ludwig von Moos — said that remembering the political birth of Switzerland and its subsequent history tied Swiss at home and abroad together on this day of remembrance. Just as the Swiss outside their homeland, who have relatives at home, share their sorrows and joys, the country's authorities are aware throughout the year of the problems facing the Swiss abroad. Such problems should not be forgotten in this hour of celebration, an opportunity for the President to send greetings and thanks for their loyalty and the honour they achieve for their country. He can well imagine that many a Swiss abroad, just as many a citizen at home, is concerned with the question what it means to be Swiss. The Swiss must not isolate themselves from the community of peoples, but that at home and abroad, we should all put into practice personally what is part of the characteristics of Switzerland: mutual understanding and help, and to do our best wherever we are. Only then may we be proud of what the famous historian Jakob Burckhardt said: *"The Small State exists so that there should be one spot in the world where the largest possible quota of nationals are citizens in the full sense of the word"*. So far the presidential message.

What does it mean to be a Swiss? To be proud of a long history, of staying out of two world wars, of our political system, of being the home of the Red Cross, a haven of refugees, of being near the top in the industrial and

banking States, of the fact that the astronauts wore Swiss watches and used a Swiss device for solar wind measuring when they landed on the moon? We may certainly be rightfully proud, but if that is all that makes us Swiss, whether at home or abroad, then we are wrapped up in ourselves and make a very small parcel indeed.

Does it mean we are Swiss if we keep ourselves to ourselves as individuals, just because Switzerland's neutrality has been a safeguard for the country? Federal Councillor Celio at last year's "Rencontres Suisses" in Lausanne emphasised how vital it was to open up towards the world and to burst open the snail's house, so that Switzerland's position in the world, which could once be described as "Neutrality and Solidarity", should deserve the description of "Neutrality and active participation in the Destiny of the World".

Fair enough, we say, for the country as a whole. But where do we come in as individuals? If we believe with Plato that practical work means degradation of culture, then we can sit back once more and enjoy in an abstract way presentation on stage, screen and TV, in beautiful books, in balanced essays and articles, on the concert platform, of everything that happens, be it in politics, science, art or culture. But today, the problem is rather that we run the danger of becoming slaves to technology, of losing humanity as one of the greatest of virtues.

The Viennese neurologist V. E. Frankl said: "Contrary to an animal, no instincts tell man what he has to do. And to the man of today, traditions don't tell either. In fact, he often no longer knows what he wants." "He follows the Joneses, he turns a meek conformist or he does what others want him to do; he is perpetually bewildered and at sea and rebels suddenly out of a feeling of uselessness, of senselessness".

I believe to be a Swiss is to accept humbly and with gratitude the great things that the Switzerland of the past and of the present stands for, and equally the gifts and talents God has given each of us as an individual and to put them to good use. But that means increased responsibility towards my neighbour, my friends, my adversaries; it means shaking my conscience and listening to it; it does not mean acquiring more knowledge or more worldly goods in order to give more to others; it means more humanity as a person, more charity and more love. Each of us stands at a different station in life, but each has a divine timetable and direction to follow — a humble but alert sense of responsibility will make sure that it is the right one.

That means being Swiss, free in the true sense of the word. That is when celebrating the First of August becomes full of meaning again.

MM

## MESSAGES DU PRESIDENT DE LA CONFEDERATION

### aux Suisses de l'Etranger

Chers Compatriotes,

Le 1<sup>er</sup> août est chaque année le jour du souvenir: il nous remémore un événement politique, la naissance de la Confédération et les origines historiques de notre Patrie. Il unit tous les Suisses, en quelque point du globe terrestre qu'ils se trouvent. Nos compatriotes de l'étranger et leurs familles, tous enfants du même pays, partagent nos sentiments patriotiques; c'est pourquoi nous vivons ce jour en communion de pensée avec eux.

Le Président de la Confédération est heureux de s'adresser à cette occasion à tous nos compatriotes résidant dans des pays étrangers, proches ou lointains. Ceux qui ont encore des liens familiaux en Suisse savent que leurs parents prennent part à leurs succès, à leurs joies ou à leurs soucis. De même, les autorités suisses vouent leur attention, tout au long de l'année, aux problèmes qui préoccupent nos compatriotes de l'étranger. Les heures de fête patriotique ne doivent pas nous les faire oublier. Nous en avons connaissance; souvent aussi il nous révèlent des témoignages émouvants d'attachement à la Suisse.

Je voudrais cependant profiter surtout de ces heures de fête pour adresser mon salut à nos compatriotes de l'étranger et pour les remercier de leur fidélité et de leur activité, qui font honneur à notre pays. J'imagine qu'à l'occasion du 1<sup>er</sup> août beaucoup d'entre vous se demandent, inconsciemment peut-être, ce que cela représente que d'être Suisse. La question se pose aussi à ceux qui vivent au pays. Mais elle a un sens plus profond pour les Suisses qui résident hors de nos frontières même s'ils sont les hôtes de peuples amis. Nous ne croyons pas être meilleurs que les autres. Néanmoins, si nous considérons l'histoire et la structure de notre pays, le destin que lui a réservé jusqu'ici la providence, la protection qu'elle lui a accordée contre la guerre, la misère et les grandes catastrophes, voilà autant de raisons de nous soucier du sort de ces compatriotes qui restent si fortement liés au pays dont ils sont les enfants et les citoyens, et qui lui gardent cet attachement même en terre étrangère. Nous n'entendons pas vivre à l'écart de la communauté des nations, mais nous ne pourrions maintenir et améliorer la contribution de la Suisse à l'oeuvre commune de concorde et de paix que si notre comportement personnel s'inspire réellement des qualités et des vertus qui caractérisent la Suisse: nous devons donc faire preuve de compréhension les uns envers les autres, nous entraider et, où que nous soyons, donner le meilleur de nous-mêmes. Nous pourrions alors, avec quelque fierté, dire avec le célèbre historien Jakob Burckhardt; «La raison d'être d'un petit Etat, c'est de constituer une parcelle de la terre où le plus grand

nombre possible d'habitants sont des citoyens au plein sens du terme».

Méditons ces paroles en ces heures de fête consacrées à notre chère Patrie; je vous adresse à tous, dans le monde entier, le salut cordial de votre pays.

Ludwig von Moos  
Président de la Confédération

## MESSADI DIL PRESIDENT FEDERAL

### als Svizzers egl exteriur

Cars cumpatriots egl jester,  
Igl l.d'uost vala per il gi d'ina stedia  
regurdientscha all'ura da naschientscha  
dalla Confederaziun; el meina nus  
anavos tier las entschattas dalla historia  
da nossa tiara ed unescha ils Svizzers  
che vivan ellas diversas zonas da nies  
mund. Nos cumpatriots e lur agens ein  
en quest mument datier da nus es nus  
patertgein a medem temps ad els.

Il president federal selegra da a  
quella caschun puder sedrizzar a nos  
cumpatriots egl exteriur datier ni el  
lontan. Schilunsch ch'ei setracta da  
members da famiglia ch'ei stret-  
gamein cun lur parents ella patria,  
savein nus ch'els ein fermamein interes-  
sai vid lur success, plaschers e quitaus  
che stroclan. Da maniera semeglionta  
sefatschentan duront gl'entir onn las  
autoritads da nossa tiara cun las  
dumondas e problems ch'occupan nos  
conburgheis egl exteriur. Quels pro-  
blems e quellas dumondas vegnan ad  
ureglia a nus, tochen ellas stivas dils  
uffecis e mintgaton scuntrein nus a  
segns d'attaschadadad persunala. Qui-  
taus e problems duein denton era buca  
vegnir emblidai ell'ura festiva da nossa  
patria. Quella ura vulesse jeu oravontut  
nezegiar per tarmetter a nos cumpatriots  
salids ed engraziament per lur fideivla-  
dad e per la honur ch'els attribueschan  
a nossa tiara. Jeu sai s'imaginar che  
biars da vos sefatschentan cun la  
dumonda — seigi quei conscient ni buca  
cunscient — tgei quei munta d'esser in  
Svizzer. Quella dumonda sepresenta era  
als burgheis eifer nos cunfins. Ella  
obtegn in senn special pils cumpatriots  
che vivan dator nos tiarms e denter  
auters pievels — era sche quels apparteg-  
nan tier nos amitgs. Nus vulein buca  
sesuttametter alla illusiun dad esser  
megliers ch'els auters. Nossa fuorma  
historica e la structura da nossa tiara  
giustificheschan la sort che ha preservau  
nus d'uiara, misergia e grevas scurladas.  
Ellas giustificheschan dasperas da era  
far nos patratgs davart la posiziun da  
nos cumpatriots ch'ei pervia da lur  
origin e dretg da burgheis ligiai cun nus  
e che restan ligiai, era sch'els habite-  
schan dator nos cunfins. Nus havein  
pilver buca l'intenziun da desligiar dalla  
cuminonza dils pievels, denton nus  
savein taluisa rinforzar e promover la  
contribuziun dalla Svizra all'ovra com-  
munabla dil capir in l'auter e da salvar  
la pasch. Quei sa mo daventar cun nies  
secutener persunal che duei interme-  
diar la forza pigl agir; quei appartegn  
agl esser ed alla atgnadad dalla Svizra.

Quei ein il capir e gidar in l'auter e da  
prestar il meglier pusseivel, nua nus  
essan plazzai. Lu astgein nus cun entgina  
luschezia menziunar il plaid da Jakob  
Burckhardt: «Il stadi pign ei cheu per  
ch'in liug sesanfli sin tiara, nua la pli  
gronda quota da habitonts vala per  
burgheis en siu entir senn».

Lein schar ir a cor quei ell'ura  
festiva ch'ei dedicada a nossa cara  
patria. Cun quella caschun tarmettel  
jeu a tuts Svizzers egl entir mund mes  
cordials salids.

Ludwig von Moos  
president federal

## Rütlichwur

*Wir wollen sein ein einzig Volk von Brüdern,  
In keiner Not uns trennen und Gefahr.*

*Wir wollen frei sein wie die Väter waren,  
Eher den Tod, als in Knechtschaft leben.*

*Wir wollen trauen auf den höchsten Gott  
Und uns nicht fürchten vor der Macht der*

*Menschen.*

*Nach Schiller's «Wilhelm Tell»*

## De Schwyzerfaane

En eerschten Augschte und käi Reed?  
S miech nüüd. Me wäis jo wool, me sett  
vil söörger haa zum Vatterland  
und nid vertue i mängi Hand,  
wo nid zum Schwyzerfaane hed.

S root Faanetuech! Es wysses Chrüüz,  
im obre Stangenegge lyd s,  
isch früener äinisch munzig chly  
de Loon vo Papscht und König gsy  
für Chriegshülff us em Tal vo Schwyz.

Lang spööter hed en Aidgenoss,  
de Dufour, tapfer, fromm und grooss  
em Chrüüz die hüttge Forme ggää.  
Es sell si niemer welle nää!  
Es gid is Chraft uf üser Strooss.

Du wysses Chrüüz im roote Fäld  
bezüüg, as d Rettig vo do Wält  
üs chund vom Häiland Jesus Chrischt,  
wo für all Sünder gstooben ischt,  
vo Hänkers-chnächte gruusig quält.

He säg, öb mer für Chranz und Stärn  
sell ofere de Schwyzerchärn.  
Was säid s wyss Chrüüz im roote Fäld  
zu Macht und Grööss, Glanz und Gäld?  
und lost mer ächt uf daas nu gärn?

Wo Trake sind und d Liebi fäält,  
wo Zwang und Gwalt Betrückt quält  
zäntume uf em Wälterund,  
chund naümis Trooscht vom chlyne Bund  
mit wyssen Chrüüz im roote Fäld.

Drum fladret s nu so froo im Wind  
und isch für vil Verfolgti Fründ  
s wyss Chrüüz im roote Faanefäld.  
S gilt äistig öppis i de Wält,  
solang mer fry und äige sind.

Zilander

## ASSEMBLY OF SWISS ABROAD

### Programme for Montreux

This year's Assembly of the Swiss  
Abroad will take place at Montreux at  
the last week-end in August. The  
theme will be "The Swiss Abroad and  
Swiss Economy". On Thursday, 28th  
August, the Working Committee of the  
Commission of the Swiss Abroad will  
meet, to be followed the next morning  
at 8.30 a.m. by the Commission Meet-  
ing itself (Parliament of the Swiss  
Abroad). Another meeting will be that  
of the Council of the "Foundation for  
the Swiss Abroad". All these are not  
open to the public. The general pro-  
gramme will begin in the afternoon.  
There are four different outings: to  
"Ateliers de Constructions Mécaniques  
de Vevey S.A."; to motorway section  
Puidoux—Chexbres—Villeneuve; to  
Thermic Power Works Chavalon; to  
Chillon Castle.

The official opening will take place  
at the Montreux Palace Hotel, com-  
bind with a reception. There will be a  
general Question Hour of the Secre-  
tariat of the Swiss Abroad at 8.30 p.m.  
At the same time, the Council of the  
Solidarity Fund will have its meeting  
(closed).

On Saturday morning, the General  
Meeting of the Solidarity Fund will  
take place at 8.30 p.m. An hour later,  
the first plenary session begins at the  
Casino Theatre. As in past years, a  
special lunch will be organised for all  
those interested in Church questions.  
In the afternoon, there will be group  
discussions on re-integration problems  
of the Swiss abroad and on the possi-  
bilities of training of young Swiss from  
abroad in Swiss undertakings at home.  
A second plenary session will take  
place at 4 p.m., followed by a Press  
Conference.

Banquet, entertainment and dance  
will begin at 8 p.m. at the Casino.

On Sunday, 31st August, the boat  
leaves Montreux at 9.15 a.m. for Cop-  
pet. There is an ecumenical service at  
Morges, and lunch will be on the boat.  
At Coppet Castle, a reception will be  
followed by a visit to the Museum of  
the Swiss in Foreign Services. The  
return journey to Montreux will be  
made by train, and a last gathering will  
take place at 5 p.m. at the Palace Hotel  
at Montreux.

The "Festkarte" which includes  
the visit on Friday, the banquet on  
Saturday and the outing on Sunday,  
will cost 40 francs. Young Swiss from  
abroad who are between 16 and 23 will  
receive it free of charge. It is important  
to write immediately to the Secretariat  
of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26,  
3000 Berne, for application forms (par-  
ticipation and hotel reservation).

It promises to be an excellent  
meeting in an enchanting part of Swit-  
zerland, and it is hoped that a large  
contingent from Great Britain will  
make the journey to Montreux. Well  
worth it!