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Swiss from Abroad gather in Zurich

FOR many of the compatriots who live abroad and attend the annual assembly regularly, Zurich was not as much of an attraction as a smaller town with a more intimate character would have been.

Yet the opinion at the end of the four busy days was practically unanimous – the 61st Assembly of Swiss Abroad was a success, and most of the 500 present expressed their satisfaction.

By the time the official opening arrived at the Muraltengut on Friday evening, several business meetings had, as always, already taken place.

On Thursday morning, the Commission on Information discussed the problems of the "Review" in general; deadline difficulties, publicity attracting young readers, translating and distribution and its relationship with the *Swiss Observer* in particular.

It was hoped that a solution would be found soon so as to have the "Review" included in the "Swiss Observer" four times a year.

Apart from executive committees, the Friends of the Organisation of Swiss Abroad met. Question time on all kinds of problems such as education, training and social insurance took place.

The most important meeting was that of the Commission of Swiss Abroad, known as "The Little Parliament", which met on Friday morning under the new president of the organisation, Prof. Walther Hofer.

Almost 90 people were present including delegates, deputies, members from inside Switzerland and their guests. Great Britain was represented by a full delegation, Mrs Mariann Meier and Mr Joe Brogginini for the South and Bernard Simon and Dr Ursula Ditchburn for the North.

The meeting was told of the plebiscite that would take place on December 4, dealing with the equality of Swiss men and women in passing on Swiss nationality; the proposal that Swiss residents abroad may be

able to vote by post in federal plebiscites; the changes in the AHV regulations and an average increase of 11.3% from January 1984; and of the changes in the regulations allowing those wives of Swiss abroad insured in Switzerland under the compulsory AHV insurance to join after the age of 50.

Delegates were told that the next Assembly was not likely to take place in summer but in mid-May, together with the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle (MUBA). The theme would be "Switzerland's Foreign Trade Relations".

They were also given advance notice of the next Swiss National Exhibition in 1991 and told to think about what the Swiss Abroad could contribute.

Also, before the official opening, the Solidarity Fund held meetings, of both Council and AGM. The financial position of the Fund was satisfactory, but more members were needed.

In a special appeal by the President of the Confederation,

Federal Councillor Pierre Aubert, on the occasion of the Fund's Silver Jubilee, had urged all Swiss abroad who had not yet joined the Fund to do so.

Young Swiss from abroad met at the National Museum, and those participants interested in a sightseeing tour were guided around Zurich.

And so to the Muraltengut, the lovely estate built by the Werthmueller Family 200 years ago, later bought by Hans Konrad von Muralt, Mayor of Zurich – hence the name – and further renovated by the famous Bodmer Family.

The Swissair Band gave a smart musical welcome, and before President Hofer officially opened the congress, the national anthem was sung. Prof. Hofer thanked the cantonal government and the Zurich municipal authorities for their friendly welcome.

He referred to Zurich as a prosperous Canton where little emigration had taken place. Between 1850 and 1910 when mass emigration was at its highest



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elsewhere in Switzerland, the population had doubled in the Canton of Zurich and had quadrupled in the town.

Prof. Hofer mentioned the last time that Swiss from abroad had met in Zurich was 28 years ago, where the main problems concerned difficulties experienced during the war years.

The representatives of Canton and town then welcomed their compatriots from abroad in four languages, including English, and pointed out that the more the Swiss became world citizens, the more they remained Swiss at heart, and tied to their mother country.

This was followed by a reception in the grounds of the estate. A separate meeting was specially arranged for all those attending for the first time, and the young people had their own get-together.

On Saturday morning the plenary session was opened by the President at the Auditorium of Zurich University.

The President of the Mother Society, the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, René Retornaz, made a welcoming speech in German, French and Italian.

Prof. Hofer then introduced the main theme, "Switzerland and the United Nations". A special report on the speeches and discussion, and the result of the questionnaire sent to the Swiss communities abroad, will follow in the next issue.

After lunch in the "Lichthof" of the University, the Solidarity Fund presented an audio-visual show. This will be available to Swiss communities abroad very shortly. It was introduced by the Director of the Fund, Benito Invernizzi.

As always, a few questions from the floor were dealt with and then the representative of the government, Federal Councillor Alphons Egli, Minister of the Interior, addressed the meeting. He touched on several problems facing the Swiss abroad and how

the authorities at home had tried to assist.

The evening was given over to a dinner and entertainment at the Zuerichhorn. A carnival band ("Guggemusig") and an Appenzeller folklore band entertained during the meal, and then famous cabaret artist Elsy Attenhofer gave an excellent performance. Dancing continued well past midnight.

Next morning, the traditional ecumenical service took place at the Grossmuenster, followed by a boat trip to the Au peninsula.

We were served an excellent meal and were entertained with

folklore music, yodelling and flag tossing.

The return journey to Zurich by boat brought the assembly to an end. The business meetings had been satisfactory, and the entertainment was varied and attractive, but as always, it was the meeting up with old friends from all over the world and making new ones that added sparkle to many gatherings and made the whole event so rewarding.

We thank the organisers for their excellent work and we look forward to next year.

Mariann Meier

Joe Brogini joins the ASK Executive

FOR some time, the wish had been expressed by the leaders of the Organisation of Swiss Abroad in Berne to have a representative of the Swiss in English-speaking countries on the executive committee of the Commission of Swiss Abroad.

At the March meeting in Berne, the deputy delegate for Great Britain South, Mr Joe Brogini, was elected to fill the vacancy on the executive (Aus-schuss/Bureau) of the ASK.

Giuseppe Brogini was born in Losone of a "Patrician family" on his father's side, one of the Rheinfeldens (Aargau) "Burgher" families on his mother's. After completing his secondary education in Locarno, he studied architecture in Zurich where he qualified in 1966. He then worked in Helsinki, Milan and London.

Initially, Mr Brogini came to this country to study English. In 1969, however, he took a two-year post-graduate course in city regional planning at the Architectural Association School

of Architecture, obtaining the diploma in town planning in 1971.

Then followed a short professional spell in Bellinzona, but he returned to England where he undertook a three-year research course in urban and regional science under Prof. Peter Hall, head of the Geography Department. This was sponsored at Reading University by the British Council and the Swiss Government.

Since 1975, Mr Brogini has



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been working for the Greater London Council as an architect-planner, dealing mainly with development and environment issues in the largest metropolitan authority in the world.

Joe Brogini has been active in a number of Swiss societies. For some years he has been a council member of the New Helvetic Society and vice-president of the Unione Ticinese.

Last year, the Federation elected him as deputy delegate to Mrs Mariann Meier for GB South to the Commission of Swiss Abroad, the "Little Parliament".

It is 15 years since Joe came to this country. He has an English wife Alison and two small daughters, Lara and Sasha. His many friends wish him success in his career as well as in his many activities.

Having worked with him for a number of years, I have no doubt that he will deal with his new task on the ASK executive with skill and devotion. Congratulations and the best of luck!

Mariann Meier

Busy programme

THE West of Scotland Swiss Club has been busy putting together its programme for the year - and what a programme it is.

With an event each month from October through to June, it offers variety and enjoyment and is a tribute to the organisers who must have worked very hard to plan and arrange the programme.

Members of other regions may care to browse through it in search of ideas.

Programme for 1983-84:

October 14: Friday at 7.30pm at 7, Hughenden Terrace, Games Night; Beetle Drive and other games to be brought by members.

November 18: Friday at 7.30pm at 7, Hughenden

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Holiday of a lifetime

WHEN Princess Alexandra opened the World Travel Market 1982, she was offered a gift by the Swiss National Tourist Office, in the form of an invitation to Switzerland for six needy children from Great Britain.

As Princess Alexandra is

the patron of the Children's Country Holiday Fund, the six lucky youngsters were selected by this organisation and spent a marvellous week at Les Diablerets in the Alps of Lake Geneva Region.

Our photograph shows the six children with their leader.

Terrace, Swiss Film Night, followed by cake and coffee.

December 17: Saturday at 7.30pm at the home of Mrs N. Galloway, 37, Falkland Street, Glasgow, Christmas Party for Grown-Ups. An attractive meal will be provided.

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January 20: Friday at 7.30pm at 7, Hughenden Terrace, Talk with slides on the

Oberammergau and Austria by Mrs Nelly Galloway, followed by Wurstli, Weggli and tea.

February 17: Friday, Theatre Outing Full details will be announced at the January meeting.

March 16: Friday at 7.30pm at 7, Hughenden Terrace, Talk with slides on Tuscany, by Mr J. Sheffield, followed by tea and sandwiches.

April 13: Friday, Visit to the Victorian Flat in Buccleuch Street, Glasgow. The timing of this interesting visit has yet to be arranged with the National Trust for Scotland.

May 18: Friday at 7.30pm at 7, Hughenden Terrace Annual General Meeting, followed by cheese and wine party.

June 23: Saturday, at Garden Cottage, Chryston, Barbecue.

THE ARTS

Visual Arts

Margrit Linck: Ceramics, Sculptures Margrit Linck's works are now on show until November 27 in Folkstone (Arts Centre, New Metropole, The Leas).

Although now 85 years old, Margrit Linck is still a very active artist. For years she has had her workshop in Schloss Reichenbach, a place well known to all ceramic connoisseurs. Her remarkable sense of geometrical

forms, her creativity and technical perfection has been internationally recognized.

Mrs Linck now spends her time between Berne and Burgundy.

Alberto Giacometti: Lithographs "Paris sans fin". Giacometti's views of Paris, touring Great Britain since it was first shown in London in 1981, can be seen until October 21 in Birmingham (City of Birmingham

Polytechnic) as well as later in Ayr, Rochester and Aberystwyth.

Fred Siegenthaler: Paperwork. The artist's work "Pietà" of handmade paper, included in an exhibition called "Paper as Image", has been on show in the United Kingdom since July. You will be able to see the exhibition until October 27 in Brighton (Gardner Centre, University of Sussex) and in November/December in London.