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Thanks to Swiss Review

I greatly appreciate receiving Swiss Review regularly, and I always find it very interesting. I live far from Switzerland, and we do not very often hear, either in the papers or on television, about what is happening in Switzerland. This is why Swiss Review keeps us in direct contact and give us useful and sometimes also pleasant information.

Jean-Pierre Emery, Australia

Thank you for sending me this very well organised and so interesting review. Please continue doing so even though I am ninety.

Bernadette Caldozo Coelho, Portugal

Commentary on the referendum of June 9, 1996 (SR 3/96)

It seems to me that voters' decisions should be respected and politics conducted in consequence. According to an eminent law professor, this is one main reason for the growing number of abstentions: people have the impression that whatever they vote, politics will continue in the same way. It is not difficult to find examples of this in recent Swiss history. We may go even further and think that a good government could even take advantage of voters' decisions, in foreign policy for example.

Christian Jungen, France

The fact is that Swiss voters did not accept the way in which the government was to be discharged of its responsibilities. I would have voted YES if the secretaries of state had been responsible to the parliament which was to appoint them.

I am delighted that you dealt with subjects of real interest to Swiss Abroad, particularly in your interview with Professor Remigio Ratti on the very worrying subject of our unity.

Henri Addor, France

Air pollution and smoking

In the Snippets section of Swiss Review 4/96 I read with interest about the cost of air pollution and the death rate caused by traffic in Switzerland, according

to a study by the federal administration. As a very frequent visitor to my homeland I find the pollution from smoking far worse. Has the federal administration ever carried out a study on how much it costs to keep thousands of people in hospitals due to heart problems, lung and breathing problems and other illnesses from smoking? For the non-smoking public, Switzerland is a very dirty place to visit, in fact among the dirtiest in Europe and North America.

Sigisbert Bienz, United Kingdom

The OSCE in Chechnya

In any theatre of war you will find people who, surrounded by dead, hang on to life. However, your author, OSCE diplomat Heidi Tagliavini, who was only a visitor in Chechen Grozny, would have done well if she had devoted a few words to the victims of the Russian genocide. Instead of that, she slandered the now fallen leader of the Chechen freedom fighters as "renegade rebel" and "self-proclaimed president". The elections which confirmed Zhokar Dudayev at the head of this Caucasian state were certainly no worse than those which the OSCE carried out in Bosnia under Swiss auspices.

Andreas Selmeç, Germany
Association for Threatened Peoples

Switzerland's image (Editorial SR 4/96)

I take a serious objection to your statement, that "Switzerland's image abroad has worsened" because Switzerland did not join the United Nations nor the European Economic Area. I travel the world for business and find that Switzerland is very highly regarded, particularly as the people had the strength and courage to say NO to what they believe is not in the best interest of Switzerland.

W.A. de Vigier, United Kingdom

In your review I often appreciate your efforts to bring out the best in Switzerland – to show that it is one of the most beautiful countries in the world and at

Readers' letters

The editors of Swiss Review are delighted with the many echoes we get from readers. Unfortunately, for reasons of space we cannot publish all of them. The shorter the letter, the bigger the chance of it appearing. We regret that we cannot reply to readers' letters.

all events the most balanced morally. In a phrase, it is a typical example of what the Europe of nations ought to be. Continue as you are.

Daniel Guyonneau, France

I must express my disagreement when you say that "Switzerland's image abroad has worsened." This is certainly true as far as politicians and journalists are concerned, but it is not true for at least half of the French and Swiss people. I would like to remind you: in France, the referendum on Maastricht was only just accepted, and that thanks to many and varied pressures.

J. Wanner, France

Initiatives in brief (SR 4/96)

I was disconcerted when I learned about the popular initiative "Moderation in Immigration!" which was pending. I realised that such initiatives can be formulated only by black and white "thinking" people, who have either never left their own country or have done so only on organised holiday trips. In conversations with my many foreign friends, I always find it embarrassing to have to refer to the existence of parties like the Swiss Democrats, when Switzerland is being talked about with affection and admiration.

Peter Willi, Germany

Nazi Gold (SR 6/96)

I am astounded by your comments, full of excuses and justifications for the most appalling behaviour by our politicians, industrialists, financiers, high military and Red Cross (hear nothing, see nothing and know nothing).

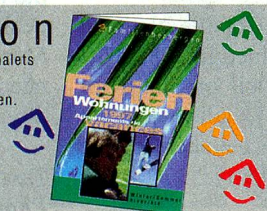
Edith Tober-Duss, United Kingdom

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