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Editorial..

Editing the Editorials...

Editorials are written, read and soon forgotten. Controversial issues are often welcome material for editors. They present the editor with an opportunity to state his or her personal opinion and can motivate readers to disseminate the subject matter at length. Editorials often move readers to put pen to paper and so fill the column reserved for "Letters to the Editor".

The time is near (July) when a new editor of HELVETIA will make his mark on our publication.

You may have noticed that in the past I endeavored to give emphasis to mostly positive aspects to various subjects of editorials. Today's editorial may well be the exception!

Whenever possible I tried to write about parallel happenings in Switzerland our 'country of origin' and in New Zealand, our 'adoptive country'!

As Swiss/Kiwis most of us have the welfare of both these countries close at heart. How would you then define the happiness of our two countries in general? Would you agree with my thinking, that the happiness of the country's population in general is steadily diminishing?

Statistics would certainly agree! We can read headlines stating: *Society is not what it used to be!* We know of a steady break-down of family values. Lack of discipline among School children. The high suicide rate among young people. Low self-esteem to the point of self hatred.

- Recently I found an article in a Swiss paper, describing a new trend of self destruction among young

Swiss girls. Inflicting superficial wounds on themselves they are apparently desperate to draw attention to themselves and with such mutilations they express total lack of self-esteem.

Where is it all to end, we may ask? Here in New Zealand we are confronted with an increasing lack of respect for the sanctity of human life resulting in violent home invasions, rape and murder. Government spending or lack thereof is blamed for most shortcomings affecting the welfare state.

- In most Christian Churches the message of Lent, the need to confront personal sin and the failure of a moral society at large is being preached about at this time. But who is willing to listen in a post-Christian society as ours?

Let the Government print more money I heard someone say!

It might help for a short time to live with a false economy and the super rich would probably increase their wealth while the working poor would pay later...!

I'm sure that you have your own opinion on the ills of today's loss of values and morals with inherent costly results to society. Who is speaking out to us all about the need for self-discipline?

The need to remind us all that irresponsible living is costly and that the welfare state is under threat. I believe there are now approx. one million 'Kiwis' dependent or partially dependent on the Government for their necessary income to survive.

We hear of the huge debt incurred by Government's borrowing abroad during the past decades.

Aware of such calamities which can steal the country's happiness some of us 'oldies' will be forgiven when we talk of the 'good old days' when expectations were few, self-discipline incorporating responsibility was common, standards of behavior were wholesome and we could enjoy most entertainment without being warned of 'offensive language, drug use, violence, sexual references and horror scenes.

Have we as part of 'western society' ever been encouraged to ask "what can I do for my country", rather than "what can my country do for me"?

Or has that only ever happened in America?

I would love to see and hear on a regular basis a panel of leaders of

SWISS SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

PATRON: Mrs Sylvie Matteucci-Keller, Ambassador of Switzerland

PRESIDENT/TREASURER: Beatrice Leuenberger, 44 Montgomery Crescent, Hamilton, Ph.(07) 843-7971 Fax (07) 843-7941 bea.leun.rachel@xtra.co.nz

VICE PRESIDENT: Marianne Drummond, Stratford, Ph. 06 762 8718

SECRETARY: Ruth Waldvogel, 89 Crosby Rd. Hamilton, Ph/Fax (07)855-3417

RIFLEMASTER: Peter Rust, 4202 Pepepe Rd. Naike, RD 2, Huntly 07 8266711

DELEGATES TO THE SWISS ABROAD CONFERENCE IN SWITZERLAND

DELEGATE: Heinz Leuenberger, 33 Russell Terrace, Putaruru, Ph/Fax (07) 883-8537

DEPUTY DELEGATES: Beno Noetzi, Normandy Road RD11, Hawera, Ph. 06272 6727

Roland Schütz, 35 East St. Petone - Wellington Ph. 04 568 6772

EDITOR: RINALDO RUST, 242 TE PAHU RD. R.D.5.

HAMILTON, PH/FAX (07) 871-9946 E-MAIL: RINALDORUST@XTRA.CO.NZ

CLUB REPRESENTATIVES

AUCKLAND

SECRETARY: Trudi Fill, 51 Clifton Rd, Herne Bay, P.O Box 40152, Glenfield, Auckland, Ph/fax (09) 3764923, e-amil <weidfill@xtra.co.nz>

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EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND: Panama House, 22 Panama St. Wellington, Ph. (04) 472-1593 or (04) 472-1594 Fax (04) 499-6302

HONORARY CONSUL: Peter Deutsche, P.O. Box 90-209, Auckland Mail Centre Ph./Fax (09) 366-0403. Email: deutsche@clear.net.nz