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Lichen (*Xanthoria elegans*), Gantrisch region (Canton Berne); photo: Rolf Herzig.

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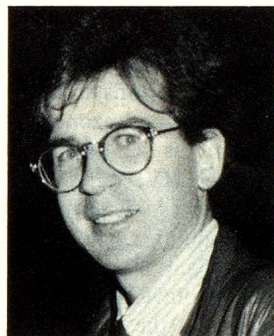
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Editorial

Good and Bad News...



At the beginning of September Federal Councilor Flavio Cotti launched the national informative campaign «Clean Air - Healthy Living». The campaign aims over a period of four years to encourage the public to stem air pollution voluntarily through the media, posters and brochures. Above all the campaign seeks to inform that air pollution even when it can't always be seen or smelt leads to a considerable health hazard, to forestry and agricultural damage as well as to damage to buildings and historic monuments. «We inhale our own exhaust», is one of the slogans of the campaign. Thus an agricultural yield loss of 5 to 15 per cent is being estimated solely as a result of excessive ozone levels. In 1986 the Federal Council had already valued the economical cost of air pollution in Switzerland as a whole at over one billion francs.

Out of consideration to such reports we have decided to take the environment as our Forum theme at the close of the year. To be more precise: In what condition is our air, our water, our soil and how does Switzerland want to come to grips with her ever increasing mountain of waste? Such questions unveil not only the positive, they also uncover abuses. One or the other reader will now be asking himself - is the Swiss Review going to become just another of those 'bringers of bad news', to the likes of a boulevard journal. That is not our intention. The Swiss Review wants to be a joining link for our compatriots to their homeland. It reports in word and picture about the things which concern those living in our country. Both encouraging and delicate subjects. Switzerland has changed so greatly both in appearance and structurally that some Swiss people living abroad believe to have landed in another country on visiting their old homeland after many years abroad. As far as it is able, our journal wants to hinder such a rude awakening and to contribute to a continued and active contact with Switzerland. It is quite clear that this demands rather than excludes the emotional bond to Switzerland.

On behalf of the editorial staff, I would like to send you my best wishes for the forthcoming festive season and for the coming New Year.

Marco Zaugg, Editor