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70th Congress of the Swiss Abroad

The best informed of Swiss

About 450 Swiss Abroad discussed the European challenge in St. Gall. They also greatly enjoyed the trip through the Appenzell countryside with compatriots from all over the world.

Walther Hofer welcomed Congress participants for the last time as ASO president. In his opening remarks Professor Hofer said it was not without a touch of pride that he was leaving a body which had done so much to strengthen the presence of the Fifth Switzerland in the homeland. One of the most important achievements of his term was certainly the right to vote by correspondence; and the importance of the approaching referendums increased the resonance of the Congress.

Mobility a main theme

"Switzerland and the Swiss Abroad faced with the European Challenge" was the main subject of this year's Congress. The Swiss Abroad were able to obtain at first hand and from those directly involved the latest information about European integration and Switzerland's stance. This led one commentator to remark that they must be the best informed voters in the country. Areas such as social security, free movement of persons and recognition of diplomas were examined in detail. Mobility in a more open world turned out to be one of the main interests of the Swiss Abroad.

Federal Councillor Kaspar Villiger wound up with a plea for the EEA Treaty, and indeed the plenary meeting had already passed a resolution in this sense. In addition to the big majority on this, there was also a unanimous

vote in favour of maintaining the voluntary pension scheme.

Idyllic trip

The Congress was given a festive atmosphere not only by the honours heaped on

Walther Hofer but also by the banquet and the Sunday service. The first drops of rain baptised the trip to Appenzell but did nothing to spoil the atmosphere. Everyone enjoyed the midday stop in Appenzell and the visits to

the cheese dairy and folklore museum in Stein. There was also plenty of musical entertainment.

"Next year in Montreux" was on everyone's lips at parting. The 1993 Congress will take place from the 20th to the 22nd August in the famous lakeside resort, and the main subject will be "Embassies, Consulates and the Swiss Abroad".

RL

New president for the ASO

Jean-Jacques Cevey to follow Walther Hofer

At its autumn meeting, the Council of the Swiss Abroad elected Jean-Jacques Cevey to succeed Professor Walther Hofer as president.



The new president, Jean-Jacques Cevey...

Applause greeted former National Councillor Cevey's election as president of the Association of the Swiss Abroad. A leading journalist in Canton Vaud, Mr. Cevey has been a member of the Council since 1985 and Vice President of the ASO since 1988. He has been mayor of Montreux for many years, and successively member and president of the National Council. He has all the right qualities to serve the Fifth Switzerland. He takes up his post on October 1.

After his ten years as ASO president, celebrated historian Walther Hofer was elected honorary president by acclamation. Which means we will not have to continue entirely without him!

Stucky as Vice President

The new internal members of the Council are Hans-Ulrich Glarner, head of the Stapferhaus in Lenzburg and originator of "Encounter 91", and National Councillors Gianfranco Cotti and Georg Stucky. Mr. Stucky becomes ASO Vice President.

The latest Swiss Abroad statistics mean an upward re-



... and the new honorary president, Walther Hofer.

vision of ASO membership figures for Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, while the 132,387 Swiss residents in France also received a new council seat. Club Suizo de Rojas (Spain), Cheminée Suisse (Italy) and Swiss Club Northern Transvaal (South Africa) were recognised as new Swiss associations. The meeting also discussed dissemination of political news to the Swiss Abroad.

Maintaining the pension scheme

The Council recommended to the Association's plenary meeting a resolution on "Switzerland's opening to the rest of Europe". The proposed abolition of the voluntary pension scheme by the Federal Council was condemned. The Council would have preferred not to take sides on the EEA issue, but the plenary meeting voted in favour of the treaty.

RL

SSA Ski Camps 1992/1993

New Year Camp at Splügen, December 26, 1992-January 4, 1992 and
Spring Camp at Grimentz April 6-April 15, 1993
Application forms now available from:
Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad
Youth Service
Alpenstrasse 26
CH-3000 Berne 16