

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 20 (1993)
Heft: 4

Rubrik: SSA news

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71st Congress of the Swiss Abroad

Dialogue must continue

Over 500 Swiss Abroad attended this year's Congress to analyse their relations with their diplomatic posts.

In a spirit of open dialogue those present at the Montreux Congress Centre conferred praise and criticism, asked questions and expressed

wishes. They were told by experts which services embassies and consulates can provide and which they cannot. Mention was made of private institutions which supplement the work of diplomatic posts.

At the end of the day most participants expressed satisfaction about the work of Swiss diplomats in their favour. But a number of problems did arise – particularly in the field of information. These have now been put in writing so that they can be discussed and resolved.

Concluding the plenary meeting, Federal Councillor Flavio Cotti promised to take the concerns of the Fifth Switzerland very seriously indeed and to integrate them as fully as possible into the

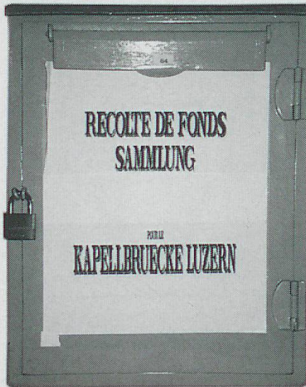
work of the foreign ministry. He confirmed that officials had been listening with open ears to the points raised and were ready to discuss them all in a constructive spirit.

The 71st Congress of the Swiss Abroad ended with an oecumenical service and a trip on Lake Geneva. The 72nd Congress will take place at Lenzerheide-Valbella on August 19–21, 1994.

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The voluntary pension scheme

Immediately before the Congress, it was made known that the Federal Council is considering ending the voluntary old-age and disability pension scheme on financial grounds. Both the Council for the Swiss Abroad and the Congress protested unanimously against this prospect.



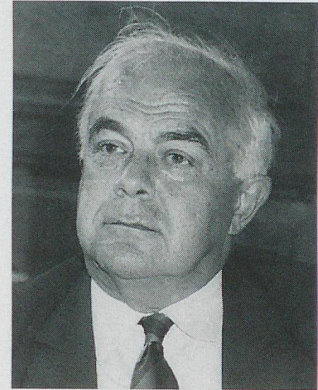
Those taking part in the Congress collected about Sfr. 6000 for the Kapellbrücke in Lucerne which was recently destroyed by fire.

AJAS

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AJAS
Alpenstrasse 26
CH-3000 Berne 16

Congratulations



On September 19, Marcel Ney, who was director of the Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad until 1987, will be 70. Our warmest congratulations.

The Council for the Swiss Abroad meets

In the light of the elections

The newly formed Council for the Swiss Abroad elected its officers and transacted current business at its autumn meeting.

For the first time in its 76-year history, elections to the Council have taken place simultaneously all over the world – according to the procedure described in Swiss Review a year ago. The number of Swiss Abroad members has gone up by 8 to a total of 128. The proportion of women members has risen from 14% to 22%. After confirmation of the election results, the Council proceeded to appoint its additional 30

members from within Switzerland.

The Committee for the next four years was then elected, with Jean-Jacques Cevey at its head. Roselyne Crausaz, Vice Chairman of

the New Helvetic Society, joins the Committee on a consultative basis.

Other business of the Congress included the revision of the ASO Foundation statutes, information on voting by cor-

respondence, unemployment insurance, and the Place of the Swiss Abroad (to be described in a future issue). The Council also recognised three new Swiss associations, at Avrecourt (France), Memleben (Germany) and Rojas (Spain).

RL

New Year and Easter ski camps

**December 27, 1993–
January 5, 1994,
Splügen, Grisons
April 1–10, 1994,
Grimentz, Valais**

Spring skiing promises plenty of sun and good snow conditions. Young people between 15 and 25 should register as soon as possible with:
*Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad
Youth Service
Alpenstrasse 26
CH-3000 Berne 16*

**Jean-Jacques
Cevey, presi-
dent of the
Organisation
for the Swiss
Abroad.
(Photos SSA)**

