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Thanks to SR

It is not because I have decided to study here in Japan for two years that I am no longer interested about what is going on in Switzerland. Swiss Review provides me regularly with various information about my home country and its international activities. More than that, your magazine allows me to have an even more accurate global view through (for example) comparisons between Japan's and Switzerland's societies.

E. Chappuis, Japan

I receive your review and am very satisfied with your product. Bravo to all, and keep up the good work!

Christopher H. Bull, USA

We want to congratulate you on the article about the federal referendums of June 8, 1997. It was concise, to the point and neutral.

R. and E. Chrenko, USA

Bishop Haas (SR 2/97)

Bishop Haas was disparaged in 2/97. Have you any idea of what you are doing? Why don't you look if there isn't something bad in yourselves which might be uncovered? Our Lord Jesus said: "Let he who is without sin throw the first stone".

O. Mathis, Canada

Railwayland Switzerland (SR 2/97)

This issue of Swiss Review pleased me very much. A compliment for variety. I missed a few tips for Swiss Abroad about how they could use Switzerland's railways during a stay in the homeland.

Walter Ledermann, Thailand

Your no. 2 issue of this year had a particularly interesting item – the one devoted to the Swiss railways' 150th anniversary. Thank you for sharing history with those of us who live abroad. As an afterthought it struck me that my host country, China, was taking delivery of several brand-new locomotives made by ABB Zurich just as your article appeared. Wouldn't it have been possible to dwell in a few lines on the world market which accounts for a considerable share in ABB, SLM and Schindler business?

Roger Beaud, China

This issue is beautiful edited and a treasure trove for information about the Swiss Railways. I sincerely hope that

Switzerland retains its rail system for a time when reliance on car transportation will wane and be replaced by a more integrated system of rail and roads, as has been striven for already for many years.

John R. Sollberger, USA

Patients' rights (SR 2/97)

The introduction to the article 'Hope for a Merciful End' contains a paradox. Logically, putting an end to one's life can only be suicide, whatever other name one gives it. Doesn't this mean that the stupendous progress of modern medicine should result in legislative and therefore moral encouragement of suicide by patients?

Jean-Marie Humain, France

The optional state pension scheme (SR 3/97)

I read with consternation of the 'dismantlement' of the optional state old-age and disability pension scheme. I would like to hope that there will be a big difference between the drafts described and their execution and that the final result will not be as disastrous as it looks at present.

Claire Messinger, Israel

I have been living in Germany since 1983 and have been paying into the optional state insurance scheme without interruption. My husband and myself work together on a freelance basis. My husband's German pension will probably lie below the social assistance contribution rate. How happy I am therefore to have had the opportunity to be insured by the Swiss state insurance system – on which I will be very dependent when I am old. If the optional scheme gets anywhere near as 'reformed' as the writing on the wall in your article suggests, it would be a disaster for me.

Jutta Gess, Germany

If the Federal Council does propose such a scandalous undermining of the present old-age and disability insurance rules, this will basically be an act of outrageous arrogance against the Swiss Abroad, who are after all Swiss citizens. If it talks about public spending cuts at the same time, this is quite simply false. Because all those abroad who can just keep their heads above water as the rules are now will have to return to Switzerland if the insurance benefits are cut down, and this will be an infinitely

greater burden on the social security system.

Rolando Ernst, Spain

I am horrified! In the 70s the Swiss Government encouraged us Swiss Abroad to join this voluntary pension scheme and promised us a secure pension for our retirement. Now we have to read that we are going to be the first casualties of cuts in social security.

Edith Tober-Duss, United Kingdom

Radio Eviva

Although Swiss Review is very good, we Swiss Abroad also took Radio Eviva to our hearts as a cultural link with the homeland. The news that Radio Eviva has had to stop broadcasting greatly saddened thousands of Swiss Abroad. As it appears from a newspaper article, the main culprit is Federal Councillor Moritz Leuenberger who, it says, neglected to present to the Federal Council an application for the attribution of a VHF frequency.

Alfred Schilling, Spain

Eviva was not stopped by the Federal Council, and the latter never cancelled a frequency or went back on the approval of one. With the legal situation as it is at present, it is impossible to attribute VHF frequencies to regional language broadcasters like Radio Eviva. Its original licence was for broadcasting over cable and satellite. After three years, the Federal Council allowed the station to broadcast on the medium wave also. When Eviva made the application for this, those in charge knew that reception would not always be ideal. Although it was under no obligation to do so, the federal government stated that it was prepared to try to find it a better position on the medium wave. Negotiations with Germany on the subject came to nothing, but at the time the station went off the air Austria had not taken a position. Before the summer break the Federal Council had not ruled on the application for a VHF frequency because it wanted to wait for the answer from Austria. It would have been prepared to offer another medium-wave frequency. Regardless of this, Radio Eviva was not able to exercise the necessary patience, but decided to stop transmitting because the VHF frequency requested had not been granted by the end of June – although they had no right to it. Radio Eviva failed for economic reasons.

*Federal Councillor
Moritz Leuenberger*