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Air traffic

"The trouble with air traffic control", SR 1/2000



According to Consumer Reports Travel Letter, one of the main reasons for delays in European air travel is the wide corridors reserved in many countries by the national air forces for training, Switzerland being one of the main culprits.

Roger W. Jeanloz, USA

Shallow topic?

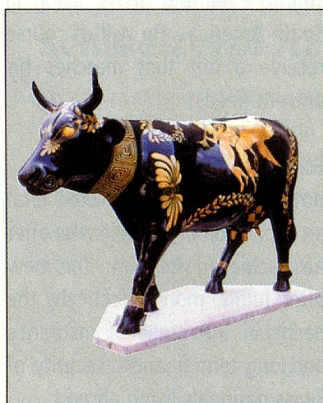
Focus "The cow over the ages", SR 2/2000

I must express my disappointment about the latest issue. I was looking forward to some news on the recent reform of the AHV/IV. Instead we are given some ridiculous article on cows. Are you people serious? If I desire to know about cows I can buy "The Farmers Journal".

Cecil Martin, Ireland

We'd love to find out the name and owner of the beautiful cow on the front page. A cow is not an anonymous creature; you could have "personalised" it with a few vital statistics.

B. Rambaud, France



I can't understand why you chose a picture that gross to go with your article on page 6. Would you eat the Emmentaler which came out of that kettle – spiced with hair and dandruff and maybe some perspiration and saliva which did not get flushed out with the whey?

Adolf Federer, USA

Overcoming the past

"Burdens of the past", SR 2/2000



It's easy for us to sit in front of the TV in a comfortable armchair and pass judgement on an epoch which 90 percent of us have not experienced, while the accused are no longer among us to put across their view. And the memories of the other ageing ten percent are now probably somewhat fuzzy. Nor do I think that the Swiss government, which naturally found itself in a rather more favourable situation due to its neutrality, should be attributed any form of guilt as the article claims.

I was born in 1926 and lived through those times. I remember that on many occasions Swiss people assisted those fleeing from war-torn countries. I remember 150 children in the community of Cluses (Haute Savoie), which once boasted 3000 inhabitants and where I myself lived, who were sheltered and cared for in Switzerland for two or three weeks. Naturally they were not Jews. So your response might be that Switzerland's assistance was therefore misdirected. But

what you fail to mention is that the entire world was completely ignorant of the concentration camps.

No-one guessed that such dreadful things were going on. We should not forget this when we set about judging our elders, nor should we forget the extreme circumstances which to us are almost unimaginable.

Florent Gintz, France

Do you not realise that for several years a clique of young historians has been working on documenting weaknesses, which are of secondary importance in the overall context of the time? Even those working on the Bergier Report make suppositions which are contradicted by other chapters of the report. The aim is not to glorify Switzerland but to respect the facts and put them in the right perspective within the overall context at that time. This is the only way that useful lessons can be learned.

Malicious masochistic games such as "Switzerland does not exist" and public self-castigation make us look ridiculous. Because they show that the incompetents hold sway in Switzerland.

Adrien Kesselring, France

Is it not time to end this constant criticism of our parents' and grandparents' conduct during the last war? How simple it is, with the hindsight of 50 years and the historical developments that have taken place since then, to moralise and judge people who acted not out of evil or mean-spiritedness, as their slanderers would have us believe, but for the welfare of their country and in an extremely difficult and uncertain situation.

Is it not time for us to scrutinise the moral timbre of those

who criticise us? America won by slaying tens of thousands of Indians and robbing others of their territory. England became rich through colonialism and the slave trade. Israel now treats its non-Jewish nationals like third-class citizens and supplies weapons to suppressive states like Burma. Do all these countries practise self-criticism on their far from glorious past, as has apparently become the fashion in Switzerland? Do we want Switzerland to have a future? One thing is sure: that future will not be built on a platform of guilt.

Lorenz Tanner, Norway

Enough is enough, particularly in an official national magazine. Well, since you have tendentiously reported on our country's "burdens of the past", you can now write about the "glorious past" of the Jewish people during the last war, who could not take up arms to defend their own kind, as many other nations did.

Roger Gaston Progin, France

Readers' letters

The editors of the "Swiss Review" are pleased to receive the numerous responses from readers. But please note that we cannot publish all your letters in the "Mailbag" section and also reserve the right to abridge them. We do not engage in correspondence about reader's letters.