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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I refer to the Editor's recent article on Swissair's decision to close its Auckland office and I would like to respond as follows:

The European carriers quoted as our competitors in New Zealand have generally reported significant financial losses especially over the last 2 years, and all have been compelled to close offices, cut staff and restructure their operations worldwide to the satisfaction of their shareholders, who in many instances are their respective Governments subsidising the losses these airlines are making. None of the airlines fly to New Zealand but one who does, Air France originally known as UTA in New Zealand, is withdrawing its flights from New Zealand, due to the route being unprofitable.

On the other hand Swissair as a company has always reported an annual profit and along with British Airways were the only two major European airlines to do so in 1993. Both are not subsidised or owned by their respective Governments and the results suggest we are successful in what we do despite the editor's view. Until yields improve worldwide, it makes no economic sense for Swissair to fly to Australia and we shall patiently wait for the situation to improve. The recent disclosure by Qantas that it made losses in all but two of the past twenty years on the Australian/Europe route, has not gone unnoticed by Swissair.

In New Zealand, if our European competitors choose to offer air fares at levels which fill seats but at little or no profit, that is up to them but it is not difficult to predict the ultimate outcome of such a strategy.

Because Swissair decided to close its Auckland office and appoint a well established and reputable representation company to be our General Sales Agents, it does not mean we are turning our back on New Zealand. To the contrary, we fully expect our General Agents to increase our market share whilst lowering our costs. There are many New Zealanders, be they individual or groups, who want quality and prefer value for money rather than the lowest price. Swissair is a quality airline, not a quantity airline. We do not intend to change this nor do we believe our Kiwi customers want us to. They know quality never comes at the lowest price.

Sincerely, Swissair.

**Alan K. Hall, General Manager,
Australia, New Zealand and
S.W. Pacific.**

EDITOR'S LETTER TO SWISSAIR

Dear Swissair, In your endeavour to achieve financial success, you seem to have forgotten that it was the Swiss taxpayers who once saved you from extinction. So if you accept Kiwi groups on your flights, why are Swiss Kiwi groups not welcome? Allowing a few Swiss Kiwi Groups to travel on your services would have been good publicity for you both in New Zealand and in Switzerland and surely, it would not have plunged you into the red. So please, Swissair, do not turn up your nose on what you may consider as "cheap passengers" because in the forthcoming deregulated world market, you will need every friend you can get.

It is my pleasure to introduce myself. I am a lawyer and I have had the pleasure to live part of my life in Switzerland. Part of my family is still in the Tessiner part, but I have now lived here for the past ten years.

I am concerned especially about the rights of older adults in New Zealand and as such the ethnic minorities figure highly. From my experiences as legal counsellor for "Grey Power" and sometimes "Age Concern" and also from my practice experience as barrister and solicitor, I know how easy it is to be confused by the constant changes to our society and the regulations according to which we live our lives.

When older adults are confronted with such changes, the difficulties usually increase, whereby the fact that one may be losing control of memory or physical mobility does not help. If one adds to that the increasing difficulty in maintaining the old mother tongue and the lack of control of the language of the new motherland, it may lead to further problems.

Many in the field of selling or in other business have targeted such older adults as easy prey. Once the older persons acknowledge their vulnerability they can then ask themselves if they can do something to prevent being abused by others.

The answer is again and again that one has to become aware of one's rights. Once you know your rights, you can take steps to either prevent abuse or regain your rights or possessions. If you have any questions which you would like me to discuss with you, you can phone me on Monday mornings when I run a free-phone legal advice session, where you only pay for the phone charges.

NOTE TO SECRETARIES

Next issue of the Helvetia magazine: December. All contributions must be in by 15 November. Many thanks for your kind cooperation.

"OLDER ADULTS AND THEIR RIGHTS"

and

"DO I NEED A TRUST"

both written by

JACQUES F. VANNOORT (LLM)

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