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EDITORIAL

When you read in the newspapers the words "According to experts..." or "Experts predict..." have you ever wondered who these experts really are. Where do they come from, what have they actually done to be called "experts"? Why are they always mentioned in the plural and why are they never mentioned by name?

There are very simple answers to these questions.

Firstly there are far too many experts in the world to name them all. In fact, everyone of us professes to be an expert in one field or another and some clever dickies even think they are experts in everything. And secondly, experts are more often than not totally wrong in their predictions, so it pays, in their own interest, not to mention them by name.

Experts have led us up the garden path ever since mankind exists. From religion to astrology, from astronomy to weather forecasting, from human fitness to health foods, from the most complex science to the simplest mundane actions, absolutely nothing has escaped the attention of our experts. This in itself would not be a bad thing if it were not for the fact that for every expert there is also a counter-expert with exactly the opposite views from the first one.

How we have all been mislead by experts is shown in the following everyday example. Brushing your teeth is a simple, uncomplicated everyday chore

if it were not for the experts. When your Editor was a kid, we were told by experts to move our toothbrush backwards and forwards over the teeth. Then suddenly this was all wrong. New experts told us to brush from the top of the teeth down or up towards the gums. This procedure was soon to be rubbished by another bunch of experts telling us to brush the other way round, from the gums to the top of the teeth. Now the other day, a young and obviously expert dentist told your Editor: "Forget everything you have ever been told in the past about brushing teeth. The only correct way to do it from now on is to brush backwards and forwards over your teeth" Hey, this is what we had been told some 60 years ago, isn't it? So after 60 years of following advice after advice from oral experts, we are surprisingly back where we started from!

Just as confusing are our experts on food. For thousands of generations, eggs have been a staple food for mankind until experts decided that eggs were unhealthy because they created too much cholesterol which was clogging up the arteries in your body and therefore were the cause of many heart attacks. Immediately, counter-experts claimed that cholesterol had nothing to do with heart attacks and that some of it was actually even vital for your good health. Some experts claim that barbecued meat is better for you than fried meat because the flames from the barbecue seal the goodness inside the meat whilst other experts believe just the opposite, claiming that the meat

touched by the flames could cause cancer. You just can't win.

There is hardly a single food item left that has not been attacked or defended at one stage or the other by some nutrition experts. The same goes for clothing. Tight clothes hamper your blood circulation, loose clothes give you chills, hats make you loose your hair because the scalp is deprived of fresh air and cannot "breathe" and no hat can lead to sun strokes and melanoma. Boots keep you warm in winter but make your feet "sweat" which can cause infections. Too many clothes is considered as unhealthy and too much bare skin is touted as being indecent. And the list goes on. According to the experts, there is just no way for you to dress correctly.

And what about fitness? Here the experts are more divided than ever. There was a time when jogging was hailed as the panacea, the remedy against all illnesses and flabby stomach muscles until some experts claimed that the continuous pounding endured by the joggers was affecting the bones in their feet and the brains in their heads. So jogging should be replaced by walking.

Mark my words. It won't be long before an expert will tell us that walking is dangerous because it grinds down our hip bones and wears out our knee caps. No doubt, every TV expert will agree with that and will try to convince you that any exercise beyond sitting on a couch watching TV and perhaps push the remote control button now and again (but not too often) is detrimental to your health.

Expert will soon emerge to tell you that muscle building programmes and fitness centres with all their gadgetry and torture machines are totally unnatural and do not belong to this world. In this, these experts have powerful allies in the animal world because no animal spends hours of training for fit-

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ness. The monkey can easily swing from branch to branch without having to do some weight lifting first. The lion lies around for some 16 hours a day but when hunger strikes, he can run like the wind to catch his dinner. Would you expect the boa constrictor to flex its body muscles for days on end so that it will be fit to strangle its victim when the time comes? Of course not. The boa will do it without any prior training. And how about your friendly pussy-cat. He does not have to train for weeks before he climbs that tree. When the urge takes him, he just goes and does it.

So don't be surprised if some great experts will come along and tell us that all this fitness training is not only futile, but actually quite harmful to our tender bodies.

For centuries, experts have predicted the end of the world and since this never happened, they are now predicting its constant warming up although winters are growing colder and summers getting lousier, cooler and shorter by the year. No expert seems to be able to explain what happened to the long hot summers which lasted for weeks on end at the time of our golden youth.

But as we said at the beginning, everyone can be an expert. All you have to do is to pick a certain subject dear to your heart and stick with it. At every possible occasion, keep talking about it and never stop. You will obviously become an absolute bore amongst your friends, but sooner or later they will consider you as the unmitigated expert in your chosen field.

This is exactly what happened to your Editor. After some 50 issues of the *Helvetia*, everyone regards him as the perfect expert in journalism and tall story telling, but between you and me and the proverbial bed-post, I haven't a clue what I am doing. Thank goodness a team of experts from Hamilton will soon take over the production of the *Helvetia* so your present Editor can shed again his image of an expert journalist and revert back to be solely a top expert in travel....

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SWISS SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND LTD

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 1 June 1997 at 2.00pm at the Glenview Motor Hotel in Hamilton.

AGENDA

1. Welcome by the President
2. Apologies
3. Reading of the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting
4. Matters arising from the Minutes.
5. President's Report
6. Matters arising from the President's Report
7. Financial Report
8. Matters arising from the Financial Report.
9. Editor's Report
10. Matters arising from the Editor's Report
11. Delegate to the Swiss Abroad Report
12. Riflemaster's Report
13. Matters arising from the Riflemaster's Report
14. Setting of subscription for the 1997/1998 year
15. Election of Officers - Editing Committee - Delegates to the Swiss Abroad.
16. General Business and setting of the date and place for the next Annual General Meeting and handing over to the new Committee.

MOTION

That due to the steady increase in the cost of medals over the years, it is proposed that as from 1998, the price for all medal competitions be increased from \$3.00 to \$4.00.

ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY THE HAMILTON SWISS CLUB FOR THE AGM.

The Hamilton Swiss club has notified each club secretary of details for this year's Society's AGM. Some points to note are:

1. The AGM will be held at the Glenview Motor Hotel at 2.00pm on Sunday 1 June (a map has been forwarded to your Secretary).

2. Accommodation is available at the Glenview at a cost of \$86.00 per night for two people. Each additional person will be charged \$10.00 per night.

3. For those people coming to Hamilton on Saturday, a light dinner will be provided at Swiss Craft premises, fol-

lowed by a *Gemütlicher Abend* of bowling, jassen or just listening to Swiss music.

4. On Sunday evening, people are able to book dinner at the Glenview at a cost of \$19.95 per head for a smorgasbord meal. Everyone will be able to remain in the conference room after dinner, where light entertainment will be provided.

5. **IMPORTANT:** We will need to know numbers of people requiring accommodation for either Saturday or Sunday evening, as well as numbers for the Saturday and Sunday evening meals. Please contact Hamilton's Secretary, Heidi Fransen (Ph. 07 847 1353) before 20 May.

MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S AGM OF THE SWISS SOCIETY.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SWISS SOCIETY HELD AT THE NEWMARKET CLUB IN AUCKLAND ON SUNDAY 2 JUNE 1996.

The AGM started at 2.30pm with Peter Schüpbach, Vice-President, welcoming everybody to the meeting.

Present: Hans Fitz (President), Peter Schüpbach (Vice-President), Henry Sigerist (Editor) and around 70 other members with voting rights.

Apologies: Mr. and Mrs. Hochuli, Mr and Mrs Enzler, Mr and Mrs Stucki, Mr

and Mrs Hiestand, Mr and Mrs Dudli, Mr and Mrs Flühler, Mr and Mrs Hartmann.

The Minutes of the past AGM were taken as being read, having previously been published in the *Helvetia*. Moved by Hans Fitz and seconded by Syd Melville. The President's report was read and accepted. The President asked the members to stand for a minute's