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A husband, proving to his wife that women talk more than men, showed her a study which indicated that men use about 15,000 words a day, whereas women use 30,000 words a day.

She thought about this, then told her husband that women use twice as many words as men because they have to repeat everything they say. Looking stunned, he said, "What?"

The shortest recorded period of time lies between the minute you put some money away for a rainy day and the unexpected arrival of rain.

Jane Bryant Quinn



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Message from the Ambassador

Dear Fellow Citizens,

It was with great pleasure that I, in the month of October 2005, took up my new duty as the Ambassador of Switzerland to New Zealand.

This assignment was my family's and my destination of choice and we are therefore very much looking forward to spending a number of interesting and unforgettable years being part of such a lively Swiss community in this beautiful country.

I will therefore make it one of my priorities to meet with all the Swiss Clubs in the country and participate in as many social occasions as I can, meeting as many of you as possible.

I was born and raised in Baden, Canton of Aargau, where after school I worked for ABB as a commercial clerk, before going on to do my Matura in Economics, followed by studies at the Universities of Zurich and Vancouver B.C. in Canada. I graduated with a Doctorate in History before joining the Swiss Diplomatic Service in 1988.

After postings in Bern, Costa Rica and Kenya I was the Swiss Ambassador for the Environment for 8 years, responsible for the Swiss foreign policy in the field of the environment.

My Wife Irene, originally from the Canton of Appenzell AR, holds a Doctorate in Pedagogics.

My sons Sam (16) and Simon (15) both attend Hutt Valley High School and my youngest son, Christian (12), is at Hutt Intermediate School. All three love travelling, languages and, of course, are expert soccer players with many years in club soccer between them.

The relations between Switzerland and New Zealand have traditionally been very good. I will do my best for them to improve even more, in particular in the field of multilateral affairs within the System of the United Nations.

Both countries share fundamental values such as human rights and the protection of the environment, which makes us natural partners on many issues in the UN.

Bilateral affairs will, of course, also be at the center of my work: A good environment for Swiss investments in this country is as important as a strong and visible presence of Swiss cultural activities. It is my objective to see, whether a bilateral agreement on the so-called working holiday scheme can be found.

While I do understand a certain concern on parts of some members of our Swiss community regarding the way the New Zealand authorities have dealt with the issue of social insurance rights from the Swiss AHV, you are undoubtedly aware of the fact, that the New Zealand authorities are applying the national applicable law correctly. However, a number of options, which might take into account the interests of senior citizens who are eligible for overseas state pensions will be presented to Cabinet in the first half of 2006. Let's hope for the best!

I am very pleased to inform you, that the Embassy is working to have its own internet homepage up and running really soon. It will help you find all the necessary information on consular matters. It will also provide news on our cultural activities in New Zealand. It will of course be directly linked to the websites of the Swiss clubs.

Please do not hesitate to call the Embassy or myself personally whenever you need our help. In the meantime, I do hope to meet with as many of my fellow citizens as possible across New Zealand in a not too distant future.

With my best wishes for a great 2006 to all of you.

Beat Nobs
Ambassador of Switzerland

