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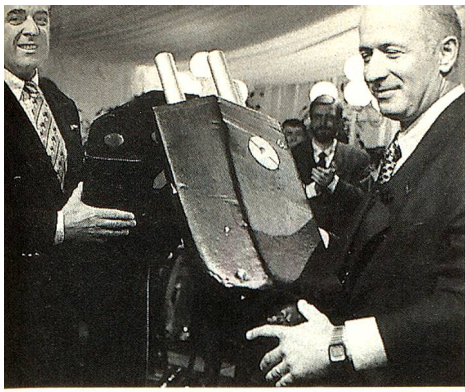
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Back in the days when the Swiss television world was at peace: Federal Councillor Adolf Ogi (left), and director Roy Oppenheim the day "S Plus" started transmitting. (Photo: Keystone)

majority decision based not on provable arguments, but on assertions some of which have long since been refuted, on commonplace clichés and – as must unfortunately be supposed – on individual preferences in favour of specific media corporations".

Blick

"The Federal Council's decision... is almost an historic one: for once our government – unlike the habit it used to have – has not judged on the basis of cold legality alone. Yesterday's decision was much more creative. A political course has been set with both heart and mind".

CORRIERE DEL TICINO

"Ogi talked ... all the time about 'German RTL' in contrast to the national SRG ... His way of commenting on the Federal Council's decision has a very 'nationalistic' tone. When we think that this comes from a source which takes every other opportunity of inviting the people to open up to Europe and the world, we may well ask what sort of psychological consequences it may have".

Luzerner Zeitung

"The refusal of RTL Schweiz will make not a single foreign transmitter and not a single superficial television programme disappear. Instead, advertising money for foreign programmes will continue to be obtained in Switzerland and then taken abroad. That is economic lunacy".

St.Galler Tagblatt

"The publishers behind RTL Schweiz guaranteed that they would go to work with 'journalistic quality'. But who came upon the idea of attributing a 'serious side' to a tabloid paper? It remains unclear how Swiss could have been educated on this channel, which was meant to serve the basic instincts of the public".

SRI News

Short wave will continue to play an important role

Ever since SRI announced its new strategy, summed up by the slogan "Short wave as long as necessary, satellite as soon as possible", we have received advice from all sides warning us against over-hasty withdrawal from short-wave technology. SRI would like to spotlight the facts of the case.

The policy statement "Short wave as long as necessary – satellite as soon as possible" is completely correct and we stand by it. In the nineties, an internationally active Swiss radio service could not possibly afford to stand aside from satellite broadcasting and hope to succeed as an effective means of presenting Switzerland abroad. Nevertheless, emphasising one approach need not preclude the other, and SRI intends both to have its cake and eat it.

It would be inconceivable for SRI to abandon short wave before it can guarantee both stationary and mobile reception of its output. This is particularly important in all those situations where SRI is (virtually) the sole source from which listeners can obtain up-to-date information on Switzer-

land, or get the Swiss viewpoint on world events, or hear a journalist explain the background to crucial votes or elections.

Admittedly, it would be relatively simple and inexpensive for Swiss citizens living elsewhere in Europe to invest in the hardware to switch from short wave to

satellite. However, even here in Europe satellite reception is a very long way from supporting genuine mobile use. In this situation, SRI feels it desirable – and indeed essential – to maintain guaranteed basic coverage via short wave; our promise is to deliver up-to-date information from and about Switzerland at peak listening periods on at least two short-wave frequencies. One broadcasting frequency (6.165 MHz) will be permanent; the other will alternate between 3.985 MHz and 9.535 MHz.

Outside Europe, SRI will use three or four frequencies and back up its Swiss-based transmitters with booster relay stations located closer to the target areas. A powerful new relay station in Montsinéry in French Guyana will go into operation for SRI in summer 1994. This station will significantly improve reception of our programmes in many regions of the world.

For any medium which operates on a world-wide basis, achieving totally faultless reception conditions remains a virtually unattainable ideal. "Blazing a new trail" through the maze of short-wave and, subsequently, satellite frequencies will always be a task that calls for a degree of patience. SRI thanks all its Swiss listeners abroad for the tolerance they have shown in the past and hopes they will sustain this loyalty in the future and also be prepared to offer constructive criticism of our programmes.

Ulrich Kündig, Dir. SRI

Good marks

At a meeting held in June, Swiss Radio International's Committee of the Public gave excellent marks to the current affairs programmes in German, French, Italian and English for both structure and content. Contributions were up-to-date and delved below the surface. The Committee would like to give priority to this in-depth approach to news coverage as against a multitude of short items. But it would also be glad to see more attention given to events here in Switzerland. «Well made and informative» – this was the verdict given by the Committee on the audio cassettes about federal referendums prepared by SRI for those Swiss Abroad wishing to vote. But it would also be useful to include a clearer view of the positions of the various parties and more information on voting procedure.

Arnold Isler, Chairman of the Committee of the Public