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Depending on their previous education, Swiss Abroad may have to pass additional tests in some subjects to be admitted to federal medical examinations.

Medical studies in Switzerland

Our eldest son was admitted to the University of Basle Medical School, because of his prior academic accomplishments. But then, the "Eidg. Maturakommission" insisted that in addition to German he had to be proficient in a second Swiss language. This requirement is not imposed on foreigners, but it is rigidly enforced with Swiss from abroad. The "Eidg. Maturakommission" forced our son to discontinue his studies at the University of Basle Medical School and continue elsewhere in Europe! Obviously the University recognized him as a desirable student and he could have successfully concluded his studies. It is with sadness that we reflect on the fact that a Swiss from abroad has less of a right and chance to study in Switzerland than a foreign citizen.

Rolf L. Meyer, Westwood, USA

With the express accord of Basle University and basing itself on the provisions in force, the Maturity Commission

in 1980 required Mr. Joel Meyer to take additional school-leaving examinations in four subjects, including French, in order to be admitted to the federal medical examinations. These conditions were known to him when he came to the university, as also the fact that in principle the French exam could be put off until the finals – an opportunity he intended to use. Mr. Meyer was finally obliged to leave Basle University not because of the French examination, but because he unfortunately failed exams in three other subjects. It is true that, like students resident in Switzerland, Swiss Abroad must prove knowledge of two national languages. It is also true that in this respect they are treated differently from foreign students, but the latter are admitted to federal medical examinations only provided they take up Swiss nationality and satisfy the same conditions as other Swiss citizens.

Federal Office for Education and Science, Education Division ■

Agriculture in Switzerland

Agriculture's contribution to Swiss tourism is certainly very substantial. Swiss farmers may be regarded as gardeners compared with their American or west European opposite numbers. Agricultural regions cared for as in Switzerland are pleasing to tourists, which means that the farmers are in fact greatly helping the country's tourist industry.

Martin Puech-Favre, Paris, France

I am referring to the editorial in Swiss Review 2/94. Born in the outskirts of Zürich in 1929, I will remem-

ber awakening in the morning to the sounds of cowbells. To me, the Swiss farmer represents the true picture of Switzerland, an "urchig" feeling of a national pride that goes much beyond whistling the national anthem.

Werner Thanner, Colorado Springs, USA

Thank you for excellent articles on Swiss agriculture in Swiss Review 2/94. First time that I got a clear picture of what is going on in CH-agriculture. Keep up the good work.

J. Müller, Vancouver, Canada ■

Praise and criticism

After some considerable time, I have returned abroad – and therefore receive Swiss Review. What has been done there is very welcome. For the first time I have the impression of having in my hands a magazine reflecting today's real Switzerland, with all its manifold contradictions. It is not a "homeland protection review" which concentrates only on positive aspects to the point of self-denial.

Thomas Maurer, Nishinomiya-shi, Japan

The Fifth Switzerland should not simply be reduced to nothing! Eight issues of Swiss Review are not enough. It is absolutely essential that the Swiss Abroad should have a monthly magazine. If the worst comes to the worst, I suggest there should be a small subscription charge, but the federal government should make at least some effort.

A. Briod, Playa las Americas, Spain

For years I have been an interested woman reader of Swiss Review. As you may assume from my emphasis, the sexist vocabulary of Swiss Review disturbs me more and more. Apart from references to the federal census, one would think that there are only male Swiss, male Swiss Abroad and male members of the Solidarity Fund, etc. We are all aware by now that permanently ignoring women linguistically also extends to views on other subjects and problems specific to women.

Verena Lüttel, Siegen, Germany

(This reader's opinion applies to the German edition of Swiss Review-Ed.)

Thank you very much for providing Swiss Review, which gives something of an insight into cultural and spiritual life in Switzerland. Only I would like to say that I found the cover picture of no. 5/93 disturbing. It shows in a very unbecoming way the briefness of hurdle sprinter Julie Baumann's costume, which is hardly fitting for a magazine distributed all over the world. I know that sports fashion – which I disapprove of more and more – is not in your sphere of influence, but you can decide on which pictures to publish.

Max Graf, Taichung, Taiwan ■