

# Swiss Telecom catching up

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## SWISS TELECOM CATCHING UP

As far as telephone communications  
are concerned, New Zealand is far  
ahead on Switzerland. Under the name  
"Swiss Freecall", Swiss Telecom have  
just announced the introduction of the  
0800 free calling system for both do-  
mestic as well as international calls.

We have had this service in New  
Zealand for several years already, so  
we can be a bit "blasés" about all this.

Another peculiarity: All the new Swiss  
Telecom services seem to have Eng-  
lish names. Either the Swiss languages  
are so poor that there are no equivalent  
terms available or the Swiss civil serv-  
ants have become tired of having to  
translate all these new electronic inven-  
tions into four different languages. So  
English has become an easy substitute.

## HERO IN GERMAN HANDS

HERO Lenzburg, Switzerland's larg-  
est canned food manufacturer has been  
sold out by its majority shareholders to  
the German food giant Schwartauer  
Werke near Lübeck.

One of the main reasons for this  
move was that HERO needed an infu-  
sion of capital not only to maintain and  
expand its market share in the countries  
in which it is already established, but  
also to penetrate new markets. Whilst  
HERO is well established in Switzer-  
land, Great Britain, The Netherlands  
and Spain, the food products of  
Schwartauer Werke hold strong posi-  
tions in Germany, France and the USA.

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So the two firms complement them-  
selves very well.

The North German Arend Oetker  
who owns 95% of the capital of  
Schwartauer Werke has now also be-  
come HERO's new main shareholder.  
Assurances have been given by HE-  
RO's new Board of Directors that noth-  
ing will change within the company, but  
the fact remains nevertheless that an-  
other Swiss "institution" has slipped into  
foreign hands.

## NEBELSPALTER

There is hardly a Swiss anywhere in  
the world who has never heard of the  
famous satirical weekly magazine, the  
NEBELSPALTER. Generations of read-  
ers loved its jokes, its barbed wit, its  
humorous and sometimes acid attacks  
on bureaucracy and government de-  
partments and officials. It seemed that  
the Nebelspalter was able to coax a  
joke out of every event, whether local or  
international and find a funny side to any  
given situation.

But times are changing and like many  
other publications, the 120 year old  
Nebelspalter became victim of the  
changes in taste of its readers. Over the  
past few years, subscriptions to the  
magazine have dropped steadily to a  
point where the possibility of the  
Nebelspalter going totally out of busi-  
ness was considered by Löpfe-Benz  
AG, the printing and publishing firm that  
owns the magazine.

However, as a last try to save it, the  
publishers have decided that as from  
January 1996, the Nebelspalter will only  
appear monthly instead of weekly as up  
to now. We sincerely trust that this move  
will be successful as it would be a real  
shame, should the Nebelspalter disap-  
pear for ever.

## INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

The International Red Cross Com-  
mittee is expecting to receive a further  
10 million SFR from the Swiss Govern-  
ment to be able to balance its books.  
The total annual contribution to the Red  
Cross by the Swiss Government  
amounts to some 90 million SFR, with a  
further 5 million on top of that for 1996.

On the other hand, the International  
Red Cross Committee just spent 16  
million SFR in putting up another build-  
ing in order to overcome the chronic  
shortage of space due to its ever in-  
creasing staff.

The worrying thought comes to mind  
as to whether the Red Cross could  
perhaps be spending too much money  
on its own internal administration rather  
than in aiding the needy.



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