

Your corner...

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Letter to the editor.

Nazi Gold - more on that matter

My first reaction to the BBC documentary (Nazi Gold) screened on TV 1, on 8 August 1998 was: haven't we heard enough about that subject?! The film contained disturbing features which do not align with my school day history lessons. I was told that it was Switzerland's neutrality and the topographical features together with a strong army that prevented Hitler from invading. I was under the impression that Switzerland had always been open to refugees.

Now after watching the documentary I am to believe that Switzerland bought Nazi gold that had been stolen from different countries or even from individual Holocaust victims. The documentary informed me that Hitler's army refrained from entering Switzerland because he needed the Swiss banks. The claims are made that trains full of human cargo (Jews on the way to concentration camps) crossed Switzerland from Italy to Germany with knowledge and permission from Swiss authorities. - Right now I don't think there is any room at all to defend those actions. - All efforts currently in place, like opening bank accounts, allowing claims to proceed and changing school books are natural consequences of the past. Only when this is done can I be proud again to be Swiss.

Anna Blättler,
217, Stanley Rd.,
Te Aroha.

Your Corner.....

By the time this edition of HELVETIA reaches you, so will the first day of spring and once again we can say winter is behind us. Though I must say some of this winter has been quite mild and it feels like spring is already around us with some trees in blossom and young lambs and calves out in the fields.

- We have for you a very interesting **Society Member's Profile** on **Paulo Kündig**, a Society Member from Christchurch. Paulo wrote to us a few months ago in reply to our

request about immigration issues, and we would like to share his experiences with you. We aim to have the article on Immigration ready towards the end of the year.

Society Members Profile Paulo Kündig

"Call of the Quiet"

If the American author Jack London had been born in New Zealand his book *Call of the Wild* would no doubt have been entitled "*Call of the Quiet*" (if he had been Swiss this book possibly would have been entitled "*Call of the Ordered*").

There are probably as many reasons for immigrating to New Zealand as there are immigrants. In twelve years of experience as a New Zealand immigration lawyer I have come to realise that behind each New Zealand immigrant is a very interesting story culminating in the decision to emigrate.

There are refugees from war, poverty and lack of opportunity. There are those who are running away from stress and pollution and those who are running away from crime and crimes (luckily, few of the latter ever really get in). There are those with ambition and drive wishing to create something for themselves in what is still seen as a land of opportunity; not so much economic opportunity ("quantity" in life) but lifestyle opportunity ("quality" in life).

My own story is somewhat complicated. My father is Swiss and my mother is Brazilian. Take it from me, that particular ethnic combination is about as stable as gelignite. My parents' marriage lasted one year, and following my birth (in Winterthur, Zürich) they went their separate ways when I was one year old, she (with me) to Brazil and he back to Pfäffikon. For the next eleven years I was raised in Recife and São Paulo in Brazil. When I was 12 years old my mother immigrated (permanently) to Los Angeles where I lived until I was 27 years old. I attended high school, university and law school in Los Angeles and whilst returning from my first ever visit to New Zealand on a summer holiday I met my wife-to-be during a short stopover in Fiji. One year later we were married and she being at that time (and still) a New Zealand citi-

zen, I decided that New Zealand was as good a place to live as any I had ever seen, so I "took the easy way in" to New Zealand, marriage to a New Zealand citizen. We now have two New Zealand-born sons who are one quarter Swiss, one quarter Brazilian and one half untidy like their mother.

- With that kind of background it is little wonder that I drifted into immigration law once I joined Lane Neave in 1986.

I have always felt that I am an extremely lucky individual because along with the other good things that have happened to me I have landed a job which gives me a great deal of satisfaction and challenge. Unlike so many areas of the law where people turn to a lawyer as a "last resort" my clients often come to me with dreams that they need help fulfilling, they may want to come here to live or to bring in a much-loved family member (the odd mother-in-law being the sole exception).

My experiences in this country have been very much *positive*; I truly believe that the more I put into this new country of mine the more it will give to me. Sure, we have our little problems down here but they hardly rate a mention when one compares life in New Zealand to what often passes for "daily life" in many other places in the world. I only wish we were better at soccer.

Trudy and Doris.

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