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Editorial

This month I'm writing a follow-on about last month's editorial. I had intended to write about a completely different subject, but this will keep 'til later. I decided on this course because of the considerable supportive feedback I received from many of you!!! One of many "phone calls of support came from 300km away"!!! But most support was verbal from folk in my local Taranaki Swiss Club area, some of whose families I've had the honour of knowing for over 60 years!

So, back to comments on further thoughts I've had on the very grave issues I wrote of in last month's editorial and about which I feel very passionately! I feel so sorry for our "Swiss-descendant" Kiwis who are in the position referred to last month. There appears to be hundreds of you throughout NZ. But we "Swiss Kiwis" are not alone with our problems of dual nationality. Spare a thought for our "Dutch Kiwi" neighbours of whom some

90,000 immigrated to NZ between 1946 and 1976, a heck of a lot more than us Swiss!!! I believe for nearly 40 years they too lost their Dutch citizenship if they became naturalised New Zealanders! Witness the kerfuffle caused by our New Plymouth MP, Harry Duynhoven, when he applied for reinstatement of his Dutch citizenship lost by his family when his father became a New Zealander! Was it not interesting to see how fast a government can move to correct a stupid little anomaly in their own regulations when it threatens their own paper-thin majority in Parliament?!

Anyway, I well recall reading a three column wide ad in our provincial "Daily News" from the Dutch Embassy, reminding New Zealanders of Dutch birth and descent that they can now apply to have their Dutch citizenship reinstated, and the ad was in both Dutch and English! So, I beg the question, why can't our own Swiss Government keep us

"Auslandschweizer" and dual citizens better informed regarding what appears to me, very complicated rules and regulations on Swiss citizenship, and the obtaining or reinstatement thereof!!! And in this day and age, why are the rules so very different for a Swiss woman marrying a foreigner than a Swiss man doing the same? Or have these archaic laws already been changed? Not as far as I know! Although my latest information is that the Federal Parliament has recently debated and, I believe, changed some naturalisation laws, I have yet to see the details. It would have been such a wonderful opportunity for Bern to circularise its embassies and find out what is "bugging" their "Swiss Abroad" ... before the Parliamentary debate!

I would most certainly have had some comments, questions, and suggestions for the relevant government ministries in Bern to ponder over. I feel they would have found them at least interesting and hopefully even helpful for their deliberations over revisions of these laws!

To me it seems that, sadly, a wonderful chance for comprehensive survey on these matters of Swiss citizenship, amongst its Swiss Abroad, has been missed by Bern!

On a lighter note, hasn't this year flown past? Or maybe it's because I'm getting too old and slow to keep up with "Father Time"! Already we are planning Christmas and New Year festivities with our families!

I want to wish you all a wonderful festive time with your families and may God's blessings keep you all safe and healthy 'til next Christmas, next year and beyond!

*Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year,
Paul*

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