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Revision of the Lex Friedrich (SR 3/95)

I learned with great consternation about the change in the Lex Friedrich planned by the Federal Council. This arbitrarily and discriminatorily equates the Swiss Abroad with foreigners not residing in Switzerland in acquiring property, while at the same time giving foreign companies this right. How can such an apartheid measure be squared with the constitution? Are we to have first-class and second-class Swiss? I find the position of the Organisation for the Swiss Abroad absolutely incredible.

Gabriella Häusler, Eisingen, Germany

The revised Lex Friedrich is supposed to correct a situation created by the present rules which is contrary to international law, but unfortunately at the cost of equal treatment for all Swiss citizens. Yet the revised "Lex" is contrary to international law and also contradicts EU law. The only correct procedure in both international and national law is to abolish the Lex Friedrich as soon as possible.

Walter E. Weisflog, Brighton, United Kingdom

I was born in Germany the son of a German father and a Swiss mother. I possess both nationalities. My country of residence to date is Germany, but I have been closely linked to Switzerland since my childhood. Apart from annual visits to relations I have taken part eight times in Swiss Abroad winter camps. In 1988 I was asked to join the Swiss national hockey team. In a word, I feel Swiss, and I am all the more concerned when I now have to read that my country wants to treat me like a second-class Swiss citizen.

Frank Schneider, Bonn, Germany ■

Switzerland and the EU

I have just returned from a six-week stay in Switzerland and have also visited Holland, England and France so that I could hear about experience with the

EU on the spot. Opinions were divided. But I became convinced that since 1989 we are living in a completely new phase of human society. We must all change our ways of thinking. How do we really want this society to be? So I beg everyone – those in favour and those against – to become better informed and to discuss the pros and cons on a practical basis.

Erwin Zimmermann, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The EEA treaty was rejected for many reasons, one of which was its unfair legal concept. It has been noticeable for a long time that representatives of the economy – regretting the voters' No to the EEA – reduce the complex integration problem to a matter of profits and sales. Important cultural and social aspects are not even mentioned. Such a portrayal appears extremely naive and petty-minded.

Peter Stacher, The Hague, Netherlands

I must congratulate your review because it does not hesitate to publish letters which disagree with the opinions which are sung in choir by the "good subjects" in parliament. You can guess how I voted. I am only Swiss by adoption, but I can perhaps understand better that Switzerland is a rare phenomenon – unique even – which is extremely well worth safeguarding.

N. Viddinoff, Mersin, Turkey

I watch my country losing confidence in itself with sadness. The media, by choosing a policy which I can only describe as "morbid realism" has a heavy share of responsibility in this negative development, and Swiss Review is unfortunately no exception. It is not by always putting the accent on the difficulties confronting Switzerland after its incomprehensible refusal to join the EEA that the right atmosphere will be created in the country itself. Enthusiasm and optimism are necessary to face up to the problems and to give

Readers' letters

The editors of Swiss Review are happy to receive readers' letters. In every second number, we publish a selection of their reactions.

The editors reserve the right to choose and to shorten where necessary. Anonymous letters are ignored. The shorter the letter, the more chance it has of being published.

the impression abroad of a modern and dynamic society.

Lorenz Tanner, Oslo, Norway ■

Information for those abroad entitled to vote

I read Swiss Review with interest. It is now particularly important to forge the link with my old homeland. Above all it is necessary to get to know the various parties better – the right to vote recently obtained demands it . . .

Hedi Tobler, Oslo, Norway

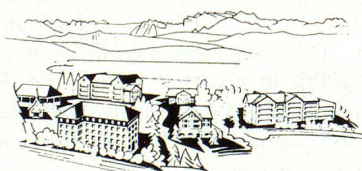
Unfortunately the number of Swiss Abroad taking part in referendums and elections is rather low. We need more information; only in this way can you expect higher participation from abroad. Swiss Review is very informative on only a few pages. But we should hear and read more of it. I propose that it should appear monthly. Most of us would be very happy to pay the postal costs.

Franz Arnold, Desert Hot Springs, USA ■

Thanks to Swiss Review

As a Swiss Abroad I receive and read the review with much interest. I am taking the opportunity of telling you how satisfied I am, for this very well-designed review allows me to maintain real contact with my country.

Isabelle Berthelot, Preuëssin, France ■



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