

**Zeitschrift:** Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad  
**Herausgeber:** Organisation of the Swiss Abroad  
**Band:** 23 (1996)  
**Heft:** 4

**Rubrik:** Dialogue

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## Portrait of the President of the Confederation / Switzerland and Europe

Thanks for your well-written article. It makes our new president sound very nice, but there is a black spot which I find irritating – the fact that Mr. Delamuraz dreams of being on the photo of heads of state at the European Union conference. I thought that the representative of our country was meant to respect the wish of Swiss voters, whose majority said No at the end of 1992 to our country entering a corrupt socialist Europe.

*Max Häfliger, France*

Answer to Franz Ineichen, Spain (SR 2/96). Your letter puts me off. You live in an EU country and profit from it, and yet you are against that institution. We can no longer stand aside. We must adapt and open up to Europe, especially for the sake of our youth.

*Yvonne Brugger, Spain*

## The Bourbaki panorama (SR 2/96)

Allow me to point out a slight mistake about the fate of Bourbaki. He only tried to commit suicide. He in fact survived and died several years later. And it would not be a bad thing for the reputation of that excellent general to point out that it was the absence of precise orders from the government and the defence ministry which led him to give up the fight.

*Michel Fleury, France*

I receive Swiss Review and always read it with great interest. Its varied articles remind us of events in our history. I was particularly interested in the Bourbaki article because I am Neuchâtelais and come from Les Verrières. I would like to point out one small detail: General Bourbaki only tried to commit suicide and did not die until 1897 in the Basque region. And a short anecdote: my paternal grandfather used to tell us how

at the time he saw a French officer sell his horse for five Swiss francs.

*Jean Fatton, France*

## Jass is full of fun (SR 2/96)

I read the articles on jass with great interest. I have been a passionate player since childhood, and I used to take part in jass tournaments everywhere and all the time before I finally came abroad. Things are not as simple as they used to be. You are right that the game has many traditions. But time does not stand still. One day a few other women jass players and myself came to the conclusion that it was rather a bore that only those (unattractive) men stared at us out of the cards. Whoops – the idea of women's jass was born, and the new cards were soon printed. Women jass cards can be obtained in all good games shops.

*Monika Brühlhart, Guinea*

The coloured map does not correspond to reality. In Canton Thurgau many communities play with French cards, which were introduced by Prince Louis Napoleon between 1824 and 1838. There is no card frontier across Switzerland just as there is no language frontier. We ought to emphasise the things that bind us together, not those that separate us.

*Albert Schoop, Switzerland*

## Support in difficult times

I am a Swiss woman living for the last four years in Israel. We had war for two and a half weeks. As we live very near the Lebanese border, we were directly affected and had a difficult time. During it we received a telephone call from the Swiss embassy in Tel-Aviv. Our consul personally wanted to know how we were getting on and whether we needed assistance. This was very encouraging for us – knowing that our homeland will help us is a great relief.

*Brigitte Weidmann, Israel*

## Thanks Swiss Review

I was born and raised in Switzerland and left my country only 15 years ago. Thanks to Swiss Review I have become more Swiss than I was when I left, at least I have become more conscious and proud of being Swiss. A big thanks to the whole Swiss Review team, they are doing a great job! I have been voting for the last four years, a thing I never did when I lived in Switzerland. I am also very grateful to Swiss Radio Interna-

tional for the cassettes which I receive at no cost to me. They prepare me very well for the voting. I am truly grateful for the effort that is being made to include the Swiss Abroad in Swiss affairs.

*Marianne Muller, Canada*

I enjoy your review so much. It is well written, interesting, error-free, just a great piece of work on what is probably a very tight budget. Congratulations and thank you.

*Mark K. Strassle, USA*

## Voting rights: renewing registration

Signing an initiative or a referendum demand is considered as re-registration. Why is voting in a referendum, which must be proof of one's interest, not also considered as re-registration? That would be simpler, since having to re-register periodically tends to get forgotten. To avoid a municipality having to send voting documents to a registered person with no or little interest it would be sufficient to say that a registered voter not having voted in three or four successive referendums would be taken off the register. He could be warned by a notice sent with the documents for the third or fourth referendum.

*Roger Perrenoud, France*

## VAT and the Swiss Abroad (SR/2 1996)

The article states that a businessman subject to tax abroad who is not domiciled in Switzerland for tax purposes can request reimbursement of VAT from the Federal Tax Administration (FTA) once a year. But he cannot contact the FTA directly. He has to mandate an organisation domiciled in Switzerland to obtain the reimbursement for him. Cantonal chambers of trade and industry set up a VAT repayment service for such companies as soon as the new law came into force.

*Patrick Coïdan, director of the Geneva Chamber of Trade and Industry*

## More history in Swiss Review?

I value Swiss Review as a good source of information. But I would be very happy to see there more articles about Swiss history. For example, who were William Tell and Winkelried?

*F.A. Bleuel, Argentina*

## Federal Referendums

September 22, 1996

No referendums to be held

December 1, 1996

Subjects not yet decided