

**Zeitschrift:** Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad  
**Herausgeber:** Organisation of the Swiss Abroad  
**Band:** 34 (2007)  
**Heft:** 5

**Vorwort:** Swiss army knives made in China?  
**Autor:** Eckert, Heinz

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 22.08.2025

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

## Swiss army knives made in China?

**O**MINOUS NEWS WAS ANNOUNCED by the newsreader on Swiss Radio one early morning at the beginning of July: according to reports, there was a distinct possibility that the new Swiss army knife would have to be manufactured in China. Due to the large volume of orders, an international WTO tender was being considered, in which all knife suppliers and manufacturers would be invited to participate.

While good-quality pirate copies of the famous Swiss army knife have long been in circulation, the idea that the official Swiss soldier's knife could bear the words "Made in China" caused quite a stir. This raised the curtain on a mini-drama in the Swiss media, resulting even in a petition to the Federal Council calling for the soldier's knife to be defined as a stabbing weapon (since weapons are not covered by WTO provisions and not therefore subject to international tender regulations).

Why does the Swiss army need a new soldier's knife in the first place? Armasuisse, the procurement office of the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DCS), explains the rationale: The old "61" soldier's knife no longer meets modern criteria in terms of safety and technology. For instance, the blade cannot be locked, which may result in injury during use. Added to this, better stainless steel is now available for the blades.

The army therefore wants 65,000 new soldier's knives worth CHF 1.17 million. The new knife, which will be issued to recruits in 2009, will have the following features: stainless steel, lockable cutting blades and a serrated knife, screwdriver, wood saw, reamer and



Heinz Eckert

punch, screwdriver with locking can opener and one-handed spring-less opening of the blades.

The soldier's knife will also be low-maintenance and can be worn on a belt.

The Swiss soldier's knife has been manufactured by Victorinox in Schyz ever since 1891, and a Swiss army knife made in China would be more fatal for the company's image than for its finances. So does the new knife really need to be put out to international tender? No, says lawyer Alois Kessler, the initiator of the soldier's knife petition and a candidate for a seat on the Schyz cantonal council. For him, the new knife is clearly a stabbing weapon and, as such, not subject to a WTO invitation to tender. Kessler accuses the Federal Council of a "goody-goody mentality" that is putting jobs at risk. Other states also interpret the WTO regulations in their favour, he says.

What happens next remains to be seen. A decision is to be reached by the end of the year. Armasuisse is now reviewing its position. After this "Furore over a penknife tender" (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*), no-one seriously wants to believe that the 2009 batch of recruits will be wearing knives made in China on their belts.

We have received a large number of e-mails and letters from readers complaining that we published an SVP advertisement for the forthcoming elections, and criticising what is perceived as our pro-SVP leanings. The fact is that we invited all parties in the Federal Parliament to advertise in "Swiss Review" to publicise their political manifestos among the Swiss abroad. The editorial team and publishers dictate neither the size nor the frequency of advertisements placed by political groups. This is a matter solely for each political party to decide.

HEINZ ECKERT, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



The first Swiss army knife, manufactured by Victorinox. The first shipment was made in 1891.

5

Mailbag

5

Books: The life and work of the first Federal Councillor from Ticino

7

Images: Swiss alpine life

8

The Swiss newspaper market is in flux

11

By mule-track over the Gotthard

## Regional news

13

Cartoon: Switzerland: a sailing nation

14

Notes from Parliament

17

Switzerland is a much sought-after peace broker

18

The new Lötschberg tunnel: The construction project of the century

20

OSA news

23

News in brief

Cover photo: "20 Minuten", a free commuter newspaper, made its appearance in Switzerland at the start of the new century  
Photo: RDB

**IMPRINT:** "Swiss Review", the magazine for the Swiss abroad, is in its 34rd year of publication and is published in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish in 21 regional editions. It has a total circulation of 400 000. Regional news appears four times a year.

■ **EDITORS:** Heinz Eckert (EC), Editor-in-Chief; Rolf Ribi (RR), René Lenzin (RL), Alain Wey (AW), Gabriela Brodbeck (BDK), responsible for DFA information pages, Service for the Swiss Abroad, DFA, CH-3003 Berne Translation: CLS Communication AG ■ **POSTAL ADDRESS:** Publisher, editorial office, advertising: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne, Tel.: +41 31 356 61 10, Fax: +41 31 356 61 01, Postal account (Swiss National Giro): 30-6768-9, Internet: www.revue.ch ■ **E-MAIL:** revue@aso.ch ■ **PRINT:** Zollikofer AG, CH-9001 St.Gallen.  
■ **CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** Please advise your local embassy or consulate. Do not write to Berne. Single copy: CHF 5 ■