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Life sometimes springs unpleasant surprises on us, leaving us wondering what we could have prevented had we only paid closer attention and recognised the signs. A sentence on page 29 of this issue may harbour an unpleasant surprise for you, my dear readers. It is located in the top right-hand corner of the page: “In future, would you prefer to subscribe to the electronic version and continue receiving six issues?” This refers to the “Swiss Review”. The unpleasant surprise is that the DFA and the directors of the OSA plan to send just four of the six issues a year to subscribers who opt for the printed version of the “Swiss Review”. Only those who subscribed to the electronic version would continue to receive all six issues. This means that subscribers to the print version would be provided with only some of the information. We are interested to know what you, our readers, think of these plans. You can also write directly to those responsible: juerg.burri@eda.admin.ch, mastantuoni@aso.ch or rustichelli@aso.ch

The outcome of the elections on 18 October was no great surprise. As predicted, conservative parties gained a lot of ground in the National Council. In the last legislative period, we saw how the Swiss People’s Party (SVP) – which is now the strongest party by far – used initiatives and referenda to push its policies through. The will of the people was declared to be the highest authority and the role of the constitutional state was sidelined to some extent. However, democracy and the constitutional state belong together. This also means that none of our organs of power – neither Parliament, nor government, nor the people – should have sole authority. Those in government must also abide by the law because if laws are adapted arbitrarily to suit different situations, the outcome is nothing short of dictatorship. Our election reports can be found on pages 12 to 15.

And finally, on a personal note, this is the last issue of the “Swiss Review” for which I will be responsible as editor-in-chief. Because I will be retiring in February 2016, I will hand over editorial control to my successor, Marko Lehtinen, at the beginning of November. The past five years have been a tremendously enriching experience for me as editor-in-chief. Together with the editorial team, we have succeeded in adapting the “Swiss Review” to the modern requirements of communication. Many of you, my dear readers, have written to us. You have made suggestions, voiced praise and sometimes also criticised us. I would like to thank you most sincerely for this. Because without such feedback, journalism takes place in a vacuum.



Cover photo:

The wolf, the scientific term for which is *Canis lupus*, migrated from Italy to Switzerland in 1995. It has since caused emotions to run high. Photo: Keystone

BARBARA ENGEL, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF