

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 67 (2001)
Heft: [6]

Vorwort: Editorial... : freedom without security is freedom with shackles...
Autor: Rust, Rinaldo

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Editorial..

Freedom without Security is freedom with shackles.....

Once again the Swiss voters have made a decision (by slender margin only), accepting a new law, (rejecting a Referendum) allowing Swiss military personnel to carry arms during peace-keeping efforts abroad. Swiss Neutrality demands that such efforts are only undertaken in response to an appeal by the United Nations.

It was interesting how the result of the Swiss vote was reported here in our adoptive country of New Zealand. A cartoon in the Waikato Times showed a Swiss soldier carrying a gun with all sorts of gadgetry attached resembling an oversized Swiss army knife.

The accompanying explanation stated that the Swiss Government

gave permission for the first time for the army to carry guns when peace-keeping.

I suppose it would have been too demanding on the Waikato Times cartoonist to explain that it was the Swiss voters giving permission by majority vote rejecting a Referendum.

Such incidents remind us of the tremendous political influence Swiss Citizens enjoy with the most direct Democracy possible. The whole concept of the founding of Switzerland and its Neutrality is based on the desire to be free of 'overlords' and any kind of foreign influence on the country as such.

To live in such freedom demands Security to bring contentment for people to live without fear. Unfortunately fear is an ever growing evil for mankind be it in Switzerland, New Zealand or any other country. The most common fear, and therefore a

certain loss of freedom, is created by today's violent society. Less obvious fear is present in the work environment, losing a job, or being made redundant. Society at large is becoming ever more insecure. Fear of marriage breakdown prevents people from getting married in the first place. Fear of all the difficulties bringing up children prevents people from having children. Fear of financial difficulties arising in the future prevents people from living free of such worries. Fear of speaking out for the 'underdog' in society. Fear of illness and fear of inadequate help in case of failing health. For young people, fear of exams, fear of pressures on performance.

As the headline in a Swiss newspaper read: "*Sicher ist dass nichts mehr sicher ist!*" **The only assurance we have today is the fact that nothing is assured any longer.**

How then should we cope in a world that is losing freedom because of insecurity? Can we ask the government and hold it responsible for reversing the trend?

I think if we agree that the government represents all of us, then it is up to the individual to make an effort bringing about a sense of security for body and soul.

Let us speak out against social injustice, bringing back more equality. Recently statistics revealed that there exist about seven million millionaires in our world. What it did not reveal was how many billion poor there are. Let us remember that people's happiness also depends on freedom from spiritual fear. Lack of spiritual assurance in supposedly Christian societies is common in our times.

To trust in God and the saving power of Christ can set us spiritually free. It will not take away all worry which modern living brings, but it can help us to counteract many limitations in our lives.

SWISS SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

PATRON: Mrs Sylvie Matteucci-Keller, Ambassador of Switzerland

PRESIDENT/TREASURER: Beatrice Leuenberger, 44 Montgomery Crescent, Hamilton, Ph.(07) 843-7971 Fax (07) 843-7941 bea.leun.rachel@xtra.co.nz

VICE PRESIDENT: Bert Flühler, 1 Bettina Rd. Hamilton, Ph. (07) 855-4308

SECRETARY: Ruth Waldvogel, 89 Crosby Rd. Hamilton, Ph/Fax (07)855-3417

RIFLEMASTER: Peter Rust, 4202 Pepepe Rd. Naiké, RD 2, Huntly 07 8266711

DELEGATES TO THE SWISS ABROAD CONFERENCE IN SWITZERLAND

DELEGATE: Heinz Leuenberger, 33 Russell Terrace, Putaruru, Ph/Fax (07) 883-8537

DEPUTY DELEGATE: Marie-Therese Melville-Schöpfer, P.O Box 79-294, Royal Heights, Auckland 1230, Ph. (09) 833-4029

COORDINATOR IN NZ FOR THE SWISS ABROAD YOUTH EXCHANGE SCHEME

MRS. NICOLE HELSDON, 58A MARELLAN DR, RED BEACH, OREWA, PH.09 426-0927

EDITOR: RINALDO RUST, 242 TE PAHU RD. R.D.5.

HAMILTON, PH/FAX (07) 871-9946 E-MAIL: RINALDORUST@XTRA.CO.NZ

CLUB REPRESENTATIVES

AUCKLAND

SECRETARY: Trudi Fill, 51 Clifton Rd, Herne Bay, P.O Box 40152, Glenfield, Auckland, Ph/fax (09) 3764923, e-amil <weidfill@xtra.co.nz>

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