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Swiss reject foreigners law . . .

SWISS voters have narrowly rejected a proposed new law aimed at improving the conditions of foreign workers.

The law was rejected by 690,339 votes to 680,432 (50.4 per cent to 49.6 per cent) – one of the closest results in any

national vote in Switzerland this century.

The law, intended to ease the strict permit restrictions here and facilitate the integration of foreign workers into Swiss society, had already received overwhelming approval from the Swiss parlia-

ment. But it was opposed by the small People and Homeland party, which collected enough signatures to force the vote.

The party claimed that the new legislation would encourage immigration into Switzerland at a time when many Swiss them-

selves are facing problems of housing and job security.

Latest official figures put the number of foreign residents in Switzerland at just over 900,000, or more than 14 per cent of the total population – the highest level for five years.

	Turnout %	Foreigners Law				Penal Code			
		For	Against	For %	Against %	For	Against	For %	Against %
Zurich	44.5	155,003	150,960	50.7	49.3	203,221	105,735	65.8	34.2
Berne	39.5	39,450	35,818	52.4	47.6	160,374	81,788	66.2	33.8
Lucerne	33.8	28,619	34,419	45.4	54.6	40,284	22,943	63.7	36.3
Uri	37	3,454	4,493	43.5	56.5	4,965	3,081	61.7	38.3
Schwyz	31.4	7,956	11,037	41.9	58.1	12,091	7,010	63.3	36.7
Obwalden	45.5	3,187	4,160	43.4	56.6	4,888	2,514	66	34
Nidwalden	33.3	3,183	3,196	49.9	50.1	4,353	2,068	67.8	32.2
Glarus	56.6	5,049	7,643	39.8	60.2	8,500	4,239	66.7	33.3
Zug	39	8,464	9,365	47.5	52.5	11,370	6,478	63.7	36.3
Fribourg	22.5	15,747	10,881	59.1	40.9	18,035	8,879	67	33
Solothurn	40.8	26,622	29,872	47.1	52.9	35,898	20,773	63.3	36.7
Basle City	35.8	25,072	24,170	50.9	49.1	27,661	21,939	55.8	44.2
Basle Land	32.8	23,201	22,001	51.3	48.7	24,208	21,144	53.4	46.6
Schaffhausen	88.8	13,588	14,297	48.7	51.3	17,268	10,812	61.5	38.5
Appenzell (AR)	37	5,172	6,038	46.1	53.9	7,734	3,520	68.7	31.3
Appenzell (IR)	26	1,005	1,091	47.9	52.1	1,682	496	77.2	22.8
St Gall	32.3	39,450	35,818	52.4	47.6	53,914	21,789	71.2	28.8
Grisons	27	13,630	13,376	50.5	49.5	17,330	10,039	63.3	36.7
Argau	29.9	37,719	44,544	45.9	54.1	50,041	32,703	60.5	39.5
Thurgau	38.4	18,756	22,297	45.7	54.3	26,607	14,826	64.2	35.8
Ticino	34	23,439	27,996	45.6	54.4	31,614	20,063	61.2	38.8
Vaud	23.5	42,086	31,193	57.4	42.6	44,113	29,897	59.6	40.4
Valais	21	14,664	14,579	50.1	49.9	17,181	12,228	58.4	41.6
Neuchâtel	31.8	18,029	12,062	59.9	40.1	19,161	11,215	63.1	36.9
Geneva	30.2	26,506	27,325	49.2	50.8	34,607	20,267	63.1	36.9
Jura	22.5	5,370	3,626	59.7	40.3	3,755	5,451	40.8	59.2
Total	34.5	680,432	690,339	49.6	50.4	880,855	501,897	63.7	36.3

. . . but approve a tougher penal code

IN ANOTHER nationwide vote, the Swiss electorate have approved by a large majority a toughening of the penal code. Voting was 880,855 in favour and 501,897 against (63.7 per cent to 36.3 per cent).

The revised code allows for wider police powers and tougher penalties for terrorism and other crimes of violence not covered by existing legislation.

Opponents of the revision allege that the wider police powers could lead to curbs on civil liberties. But the government argues that the aim is to provide the population with increased protection.

AS a regular subscriber to and reader of the Swiss Observer I was surprised at the somewhat ignorant and negative Swiss-eye-view comments of the Falklands dispute in the Swiss Press, as reported in your recent issues.

Switzerland, supposed to be the bastion of whatever freedom these days denotes, appears to have failed to recognise and condemn, even as a neutral state, what was a naked and deliberate attempt to suppress and destroy freedom and sovereignty in a country of similar size as Switzerland.

Whether it be 8,000 miles away or in the vicinity, the principle remains the same and the freedom loving world at least should show its gratitude to the courageous British Government headed by Mrs M. Thatcher.

Press's ignorant view of the Falklands war

In a swift and brilliantly conducted campaign its voluntary army of freedom defenders – after all the talking failed – restored the rights of free and democratic life to the relatively small British community in the Falkland Islands and dependencies after 10 weeks of suppression by an adversary far superior in number.

It seems almost ridiculous to mention, but one Swiss comment I heard was that the British fight for freedom in the Falklands could cause petrol rationing in Switzerland!

How narrow-minded, pikemish and selfish can one be when others are robbed of their freedom at gunpoint, their homes are looted, desecrated and destroyed by an animal-like intruder equipped with unconventional weaponry such as napalm-like substances and dum-dum bullets?

If the free world would have reacted more resolutely when Afghanistan was overrun by the Russians then this latest attempt of aggression and the heavy sacrifice in human toll might well have been avoided.

At least some of us remember the events and consequences of the 1930s when the then League of Nations failed as miserably as the present day so-called United Nations with its Security Council and double standards.

Switzerland may be well advised to keep its nose clean of the idea of joining that hotbed of intrigue, espionage and sponge for milliards in squandered subscription moneys.

I would have expected to find in your latest issue some kind of more positive comment by the Swiss Press in acknowledgment of the freedom and sovereignty restored in the Falklands area on June 15 when the uninvited and demoralised invaders capitulated in the face of our determined freedom fighters. – A.J.L. Hug, Shipley, Yorkshire.