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Referendum on European Economic Area

The referendum on Swiss membership of the European Economic Area whipped up a tempest not only at home but also amongst Swiss Abroad. Here is a selection of readers' letters:

I was very annoyed that Leupin (sic!) described EEA opponents in such a derogatory way as "custodians of the

past". Every voter has the right to his own view, even when a crushing majority of the press, economic associations, trade unions and the government are against him!

With the battle done and the EEA opponents happy with the result, we can rejoice that Switzerland will remain a free country.

A.J. Bürki, Atibaia, Brazil

Permit me to congratulate you on publishing the Review with the diversified opinions of many experts re Swiss affairs with which the Swiss Abroad are not fully familiar. Some criticisms published in the last Review (6/92) are extremely biased as the Review has clearly published divergent opinions.

R. Ehrmann, Strathavon, South Africa

I still can't really get over Switzerland's (half) No to the EEA. We are very sad about it because we thought that as Swiss Abroad living in Austria we would finally get the same rights – and not only obligations – as the Austrians have. I would like to tell you about my own family. In 1965 I had a daughter, Barbara, and then in 1968 I married an Austrian who gave me another daughter, Manuela. As a dual national, Manuela can work wherever she likes, purchase property and take out a building loan on easy terms. Although Barbara was born here, however, and was adopted by an Austrian, she's Swiss and has to renew

her residency permit every five years; she can't buy property, and she's not entitled to a mortgage or housing subsidy of any description.

The EEA would have solved quite a few of these problems at one blow. We look at Switzerland's No from the point of view of Swiss Abroad, and we consider ourselves neglected and betrayed by our nay-saying compatriots.

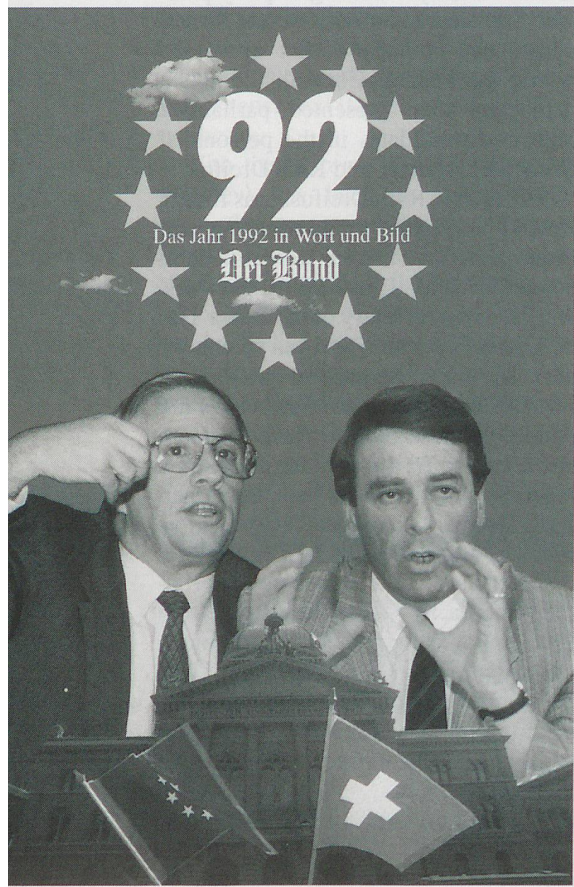
Ch. Engebrecht, Kufstein, Austria.

I am very astonished at your biased attitude in connection with the recent Referendum. As your Review is printed at the tax-payers expense, I would have thought – particularly as the Swiss people voted No – that you would have had a more balanced approach in your commentary and press review.

W.A. de Vigier, London, England

The Swiss Review is not at all biased. Our reporting on the EEA referendum was intended to reflect the atmosphere throughout Switzerland in the run-up to December 6. Our commentary tried to approach the issues which would face both supporters and opponents after the decision had been made, and our press roundup gave a representative overview of the Swiss media. Although the Swiss Review receives a subsidy from the federal government, its freedom of expression is guaranteed. Its contributors follow the same rules as those of any other Swiss paper.

The Editor



In 1992 Europe was a central theme not only of the «Annual Review» of the newspaper «Der Bund». Two publicists from the same party, National Councillor Christoph Blocher (left) and President of the Confederation Adolf Ogi, in close combat for and against EEA entry. (Photo: Archives)

Correction

On the map «Swiss throughout the World» which appeared in the last Swiss Review, there were one or two unfortunate mistakes. For example, Nigeria appeared as Niger, and Dubai is not an independent state but a consular district within the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in which 189 Swiss citizens are currently registered.

Sport in the Swiss Review

I find your paper very interesting – but I'm a great sports fan, and I don't think you have enough sports coverage. Wouldn't it be possible to find a little corner for ice hockey and A and B national league football results? I am sure a lot of Swiss Abroad would be very pleased.

W. Schlumpf, Port Elizabeth, South Africa

Alongside politics, culture and economics, the Swiss Review does try to cover sport. There were quite a few sports stories in recent numbers, and this time we have a short item on two Swiss world champions (see Mosaic). But in view of the time lapse before readers receive the Review, it doesn't seem to us to make much sense to publish national results which would be long out of date. Some of you might have to wait three months!

The Editor