

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 16 (1989)
Heft: 1

Artikel: Column : Switzerland : the future lies in Europe
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-906429>

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partner based on her history, culture and economical network. Switzerland wants to observe her joint responsibilities in and towards Europe. Not becoming an EEC member does not mean renouncement of participation in the European integration process. This does not require any fundamentally new orientation, it rather renders possible the consequential continuation of the pragmatic cooperation with the EEC as it exists today, which bases itself on a strict reciprocity of rights and duties. The requirements would undoubtedly become stronger, one reason why Switzerland should continually improve her ability to remain compatible with Europe. This compatibility requires amongst other things an organisation of its own legal system to conform with the rest of Europe so that Switzerland's legal regulations align as closely as possible to those of her European partners.

The right of codetermination of the EEC politics, not applicable to third party states, must be compensated for by a sharper awareness of possible aims which could effect national interests, as well as by active efforts to make contacts and a readiness for consultation. The Federal Council stresses, however, that Switzerland must above all remain constantly so attractive and so vital, in relation to the EEC European, economical and competition politics, that she should always be able to decide for or against an EEC-entry, should this come about, freely and calmly.

Raul Lautenschütz,
NZZ Parliamentary Editor, Berne

Column

Switzerland: The Future lies in Europe



A few months ago the authorities, media and general public started to realise that the development and the acceleration of the efforts towards European integration are to have a direct effect on Switzerland, her inhabitants and business operations. This impression is accurate.

Since the Treaty of Rome (1957), the European Economic Community has been developing steadily. Today the EEC has a political organisation which is laid down in its constitution, the European Single Act (1986). The Executive is the European Commission, a sort of European Federal Council. The advisory bodies are firstly the European Parliament – a kind of National Council – and the Council of Ministers – a sort of Council of States. The legal authority is embodied by the European Court of Justice.

These Institutions work out and enforce a common policy in various areas, for example in agriculture, social welfare, science, transport, development collaboration, the fighting of terrorism, etc. There is a strengthened economical and social solidarity between the member states. There exist moreover common principles and rules concerning foreign policy.

The Community produces a common law, which has a comparable relationship to the individual national laws of the member states, as does Federal Law to Cantonal Law. In addition the Community has a budget, an administration and a currency unit (the ECU) and a European passport, which will be issued to all of its 320 million inhabitants.

With the exception of the defence policy – the majority of the Member States belong, however, to NATO – the Community shows nonetheless many characteristics of the future United States of Europe.

Bearing this changing reality in mind, there are many voices saying: 'Switzerland cannot belong to the EEC'. This is, however, a conclusion which is drawn before real considerations have begun. How can we avoid asking certain questions, when French and German – who have fought against each other in three wars in the space of 100 years – have fundamentally reviewed their relationship and the English have had to reconsider their insularity? Today it is quite clear, that the United States of Europe will one day emerge out of the European Economic Community. Switzerland must become involved with this to ensure that this European State Federation can be democratic, federalistic, social, having a legal state, capable of defending itself, of respecting and developing human rights.

Switzerland must become involved, because it is dependent on Europe and the decisions made by Europe. It must also become involved because it has a lot to contribute to this Europe in its construction stage: As a democratic legal state, which bases itself on individual freedom, Switzerland has a wide experience in federalism; its negotiation sense and skills in compromise have allowed Switzerland to form and administer a political house in which various groups of people, languages, cultures and confessions find their place. Switzerland is a model for the Europe of tomorrow.

The Europe of today is the Switzerland of 1847: the Europeans of the 20th century are now in the throes of constructing, on a continental level, what the Confederation realised on a national level in our country in the 19th century.

Let us then live in the present and look reality in the face! Let us have faith in ourselves and accept the challenge: Then if Switzerland is our homeland, Europe will be our future.

Guy-Olivier Segond, Mayor of Geneva, National Councillor, President of the Swiss European Movement

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August 16–September 9, 1989