

Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility,
and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

English Edition of *Zeit-Fragen*

French soldiers and “journalists” operating the secret war in Syria

What does the French intervention in Damascus has to do with the Gripen purchase and the scrapping of modernized Swiss armored personnel carriers?

me. We previously reported that foreign contingents of Special Forces reinforce, train and develop the so-called “insurgents” or the so-called “free army of Syria” posing in Adidas trainers and sneakers on photos and that they operate the radio communications.

Heavy armaments come from France as well. During the first three days of fighting in Homs, the rebels prevented the Syrian army from advancing into the rebels’ districts. They fired Milan type anti-tank missiles on all approaching tanks and armored vehicles; that is why the Syrians had to eliminate the rebels’ battle positions with artillery and rocket launchers, even if they might risk the lives of residents that way.

Milan missiles for the rebels

Each of the Milan fighting positions at the entrance corridors to the Baba Amr district of Homs costs about 120,000 francs (rocket launchers, thermal imaging target device, radio, etc.), each shot or each rocket costs 15,000 francs. During the battle they fired in rounds of one to three shots per minute. Count: There was obviously no lack of money. The devices had been manufactured by the company Nord-Aviation (France) and MBB (Germany). The delivery to the so-called “Free Syrian army” was done out of the supplies of the German Bundeswehr and the British Army, as “Réseau Voltaire” reported. In April 2011, Qatar had already admitted to having delivered Milan missiles to the Libyan rebels.

French intelligence colonel captured

As for the French soldiers, the Syrians captured a colonel of the French foreign intelligence service DGSE who is a specialist for wireless communication. The commitment of the Elysée Palace is rather significant. As “Réseau Voltaire” learned from a reliable source, another French agent was captured on Monday 27 February 2012 in Azouz (in the district of Idlib, near the Turkish border) by the National Syrian Army. Thus, the number of French prisoners has increased to 19 (nineteen!).

Now, secret negotiations for their release via the Russian Federation, the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman are in progress. The French run a presidential election campaign. The affair must either be kept under cover for value of large ransom payments from France to

Syria, or *Sarkozy* and his Foreign Minister *Juppé* must provide more explanation to their countrymen, holding the baby of the long-legged president’s wife to the cameras is not enough.

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Basic resistance against the reduction of the army in Switzerland

Group Giardino adopts resolution against the scrapping of the Spz 63/87
Private sponsorship for armored tracked vehicle (abbrev. Spz) in prospect

ab/me. At the general assembly on Saturday, 3 March 2012, in Berne, the *Group Giardino* passed a resolution intending to stop the scrapping of some 350 combat-enhanced armored tracked vehicle Spz 63/89 (M113). The *Group Giardino* is a non-party grassroots movement in Switzerland, which rightly sees the Swiss army and security policy in a desperate situation and calls for “a radical course correction of security policy.”

The general assembly instructed the executive board:

- to stop the transport of some fully operational 350 Spz 63/89 from the storage depot *Turtmann/Valais* to the scrapping company *Schnyder Gotthard AG*, Emmen/LU by means of a judicial *super provisional directive*
- to clarify without delay against which person or body a charge *may be brought due to negligent and illegal scrapping of army material*, and after immediate judicial review and assessment to file a criminal complaint with the responsible Prosecuting Attorney. The spokesman for the working group Spz, *Willy P. Stelzer* (Major of the armored troops) commented upon request:

“These tanks are fully functional and would be operational. For years they have been standing in caverns in *Turtmann*. The fuel tanks were filled with diesel. After installing the batteries, the tanks can be immediately set in motion. The claims made by Federal Councilor *Maurer* that the tanks were outdat-

ed and no longer functional, are incorrect. The M113 will continue to be used in more than 57 countries (war zones included), including USA, Israel, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Turkey and by the Brazil army. In Germany, the M113 has been in service until 2010 (but not combat-enhanced models). Only the Hezbollah and Lebanese private armies have discharged the M113.

The scrapping is irresponsible. Part of our troops of the Army XXI have no allotted vehicles or would be transported without protection by trucks. When the VBS has little money for combat, it is not necessary to scrap operational material worth millions. This is not only incomprehensible, but absurd! It is this we are resisting to.”

Stelzer continued that talks are underway with other groups of the civil society. Wider discontent is emerging. The vote on the issue that the rifle stay with the soldier was won by an overwhelming majority. By that vote the people stopped disarmament and demobilization. That is why they are mobilizing resistance now.

Already several families have said that they are ready to become sponsors for a Spz. They are willing to annually transfer money for the costs of maintenance and storage of a Spz to a special account. *Stelzer* soon expects the signing of sponsorships for the Spz in the three-digit range. “If the mothballing causes

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"French soldiers and ..."

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The French, known for dirty tricks of the coarser kind sunk the Greenpeace yacht ("Rainbow Warrior") near New Zealand in 1986. Two French intelligence agents were only released by the New Zealanders, after Paris had paid a few million to Greenpeace and the New Zealand government and opened the French market for the import of New Zealand sheep meat. This is still giving the French sheep farmers a hard time. This time, with 19 captive agents, the deal will probably be more expensive. Perhaps Mrs Assad will soon become the godmother of Nicolas' baby. Or the like. We should not be surprised.

Rebels of Baba Amr to surrender

Just after the UN Security Council's veto on the Syria resolution, the Syrian army gained the mastery. Soon, the 35 Western military advisors and journalists that had not yet been caught fled from the "Islamic Emirate of Baba Amr". About 2,000 fighters in Homs also lost all hope that the great promises made to them by the Western side would become reality. On 29 February 2012 several hundred fighters surrendered after having ruled over the small area of the size of less than 50 football fields (according to FIFA standards). They left behind artillery guns and antitank missiles of the type AT-13/9K115 Metis, among other things. It is still an open question how this older Russian manufacture, which is fairly common in the region, could have got to that place.

France removed its remaining agents from Syria

In any case, the French "military advisers" fled towards Lebanon. Of course, the French ambassador in Beirut, *Denis Piletton*, "accidentally" stayed with a convoy in the area, officially in the border region of Baalbeck in eastern Lebanon. He traveled with an embassy security team to the north of Bekaa on the border with the Syrian province of Homs.

On the Syrian side of the border French officers and experts from the military intelligence services – some disguised using a journalist status – took care of the fighters of the free "Syrian" army. They all entered Syria illegally.

The Ambassador and his passengers received the French secret service agents at an irregular border crossing. They had tried to convey knowledge about the fights in the built-up areas in the "Islamic Emirate of Baba Amr" in Homs to the rebels, and were quite exhausted and hungry from the flight. Due to the Vienna Convention, diplomatic vehicles must not be searched. Therefore, the convoy was able to bring

back the French agents to the French embassy without the Lebanese police being allowed to intervene.

With the arrogance of the former colonial or mandate power, the French ambassador had previously intervened in intra-Lebanese affairs on 23 February by explaining to the "Daily Star": "Lebanon should refrain from intervention into the riots in Syria".

Sources:

www.voltairenet.org/La-France-exfiltres-agents

www.voltairenet.org/Des-rebelles-Baba-Amr

www.voltairenet.org/Un-19eme-agent-francais-arrete-en

www.voltairenet.org/La-France-ouvre-des-negociations

me. One ought to have such chutzpah. Instigating a synthetic civil war with the help of agents and senior officers in Syria, then exfiltrating (such is the official jargon) them by abuse of diplomatic conven-

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"Basic resistance ..."

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no cost for the VBS there is no more reason for scrapping." A joint venture between private partners and the VBS is to be established in terms of public-private partnership. One could also imagine a foundation that administers the sponsorships. Major Stelzer is confident that a broad-based movement will be up until Easter.

The president of Giardino, *Hermann Suter*, historian PhD, said. "As a former rector of the teachers' college of Lucerne, I am sure that whole families or even school classes can sign a sponsorship for a Spz." The children may give the Spz – "riflemen bucket" as he calls them – a name from Swiss geography or history. The children would then be allowed to come and paint them on the Spzs. Suter said: "Names like *Wilhelm Tell*, or *Bruder Klaus* would be fine, footballers like *Xherdan Shaqiri* or "Mr Watch" *Nicolas Hayek* are to be expected. *Henri Guisan* or *Elsie Attenhofer*, *Margrit Läubli* are fine, too." Then he grins: "Only names like *Samuel Schmid* and *Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf*, I would have to discuss with the pupils."

With this remark Suter probably refers to the fact that this unfortunate lady recently caused the Federal Council to refuse to follow the request of Parliament namely to provide more money for the army: The Parliament should come back on its decision, since it is outrageous in terms of constitutional law and national policy. The Federal Council is the employee of the people, and therefore should behave as an employee towards the one who pays the wages. The Federal Council is not the boss. The highest authority in Switzerland are the people and the Parliament.

He's right. The moment has come for the people to intervene across the board. The mischief that modern military equipment is to be scrapped, material which recently was brought up

to date (eg. add-on armor, etc.) for a lot of money (tax money nota bene!) must be stopped. Unorthodox methods are necessary. Etatism of the worst kind in the Federal House must yield. If the VBS wants to, it can also have a Tahir Square. Enough is enough. We want those at the top to show mental capacity and backbone again or to resign. We should say "No". The M 113 will bear up against Steinbrück's cavalry for quite some time, and our neighbor France, a nuclear power is waging war on Libya and now on Syria; without a UN mandate! Anyway, we do not want submissive gestures, no disarmament against the people's will. If the Federal Council or the SVP do not understand this now, they will later.

By the way: On the subject of Philip Hildebrand and the Spz: Did he have accomplices? The franc's linking to the euro had been planned long before. It was something very rare, indeed, but a very sure thing to earn some money with insider speculation. Is it true that in all of Switzerland, only the Pakistani-American wife of our handsome then Chairman of the Central Bank did a little insider trading? Were all the others across the country of immaculate integrity? All of them? Or were there other confidants – men or women – in the Federal Council, the federal government, the supervisory board of the National Bank or elsewhere weak in character, as well? Were there other persons that made little "sideline tradings"? And did Mr Hildebrand know about that? Was this the reason he was defended with such unquestioning loyalty? Or was it love? Did he impress Mrs. Widmer-Schlumpf with his sex-appeal? Either way, someone making such transactions is a security risk for our country. There are accomplices, bank employees, for example. Whoever made such transactions may be subject to blackmail. These men and women had better quietly resign from office for health reasons instead of waiting for discovery. Anyway, they should quickly help to stop the disarmament of Switzerland.

"French soldiers and ..."

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tions and simultaneously telling the Lebanese what to do.

Why are you acting that way, France?

Is France's role not a strange one, which requires explanation? In the secret war against Syria and its allies Paris has been responsible for the deaths of at least 3,000 Syrian soldiers and 1,500 civilians, the economic losses and sabotage against pipelines, etc. not included. Why and to what purpose or by what interest does our neighboring country fight at the forefront in Syria? Why does it support an "Islamic Emirate of Baba Amr", proclaimed by the rebels? Not long ago, the Navy Seals caught the evil *bin Laden* in Abbottabad, and drowned him in the sea from an aircraft carrier. Has al-Qaeda suddenly mutated from the evil enemy into the good guy? Or is the emirate simply a concession to the sponsor, the Saudis and Qataris (as France has actually no money to wage war)? Even the war against Libya was set off in Paris (together with London) and French pilots began with their bombardment.

This is all not about the civilian population, neither in Syria nor in Libya. Unfortunately, this is only the "spin". The soapy UN concept "Responsibility to Protect" is a pretext, so that the West has a better chance to interfere. The pattern is clear: the rebels are given French Milan missiles due to which the Syrian tanks cannot advance and so the Milan bases in Homs have to be eliminated by artillery. Civilian casualties could not be excluded. This was the occasion on which the Security Council was asked to pass a resolution that finally should have made an intervention in Libya from the outside possible "to protect the civilian population". The point is not that complicated, it is actually rather transparent. You force the Syrians into a situation where they need to fight in built-up areas; and the civilian population, which inevitably has to suffer losses, serves as a pretext to intervene.

But wait, please pause for thought: Why is the civilian population in Benghazi and Homs worth such a resolution? Why were the Afghans, Iraqis and Kurds,

Palestinians, or the residential areas in Beirut bombed by the Israelis in 2006 or in Grozny not worth such a commitment? Either the West is racist and certain peoples do not count, or they have double standards. Or both. When asked to choose between such perverted "Western values" or the classic "sovereignty", the Indians make an easy choice. (For foreign readers: The former German federal minister of finance *Steinbrück* labeled the Swiss Indians, against whom he was going to make ride the 6th Cavalry from Fort Yuma. He thus gave evidence of both his trans-Atlantic connectivity as well as his political attitude and, by the way, helped the Swiss population to close ranks.)

But back to the French: We may probably once get to know, how expensive the exchange of agents was this time, but in our country, we also have strange trails that lead to France. When our federal government recently decided to purchase Swedish *Gripen* fighter planes instead of French *Raffale* planes, a roar was raised, accompanied by some media; anonymous letters of most embarrassing content were spread which smelled of the French style and raised unsubstantiated allegations of corruption against the provision authority. Even when Switzerland refrained from the purchase of a French fighter aircraft later in the 1980s and bought the *Tiger* instead – which will now be replaced by the *Gripen* – the French proved to be bad, gaffly-like losers. Even today the former

procurement team on the Swiss side has bad memories of the French. We ought to be careful. Our neighbor wages a war that violates international law. When will it be our turn? CDs containing bank details have already been stolen, and blackmailing has also been reported. Will a commission of historians be to wonder fifty years later, why no one in our country interpreted the signs of the times correctly? Incompetence or 5th column? Either way, we will have to take the consequences.

Instead of scrapping our recently modernized armored personnel carriers, we have to demand of ourselves and of those in Berne to show more backbone and thinking ahead. (Federal Councilor Maurer included). Let's start? •

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Editor: Erika Vögeli

Address: Current Concerns,

P.O. Box, CH-8044 Zurich

Phone: +41 (0)44 350 65 50

Fax: +41 (0)44 350 65 51

E-Mail: CurrentConcerns@zeit-fragen.ch

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KLA commander must leave Switzerland

The Kosovo member of parliament and former commander of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), *Azem Syla*, must leave Switzerland according to a judgement passed by the Administrative Court of the Canton of Solothurn. Moreover a lawsuit against him is pending because of 426,000 francs supplementary benefits, which were received unlawfully.

Source: *sda*

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

At least protect the airspace Officers threaten to launch a people's initiative

The Swiss Officers' Association (SOG) views the higher military budget and the new fighter jets at risk. According to a media report the association is now taking the offensive "for a reliable army".

The Swiss Officers' Association (SOG) expresses its opinion in the debate on fighter jets, military budgets and cost-cutting programs. If a referendum against the 750 million cost-cutting program was submitted, a negative impact on the Army budget and the acquisition of the new Gripen fighter jet could be the result. The SOG will not stand by and watch such a development. For this reason it is considered to launch a people's initiative.

"We are ready to go to the people," says Denis Froidevaux, brigadier and vice president of the Officers' Association, in an interview with "Tribune de Geneve" and "24 Heures". According to Froidevaux the SOG has worked on an initiative called "For a reliable army" since last summer. The initiative text is nearly completed, the corresponding initiative could be launched quickly.

Army with 100,000 men and new fighter jets

What is the initiative about? The Officers' Association doesn't want to make details public yet. In the interview Froidevaux recalls last year's Federal Assembly's mandate to the Federal Council to raise the Army's annual expenditure ceiling to five billion francs in 2014. So far, the expenditure ceiling had been 4.4 billion. The purpose of this money should be the financing of a 100,000 men army including new fighter jets. The modernization of the Swiss army should not be put at risk, unfortunately this would happen with regard to the new cost-cutting program from 2014 on. For many years the SOG has held the position that the Swiss army is underfunded. At the same time a coherent security policy is lacking. It cannot be that new tasks are assigned to the army all the time without providing additional funds. This is disrespectful towards the citizen-soldier, says Froidevaux.

Fundamental question: What kind of army do the people want?

The Officers' Association does not want the initiative "For a reliable army" to be

Destruction plan for 350 armoured infantry fighting vehicle, combat value increased

me. As it has come to our attention there is a plan to scrap the amount of 350, several times combat value increased armoured infantry fighting vehicles M113 63/89 at two locations (in Emmen (Lucerne LU) and Ecublens (Vaud VD)) starting in January 2012, presently they are hidden in old aircraft-tunnels near Raron and Turtmann (Valais, VS). Just a few years ago this version infantry fighting vehicle has received an advanced new armour and the most powerful turbo diesel that was ever installed in an M113 worldwide, which gives it rapid acceleration and maneuverability. Also it possesses a 20mm gun for self-defense. The vehicle speed outrageously and are almost as fast as the Leopard main battle tank.

The scrapping order was issued to: Gotthard Schnyder AG, Emmen and Thevenaz-Leduc, Ecublens VD. Every month, around 30 pieces M113 armored infantry fighting vehicle, will be turned into scrap. According to our sources the vehicles are in very good condition and ready for use.

The infantry fighting vehicle weighs about 11,000 kg. One half of that, about 5,500 kg are aluminum. The aluminum price is just under CHF 2,000 per ton. Therefore you receive a maximum of CHF 10,000,00 per tank. In the current version, it costs CHF 430000,00.

Calculate: 350 units times CHF 430,000 unit price that amounts to CHF 150 million. The Federal Department of Defense, Civil Protection and Sports (DDPS) will therefore destroy 150 million and receives about 4.1 million for the aluminum melt. By the way: the replacement value, if new armored fighting vehicle have to be procured, is at least 5 to 10 times higher, that means more than one billion francs!

Indeed, it cannot be that Defense Minister Maurer and Chief of the Armed Forces Blattmann want new Gripen fighters, but destroy military equipment ready for use worth 150 million against the will of the people on the other hand.



M113-tanks loaded for transport. (picture Group Giardino)

Youtube: Drive to scrapping

On Youtube you can see how the second tranche of the armoured infantry fighting vehicle drives in the scrap yard. They demonstrate fitness, appear new, emit a robust sound of their powerful new turbo diesel engines, and you see how much fun the drivers of these armored Ferraris have. There are several videos.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_ntiDPzBE&feature=related

regarded as a threat. Rather, the Swiss people should get the chance to decide on the fundamental question, what kind of army they want – and what funding this Army should receive. Froidevaux stresses that the geopolitical situation isn't stable. Not least the economic and financial problems in Europe bear severe security risks, for Switzerland as well. The SOG

Vice President is convinced that the officers' initiative would meet with a positive echo when launched. Froidevaux assumes that the army still enjoys great sympathy and support among the population. •

Source: *Basler Zeitung* from 23 February 2012

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

“Foreign imposed ‘Regime-Change’ violates the UN Charter in letter and spirit”

“Actions outside the Security Council would be illegal interventions and constituted crimes against peace or else aggressive acts, and those who decide on them would have to be brought to justice accordingly”

Interview with Professor Dr phil. et iur. Alfred de Zayas



Alfred de Zayas
(picture thk)

thk. Syria was the dominant topic during the first days of the UN Human Rights Council session. Already on the second day of the spring session the Western states urged for a special meeting to deal with the events in Syria. The extremely biased media reports about the situation in Syria were mirrored by the statements of several countries. Similar to their unambiguous position in the Security Council Russia and China took a clear stance inspired by international law, bringing reason to this emotional debate that way. Obviously the West aims for another «Regime-Change» following the Libyan recipe and human rights violations are meant to provide justification for an intervention. In the following interview, US-American international law expert Professor Alfred de Zayas judges the situation in the Near East from the viewpoint of international law and also talks about the war preparations against Iran.

Zeit-Fragen: Some countries especially from the West, keep issuing statements about Syria at the Human Rights Council here in Geneva. As it seems, the West is urging for a mandate to militarily intervene like in Libya. How should we see that from a standpoint of international law?

Professor de Zayas: When we are talking about Syria, we should bear in mind why the United Nations were founded in the first place. We learn from the preamble that the objective of the UN is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to protect people from conflicts and to solve conflicts peacefully. The principles and aims are made very clear in the UN Charter. This includes the policy of non-intervention. But what was at stake here was a conversion, a revolution, a corruption of the United Nations. The transformation of an organization of peace, a peace-promoting and peace-keeping organization into an organization engaging in «Regime-Change» this is total-

ly against meaning and spirit of the UN Charter.

The Libya resolution was meant to protect the Libyan civilian population; however it was interpreted in a completely different way. The resolution was abused as a pretext to wage war and to overthrow the government. This is a turning point. The Russians and Chinese drew their consequences from this. If one intends to interfere in a civil war in order to protect the civilian population, this can be debated. But this resolution was abused; therefore China and Russia won't put up with it any longer.

Is it fair to say that the veto of Russians and Chinese strengthened international law?

Absolutely. There was a real threat here for the principle of non-intervention, the principle of non-violence. To break down. It is also a vote for legal security. If resolutions get abused as in the case of Libya, one has to make it very clear to those responsible for the abuse that it is unacceptable, that it will not happen again. Should they wish to act outside the UN this would constitute a crime. It is a crime as defined by the ICC statute member states according to Article 5 of the International Criminal Court. If it had taken place outside the Security Council, it would immediately have been regarded as a crime and aggressive act, and those who decided upon this would have to be brought to justice accordingly.

In this line of argument any intervention bypassing the UN is definitely a war crime?

The question is, whether NATO would dare to intervene in Syria without resolution of the Security Council the same way as they did in the case of Yugoslavia. Syria is in geographical proximity to Russia and Russia will not put up with that. It is well-known that the Russians will take certain protective measures in such a situation. NATO has to think very carefully how this could escalate. At the time of the NATO intervention in Serbia, Russia was relatively weak. The reemergence of the Russians was still to come. I believe it is a totally different situation today as compared with the year 1999; it is not so easy any more to intervene. The intervention of NATO or rather of the so-called «coali-

tion of the willing» in Iraq in 2003 would prove much more difficult today.

What is the task then of the UN in this situation?

The UN functions as a moderator for dialogue. We have all bodies for a reasonable and peaceful settlement of differences between states, such as the Human Rights Council in Geneva, the Security Council and the General Assembly in the USA. These are all arenas where differences between states may be articulated without engaging in violence. Article II para 4 of the UN charter is a legal proposition; it rules that the use of violence is prohibited, even the threat or aggressive gesture.

At the moment it is not only Syria, where we have an escalation...

If I look at Syria, the situation in Iran worries me even more. Whether Iran aims for the atomic bomb or not, is something we cannot tell any better than the *International Atomic Energy Agency*. Of course we would like to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, which is exactly why the *Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT)* was introduced.

What was the objective behind it?

According to Article 6 of the NPT, this is quite explicit: nuclear disarmament. Total disarmament of all nuclear states. That is the USA, France, Britain, Russia and China. Considering that a number of nuclear states who possess nuclear weapons have never signed the *Non-proliferation Treaty*, namely India, Pakistan and Israel, one should not get hysterical about the possibility of Iran perhaps one day owning nuclear weapons, too. Even if Iran had them, they could never use them. As soon as Iran would use a nuclear bomb, it would face total annihilation. The Iranian government knows that very well. It is the same what we have already known in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, the possible nuclear destruction. The question, whether Iran has an atomic bomb or not, should not drive the world community into hysteria. There are already thousands of atomic weapons around in the established nuclear states, and those weapons are not getting used. Why should one expect Iran to start a nucle-

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ar war? Actually, this would be quite obvious for any reasonable politician and hardly comprehensible.

Is that not further warmongering?

A cool analysis of the situation in Iran is one thing, another one is the agitation against Iran which can be read anywhere in the media today. Taking into account that this kind of war propaganda is actually prohibited by Article 20 of the *UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, it is striking to note, that the press in the USA, in Great Britain and partially also in Germany is doing just that – engaging in war propaganda against Iran, using lies, half-information emotionalizations among other things, which cannot really stand up to serious scrutiny. Nevertheless an atmosphere is created in the USA by constantly repeated messages via *FOX News* and *CNN*, programming peoples' minds into thinking that Iran poses the greatest threat to world peace. I think this can easily be pushed aside. It is what we in the USA call a «red herring», a method to fool people.

How could these tensions be solved?

A real disarmament of the region should be the priority. Basically, disarmament of the world would be desirable. Let us begin with the Near East. If we achieved a nuclear disarmament and a conventional one in the Near East, this would be a brave act. Israel would also join in because there is no international law at leisure, there is no sideway which is open to one state, but not for the other.

This would mean to comply with the Non-proliferation Treaty?

This is clearly the disarmament, as stipulated in Article 6 of the Treaty. This means that all states possessing nuclear weapons undertake to disarm. They have not done so far. This violation of the NPT is a much more blatant violation on the side of the nuclear powers than on the side of Iran. According to Article 3 of the treaty, Iran has been given the right to peaceful use of nuclear energy and even the right to international assistance in order to achieve the peaceful use of nuclear power. It is just a matter relating to Article 4, if the IAEA inspections are thorough, or whether the inspections have

been undermined. It is a matter of argument, but it has never been a *casus belli* or a reason to provoke a quarrel or preemptive war. It should also be mentioned that the UN Charter concerning Article 51 is very clear: The right to self-defense exists, but there is no pre-emptive right to do so. I cannot say that Iran poses a potential threat, ergo you may attack Iran. It applies only when a country has been attacked and had no time to address the Security Council in order to get the UN involved directly; only in this case you have the right to immediate counter-measures, i.e. war, until the Security Council has become involved. The very moment, in which the Security Council takes over, defensive measures have to stop. That is, what Article 51 of the UN Charter means. It is not to be understood as a *lex specialis* that discards or replaces everything else. It represents a very limited possibility under very restricted conditions. If not, it is a crime against peace as defined by the Nuremberg Verdict and as described in Article 5 of the *ICC Statute*. •

(Translation: *Current Concerns*)**“Strengthening of law supremacy”**

cc. In the debate at the Human Rights Council on the general question of human rights, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Gennady M. Gatilov, expressed his condemnation of the West's intention to undermine Syria's right to self-determination and the principle of not-intervention in the affairs of a sovereign state in the name of human rights.

At the same time we cannot agree with the attempts to transform the Council into an instrument of political pressure, to divide the states into 'bad' and 'good', 'pupils' and 'examiners', to dissolve the intergovernmental nature of the leading UN body for human rights. We cannot in general be satisfied with the ways of using the issues of human rights in the international context. A number of countries tend to usurp the human rights record, to politicize and use it as a pressure instrument. They do not tolerate any criticism addressed to

them, they try to dictate the objectives of the human rights monitoring on the selective basis at their own convenience and according to their own political views. We are sure that the human rights cannot be farmed out. This work shall be carried out on the constructive and collective basis, which is favourable to all countries.

Mrs Chairwoman, the recent events in the Middle East and North Africa have proved the inseparable interrelation of the three fundamental principles of the modern world order – development, peace and safety, and human rights. Nowadays it is more than ever obvious that observance of human rights is impossible without peace and development. And stable international peace can be reached only on collective basis by strengthening of law supremacy in international affairs.

The idea that the problems are to be solved by the nations themselves, without external pressure and interference, in peaceful ways and within legal limits,

through national dialogue and social consensus on the ways of the urgent reforms, shall be an imperative. If we support the right of nations to self-determination and choice of their own way of development, external forces shall accept such choice and avoid interfering in the national dialogue and election campaign.

Russia is decisively against any violence in regard to civilians, but it is no less decisively against any external force interference in support to one of the parties of internal conflicts. Violation of human rights shall not be left unpunished, although the situation when the acts performed under the pretence of defence of human rights lead to mass violations but in this case from another side, including death of hundreds of civilians, is inadmissible.

Source: Excerpt from the *Statement of G.M. Gatilov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia*, in High Level Segment of 19th Session of UN Council for Human Rights, Geneva, 29 February 2012.

Leipzig - city of books

by Walter Mayer, Karlsruhe/Germany

Every year in mid-March, the Leipzig book fair takes place in Leipzig. As first book fair of the year it provides important stimuli for the book market with the presentation of the forthcoming books of springtime. Today it is primarily a public fair whose foremost aim is to provide authors and visitors with the chance to meet. This is also supported by the reading festival "Leipzig liest" (Leipzig reads) which offers more than 2,000 events on more than 350 sites at the trade fair grounds and throughout the entire city where the Leipzig citizens and many young people can directly get into contact with the authors and which makes it the biggest reading festival of its kind in Europe.

In the former Graphic Quarter the *Buchgewerbehaus* (book trade building) with its oriels was considered a landmark of the book metropolis Leipzig. The *House of Books*, opened for the first time in 1996 to the citizens of Leipzig, stands on historical ground and has become a meeting place for book lovers and book-makers; literary events take place there almost every day. It stands on the site of the former *booksellers' house* which was erected in 1888 in the magnificent neo-renaissance style. In 1990 during the negotiations for a merger of the booksellers' associations in Leipzig and in Frankfurt-on-Main, people remembered and revitalized the old Leipzig tradition by building this house on historical ground.

Leipzig developed into an international trade fair location

Leipzig can look back on a more than 500 year old tradition as a production and trading place for books, as well as a *place of traditional book culture and literature promoting*.

After the award of the city rights and the market privileges around the year 1165 by *Otto the Rich*, Margrave of Meissen, Leipzig developed into an important trading centre.

Since 1165, after being awarded the city and market rights, the oldest preserved city and parish church St Nikolai was built. She owes her name to *Nicholas*, the patron saint of merchants. Leipzig's tradition as a major trading centre in Central Europe with one of the oldest fairs in the world dates back to 1190, when the Easter and Michaelis markets were confirmed. Since 1218 the first documented merchants and craftsmen have settled in Leipzig. In 1341 the clothiers bought their own building on the Leipzig market, the first "Gewandhaus" (Garment House). In 1497 the Roman-German king and future Emperor *Maximilian I* gave Leipzig the

imperial trade fair privilege. This privilege was confirmed in 1507. Furthermore the Emperor gave the stack privilege, which meant that, within the precincts of 115 km, no fairs were allowed to be held and no goods could be stored outside the city.

In the course of the centuries Leipzig has developed into an *international fair location*. Leipzig owes its development as the city of books to its trade.

Art of book printing since the 16th century

Even before the invention of book printing, handwritten books were brought in large barrels to the fair. The first single sheet prints of the 1450s still were a fair sensation; only a decade later printed books were mentioned as exhibits. Until about the end of the 15th century predominantly itinerant book printers and traders brought their publications to the city. The first book printed in Leipzig was published in 1481. It was *Johannes Annius'* "Glosa Super Apocalypsim de Statu Ecclesiae" (The future victories of the Christians over the Turks and Saracens), printed by *Marcus Brandis*. Books spread widely.

By 1500 there were already six printing houses in the city, which especially printed books for the city council and the clergy. Unit 1530, about 1300 book titles had been published, including prints of liturgical, theological, philosophical, legal and mathematical works, first editions of the classics and works on the Reformation. The first printing house in Leipzig, also producer of the most beautiful, artistically and technically high-level printings of the time, was founded by *Valentin Bapst* in 1541. In 1559 under his successor *Ernst Vögelin* the company succeeded to become the largest print shop in eastern Germany with six presses, a type foundry, a scientific publishing house and a bookstore. In 1594 *Henning Grosse* published the first catalog which listed all books published since 1564; in 1860 he abandoned its publication. The fair catalogs were published almost twice a year, usually at Easter and Michaelmas, and were the first regularly published book trade directories. In 1632 the number of books presented in Leipzig exceeded those from Frankfurt-on-Main for the first time.

Independent book fair

The book fair, where publications from all parts of Europe were traded, developed together with the general trade fairs during the second half of the 16th century and became independent in Modern Age during the 17th Century. Its tasks included

the sale, the commission and the exchange of books; the contracts between printers, bookbinders, paper merchants and publishers; billing and payment as well as the coordination and the exchange of professional work.

The bookseller cantata, later the *Book Fair*, achieved importance as an independent event. It was a show within a show or changed from a fair with bookstores to the book fair.

In 1650 the first daily newspaper in the world was published

As early as 1643 the Leipzig printer and bookseller *Timotheus Ritzsch* printed and distributed a newspaper that was published four times a week. From 1 July 1650 he had his newspaper published six times a week – so it is regarded as the first daily newspaper in the world – and he called it *Incoming Newspapers*. "Newspapers" in the former usage corresponded to messages or news. Each issue had four pages; the circulation might have amounted to 200 copies. The paper was typeset in metal letters, printed by hand on a wooden printing press. Ten years later as a continuation Ritzsch then issued the *New Incoming News of War and World affairs*, printed by him as well.

The scholars' journal *Acta eruditorum* (Latin: reports, deeds of scholars) edited in monthly magazines by the scholar *Otto Mencke* in the year 1682, published in Latin extracts from new publications, reviews, independent smaller essays and notes. Due to Mencke's extensive correspondence, scientists of international reputation were won over to write reviews for the paper; excerpts from new works, independent smaller essays and notes were added. The *Acta eruditorum* initially had an average extent of two to three pages. They were published by the company *Grosse's Erben* (who also published the Leipzig and Frankfurt fair catalogs), the publishers *Johann Friedrich Gleditsch* and temporarily *Thomas Fritsche* in Leipzig. Their aim was to represent the German scholarship internationally. It was the first scientific journal in Germany.

Until the founding of the first bookbinders' guild in 1545, the printers' guild in 1595, there had already been fourteen bookstores. Around 1700, 276 works had been published and printed, the fair catalogs became more and more extensive, while the Frankfurt catalogs became thinner until they finally disappeared in 1749. Around 1800, about 1600 works were annually published in Leipzig, with the

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number doubling during the next hundred years. Leipzig attracted the book trade and flourished as a book printer and publishing place.

Establishment of the Booksellers Association

In his essay "Thoughts on the book trade and its deficiencies" the publisher *Georg Joachim Göschen* wrote in 1802 that the first place among the merchants was due to the booksellers, because they dealt with the most precious commodities. He called for a booksellers association in order to organize the annual accounts. *The German Publishers and Booksellers Association* (most commonly called "Börsenverein") – founded in 1825 in Leipzig by 99 companies – got its name from the Booksellers' Exchange founded in Leipzig in 1792. The participation of Leipzig Companies in the founding of the Börsenverein was initially relatively low; it was only when Prussia threatened to shift the book fair to Berlin that this threat promoted cooperation with the booksellers. The Börsenverein served as centralized association of independent German booksellers, introduced strict rules for the commerce of the booksellers among themselves and with the public and took care of education and training of the booksellers. In 1834 it founded the *Börsenblatt*. As from 1835 on, it was owned by the Börsenverein and was then called "Official Gazette of the Booksellers Association". At first it was published weekly, since 1866 daily (except Sundays), consisting of advertisements, an editorial section and the bibliography *Published News of the German Book Trade*, indicating new books and magazines. After the division of Germany, there was a Leipzig and a Frankfurt edition of the financial newspaper. Since the unification of the Leipzig and the Frankfurt Börsenverein in 1991 only one financial newspaper per week is published. The Leipzig count of volumes was accepted, because Leipzig could hark back to a longer tradition.

Collections of encyclopedic knowledge

The city played an important role for German encyclopedias. For decades, the city hosted the publishing houses of the two most important German encyclopedias, *F.A. Brockhaus* and *Meyers Bibliographisches Institut*.

The first comprehensive collection of historic sources for German history, the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, founded at the instance of Baron *von Stein* in 1819, was published in the publishing

house of *Heinrich Wilhelm Hahn* in Leipzig in 1826.

On the Swiss publisher *Salomon Hirzel's* initiative the brothers *Jacob* and *Wilhelm Grimm* began their work on the largest and most comprehensive dictionary of the German language with altogether 33 volumes in 1838: *Das Deutsche Wörterbuch* (German Dictionary) or "the Grimm" was also published in Leipzig. It was a classical reference dictionary, which described the origin and use of each German word and also contained abusive expressions and vulgar words of a period from 500 years ago to the present. Its aim was that every commoner could make sure of the national commonalities in the German language. In 1854 the first volume was published; the last volume in 1960. The German Publishers and Booksellers Asso-

ciation and printing companies. Leipzig was terminal and staple market of almost the entire German book trade: *Ordering is only to be done in Leipzig*. Nearly every tenth inhabitant of Leipzig was active in these industrial trades. Leipzig became famous as "city of books", even abroad. It had its high phase at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Leipzig held the leading position as book metropolis until 1945.

Already in 1848 the publisher *Heinrich Wilhelm Hahn* from Leipzig suggested the foundation of a German National Library. In a letter to the Frankfurt parliament, the Frankfurt St Paul's-Church Assembly, he asked for permission to donate "the writings of historical, political, statistical, war-scientific and legal contents, among them also the Monumenta [Germaniae Histori-



Leipzig 1943. "In the hail of bombs the Graphic Quarter was almost completely destroyed; 1,000 enterprises and 50 million books were lost to the Leipzig book trade." (picture ma)

ciation (Börsenverein) initiated further developments in the area of bookselling and trade. During the 19th century Leipzig has established itself as central interface and hub of the German book trade.

Leipzig held the leading position as book metropolis until 1945

In the search for larger warehouse spaces and premises and because factories were not allowed in town centers for environmental protection reasons, the book trading enterprises migrated and expanded into the eastern suburb, into the *Graphic Quarter*. Approximately 1,500 manufacturing and trading companies, the poly-graphic industry and the central branch federations resided there. Among these publishing houses are famous names like *Teubner*, *Seemann*, *C. F. Peter*, *Reclam*, *Insel* and also the large companies of the intermediate book trade, mechanical engineering companies, bookbinders, graphic

ca] to establish a reference library." Other publishers followed, and the president of the National Assembly *Heinrich von Gagern* announced thereupon the idea of a German National Library, which was realized in 1912. A government-owned library was not possible due to the *federal* structures of the German Reich.

The city of Leipzig – center of the bookselling and publishing trade

The strong growth of German book production at the beginning of the 20th century made the establishment of a Central Library of German literature, including the bibliography of published literature, an important goal of the Börsenverein. The second dean of the association, *Erich Ehlermann*, finally wrote a memorandum on "A German National Library in Leipzig" in 1910, which

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included his conceptions of the establishment, the mission and goals of a National Library and emphasized its practical implementation. Ehlermann informed the executive committee of the association about his preliminary talks with the official authorities. The city of Leipzig, center of the bookselling and publishing in the German Reich, the Kingdom of Saxonia and the Börsenverein agreed on a contract about the establishment of the *German Library* located in Leipzig on 3 October 1912. The German Library should collect and completely file the national literature starting from 1913 onwards and work as archives of the German-language literature. Its mission was to collect the entire literature in German and in foreign languages that had been published in Germany from 1 January 1913. Moreover, foreign literature in German should be collected, registered in a national bibliography and made available for everyone free of charge. The books are available for use within the library only, since the German library is a reference library. The German publishers commit themselves to deliver a reference copy of each new publication to the German library. Until 1945 it was the most important collection of printing products in German language.

From May to October 1914 the *International Exhibition for Book Trades and Graphics* (Bugra) took place on the fair-ground, on which the International Ar-

chitectural Exhibition had taken place one year before. The exhibition was organized by the book traders association located in Leipzig. The painter and artist *Max Seliger* is considered its founder. Crucial impulses came from the association of German Book Artisans, which had been founded in the Royal Academy for Graphic Arts and Book Trades in 1909. Meritorious personalities should have been awarded with a diploma and a bronze medal created by *Max Klinger* for the preparation and execution of the exhibition which was, however, inhibited by the outbreak of the First World War on 1 August 1914.

The *German Book and Writing Museum* is considered to be the oldest and the most important specialized museum of his kind worldwide based on the amount and character of its inventory. It was located first in the booksellers stock exchange, starting from 1888 in the booksellers house and from 1900 onward in the book trade building. As a basic stock it contains the inventory of the book trade museum founded in 1884 by the "Central Association for the Entire Book Trade", from which it originated in 1917. Its mission was to serve as archives for the book culture in Germany; it dedicated itself to the collection, maintenance, development, presentation and conveyance of valuable evidence of the tradition of books, writing and paper production. The focal points of the collection were among others printings from the 15th up to the 19th century, international examples of the book art of the 20th century, art books, specimen signatures, vat watermarked papers, samples

of and pattern books for industrial paper manufacturing, multicolored papers, archive material and documents of the history of books and in particular of the book trade, tools and machines to manufacturing of books, paper and type setting. In 1914 the museum took over important exhibits of the "Bugra". Since 1950 the museum has been a department of the *German Library Leipzig* and from 2006 of the *German National Library*. The permanent exhibition "Merkur and the books – Leipzig as a city of books for 500 years" reminds of the tradition of Leipzig (1497-1997) as a trading and manufacture site of books as well as a *place of book tradition and the teaching of literature*.

**Despite heavy damage in the war:
Leipzig remains 'city of books'.**

On 4 December 1943 Leipzig experienced the heaviest bomb attack of the Second World War lasting for about one hour. Royal Air Force carried out the attack under the code name *Haddock*. Another attack took place on 7 July 1944 by the US Air Force. In the hail of bombs the Graphic Quarter was almost completely destroyed; 1,000 enterprises and 50 million books were lost to the Leipzig book trade. It was the end of an era in which Leipzig had naturally been seen as the center of the German book trade. The 'city of books' Leipzig never recovered entirely from this blow; however Leipzig continues its tradition as 'city of books' by hosting the German National Library, the University of Graphics and Book-Art with the annual organization of the Book Fair and the unique reading events. •

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The cooperative principle as the basis of Swiss political culture – past and present

by Dr phil René Roca

The cooperatives in their various forms provide an essential foundation for the Swiss federal state. As economic self-help organizations cooperatives are based on the personal concept of man. Cooperatives should not merely be considered as a form of organization but in a broader sense as an important form of society. A cooperative is supported by a community that raises the highest ethical demands to respective tasks and that assumes much responsibility as the owner of a common cause. The total property, which must be protected, belongs to the association of people and the individual cooperative members. The functioning of a cooperative is guided by strict rules. These are monitored and in case of violations the community is supposed to impose sanctions. The cooperative is always locally based and often embedded in a federal-subsidary political system. Cooperative members democratically decide on every question, everyone has a one vote.

The purpose of a cooperative is that all the members of such an association have the optimal benefit of their common cause. Utilization can vary but the purpose must always serve the *Bonum Commune*, the common good anchored in natural law.

The well-known Swiss historian Professor Dr *Adolf Gasser* has highlighted the importance of the economic co-operative principle in a very clear and plausible way. According to his findings, the history of Europe was characterized and shaped by the strong contrast of two different ethical principles, namely domination and co-operative. In this manifestation, Gasser states, two worlds were facing each other that were subject to very different laws of development: the world in which the political system was established from above and the other world in which the structures developed from the bottom up, or in other words: the world of domination and the world of cooperative, the world of subordination and the world of co-ordination, the world of centralism and the world of communalism, the world of command and the world of self-government, the world of communal bondage and the world of communal freedom:

“The contrast between domination and cooperative might be the most important antithesis known in social history. This contrast of authoritarian state – state of society is simply about very fundamental issues: namely about the elementary foundations of human social life.”

In his major work “*Gemeindefreiheit als Rettung Europas. Grundlinien einer*

ethischen Geschichtsauffassung” (Communal Freedom as a Rescue of Europe. Outlines of an ethical conception of history) Gasser explains that it is the cooperative organizing principle which leads to community ethics:

“Whereas in an authoritarian-bureaucratic state, politics and morality always base on different levels, they are inseparable in a social-communal state. Accordingly, it is the cooperative organizing principle, as it is the foundation of the bottom up community, which can be called ‘communal community ethics.’”

In Switzerland this cooperative principle has not only been applied since 1848, but even before it had been an integral part of the federal ethos for centuries. This can be shown by a look at history.

The origin and history of the cooperative principle

The cooperative principle itself is probably as old as mankind, but it lacks written sources. Even for Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, the sources are sparse. But a look at the ensuing written sources and the knowledge about man’s social nature reveal that cooperative forms of organization were prevailing at that time. Most of the cooperatives developed from the medieval cadastral constitution or in other words, they emerged from the “medieval common Mark”.

One theory is that the free Mark cooperatives date back to the conquest of the Germanic peoples at that time. The land acquisition was done by clans, called ‘groups of a hundred’, assigned to them by the prince in their areas. These areas were just called “Mark(gravitates)”, and their soil was cultivated cooperatively. The communal and economic life within the clan was thus a free Mark cooperative. The Frankish constitution and the feudal system have suppressed this early medieval order in many parts of Europe, except in some places, such as the pre-Alpine regions of today’s Switzerland. This tradition has partly been kept alive until today on the existing common land cooperatives, alpine and forest cooperatives.

Another approach emphasizes that the Mark cooperatives were only established in the high and late Middle Ages as a merger of existing rural cooperatives; or they were created by concentration of neighborhood associations. The residents wanted to regulate the use of the common Mark within a larger framework. The population increase, the then prevailing three-field system and the further development

of the country supported this development. The regulations along borders and roads as well as agreements were necessary to cope with the joint work.

Both explanations are important and deserve attention when exploring the origin and development of the cooperative principle in the European Middle Ages. These early roots of the cooperative system are essential for the understanding of the Swiss political system. The historian Professor Dr *Wolfgang von Wartburg* writes:

“These small, natural, self-governing communities have been fertile ground and seminary of Swiss freedom and democracy and they still are today. The most extensive and most viable Mark cooperatives could however be found in the mountains, where the joint Alp and cattle farming encompassed entire valleys.”¹

Development of the cooperative principle in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age

In Switzerland, the *Allmend*, i.e. the common grounds or commons, were central to the spreading and development of the cooperatives. These areas were used for pasture, as forest and desert ground and they were open to everyone. To establish their commons, the inhabitants of a village association – of one or more villages, hamlets or groups of farms – designated a specific area for collective economic use. A peasant family’s work was thus divided into three parts: Besides the agricultural land and the residential area with gardens and homesteads the commons represented a third zone, which was jointly worked. Since the early Middle Ages the European nobility had sought to restructure the common lands constitution or at least influence it. In many places, including the territory of modern Switzerland, the cooperative principle could however be maintained. Due to the diversity of local conditions and human relations a variety of forms of cooperatives have developed over time.

For Switzerland, the preconditions of settlement history were particularly important. In the Swiss Central Plateau, where the dwellings concentrated and became villages, the common Mark or *Allmend* alongside with house, garden and fields was essential for all villagers. Therefore, regulations on the use of the commons and on the management of arable ground seemed necessary. Such land

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utilization systems had been in use since the 10th century. A prerequisite for the use of commons was often the long-term possession of a farm within the village district. Newcomers had to buy this right and pay an entry fee. By establishing and claiming definite rules the rural population was often able to resolve their conflicts via neighborly agreements. The cities also had a common Mark and enacted a similar legislation. In the hilly Alpine foreland the farms united and formed so-called Allmend cooperatives. In many places of the Alps so-called valley cooperatives were established – on the basis of the valley communities as rural associations – as for example in Uri, Ursern, Schwyz, Glarus, Entlebuch, in the Grisons, the Valais and the Ticino valleys.

The commons were of fundamental importance for the livestock until silage feeding in summer was introduced. In addition to the meadows and the stubble of the arable land, farmers grazed the forest, in particular with pigs. The forest also provided wood for construction and fireplaces. The collection of fruit and berries or mushrooms complemented the people's nutrition and secured them in case of crop failure. The Allmend has always been a kind of land reserve the people could resort to if necessary. From the 16th century onward the commons were divided and became separate property, but many also stayed intact until the rise of the Helvetic Republic and beyond.

The Nobel Prize in Economy laureate Professor Dr *Elinor Ostrom* studied the basic "constitution of the commons" in a comprehensive, world-wide study.² Based on historical examples from different continents, she revealed the importance of the cooperative principle for the present. Based on the commons her study is a reminder of how people organize in view of scarce natural resources, in order to jointly solve complex problems. In her comprehensive studies Elinor Ostrom concludes that cooperation of those directly affected is better than state control or privatization if they want good management of their local commons and their resources. So she impressively appreciates the cooperative principle and clearly reveals its importance for the economies of the 21st century.

In the Middle Ages the commons formed an important foundation of social interaction; their rules provided order and security for the geographical area we now call Switzerland. Special types of cooperatives that serve specific purposes developed in addition to the commons which could be found in all agricultural villag-

es until the 18th century. The Alpine cooperatives that are numerous in the Alps and the Jura are of great importance. Moreover, along the rivers and streams the so-called 'weir cooperatives' developed. In hydraulic engineering the term 'weir' means barrage. For the irrigation of lawns the so-called irrigation cooperatives developed, too.

The landlords and rulers repeatedly tried to exert influence on the organization of cooperatives, such as the *Habsburgs* in Central Switzerland. The early Confederation could however fend off such requests successfully. In the course of the 13th century Uri and Schwyz were given charters and they were even able to maintain this imperial competence later on. It enabled these valley cooperatives to freely dispose of their commons and use them without any outside interference. On this basis, the federal states and the Federal Charter of 1291 developed. In Uri and Schwyz the big valley cooperatives – the corporations Uri and Ursern in the canton Uri and the corporations Oberallmeind Unterallmeind in the canton Schwyz – have sur-

dle Ages and in Early Modern Age the rural or valley cooperatives took over other tasks of common work besides their traditional ones. Such were the maintenance of roads and bridges or hydraulic engineering, water supply, the building of churches or even the duty to care for the poor. Thus, the rural and valley cooperatives developed slowly into rural and valley communities, the foundation of the future federal state.

Wolfgang von Wartburg aptly writes about this process: "The Swiss ideal of freedom has emerged from this human reality, not from an abstract idea [...]. Thus, the formation of the Swiss government differs from all other state formations in Europe. It is not based on the desire for political unity, but rather on the desire to preserve the original character and freedom of the members, thereby helping to maintain their diversity. Its unity is not created by a superior power or by uniformity but by free cooperation in joint tasks."³

The comrades became citizens of the village and the former village cooperatives

Housing cooperatives in today's Switzerland

mw. Even in the 21st century, housing cooperatives still play an important role in Switzerland. Primarily in towns there are, according to the Schweizerischer Verband für das Wohnungswesen (SVW – Swiss cooperative housing federation) around 1,500 housing cooperatives operate about 160,000 housing units which represent 5.1% of all housing units. In the city and the canton of Zurich alone, there are about 60,000 cooperative housing units.

Housing cooperatives do not only rent flats; they also include several cooperative activities: from neighbourly

help to the compost team, parades for children with lamps made of turnips, excursions for seniors and the cooperative festivities. Once a year the cooperative assembly takes place, where the associates, i.e. the tenants of the flats, vote on legal issues – for example for the restoration of buildings or the construction of a district heating – and elect members to the cooperative bodies. Primarily in cities housing cooperatives contribute fundamentally to social cohesion of the people, especially in urban areas.

Source: www.mietbar.ch/index.cfm?&js=1

vived until today. The term "corporation" emerged in the late Middle Ages and can be equated with "cooperative".

The *Genossame* has always been the highest authority of the cooperative. The meetings were chaired by a president who was elected as governor, beadle or Alp master. The chairman had to take decisions, carry out inspections and was responsible for administration and judiciary. The common public work was completed in the cooperative association. The rights and obligations were laid down in statutes and codes.

The cooperatives were of major political significance for the later development of the Confederation. They developed a community-building spirit, without which a nation forged by the will of the people like Switzerland could never have emerged. Therefore, during the late Mid-

developed into public village communities. By the time this led to the development of the so-called "Bürgergemeinde"⁴ (citizens' communes) that are still in existence in several cantons.

The Helvetic Republic of 1798 resulted in the separation of residents' communes and citizens' communes. The division of the commons was intensified then. Some commons were on lease or in private ownership, others were owned by residents' communes, or corporations formed under private law.

The corporations and citizens' communes in Switzerland are still an important traditional good and establish human connections to a commune's history and culture. In the canton of Grisons, for example, the old rural cooperatives are still

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alive in the residents' communes, so these are also the owners of most of the commons. In the central Swiss area around Bern the citizens' communes as successors of the original rural cooperatives own the common property and manage it; this is also true for the canton of Valais. In the north of the Alps and the Ticino, the corporations or corporate citizens' communes are the owners and managers of the commons.

Cooperative movement in the 19th Century – the cooperative as a moral foundation of democracy

Without the tradition of the commons and the described "cooperative spirit" in Switzerland the foundation of the Confederation in 1848 would never have taken place. Adolf Gasser emphasizes that this Swiss "cooperative spirit" always roots in the small unit, i.e. in the small neat unit of the commune, whose origin goes back to the cooperative principle. Only in such a unit a vibrant co-operative autonomy can develop. Adolf Gasser comments on that:

"Large-scale political bodies of national character could only develop in a cooperative spirit, if they emerged from an assembly of free, fortified people's communities." Based on the Swiss tradition of the commons and the cooperative, a large cooperative movement formed itself in the course of the 19th century, especially with the increasing industrialization.

This movement – in Switzerland and in Europe – infiltrated into new industrial areas but not without preserving the basic cooperative principles. The various types of cooperatives will be briefly presented below.

Agricultural cooperatives

In particular, the agricultural crisis of the 1880s in Switzerland triggered a wave of creation of new cooperatives, especially purchasing and marketing cooperatives. Farmers drew on the tradition of the commons and Alpine corporations as well as the dairy cooperatives. In the course of the 19th century, these cooperatives spread as milk and dairy cooperatives from the mountains to the lowlands, i.e. to the Central Plateau cantons of the German and French part of Switzerland. Towards the end of the 19th century there were about 2,000 of these cooperatives. At the beginning of the 20th century they joined to form associations without weakening the local cooperatives. The Eastern Swiss Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (Volg) is a pioneer of such a cooperative association. In the 1890s, cooperatives also emerged in the livestock branch. Agricultural cooperatives are still

of significant importance in the agricultural sector.

Production cooperatives

During the industrial revolution production cooperatives were also established in Switzerland. Here, the cooperative members are not only owners but also employees of the cooperation. The idea of cooperative production was primarily developed by early socialist and social reform movements, who sought an answer to the social issue. In this context, the Englishman *Robert Owen* with his cooperative model plays a pioneer role. Under the influence of the early French socialists *Charles Fourier* and *Louis Blanc* the first production cooperatives were established in the 1840s, especially in the French part of Switzerland. Again, the cooperative explicitly stood in the tradition of cooperative self-help, as it had been important in rural commons corporations or Alpine corporations.

Consumer Cooperatives (Consumer associations)

The consumer cooperatives became particularly important for the economy. The consumer cooperatives' antecedents were the bread and fruit clubs, in which workers, craftsmen and farmers united, sometimes supported by manufacturers, to enable the cheap purchase of grain, other food or fuel and to make bread.

In the second half of the 19th century workers and later employees, officials and farmers joined to protect and foster their interests as consumers through joint procurement of essential goods. In 1851, eight members of the patriotic Grütli association around *Karl Bürkli* founded the Consumer Society Zurich (KVZ) which was the first to be called "consumer society". The cooperative principles included an open membership, democratic management, the potential refunding and political and religious neutrality. The consumer society Zurich was soon imitated all over Switzerland (Founding of the Swiss Consumers' Societies; from 1890 on called the Swiss Association of Consumer Associations, VSK; Coop since 1970). The consumer cooperation also stood in the cooperative tradition of Switzerland, of course.

Housing cooperatives

In the course of the 19th century the population of Switzerland doubled. At the same time, the shifting from home industry to factory-based industry in rural territories as well as in towns led to poor housing conditions and severe housing shortage. In the mid-19th century private housebuilding was mainly in the hands of speculators. At the beginning of the 20th century, finally, the cooperative and communal principle also became more and more important in

the housebuilding sector. One reason was that the public authorities intervened extensively in the housing market for the first time and accepted housebuilding as a task of general public interest. Thus non-profit housing cooperative came into the necessary money to realise own communal building projects.

Credit cooperatives and savings cooperatives

Since the first quarter of the 19th century, savings and lending banks had been established in Switzerland in the course of industrialisation. Rural and urban homeworkers and factory workers wanted to invest their saved money and plan the provisions for their old age. Communes and cantons often founded their own savings banks or promoted their development by providing guarantees and donating capital funds. In 1850 already 150 savings banks were existent in Switzerland which devoted themselves in particular to the mortgage business and then also to the granting of operating credits. As many savings and lending banks risked their non-profit status over time, they lost importance from 1860 on. Sensible alternatives were the upcoming cantonal banks and the foundation of numerous cooperative local banks, inter alia the Raiffeisen banks. Due to a broader capital basis they had more freedom to grant credits; and as cooperatives they deserved the confidence of many citizens.

The main focus of Raiffeisen banks was on the savings and mortgage business. Until this day, every Raiffeisen bank is legally independent and each of them belongs to its cooperative members. The first Raiffeisen bank of Switzerland was founded in 1899 in Bichelsee on the initiative of the Catholic priest *Johann Evangelist Traber*. He was guided by the example of *Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen* who had founded credit cooperatives in Germany around 1850. They were to strengthen the rural population by collective self-help and thus protect them against usury.

Traber describes the Raiffeisen banks as follows:

"What are Raiffeisen banks? They are credit unions which are based on altruism and charity, willing to make sacrifices; they are intended to enhance the status of farmers, craftsmen, trade and commerce morally and economically and to strengthen the financially weak."⁵

The cooperative movement of the 19th century emphasised the cooperative tradition in Switzerland. So they succeeded in connecting conservative political forces with early socialism which was solidly connected to trade unions and labour parties via the Grütliverein. Similar to the de-

" Swiss cooperative principle ..."

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velopment of direct democracy they succeeded – outgoing from the communal level up to the cantonal and national level – in establishing a national movement which internalised the cooperative idea across party lines.

Cooperative movement in the 20th century – social capital and the third way

The cooperative as a legal form was established in 1881 in the Swiss code of obligations and was becoming increasingly popular. Thus the number of cooperatives massively increased in Switzerland around the turn of the century (in 1883: 373; in 1890: 1,551; in 1910: 7,113). Above all, the most important reasons were the recurrent crises of the capitalist economy. With the big crisis of the 1930s the founding of cooperatives strongly rose again, until they reached a culmination point in 1957 with more than 12,000 cooperatives.

Barely half of the cooperatives were of agricultural nature; in addition, new ones came from tertiary sectors, as for example the electricity industry. After the Second World War building and housing cooperatives were founded and promoted particularly often.

The Migros, founded in 1925, was based on a business idea of *Gottlieb Duttweiler*. He had set himself the target to sell cheaper food by avoiding intermediary trade. In 1941 the Migros was converted into a cooperative. The intention was to protect the consumers' interests and orient the business policy towards the "social capital". For Duttweiler, the idea of the social capital was based on the cooperative principle: the capital must serve the community in a responsible way and foster solidarity in society. According to Duttweiler, the cooperative idea also fosters democracy in a decentralised sense and from bottom up.

The cooperative principle did not only win many supporters as an economic concept; in politics as well a number of personalities tried to establish this principle as the third way – beyond capitalism and communism. The political concept wanted to convert the capitalistic society into a society based on public service. Thus the

labour movement in Switzerland also accepted the so-called "three-pillar-model" consisting of "party, trade unions and cooperatives". Among other things, the trade unions supported the creation of production cooperatives and the social democratic party incorporated the support of the cooperatives in their programme from the outset. In 1895 a programme revision failed, inspired by *Stefan Gschwind* from Basel Land, who wanted the socialisation of cooperatives instead of nationalisation make the key tool for the transition to socialism.

After the First World War religious-socialist circles around *Leonhard Ragaz* also accepted the cooperative idea and saw in it an important basis for a fairer society. Leonhard Ragaz turned against Marxist, state-centred approaches and held the view of a federalist, cooperative and pacifist socialism.

From 1970 on, the discussions about self-government and alternative economic management provided the cooperative movement with new impulses. This was also reflected in the social democratic party of Switzerland. Toward the end of the 1970s the comrades discussed a revised version of the party programme. Famous personalities like the philosopher Professor Dr *Arnold Künzli* added the Yugoslavian model of self-government to the discussion. This model should form the basis to overcome capitalism and to establish a democratic, socialist society with the help of the cooperative principle. However, the Yugoslavian model entered only sparsely the revised programme sanctioned in 1982. Many suggestions remained in cold storage and were not resumed in the newest programme, which has been sanctioned only recently. Thus the social democrats reject their traditional "three-pillar-model" and ignored the cooperative principle without which, however, they are not able to realise their aim of a "social-ecological economic democracy".

And today?

Today in Switzerland there still are more than 12,000 cooperatives. This number must yet be increased and the cooperative principle as a comprehensive and sensible economic model must be appreciated appropriately. The cooperative ap-

proach must be discussed again broadly and be taught in schools and universities. If we study and investigate Swiss history and culture, we will become aware of the rich cooperative fund. Once more Wolfgang von Wartburg:

"Thus the Swiss person finds his political orientation in his homeland not in abstract ideas, but in the real world. However, this reality is the person himself as a free, autonomous personality – and the alliance of free personalities in small and smallest communities."⁶

Elinor Ostrom lists principles for a successful economic activity as a résumé of her research about the commons. She was able to monitor these principles on the basis of examples worldwide. They serve as an approach toward economic problems. If we followed them in Switzerland we would continue a long cooperative tradition and pursue it in a dignified manner. Ostrom's cooperative principles are the following:

1. Clearly defined boundaries and an effective exclusion of external non-entitled parties.
2. Rules for appropriation and provision of resource units must be related to local conditions.
3. Users can participate in modifying operational rules so that an improved adaptation to changing conditions becomes possible.
4. Monitoring of compliance with the rules.
5. Graduated sanctions in case of violations of rules.
6. Conflict-resolution mechanisms.
7. The independent rights of communes are not challenged by superior governmental authorities. •

¹ Von Wartburg, Wolfgang: *Geschichte der Schweiz*, München 1951, p. 17

² *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Ostrom, Elinor, Cambridge University Press, 1990

³ Von Wartburg, Wolfgang: *Geschichte der Schweiz*, München 1951, p. 11

⁴ Bürgergemeinde is a statutory corporation in public law in Switzerland. It includes all individuals who are citizens of the Bürgergemeinde, usually by having inherited the Bürgerrecht (citizenship), regardless of where they were born or where they may currently live. (Wikipedia)

⁵ Traber, Joh. Ev.: *Kurze Aufklärung über Raiffeisensche Darlehenskassenvereine im Lichte eines praktischen Beispiels*, St Gallen 1907, p. 3

⁶ Von Wartburg, *Geschichte der Schweiz*, p. 10

“We are threatened by a vicious downward spiral”

Radically wrong strategies have spread like a plague

An interview with Professor *Fredmund Malik*

Fredmund Malik is a well-known economist and author. In the interview the Austrian explains, where he sees the causes of the crisis and why it is so dangerous. His gloomy forecast: Stock markets run the risk of a crash. There are pessimists and those that exceed even sceptical forecast. Among them is Fredmund Malik. He is an economist and director of “Malik Management Centre” in St Gall, Switzerland.

Handelsblatt: We're still in the financial crisis. As a management consultant, where do you see the causes?

Fredmund Malik: It is insolvency and economic mismanagement resulting from poor corporate governance and radically wrong strategies. This false management has been taught for decades in the business schools and has spread like a plague. It is also responsible for the fact that more and more intelligent heads no longer went into the real economy, but in the financial industry. Among other things, there are bonus systems, which set wrong incentives and destroy economy. This has caused a lot of bitterness, contempt and agony in companies, which top management doesn't notice. It opened up deep rifts in the corporate culture. This all happened at a time in which the companies need all the confidence.

Where are the seeds of all that?

It is that shareholder-value thinking. A book published in 1986 made it popular. But the shareholder value is not a measure of real economic performance, and it is systematically misleading the top management. The supposed economic boom at the end of the last millennium was credit-based. Central banks have run a completely wrong policy with their low interest rates. Thinking in terms of financial dimensions only also gained priority in management. In cynical words, man has been degraded to the actual value of his life insurance, minus the funeral expenses. Thus we set wrong incentives in reality, which have been spread by schools and, above all, by most management consultants.

Why was it so attractive in practice?

Shareholder value means: We want to make the shareholders rich. But that should not be the purpose of a business, although it can be its result. Assessing a company by financial ratios is seductive because it seems so easy. It is much easier than talking about innovations and strategies, for example – which is however crucial. Fi-

ancial ratios hardly help, because they reflect only a short-term reality. I even say: The better operating figures are, the more dangerous the company's position. Wrong ideas have made the former Daimler CEO *Jürgen Schrempp*, for example, dump tens of billions in the purchase of Chrysler. Counterexamples are *Ferdinand Piech* from VW or *Helmut Maucher* of Nestlé.

What can be done against the debt overload?

Innovative methods are urgently needed for a new operation of organization and management. Most of the Business and Economics departments at universities and business schools should also be temporarily closed and asked before they restart: Why did your scientists tolerate everything instead of scrutinizing? We have lived in a period of systematic pollution of our consciousness. The world was made by people who discern themselves and the world only via monetary dimensions and rate everything in cash only. One facet is that we have developed stock market activities into seductive infotainment. This has caused additional damage. Even toward the end of the great bull market at the turn of the millennium, many people have invested in equities mainly through pension funds and other vehicles and are now suffering the losses, which are however only in their beginnings.

The DAX is threatened by a drastic crash

Where have companies and banks lost their footing?

They were pushed up by loans. If a company finances itself to 100 percent in equities today, analysts are shaking their heads. The credo is: The return on equity must be levered by borrowed capital. This ended up in massive debt for households, businesses, banks and ultimately the state. And of course this run on debts was also responsible for the great bull market in the stock markets. The financial sector has deviated far from its origins. Originally it was to finance investment and trade. But by the late 90s the pure volume of the financial transactions included a 100 to 1,000-fold of what real economy would have required.

Where do you see the link between debts and financial markets?

Loans and greed boosted the bull market for stocks. The schools however taught: The bull market is a natural consequence

of successful business management. Therefore there will be a bad surprise when prices return to where the bull market started off, which has always happened in similar situations. For the Dow Jones index, this means down to 1,000 points; for the DAX down to about 500 points. Briefly: Less than a tenth of today's values.

This seems impossible from today's perspective ...

The crisis as such seemed impossible to the majority. I expect a continuation of the collapse of the financial market. If we do not apply new revolutionary methods, the result will probably be the biggest deflationary depression in history. This means a massive decline in economic performance and hence the tax revenue. It will be followed by a string of bank failures and national bankruptcies. Under such circumstances, entrepreneurs will certainly no longer make investments. I expect the low point in 2015 or 2016. Then the economic performance will be between 30 to 50 percent lower than today. At the same time I expect a profound shift in values, including the replacement of the neo-liberal egoism by a new sense of community.

Where are these debt and price developments interconnected?

Falling share prices and prices of material goods in general are only a problem if the positions are based on excessive credit – which is the case today. Even if the share price only slightly decreases, the owner must contribute more money. If he cannot do so, the bank will obligatorily liquidate the position, i.e. sell the stock. This will lead to a vicious downward spiral that spins faster and faster, and cannot be stopped by conventional means. The bear markets are therefore just as exaggerated as the bull markets have been before.

Globalization is partially reversed

Have current policies to fight the crisis failed?

So far – yes. One tries to save the old world and gives even more liquor to the alcoholic. As I have already explained, the causes were established long time ago. In their faith in eternal prosperity, the Americans piled up national debt. Above all, financial enterprises behaved accordingly. Former Federal Reserve Chairman *Alan Greenspan* with his low interest rate pol-

"We are threatened by ..."

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icy missed the last chance to make a correction and created a bubble in property markets and bond markets instead. In material economic terms the US are close to a developing country.

What does this grim deflationary outlook include?

First, there will be the liquidation of unsustainable loans. The volume may be of a magnitude of more than 100 trillion dollars. We are talking about a forced sale at all major asset levels: stocks, bonds, corporate shares, commodities, real estate, which may also fall to a tenth of their peak prices.

And the investor?

He has only few options. Over time, money will increase in value. Therefore, the investor should keep his money in cash in a good currency at his bank. Later, he must deposit it at home to avoid being caught in a run on banks. The deposit protection schemes are much too small. I guess that more than half of all banks will become insolvent.

Which social developments are we to expect?

Using new methods can have the potential for a new economic miracle and new social stability. If we continue as before, however, America will isolate itself; the European Union will lose cohesion and fall apart. An era of protectionism will come. Globalization is partially reversed.

From the political point of view, radicalization is a great danger.

Thank you for your time.

Source: *Handelsblatt* dated 26/02/2012
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(Translation: *Current Concerns*)

Fredmund Malik (*1944) The Vorarlberger is an economist with focus on management theory as well as the owner and manager of a management-consulting firm in St Gall. He applies inter alia systems theory and cybernetics to the analysis and design of management systems. Earlier he was teaching at the University of St Gall, where he is Titular Professor for General Management with particular regard to leadership and governance of firms.

Malik has always understood the economy in a personal way and assessed human relations and confidence as a guiding principle in business in contrast to the U.S. management systems that are based on controlling, respectively on a different concept of man (*Menschenbild*).

He is among those who do not have to hide by arguing: "No one would have anticipated the economic crisis". In *Current Concerns* No. 10/2009, we reported

who had pointed to the manifest current crisis early enough and that it was not about "not being able to know", but the convenient "not wanting to know".

In 2004 Fredmund Malik had already lucidly presented the great questions of the indebted world economy at a one-day seminar on "Current economic situations in the US" and there he precisely predicted the present decay processes. The documentation is available from himself or the editors. In seminars interviews and closed rounds he pointed to the inevitable risks. He offers management trainings based on a personal concept of man. These are substantially better than all other MBAs as far as practical relevance, contact with reality, common sense and congealed experience from the manufacturing economy are concerned.

(www.malik-mzsg.ch)

Brazilian President criticizes "developed" countries monetary expansion policy

Brazilian President *Dilma Rousseff* attacked the "developed countries" harshly of its crisis politics. The monetary policy which the current crisis is dealt with is unleashing a "monetary tsunami", Rousseff said on Thursday. The industrialized countries are compensating their "fiscal rigidity" with a monetary policy that is "absolutely inconsistent". For other countries this policy brings about "very detrimental repercussions", criticized the Brazilian head of state.

Rousseff criticizes the enormous amounts of money being pumped into the markets,

especially in the US and Europe to avoid liquidity shortage. In December and again on 29 February 2012, for example, the European Central Bank (ECB) lent cheap money in total of more than 1 billion euro.

Rousseff said that one is "concerned" about the economic policy measures. The developed countries are not using "budgetary policies for expanding investment to come out of the crisis" but instead are pouring 4.7 billion dollars onto the world", Brazilian President *Dilma Rousseff* said. For the developing countries this

policy leads to a "currency war" which again produces inequality.

Due to this development the Brazilian government has taken action to restrict capital flow to Brazil. "We must defend ourselves", Finance Minister *Guido Mantega* commented the decision.

Source: <http://amerika21.de/meldung/2012/03/49165/geldpolitik-rousseff>, *Portal Amerika21.de*, *Forum für ein anderes Amerika*, 4 March 2012

(Translation: *Current Concerns*)

On the occasion of the Confederate Referendum of 11 March 2012

Stop the boundless construction of second homes

The initiative "Stop the boundless construction of second homes" intends to limit the proportion of weekend flats per municipality to 20 per cent. Where this proportion is already higher today, there will be a stop of all constructions of weekend flats if the initiative is adopted.

Second homes can remain second homes
The existing second homes may be used and sold as second homes after the initiative will have been adopted. What will

be limited and restricted will only be the re-utilization of first apartments and the construction of new weekend flats.

Weekend flats are not second homes

The initiative is directed against second homes only, (cold beds), not against holiday flats that are rented (warm beds). These may be built again in future and they offer unforgettable holiday events to Swiss families. *Switzerland has got too many second homes already today*

And every year there are 8,000 more that are added. The initiative stops the construction of new second homes that destroy our mountain regions and that are empty most of the time.

Second homes destroy the beauty of Switzerland

Our children shall have the opportunity of enjoying the unimpaired nature and

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"Stop the boundless ..."

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mountain regions. Second homes spoil the most beautiful regions of Switzerland, and ruin the intact overall appearances of the localities of our mountain villages.

The native people are driven away through the construction of second homes
The construction of second homes drives the prices and the rents for apartments and apartments properties into heights that the native people cannot afford to pay so that they are driven out of the regions and are forced to emigrate.

Swiss tourism suffers from the construction of second homes.

Hotels, rented holiday apartments and enterprises which work to the service of the tourism, are impaired by the construction of second homes. The construction of second homes destroys what is most valuable in Swiss tourism – unimpaired nature and landscapes.

Second homes stay empty for 11 months a year, and they bring little to the mountain railways, the restaurants and the other touristic enterprises.

High prices to be paid for ground and speculation result in closing of hotels and impaired tourist enterprises

The construction of second homes devours valuable agricultural land.

Agricultural enterprises in mountain regions are threatened in their existence and owners are forced to abandon them.

20 per cent of second homes is enough!

The initiative grants guidelines as to the construction of second homes to the communes. This way this initiative limits the wild growth of second homes.

The initiative is creates jobs in the mountain regions.

The construction branch has to follow new guidelines if the initiative is adopted. What will become more profitable again, will be sustainable construction projects for ho-

tels, rented holiday apartments and tourism sites, as well as for renovations. The capacity utilization of touristic infrastructure will improve, and it will provide for successful tourism.

Counter – Proposition – an alibi of the Federal Council and of Parliament

The indirect counterproposition demands the communities and the cantons to establish a "well-balanced" proportion between the first homes and the second homes. The issue, however, to decide which proportion is a "well-balanced" one, is left to the cantons and to the communes.

Source: www.zweitwohnungsinitiative.ch, 28.2.2012

* * *

The initiative is supported by the "Stiftung Landschaftsschutz Schweiz" (Foundation for the Protection of the Landscape of Switzerland).

High-density building

gs. For some time, there have been discussions that homes should be built within the communes' building zone in a more careful, cautious and reflected way. "High-density building" is a key word among local planners and architects. Living in homes shall be more family-friendly, and with good links to the public transports should be appropriate for older people, children and youths, the little shopping facilities for house wives, who come from work, should be near-by, and other things more: which the population and a coming generation growing soundly, should be considered by builders and architects. Some communes in Romandy have already been proving that these things are possible and viable.

However, if there is in *Seldwyla*, (famous location taken from a novel written by Gottfried Keller) a cautious and responsible man who takes the initiative... In a picturesque village with a lot of half-timbered houses and monument protection there was an ancient farmhouse with a barn that was so dilapidate that there was scarcely anyone who could have dared to go under its roof. Citizen X. whose native home it was, was planning a building replacing this barn. He submitted an application for a building permit that was demanding the substitution of the barn by an annex to the home building that was going very well with the overall appearance of the locality. This annex would provide for three apartments for his children who were approaching the adult age, and who were thinking of founding families. The project was agreed to and was welcomed with pleasure by the commu-

nal council. The building contractor takes charge of the work and clears the place.

And what will happen all of a sudden? A neighbor thinks of the paragraphs of monument protection and that the whole project could infringe those paragraphs. And who is he fetching all to the village of a sudden? It is the seigneurs of the canton. And now the devil is let out in Seldwyla! Now the situation is as follows: The barn must be put up; plus there will be a complaint to the authorities

A legal maxim is: State action has to be convenient: How do you teach princess "Monument Protection" that the luxurious years of high conjuncture have passed and that monument protection has to adapt to the people as a whole? Have all the respective laws and all dispositions to be "combed out" and be reduced to a minimum? That a reconstruction of an old

building that makes whole families lose their old age revenue because there is a dispute about any old rafter in the interior of the home, and that there has to be looked for an ancient-substitution that is hand-made and carved and other things of this sort, cannot be the purpose of "monument protection". The princess has to adapt: It cannot be the overall sense of this monument protection that any renovation and any transformation of a building would be so expensive that only speculators and the mafia can afford it.

You should have supposed that there would be more expertise in the community council of Seldwyla: They could have been looking for a way out marked by reason. Switzerland has got other and more important things to do. In Seldwyla, there is the project of nuclear final disposal site "ante portas".



(picture ma)