

Switzerland in the UK

1/11

Vote on crime could harm relations

Swiss voters have approved a plan for automatic deportation of foreigners who commit serious crimes or benefit fraud, in what was a significant victory for the nationalist party that pushed the proposal against the will of the government.

Some 52.9% of voters backed the proposal from the nationalist Swiss People's party (SVP). It was opposed by 47.1% of voters. A government-backed counter proposal failed – it would have required a case-by-case review by a judge before an individual was deported.

"I'm totally for it," said Emma Link, 86, after voting in Geneva. She blamed foreigners for what she said was rising crime, adding that she had recently been robbed on her way home from a nearby shop.

The SVP plan drew fire before today's referendum from legal experts who said it could breach offenders' human rights. Marcelo Kohen, a professor of international law at the Graduate Institute in Geneva, said people who had lived all their life in Switzerland, married Swiss citizens and had children but never obtained Swiss passports, would be unusually hard hit by expulsion.

Under Switzerland's political system, any group wanting to change the law can collect 100,000 signatures to force a referendum. Last year the country drew international condemnation after voters defied a government recommendation by approving a law to ban the construction of minarets.

The government will now have to draft a law requiring automatic expulsion of foreigners found guilty of crimes such as murder, rape, drug dealing or benefit fraud. Kohen predicted such a law would be challenged before the European court of human rights.

Likewise, the European Union – with which Switzerland has signed a bilateral treaty guaranteeing freedom of movement – would probably object to its citizens being automatically deported without the chance of judicial review, he said.

During the run-up to the vote, anti-racism groups bemoaned that the SVP's posters showed white sheep kicking black sheep off a Swiss flag, saying it played on stereotypical images of foreigners as criminals.

Virginie Studemann voted against the plan. "I think it's sad for our country," she said outside a polling station in the centre of Geneva. "It's part of a concerted attack against foreigners."

Voters also rejected a proposal to revise the country's tax system today. The Swiss news agency SDA reported that 58% of voters opposed the plan, while 42% backed a proposal by the Social Democrat party to introduce a minimum tax in all Switzerland's 26 cantons, or states.

The Polling group gfs.bern said earlier this month that initial enthusiasm for the plan evaporated after heavy campaigning by business groups, who warned it could harm the Swiss economy. Several prominent billionaires also spoke out against the proposal and threatened to move abroad if it were accepted.

Enterprise: Young prove worth



Ambassador Anton Thalmann presented the first ever 'Swiss Award' skills bursary to proud winner Lee Park. Turn to Page 3.

Celebration: 50th anniversary



Swiss Club Edinburgh celebrates its 50th anniversary with founder members and a civic reception. Story and pictures in centre pages.

Congratulations: Ursula's OBE



Ursula Jones, our very distinguished compatriot has received an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her services to music. See Page 5.



Switzerland in the UK has its own Internet site, continually bringing you up to the minute news of the latest events as well as major stories from the most recent issues and links to other interesting sites in both the UK and Switzerland. To access it go to: www.swissreview.co.uk

News about any forthcoming events that will be of interest to our readers should be emailed to: aw13638-2@hotmail.co.uk



Ambassador presents credentials to Queen

Bright blue skies greeted some very distinguished guests outside the Swiss Ambassador's residence on Tuesday, 19 October. Two horse-drawn ceremonial carriages were in attendance to convey His Excellency Mr Anton Thalmann to Buckingham Palace, where he officially presented his credentials to Her Majesty The Queen.

The procession travelled through St. James's Park

in autumnal sunshine, attracting much interest from passing tourists and Londoners alike. Ambassador Thalmann and his wife were accompanied in their carriage by Mr. Charles Gray, the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps. Following his personal audience with the Queen, Ambassador Thalmann returned to his Residence for a vin d'honneur reception in a celebration of Swiss-UK friendship.



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From the basement to the beach – young leader wins first Swiss Award

Ambassador Anton Thalmann paid tribute to the energy and commitment of young people working in social inclusion projects across the UK as he presented the first ever 'Swiss Award' skills bursary to proud winner Lee Park.

Lee, 23 from Boscombe near Bournemouth, was selected by a panel of experts for his project 'Life's A Beach!' which aims to inspire young people to take pride in their local seafront and work

towards qualifications as lifeguards and surfing coaches.

"The judges were most impressed with how this original project meets local needs and offers tangible results and goals for the participants. I hope you'll all agree it's a worthy winner of the Swiss Award," Ambassador Thalmann said.

The Swiss Award marks the culmination of the Embassy's involvement with the BBC's 'Your Game' project which offers

assistance and support to young people in socially deprived areas across the UK, allowing them to develop themselves further through sporting activities as well as access to training and funding opportunities.

As part of the project, specially-selected 'All Stars Ambassadors' have travelled to Switzerland to learn more about the opportunities that exist there for young people to broaden their skills and make best use of their talents.

The celebration took place in the Embassy's celebrated garage where guests saw at first hand the unique collection of Banksy graffiti exhibits which adorn the walls, and where the England-Switzerland qualifying match for the Euro 2012 championships was broadcast live from the St. Jakob Park in Basel.

All Stars from previous years joined MPs and Swiss footballers Pascal Zuberbühler and Kerim Frei, currently at Fulham, to watch the game in what Ambassador Thalmann called "an evening of football and friendship".



How to contact the editor

Reports of Swiss society activities, news, coming events, correspondence, articles and advertising for the 'Switzerland in the UK' section of the Swiss Review, should go to the acting editor:

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- The Swiss Review, with its 'Switzerland in the UK' supplement, is published five times a year (four with the UK supplement) – in January, March, June, September and November. The deadline for the next issue, to be published in March 2011, is February 14.



Anton Thalmann presents Lee Park with first ever 'Swiss Award'

Switzerland and the UK sign declaration on the initiation of negotiations on tax matters

Swiss Federal Councillor and Finance Minister Hans-Rudolf Merz met the Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, in London on Monday, October 25 to discuss cooperation on financial and tax matters. Afterwards Federal Councillor Merz and David Gauke, the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, signed a declaration on the initiation of negotiations concerning tax issues between Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

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Weather couldn't spoil 50th anniversary celebrations

It was a day to be remembered when Swiss Club Edinburgh celebrated its 50th anniversary. While there was apprehension that the weather might disrupt the festivities, only a very few could not make it due to adverse conditions.

At a Civic Reception in the Edinburgh City Chambers, Bailie Alastair Paisley welcomed everyone on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council and in particular three of the founder members present. Freddie Wyser thanked him on behalf of the Swiss Club. All present were able to enjoy a much appreciated aperitif with canapés.

This was followed by a further Reception at the Caledonian Hilton Hotel, where Swiss Champagne, graciously donated by Consul General Reto Renggli, was served with typical Swiss tit-bits offered by the Hotel. During this interlude there was entertainment by Alex Metzler on his accordion. On a very large screen, a film of beautiful Swiss scenery was admired by all, as was a collage of photographs taken by members over the years.

As dinner was announced, 70 guests had the pleasure of being led into the dining room by the

sound of alphorns played by two musicians who had come especially from Switzerland. President Wyser welcomed all present with a special mention of the guests seated at the head table – Bailie Alastair Paisley and Mrs Paisley, City of Edinburgh Council, Consul General Reto Renggli, Director Ruedi Wyder, Organisation of the Swiss Abroad and Mrs Wyder, Mr Peter Luedi, President of the Aberdeen Swiss Club and Mrs Luedi and Mrs Carmen Rose, President of the Inverness Swiss Club. President Wyser then asked Ron Butlin to say Grace.

A typical Swiss menu followed with Bunderfleisch followed by beef and pork fillets served with 'Sauce aux Morilles' and a Green Pepper Sauce with Spaetzli and Vegetables. There was a choice then of either Zugerkirschtorte or an assortment of Swiss Cheeses. Swiss wines were graciously donated by the Consulate General. Coffee was served and, thanks to the generosity of Lindt & Sprungli Chocolate in Kilchberg, Switzerland, all received a beautiful gift which was very much appreciated.

In addition, guests were given a



Founder member Nelly Robson with Trudi Bott

memento in the form of a coaster commemorating 50 Years of the Swiss Club Edinburgh.

Speeches by Consul General Renggli and Director Wyder were followed by the introduction of the three Founder Members present, Suzanne Henderson, Helen Reid and Nelly Robson who were given a great round of applause. Helen gave us a little history of the Club followed by Suzanne who in turn provided us with some anecdotes. President Wyser in his speech reminisced over the last 50 years and wondered what the next 50 would look like.

The Founder Members were presented with engraved goblets commemorating the 50 years of the Swiss Club and beautiful baskets of red and white flowers and blue thistles depicting the National flags of Switzerland and Scotland.

The entertainment was provided again by Alex Metzler and his accordion playing some well known Swiss songs, the two alphorn musicians, Philip Powell and Marcel Huonder playing well known tunes and finally Ron Butlin, a Scottish writer who gave readings from Robert Burns. They were translated into Swiss German by Regi-Claire Butlin-Staub who is also a writer. They all were very much appreciated and roundly applauded.

President Wyser in his closing speech, acknowledged all the people who had made this once-in-a-lifetime event such a success including Kirsten Murray and Ursula Ross, creators of the Coasters and the Committee without whom the event would not have been possible and all those who had contributed in one way or another. The event came to a close around midnight and all departed to a very cold and snowy night.



Founder Member Suzanne Henderson receiving Bouquet of flower and engraved goblet from Jill Shanks



Reto Renggli, Marlo Luedi and Ruedi Wyder enjoying themselves during a wonderful celebration



Founder Member Helen Reid receiving bouquet of flower and engraved goblet from Jill Shanks

Manchester Cathedral hosts Ambassador's Award concert

On a grey evening, the Swiss National Flag fluttered proudly from the top of the prominent Manchester Cathedral Tower inviting all to attend.

In the presence of the Lord Mayor of Manchester Cllr. Mark Hackett, Archdeacon Mark Ashcroft welcomed us all to his Cathedral. Ambassador Anton Thalmann who was accompanied by his smiling wife Mrs Dominique Thalmann, furthered that welcome to those present and then introduced a youthful and handsome Francesco Piemontesi to an expectant audience. They were not to be disappointed! On a beautifully tuned Yamaha grand piano, he played throughout with a masterly control of his subject with a skilled and easy interaction between his expressive hands.

The rhythmic cadences of Bach's Partita No. 1 were executed with delicacy and precision. The lilting harmonies of Schubert's Sonata were a delight. The musical pauses in Liszt's Vallée d'Obermann contrasted with the depth of feeling quietly but strongly expressed. The young

composer Tognetti was unknown to most. Francesco seemed to revel in the freshness of its composition and the remote foot-controlled 'music page turner' added a further interest!

Following an interval when guests were invited to enjoy a glass of sparkling Swiss wine,

Francesco resumed his playing with Schumann's Fantasia. The happy evening so well organised by the Honorary Consul G Arthur Broadhurst, was enjoyed by all! The rain that greeted us outside on our departure, was unable to dampen our heightened spirits!



Britain goes crazy for Mini Micro-Scooters

Who would have thought that bumping into a child on a scooter in a London park would be the start of a multi-million pound business? But that's exactly what happened when Anna Gibson became intrigued by a three-wheel scooter and asked the child's mother where she'd bought it.

It turned out to be a Mini Micro-Scooter and just what Anna's hyper-active three year old son needed to keep him occupied. Having scoured the shops to find one, she soon found herself being stopped by other mother's, also keen to track down Mini Micro-Scooter for their youngsters.

She realised there was a huge demand out there but no-one was distributing it properly in the UK. Having sold them for a year, she knew she could take the business further. When Anna discovered the

scooters were made in Switzerland, she decided to throw caution to the wind and ordered a pallet from Europe. Within two weeks they were sold out and it was then that she teamed up with close friend, Philippa Gogarty and decided to start selling Mini Micro-Scooters on a bigger scale. Distribution moved to a barn in Essex and Micro-Scooters UK was born.

Since then the company has gone from strength-to-strength and has sold over 400K scooters to date. It now operates from offices in West Mersea complete with its own warehousing facility. However, it remains very much a family business as both Anna and Philippa are passionate about this being the key to their ethos.

All of the products which appear on their website – www.micro-scooters.co.uk – are either tested by their own children



Anna Gibson and Philippa Gogarty: Going from strength to strength

or those of friends before they will agree to include them in the range. Both Philippa and Anna are committed to keeping this personal touch at the core of their business.

Emmi's Caffe Latte on air for first time

Emmi has been airing a TV advert across the UK in September to support Caffe Latte, their range of fresh iced coffee drinks.

The advert highlights the finest barista quality coffee used to stimulate our senses as we enjoy a real coffee experience.

Caffe Latte is currently the only iced coffee in the UK market made from real espresso coffee and fresh milk (rather than coffee flavourings and UHT milk). It comes in a convenient re-sealable cup and can be enjoyed any time of day as a light refreshing drink.

Emmi is the largest Swiss milk processor and one of the most innovative premium dairies in Europe.

York to host FOSSUK AGM

York with its very rich heritage was founded by the Romans in 71AD – a walled city, situated at the confluence of the Rivers Ouse and Foss in North Yorkshire. The city offers a wealth of historic attractions, of which York Minster is the certainly the most prominent. In 2009 it was the 7th most visited city by UK residents and the 13th most visited by overseas visitors.

The FOSSUK Committee together with the help of members of the Yorkshire Swiss Club are preparing for a very promising weekend. The official business despatched with there will be plenty of time to explore the treasures and beauties of this gem of a town. A guided tour of the Minster is a must! The multitude of cultural sights will make the final decision very difficult.

The AGM will be held on 18-19 June. For further details please keep your eye on the FOSSUK website.

Ursula Jones receives OBE for service to music

It is with great pleasure that we have learnt that Ursula Jones our very distinguished compatriot has received an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours this year, a well deserved award for her service to music.

Ursula who hails from Lucerne has spent most of her life in London. She was co-founder and general manager of the English Chamber Orchestra until 1975 and from 1978 to 1986 managed the Brass Ensemble of her husband Philip Jones, the renowned trumpeter.

Music and art were part of her upbringing as her father was one of the very distinguished members on the organizing committee of the Lucerne Festival where Ursula is now on the Board of Trustees and actively involved. She was also instrumental in the project of the Ambassador's Award concerts here in London. Her uncle is the painter Hans Erni.

Apart from music she has many other talents. In the early fifties she studied and obtained a translator's



Ursula Jones: A women of many talents

diploma from Heidelberg and Geneva Universities for German/French/Italian and English.

In 1978 Ursula took up postgraduate pre-Colombian Central America studies at the Institute of Archaeology of the University of London and obtained a PhD degree in 1992. Since then she has combined her archaeological and

musical interests lecturing on the prehistory of Mexico and organising concerts in England and Switzerland for young talented musicians.

Some years ago she gave a most exciting talk at the Swiss Church on her climbing expedition of Mount Kilimanjaro – a 60th birthday present from her husband and yet another great achievement.

The Swiss Church in London is very fortunate to have Ursula Jones as its consultant and advisor to help to organize its music programme during the past few years. Thanks to her many connections and wide experience the Church has been able to stage some wonderful concerts as part off its 'Soirées Musicales' now "Music at 79 Endell Street" series, adding a Swiss flavour to them with the participation of young talented Swiss musicians, ensembles or Swiss composers, enjoyed by many.

Ursula Jones was invested with her honour by HM The Queen on 20 October at Buckingham Palace.

Save the Museum of the Swiss Abroad in Geneva

The Canton of Geneva, the actual owner of the beautiful Penthes estate, is trying to decide whether to grant a new long-term lease to the Museum, its Conference Centre and Restaurant or to designate these facilities for some other, as yet unknown, use, because of its convenient location. The negotiations presently sunder way between the Canton and the Museum may turn out to be quite difficult. However, you can be assured that we shall defend our 'jewel' vigorously. What we urgently need are expressions of support, especially those coming from the Swiss themselves, who are presently abroad.

We would be pleased if you could join others in this appeal. Your support is important to us, thank you!

Yes, I strongly support Penthes and I ask the Canton and Republic of Geneva to allow the Museum of the Swiss Abroad to stay open for all visitors. Presenting a positive image of Switzerland is indeed very important at the present time.

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Comments

I am a member of the association "Amis de Penthes"
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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

Derek Meakin: A very hard act to follow

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Derek Meakin on Saturday 9 October.

Derek was born in Macclesfield in 1926 and apart from a spell in London working as London correspondent for the Manchester Evening News, never moved far from the town. He was an entrepreneur long before the word became fashionable. As a young boy, he bred rabbits with the advertising slogan "Rabbits for pot or pet" – never one to miss an opportunity. His next enterprise was to start a Sunday cinema club, showing feature films on a 16mm projector. When this came to the attention of the 'official' cinema a visit was made to his parents and Derek was persuaded to close the club.

Leaving school at 14, Derek became a young reporter on the Macclesfield Courier, but sent (and sold) articles to papers all over the UK and abroad. In 1942 he moved on to be editor of the Buxton Herald before being called up.

He served as a Coder in the Royal Navy during the latter part of the war then continued for his National Service, but he was



A young Derek reporting on the latest news of the day

already publishing news, even though it was on a blackboard for the crew!

Back in civilian life, Derek joined the Manchester Evening News who later transferred him to London as their London correspondent. But it was a new era and a different medium was beginning to come alive. In 1957 Derek left London to take up the exciting post of Northern Features

Editor of the TV Times at the forefront of British commercial television.

He interviewed many famous names, from Alfred Hitchcock and Noel Coward to Bob Monkhouse and Cliff Richard. Not content with that, he saw another opportunity and in the mid-1960s he set up Post Publications and pioneered the concept of the local give-away newspaper funded by advertising. Selling the group of nearly 20 local papers, he moved into magazines and established Europress. Anticipating the home computer boom, he started several monthly computer magazines, and this led to making and selling their own programmes with Database Software and the award-winning Fun School series of educational software.

There is much more. He embraced Europe, attended an Esperanto conference and travelled to France and Poland just after the war, learning French – which led him to meet and marry his Swiss wife, Lucie, in Macclesfield with a reception at Macclesfield Town Hall (where they returned in 2000 for their Golden Wedding anniversary

celebration). Derek worked tirelessly to advance and improve Anglo-Swiss relations and held dual nationality, having been granted Swiss citizenship.

Derek never really retired. Latterly his work was not so prolific because of illness, but he continued to write, edit and design the UK pages of the Swiss Review. Oh yes, he did the web page too! A long time active Rotarian and member of the Swiss Club Manchester, he was always interested in anything new, the news and the future, but always had time to help others, whether with composing copy for the press or helping a grandchild with their cv.

Never content to stand still, he was always looking for new opportunities and was always an early adopter of new technology, he pre-ordered both iPhone and iPad as soon as they were announced and amazed both his own age group and his grandchildren with his IT know-how.

Derek leaves his wife Lucie, four children and 10 grandchildren. He will be greatly missed.

Could YOU be the new editor of the Swiss Review UK pages?

The Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK (FOSSUK) is looking for a part-time editor for the Swiss Review, UK regional pages and web editor.

"The Regional Pages" are produced within the official part of the Swiss Review. They appear four times a year and contain news reports, articles, interviews and advertisements relevant to Swiss living in the UK.

We envisage a person with a journalistic background, interested in the activities of the Swiss Community and its many Clubs and Societies, very confident in written English, attracted to create an informative and exciting journal and using his/her online production qualities.

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Christmas Fair was a real winner

Although the Swiss Church has been open for just over a year following refurbishment, the bi-annual Christmas Fair this November was the best ever attended event in our remodelled premise.

Approximately 500 Swiss and other friends found their way to the Swiss Church to enjoy and support the Swiss Christmas Fair. The Fair is the major fundraiser of the Swiss Church enabling us to continue activities for Parishioners, as well as the broader Swiss Community.

Many enjoyed raclette, cheese or spinach tartlets, as well as cheese and viande séchée plates. While the adults purchased Swiss food and goods at the stalls in the main hall, the children were enjoying a number of activities on the top floor.

The new Ambassador and his

wife, visited on Saturday and Mrs Thalmann drew the lucky winners of the raffle. Many Swiss companies and individuals sponsored the numerous attractive raffle items, as well as goods to sell, or made a financial contribution. We are very grateful for their support!

As always, this event could not have happened without the able leadership of Mrs Lisa Hall and the cooperation of many volunteers from various groups, as well as the Embassy.

Swiss Golf Trophy day

We had a very enjoyable and successful day – unfortunately rain delayed tee off.

Here are some of the well deserved prize winners:
Overall winner – Jac D'Silva, top Swiss – Ernest Fergusson, top lady – Brenda Gordon, longest drive, women – Masako Kimura who also had the straightest drive and nearest the pin, longest drive, men – Joe Mascarenhas.

Contact Jeffrey Long for details about the next Golf Day.

Date for your Diary

The Swiss Club, Manchester will hold their New Year's lunch on Sunday 23 January at the Bridge Hotel, Prestbury and will also hold a Raclette Party on 12 March at the Brookdale Club, Bramhall.

Contact 0161 456 9262 or email: the.glausers@btinternet.com

Young voices hit the right note with 'The Ice Mountain'

On 25 November 2010 'The New London Children's Choir' delighted the audience at the Swiss Church in the presence of the composer Roland Corp with the performance of his opera 'The Ice Mountain'. The libretto by Emma Hill is based on the Swiss folk-tale 'Die alte Frau und die Toten'. It was a most memorable evening and the voices of the 50 or so young people linger on.



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