

Landsgemeinde loses power

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BEST QUALITY OF LIFE

The people of Geneva can hardly believe it. According to a survey, Geneva is supposed to be the city that offers the best quality of life in the world. Ask any resident of Geneva and you will hear a string of complaints about a forced life style in a cramped city chocked with traffic. The advice that they should be happy with their lot, because they live in the best city in the world, is received as a great joke. Obviously, the people who made the survey did not spend much time there but that would also be true for all other cities listed. According to the survey, the next best cities would be Vancouver, Vienna, Toronto, Luxembourg and Zurich. Auckland appears in 10th position (no mention of any other NZ city) after Dusseldorf and Singapore. The safest cities in the world would be Tokyo, Osaka and Singapore, the worst cities Algiers, Kiev, Lagos and Moscow.

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BUSINESS IS BUSINESS



With the recent drop of the US Dollar against the Swiss Franc, thousands of

"LANDI"

The next Swiss Exhibition (Landesausstellung or in short "Landi") will take place in the year 2001 and the Federal Council has given the instructions to the cantons of Bern, Neuenburg, Waadt, Freiburg and Jura to put it all together. The most likely place for the exhibition would be somewhere near the city of Neuenburg. As had to be expected, this announcement immediately sparked a lot of controversy among the Swiss. The canton of Tessin expressed its deep disappointment with the Federal Council's decision. Biel and Grenchen have also expressed their disenchantment as they had hoped to be selected to host the next "Landi".

Swiss have bought cheap US Dollars for their next trip to the USA. The "Bureaux de Change" have not failed to cash in on this bonanza and some crafty entrepreneurs have even gone as far as painting directional signs on the pavements to steer prospective customers towards their shops.

If this idea should catch on, our pavements could turn into colourful horizontal sandwichboards with local authorities also cashing in by charging rental for those signs.

LANDSGEMEINDE LOSES POWER

A rather poorly attended "Landsgemeinde" in Nidwalden has recently decided that from now on most of the important decisions would be voted on at the ballot box rather than in the "Ring". Through this decision, the traditional "Landsgemeinde" will lose most of its past importance as the affairs of this half-canton will now be decided at the urn in secret ballots rather than by the open raising of the hand. With it goes an old tradition whereby the citizens used to congregate in full regalia on the town square to decide by show of hand the political and economical future of their home county. On the other hand, this must be considered as a great success by the feminist movement who objected more and more against a system which only gave the men the right to vote. For quite a while, it was clear that in a world of equality between women and men, the Landsgemeinde's days had to be numbered and eventually it will only remain as a local tradition.





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