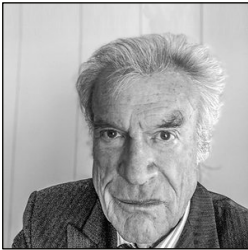


Is Switzerland mutating into a “city-state”?

Correcting blatant political misjudgement

by Hans Bieri, managing director of SVIL,* Zurich



Hans Bieri. (Picture www.neutralitaet-ja.ch)

(CH-S) On 9 October 2024, the consultation on the ordinance to the Spatial Planning Act 2 (SPA 2) adopted by the Federal Assembly ended. This ordinance decides what Switzerland will look like in the future outside the building zones and

how its areas will be used. Was this a media topic? Hardly.

The question is how to absorb and organise the pressure to use the countryside that is coming from the agglomerations, which are growing unchecked. The many buildings in the countryside outside the building zones are under enormous pressure from the ever-growing agglomerations for recreational and leisure use.

These real estate interests not only undermine the agricultural land market and compete with and impede agriculture and agricultural construction in the agricultural zone, they also actually act as pioneer plants of the city-state, which is spreading excessively throughout the country with its unlimited population growth.

Hans Bieri, managing director of SVIL (Swiss Association for Industry and Agriculture), has decades of experience in this field. He points out the emerging problems of security of supply, as they also arise in many other countries. Below we publish an excerpt of SVIL’s response:

“Now another fundamental decision seems to be pending: Whether we in Switzerland want to

maintain the necessary agricultural land and a technically developed agriculture, or whether, due to the loss of control over population growth, Switzerland should mutate into a ‘city-state’.

The completely false and outdated figures on the remaining crop rotation areas and on the state of food security, which were communicated by the Federal Council almost a year ago, are an alarming sign that politicians are literally losing their footing.

The present ordinance on the RPG 2 shows that this process of creeping erosion of soil and agriculture in favour of a development towards a “city-state” is inexorably progressing but is persistently played down.

It is now imperative that the Federal Council uses *the false figures on security of supply* as an opportunity to take a clear stand on spatial development and population policy. The present RPG 2 – which should deal with rural areas and, in particular, with our food supply – and especially the present ordinance, does not do justice to this task.

Because these interrelationships have not been sufficiently grasped and thought through, and in view of the international situation, the Federal Council must significantly increase stocks in the short term, as the SVIL had already demanded 11 years ago when the National Economic Supply Act was totally revised. Because even this ‘total revision’ in 2013 showed that politicians no longer supported the security of supply and the foundations of an intact agricultural zone and a

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The SVIL (Swiss Association for Industry and Agriculture) is a private-law association that acts in the public interest in the interest of food security. The protection of Swiss soil and its rational use are mentioned in the statutes as the main objective. The focus is on the preservation and promotion of soil as a renewable resource and a secure basis for nutrition.

The SVIL was founded in 1918 by Swiss industrialists and its first managing director, Prof. Hans Bernhard, in Zurich City Hall as a result of the food crisis. After the collapse of free trade as a result of the First World War, 150,000 tons of food were quickly missing from domestic food shelves – despite the high purchasing power. It became clear that a highly developed industrialised country cannot do without its own agriculture, even if it had always been possible to import from economically backward countries at lower prices.



farming industry producing on it to the extent required.

Now is the time to correct this blatant misjudgement by politicians and to bring it back in accord with our historical experience."

*Source: Excerpt from the consultation on the ordinance response of SVIL to the ordinance to RPG 2.
<https://www.svil.ch/SVIL%20Vernehmml%20RPV%20%20HB%20Kopie.pdf>*

(Translation "Swiss Standpoint")