



**Wärti Eidgenosse!
 Wärti Mitbürger vo alle Kantöen, vo alle Farbe!**

Wäge ne Paar überspannte Kärl i sch zletschti Jahr z'Genf es G'setz gäge s'Absinth ufcho. Es G'setz über das sich en jede wahre, freie Schwyzer schäme muss. Jetzt glaube da die donners Stündeler sie chönne e so es Verbot i der ganze Schwyz durbringe. Was würde ächt üsi alte Freiheitskämpfer wie Tell, Winkelried, wie die Helde vo Morgarte, Sempach, Laupe, Murte, u. s. w. g'seit ha, wenn me ihne g'seit hätti sie dörfit numme Milch und Chrätliwasser trinke. Ja und zu dem wird's cho wenn ihr ech fange löit ihr liebe Lüt und's Absinth verbiete weit i nser liebe, alte Schwyz. Nit numme en jede Schnabs will men ech raube, aber mit der Zit, au der Wi und sogar s'Bier.

Sie säge zwar, die Schienheilige es sei nit wahr, aber druckt hei mer's g'funde, schwarz uf wis, im Bricht vo de Alt-Gut-Templer Site 28. Da seit der D' Herco vo Lausanne ganz dutli : Der Verbot des Absinthes wird nur einen ganz schwachen Effekt haben auf den Alkoholismus im allgemeinen. Wir trachten für eine fernere Zukunft die Abschaffung aller alkoholischer Getränke, Wein u. Bier inbegriffen. Es ist aber ein Anfang...

Ja, ja ihr Schlicher, so schnell geit's de doch no nit und -um ja sicher z'si dass ihr nit zu euem Zil chömet wei mer Euch g'rad zum Anfang en Rigel stecke. Was würdet ihr säge, wenn wir chäme und Euch der Thee und's Bäte verbiete würdet. Sorget doch amal z'erst be euch une löit üs in Ruh dann geit alles guet; bis jetzt isch es immer schlecht g'gange wo ihr ech d'ri g'mischt heit.

Und de isch no en ganz wichtigeri Sach, die grosse Mörder, Ravailac, Caserio, u. s. w. hei die es Mal es Glas Absinth g'ha? NIEMALS. Nei ihr Frömmeler, ihr Schienheilige, d's Absinth, het i de Familie und uf der Welt no lang nit so viel Unfride und Unglück g'stiftet wie das Gift das ihr scho all'ne Orte higeuferet heit, wo me euch gar net erwartet und nie gwünscht het. Im Gegeteil überall wo ihr g'si sit und a chli Meister worde sit, möcht me euch gärn los si und ech be all'ne Tüfle g'seh.

Ja machet nume das ihr zum Tüfel chömet mit Euem Thee, dört blibt er wenigstens immer warm, wir aber zum Absinth bruche chalts Wasser, wiess üs der Hergott g'gäh het. Also Ihr liebe Eidgenosse standet alli uf, wie ei Ma und stimmte am Suintig mit



eme chräftige **NEI**

wenn ihr sicher si weit in spätere Jahre nit nume Absinth sonder au gmüteli es Schöppli Wi oder en frische Schoppe Bier drinke z'chönne, und wäm das nit passt dä soll wäge mine in es anders Land ga luege ob er mit Thee und Zuckerwasser wilers chonnt.

Wir aber wir stimme **NEI** und no emisch **NEI** nit nume für s'Absinth, aber für üsi Freiheit, und wei mer Manne sind und sälber wüsstet wie mer üs z'halte hei.

Wäge n'a Paar Söfle wei wi üs nit alli strafe, wir went üs no läbe la, wie wir's fuer guet finde.

Zum Schluss drioke wir en chräftige Schluck, sig's Absinth, Vermuth, Wie oder Bier, en Schluck uf's allgemeine Wohl, en Schluck of üsi liebe Freiheit.



Imp. L. BRON, Rue Romanson, Genève

Federal Vote **5 July, 1908**¹

Honored Confederates!

Honored Fellow Citizens from every Canton, of every walk of life!

Due to a handful of zealots, a law² was passed last year in Geneva against absinthe. A law about which every true, free Swiss citizen should be ashamed. Now these damn bible-thumpers believe that they can force through a similar law in the whole of Switzerland. What would our old freedom fighters like Tell³ and Winkelried⁴, like the heroes of Morgarten⁵, Sempach⁶, Laupen⁷, Murten⁸ and so forth, actually have said if someone had told them they could only drink milk and herbal tea? And it will come to that dear people if you let yourselves be shackled, and let them ban Absinthe in our beloved old Switzerland. Not only do they want to deny you your schnapps, but with time your wine and your beer as well.

They – these hypocrites – say this isn't true, but we found it printed in black and white, in a report from an old Guttempler⁹, page 28. There, Dr Herco¹⁰ from Lausanne states unambiguously: The ban on Absinthe will only have a mild effect on alcoholism in general. What we are striving for in the distant future is to abolish all alcoholic drinks, wine and beer included. It is but a beginning...

Yes, yes, you sneaks, you won't achieve your goal so quickly: we want to bar you from achieving it from the beginning. What would you say if we came to you and wanted to ban your tea and prayers? Worry about yourselves and leave the rest of us in peace, then all will be well; until now it has always gone badly whenever you have meddled.

And then there's yet another important thing¹¹: the great murderers, Ravaillac¹², Caserio¹³, and so forth, did they even once have a glass of absinthe? **NEVER**. No you pious hypocrites, for a long time absinthe hasn't wrought nearly as much unhappiness and misfortune in the family and in the world as the poisonous ideas you have already spread in every place, that we didn't expect and didn't want. On the contrary, everywhere you've been and have taken charge, people want to get rid of you and wish you'd go to hell. Yes, go to the devil with your tea, there it will at least stay warm, but we use cold water with absinthe, just as the lord God gave it to us. So, all you Swiss citizens, please stand up as one man and vote on Sunday with a firm

NO

if you want to be sure in later years not only of your absinthe but also want to be able to drink a flask of wine or a fresh stein of beer, and whoever doesn't like that should go find another country and see if he gets anywhere there with tea and sugar-water.

We however will vote **NO** and once again **NO**, not only for absinthe but for our freedom, and because we are men who know how to conduct themselves.

Because of a couple of drunks they want to punish all of us, we want to be left to live life the way we see fit.

In closing, we drink a mighty draught, whether it is absinthe, vermouth, wine or beer, a drink to the wellbeing of everyone, and to our dear freedom.

Translated from the original Berndütsch (a Schwyzerdütsch sub-dialect) with assistance from Karl Cole and Grey Boy.

A similar poster, in the collection of the Motiers Museum, has the same illustrations but a different text, in French patois¹⁴.

¹ The eventual vote in this referendum was 241 078 to 139 699 in favour of the ban. Article 32 was added to the Swiss constitution and absinthe was forbidden in Switzerland. The law actually went into effect on 7th October 1910.

² Primarily as a result of popular outrage generated by the Lanfray murders, the legislature of the canton of Vaud voted to ban absinthe on 15th May 1906. A similar gory murder in Geneva (a man named Sallaz, after a drunken absinthe binge, murdered his wife using both a hatchet and a revolver) galvanized public opinion there in favour of a ban, and the Genevan legislature enacted a law similar to Vaud's shortly afterwards. On 2nd February 1907 the national legislature voted to ban absinthe, and even its imitations. The July 1908 referendum was held to ratify this decision and enshrine the ban in the Swiss constitution.

³ According to Swiss legend: William Tell from Bürglen was known as an expert marksman with the crossbow. At the time, the Habsburg emperors were seeking to dominate Uri. Hermann Gessler, the newly appointed Austrian bailiff of Altdorf raised a pole in the village's central square with his hat on top and demanded that all the local townsfolk bow before it. As Tell passed by without bowing, he was arrested. He received the punishment of either successfully shooting an apple off the head of his son, or dying. Tell had been promised freedom if he shot the apple. On November 18, 1307, Tell split the fruit with a single bolt from his crossbow, without mishap. When Gessler queried him about the purpose of the second arrow in his quiver, Tell answered that if he had ended up killing his son in that trial, he would have turned the crossbow on the bailiff. Gessler became enraged at that comment, and had Tell bound and brought to his ship to be taken to his castle at Küssnacht. In a storm on Lake Lucerne, Tell managed to escape. On land, he went to Küssnacht, and when Gessler arrived, he shot him with a crossbow bolt. This defiance of the Austrian reeve sparked a rebellion, leading to Switzerland's independence.

⁴ Arnold von Winkelried or Arnold Winkelried is another legendary hero of Swiss history, who allegedly saved the victory of the confederate forces of the Old Swiss Confederacy in the Battle of Sempach in 1386 against an army of the Habsburg duke Leopold III of Austria. According to the legend, the Swiss couldn't break the close ranks of the Austrian footsoldiers. Winkelried is said to have opened a breach in their lines by throwing himself into their lances, taking them down with his body such that the confederates could attack through the opening. It is doubtful whether this event actually happened. The first written report of such a deed dates from 1538, and the name "Arnold Winkelried" is connected to the story only in the Chronicles of Tschudi, which writes about "a man of Unterwalden, of the Winkelried family" and in its final edition from 1564 about "a man of Unterwalden, Arnold von Winkelried by name, a brave knight". Earlier, detailed accounts of the Battle of Sempach do not make any mention of such a heroic deed, nor of the name Winkelried. The Battle song of Sempach, which dates to about the time of the Burgundy Wars in the 1470s, does mention Winkelried, but the verses on him are generally considered later additions from about the 1520s. The genealogy of the Winkelrieds of Unterwalden has been studied meticulously, and while an "Erni Winkelried" or "Arnold Winkelried" seems to have lived at that time, he was also alive and well after the battle: he was plaintiff in a lawsuit in Stans in 1389, and acted as Landamman (head of state) of Unterwalden in 1417.

⁵ On November 15, 1315, the Swiss Confederation thoroughly defeated the soldiers of Duke Leopold I of Austria in an ambush near the Morgarten pass.

⁶ The Battle of Sempach was fought on July 9, 1386 between Duke Leopold III of Austria and the Swiss Confederation.

⁷ Swiss forces successfully fought for territorial expansion against the dukes of Savoy and the Habsburgs in the Battle of Laupen in 1339. The Swiss confederate troops wore a long-armed narrow white linen cross stitched on their breasts, sleeves and thighs, the first precursor to the modern Swiss flag.

⁸ At Murten on the 22nd June 1476 the Swiss confederates scored a decisive victory over the Burgundian forces of Charles the Bold.

⁹ The Guttempler or Good Templars are a temperance organization founded in Utica in the USA in 1851. The organisation grew rapidly and reached England in 1868, Sweden in 1879 and Germany in 1889. Today the IOGT (International Organisation of Good Templars) is the largest international non-governmental organisation working in the field of temperance, with branches in more than 60 countries.

¹⁰ A misprint (or perhaps rather the result of the phonetically based Schwyzerdütsch orthography). The reference is to Dr Robert Hercod, a Swiss-Romand temperance campaigner who ran the "Secretariat anti-alcoolique Suisse" from 1905 to 1921. The book referred to is probably Hercod's "Schweizerisches Taschenbuch für Alkoholgegner", published in Lausanne in 1905.

¹¹ Because the prohibitionist movement had used the Lanfray and Sallaz murders to such good effect in their campaign against absinthe, the pro-absinthe movement here seeks to highlight two notorious assassins, both, not coincidentally, devoutly religious.

¹² François Ravailiac (1578 – May 27, 1610) was the killer of Henry IV of France. He was born at Touvre, near Angoulême. He was of undistinguished origins and began life as a servant, but later became a school teacher. Highly religious, he sought admission to the Feuillants order, but after a short probation he was dismissed as he was prey to visions. An application for admission to the Society of Jesus was unsuccessful in 1606. In 1609 he had a vision telling him to convince Henry to convert the Huguenots. Unable to meet with the king he interpreted the king's decision to invade the Netherlands as the start of a war against the Pope. Determined to stop the king he decided to kill him. He carried out the act on May 14, 1610, stabbing the king to death on the Rue de la Ferronnerie in Paris (now south of the Forum des Halles). He was immediately seized and taken to the Hôtel de Retz, to avoid a mob lynching, before being transferred to the Conciergerie. In the course of his trial he was frequently put to the torture, but denied that he had been prompted by anyone or had any accomplices. On May 27 he was taken to the Place de Grève and there was tortured before being dispatched by being pulled apart by four horses. Alistair Horne describes his torture: "Before being drawn and quartered, . . . he was scalded with burning sulphur, molten lead and boiling oil and resin, his flesh then being torn by pincers." His parents were forced into exile and the rest of his family was ordered to never use the name Ravailiac.

¹³ Sante Jeronimo Caserio (Motta Visconti Lombardy Italy, 1873- Lyons France, 18 June 1894) was a Italian anarchist, assassin of Marie Francois Sadi Carnot, President of the French Third Republic. He was executed by guillotine.

¹⁴ The same poster, but with a different text in French patois:

VOTATION FÉDÉRALE 5 Juillet 1908



Citoïens de tota lô coleu!

Grâce à quequa ceintaina de metiafous, qu'ont eru que ien avaient point quemeint ien, le 14 d'Avri de l'an darri est n'a data que la vergogna à l'historia de Geneva!

Iorcindra, lo descendeints de la maore Royanne ont perdu cein que z'avaient de pie ché ein sti mondo: le dra de s'einfata ce que ien fa pliesi quein l'a zou cha!

A causà qu'on hadian a copà la fela à son bean-paore, etreinglia sa bella-maore, copà le sebllet a son bean fraore, fezeyi à l'ièda chanda sa bella-choue, on vu no faore eiereira que le bidot, cè bon bidot qu'on s'einfata à mijo est la veretablia causa de to s'lo crimo!

Le bon! Combün ta que y-in-a, pources ami, qu'on le passa le goût de la s'pa à ien seimblable et que n'ont jamais su cein qu'elao le bidot!

Tropmann, Pranzini, Ravachol, n'ont jamais biä on varra de bidot!

Cartouche et Mandrin l'a que z'ont su ce qu'eta que le bidot? Jacques Clément, Ravailiac, Caseriu et to lo z'ütres ont y solameint cognü le bidot? Na, bein su que na!

Memameint le Greind Turc n'a jamais biä le bidot, El s'fische, al a porteint bein quaoque rein su la concheincha, qu'ein mena e n'est pas de Commugny!

Le bidot, y est le bidot, et vieta to, El cè qu'ein pu bëra ien qu'a noneinte ains est su de deveni vio, Fodra pas veni no reincontao de lanfula, On sè parfaitameint bin que cè que s'en enfata n'a seilla to lo jo, pore bin deveni to d'un coup hydrantique et d'avà n'a càpira avoue de renouilla diein le vintrà, mè y est l'ièda que fao le mà, y est pas le bidot, A pouè y a pas fauta, n'aroue, de bere comme de racha, bon diu!

Alò, à causa de quäque souliands, on vu veni no z'eimpachi, à no z'ütres, de no z'einfatao nutron bidot, Y est bon, y est bon! Y a prè n'a coup, mè y ne vu pas mè preindra ou'a, On seimblierait de bourriqua, à to le mondo, memameint u Savoyao, qui ein bëva teint que vülost.

Citoïens! Ein 1896, à Piogre, et cinco en 1906, à Milan, à z'espositions, on baillivè de merdailles d'ò, à s'lo que fabricayont la meilleu zabsinthe et iorcindra, grace à on syndicat de fabricqueints de drops de meurons, on vu no z'eimpachi de bëra s'la même absintha: è dion que y est, de poèson! Gàrda à yò!

Ah! mais na, citoïens, on ne vu pas se laossi faore, on vu pava bere ce qu'on vu et laossi bere u z'autre cein qu'a vülost bere. Le 5 de Juillet on vu preu racheta la bollerie du 14 d'Avri de l'an darri ein voteint

NA! NA! NA!

On vu preu faore vi à nos Confedérés de to lo caintons qu'on est le premi cainton de la Suisse en veneint depeutè San-Delien!

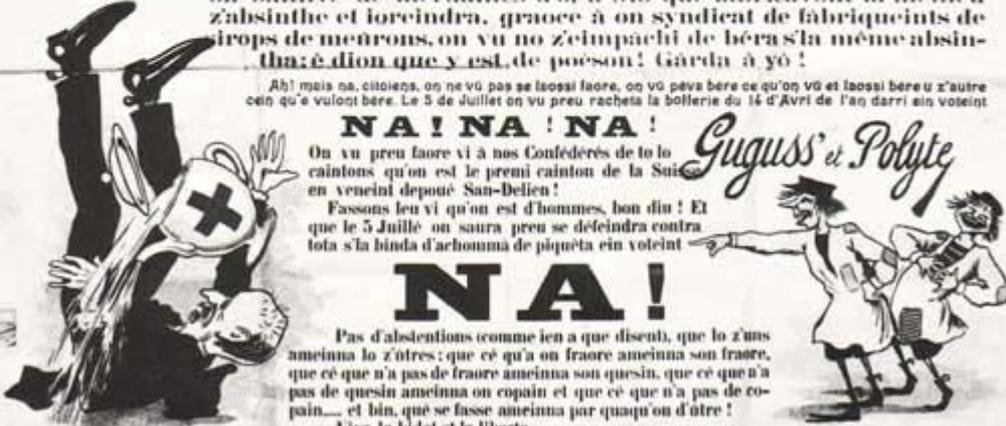
Fassons ien vi qu'on est d'hommes, bon diu! El que le 5 Juillè on saura preu se defeindra contra tota s'la binda d'achomma de piqueta ein voteint

NA!

Pas d'abstentions comme ien a que disent, que lo z'uns ameina lo z'ütres: que cè qu'a on fraore ameina son fraore, que cè que n'a pas de fraore ameina son quesin, que cè que n'a pas de quesin ameina on copain et que cè que n'a pas de copain... et bin, que se fasse ameina par quaqu'on d'üt're!

Viva le bidot et la liberta.

Guguss' et Polyte



Imp. L. BRON, Rue Brocard, Genève