



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 10, 2014

## German President Attacks “Dangerous” Swiss Self-Government

As [outrage grows among European Union bosses over Swiss voters’ February decision](#) to curb mass immigration into Switzerland, German President Joachim Gauck (shown) warned that self-government by the people is “dangerous.” Switzerland is not a member of the EU, but this has not stopped officials in Germany and across the European Union from going into meltdown mode against their independent neighbor and brazenly [terrorizing the Swiss with increasingly outrageous threats](#) over their decision to limit immigration. Gauck’s attack on Switzerland’s system of constitutional self-government, though, is among the most extreme thus far, and it has infuriated citizens all across the political spectrum.



During an official visit to the liberty-minded and fiercely independent Alpine nation last week, the German head of state [blasted](#) the Swiss system whereby the people can organize elections to override the wishes of politicians. Speaking of the immigration referendum, Gauck claimed it is “dangerous when citizens vote on highly complex issues.” It was not immediately clear why the German president thought immigration policy could be considered too “complex” for the Swiss people to make a decision about — especially considering Switzerland’s nearly unparalleled track-record of prosperity and freedom.

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In fact, across Europe, [fury over mass immigration](#) and other issues has sparked calls all over the bloc for Swiss-style national referendums. However, the emerging Brussels-based super-state, like many of its member governments, has become [notorious for imposing its will in defiance of the public](#). Indeed, the entire continent-wide effort to [smash all remaining vestiges of national sovereignty](#) and [create a “federal” Europe](#) has been accomplished almost entirely [against the wishes of citizens](#), rather than through consent. In the few cases where referendums were allowed, the public rejected EU schemes, which were imposed anyway. The erection of the [radical “Lisbon Treaty” offers an excellent example](#).

In an interview with the Swiss newspaper *Tages-Anzeiger*, Gauck claimed that Germans “respect the democratic decision” made by voters. However, rather than allowing citizens to vote directly — a common occurrence in Switzerland, where the vast majority of political decisions are taken at the local and cantonal (state) level anyway — the German president touted “representative democracy” instead. He said it worked “very well” in Germany. Obviously, though, the people and even political leaders of Switzerland were not amused with the foreign leader’s criticism of their system of self-government and direct voting to override the wishes of the establishment.



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Gauck's attacks came amid a coordinated EU-wide uproar among the political establishment, which has been trying desperately to bully the independent and neutral Swiss into compliance with its growing avalanche of decrees for many years. As *The New American* [reported after the immigration vote](#), for example, EU bosses and apparatchiks unleashed a torrent of vitriol aimed at the Swiss, suggesting that voters were somehow "xenophobic" or worse for seeking to protect their nation and culture from huge waves of immigration. Immigrants now make up about one fourth of Switzerland's population. Other EU commissars even threatened to punish the Swiss for their vote.

Of course, the efforts to bribe and bludgeon Switzerland into becoming a mere satellite state of the EU — a controversial regime that the Swiss have consistently and overwhelmingly rejected membership in — are hardly new. As *The New American* reported in 2011, the increasingly oppressive entity in Brussels has also been [demanding and threatening the Swiss over its low tax rates](#), its banking laws, [its refusal to automatically foist EU "law" on Switzerland](#), and much more. Some analysts have even referred to the EU's assaults on the Swiss as a "war" against its sovereignty and freedom.

Unlike the political class in other European nations, however, Swiss politicians and government officials have, at least publicly, remained largely steadfast in their support for a sovereign, self-governing Switzerland where the people remain in charge and government power is strictly limited. After Gauck's latest criticism of the Swiss model, current Swiss President Didier Burkhalter (who serves a one-year term as part of a rotating, multi-member executive branch) defended the system, saying it was a "cornerstone" of the small nation's culture.

Gauck has developed a reputation as a fierce anti-communist opposed to all forms of totalitarianism, partly due to his efforts at bringing down the barbaric Soviet-backed East German dictatorship. However, the German president has also been a fervent supporter of the controversial EU, despite the fact that many of its senior bosses are ["former" communists](#) and [the resemblance of the controversial system it is imposing on Europeans to tyrannical models of the past](#). Instead, in media interviews, Gauck urged Swiss voters to continue forging closer economic and social ties to the Brussels-based entity — an increasingly overbearing super-state that even European heads of state have warned is [now close to finally crushing sovereignty and self-government](#) in the bloc.

Germany, of course, is increasingly becoming known around the world for its [widespread violations of human rights](#) — especially when it comes to the [ruthless persecution and state terror endured by innocent homeschooling families](#), many of whom have already [fled abroad](#) and even [sought asylum in more tolerant or liberty-friendly nations](#). Switzerland, on the other hand, remains one of the [envies of the world](#). It has an economy that is leaving the EU in the dust, strong protections for freedom, and much more. Swiss voters would be wise to ignore Gauck and keep it that way. As Germany's own history has shown, an unrestrained political class is far more dangerous than self-government could ever be.

Photo of German President Joachim Gauck: AP Images

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