



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on September 1, 2026

Swiss Politician Seeks to Change 600-year-old Coat of Arms in Name of “Progress”

In a story that seemingly belongs on humorous news website Not the Bee, a Swiss cantonal parliamentarian proposed changing the coat of arms of his canton, Bern, in order to make it more “progressive” and “gender neutral.”

The proposal, made in March, sought to change how the bear depicted on the coat of arms and Bern flag is displayed. Swissinfo reports:

The cantonal government was responding to a written question from Liberal Green parliamentarian Thomas Brönnimann, who wondered whether it would not be more appropriate to depict the bear without its masculine attributes, so that the population as a whole would feel better represented. As a symbol of progress, the bear could also be moved from bottom to top and from left to right in future, he said.



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Brönnimann, who has also advocated gender-neutral restrooms, described the current coat of arms as “simply outdated.”

In a moment of sanity, Bern’s cantonal government rejected the proposal, noting that the coat of arms has been virtually unchanged since the 15th century.

The Importance of Symbolism

Although Brönnimann’s proposal was borderline satirical, it highlights the importance of symbolism. A country’s symbols — including its flag and coat of arms — reflect its character, culture, and political principles. Accordingly, we should not be surprised or take it lightly when individuals seek to change them to suit their ideological preferences.

Throughout history, competing factions have tried to change their national symbols to conform with their own ideologies. For example, the tricolor flag was popularized as a symbol of the ideals of the French Revolution, and multiple newly created Swiss cantons adopted green, then regarded as a “revolutionary” color, in their coats of arms at the turn of the 19th century. Similarly, when communists took over Russia, China, and other countries, they frequently replaced those countries’ flags and emblems with expressly socialist symbolism. And in Europe today, most European Union member states



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display the EU flag alongside their national flags, symbolizing the EU's intent to supplant its member states' sovereignty.

Architecture is another example of the use of symbolism to display culture and principles. In the West, classical architecture and other traditional styles have been gradually replaced by modernist and postmodernist architecture detached from Western culture.

The Attack on U.S. Emblems

Similar attacks are occurring in the United States. For example, the American flag is becoming increasingly divisive as the "pride" flag and other cultural-Marxist symbols become more common. Additionally, several states, including Minnesota, have changed or considered changing their flags because of accusations of "racism." And the official title of Juneteenth that Congress formally enacted in 2021 — Juneteenth National Independence Day — directly competes with the real Independence Day (July 4) as the nation's central holiday. In these and other areas, traditional American emblems are being supplanted by symbolism completely detached from the Republic's founding principles.

These attacks on our traditional symbols should spur us to boldly defend Americanism — not only its principles, but also the figures that represent it.

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