

# The Passy Press

## Letter to the Editor

From: John Hennessy <[jackhennessy70@gmail.com](mailto:jackhennessy70@gmail.com)>  
To: Nick Gardiner <[enpg@thepassypress.com](mailto:enpg@thepassypress.com)>  
Date: Jan 17, 2016, at 8:47 PM EST

Dear Sir

National Service certainly seems to work in Switzerland, one of the worlds oldest and true democracies, where the people get to vote on key issues, such as membership in UN, IMF, etc. and if more mosques should be built. They do nurture their culture of separate but equal Cantons and an equal voice of all the people. I believe Jefferson would have approved of this model, which has worked for over 700 years with Federal power very limited.

However, it is not a good country to use as a role model, because their policy of guaranteeing privacy regarding ownership of accounts of foreigners is not politically correct in rest of world, as it has allowed in the past for a lot of tax evasion by foreigners.

In Switzerland, All males are required to serve. Two thirds are accepted with the remaining third doing other national service while females are volunteers. Basic training takes from 18 to 21 weeks, while those unqualified for military training must serve 50% longer and lasts 340 days. It works out quite interestingly, because many people stay on and complete Training every summer and get promoted. Others just finish the basic training.

In actual fact it I think it does build camaraderie. For example the Chairman of the Board of Credit Swiss only did the basic program and by the time he was Chairman, the Chef of the Bank and several members of the Executive staff were officers of higher rank to him. One visible result was at Company birthday parties (to which I got invited in spite of being neither Swiss nor in their Army) a lot of joking went on about the momentary reversal of rank.

Further I do not think universal service would be a cure-all for restricting money in politics. It would have to be coupled to a reversal of Citizens United, which due to naïveté of the Supreme justices equated money with free speech, which is ridiculous on the surface as it based on the erroneous assumption that all money is equal, i.e. My \$1.00 is equal to Soros's \$1Billion. He and the other political billionaires certainly get a lot more political free speech than I do. Even the most obtuse Justice or lawyer must now see the many perverse results, only one of which is highlighted in latest TPP essays, an oligarchy of the rich and famous.

Sincerely,

Jack Hennessy

PS As I said in my prior, keep banging the drum on the consequences of money in politics and we will hope an American Messiah eventually arises.

John Hennessy is the former Chief Executive of CS-First Boston and was Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Treasury.