



Michael Cashman

MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

RE:FA/EE/Parlavantzas

Mr Parlavantzas
Zuerherstrasse 117
CH-5400 Baden
Suisse

WITNESS

12 January 2000

Dear Mr Parlavantzas,

I was deeply concerned by the e mail that I received from you on 22 November 1999, concerning the status and circumstance of EU nationals living in Switzerland.

I have recently received replies to letters that I sent out last year to Chris Patten, Commissioner for External Relations and to Brian Simpson, Vice Chair of the Inter-Parliamentary Delegation for relations with Switzerland.

The Inter-Parliamentary delegation has already acknowledged the issues that you have raised and Mr Simpson tells me that he has passed on your concerns to the Swiss authorities in the past. Mr Simpson also points out that the Swiss government is changing but radical change is very difficult.

The reply from Mr Patten assures me that the Commission is also fully aware of the living and working conditions of foreigners in Switzerland. The Commission has negotiated and signed a far-reaching agreement on the free movement of persons in Switzerland, which will considerably improve the situation. The Agreement will come into force sometime in 2001, after completion of the ratification process.

The consequences of the agreement will be that rules equivalent to those applicable in the Union will be applied by Switzerland. Access to the Swiss labour market will be liberalised in accordance with rules applicable amongst EU Member States and therefore, practically the whole *aquis communautaire* in the area of free movement of persons will also be applicable in Switzerland.

The agreement will be monitored very closely, with any shortcomings or problems being brought to the attention of the Joint Committee to be set up under the Agreement. The monitoring and information activities, which you proposed in your e-mail, will be undertaken in this framework.

I hope that this information addresses your concerns. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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European parliament

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