FORVM GEOPOLITICA
Independent Commentary on a Fractured World




# Swiss Ambassador to NATO Launches a Broad Attack

**Jacques Pitteloud views Switzerland as the “weak link” and “blind spot” in the EU’s security framework. He calls Rafael Lutz’s book "The NATO Network in Switzerland" a “vile” pamphlet. A response**

*Rafael Lutz*

Sun 22 Nov 2026 6 min read

Gone are the days when Switzerland was a “special case”; gone are the days of isolationism. Jacques Pitteloud—who served as Swiss chargé d’affaires in Washington until 2024 and has since been ambassador to NATO in Brussels—is now convinced that Bern must urgently contribute to “European security.” Under

no circumstances should Switzerland continue to be the "soft underbelly" (ventre mou) at the heart of Europe. That is the opinion of the Swiss diplomat, which he recently expressed in an interview with the French-language newspaper Le Temps.

Pitteloud nonchalantly described his home country as a "blind spot (angle mort) in the security framework" of the EU and NATO. Such a blind spot must no longer exist, according to Pitteloud, who evidently no longer believes in Switzerland's sovereign national defense and neutrality and belongs to the NATO-friendly wing among diplomats at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), which advocates closer cooperation with the alliance.

Anyone who does not march in step with NATO is subjected to Pitteloud's rhetorical stranglehold. This is exactly what happened in my case: In an interview with Le Temps, the ambassador really let loose against my book *The NATO Network in Switzerland—Who Is Sacrificing Neutrality to Global Power Interests*.

Pitteloud claims that the book was blocked by a judge (bloqué par un juge)—not because of "sensational revelations," but due to "unacceptable and despicable attacks on the private life of a colleague." He is referring to the passages about Pälvi Pulli, former head of security policy at the DDPS, who took over the job from her predecessor, Christian Catrina, in 2018—her former partner.

The fact is: There was never a court order (such as a super-provisional injunction) against the book. Instead, there were several cease-and-desist letters from Rena Zulauf, Pälvi Pulli's attorney. She demanded the removal of numerous passages, which my publisher, Christoph Pfluger, accepted upon the second threat for obvious—and above all, economic—reasons. In addition, Zulauf successfully intervened with major book retailers such as Orell Füssli and Co., which subsequently removed the book from their shelves for several weeks.

Let's be clear: For Pitteloud, exposing cronyism and connections among the highest-ranking officials in the state is an outrage. However, the Swiss ambassador to NATO apparently has no problem whatsoever with the intermittent censorship of a book that brings such matters to light. Pitteloud, it seems, views the free press and journalists much like a king in the age of absolutism, when there was no room for criticism whatsoever.

The ambassador is not known as a champion of freedom of expression anyway. Pitteloud is said to have once intervened with Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS) regarding Jacques Baud—the former colonel in the Swiss Army who was sanctioned by the EU—and asked the broadcaster to refrain from conducting any further interviews with Baud. Baud is an advocate for a neutral Switzerland who, in

several books, has also critically examined NATO's actions in the war in Ukraine and who previously worked with Pitteloud. Pitteloud has little sympathy for Baud's views. One would search in vain for any criticism from him of the EU sanctions against Baud.

One thing must be said in Pitteloud's favor, however: The Swiss ambassador to NATO is a master at twisting or bending the facts. This was also evident during the debate on the 2026 Neutrality Initiative, which called for an end to sanctions against Russia and was rejected by Swiss voters this fall. In an interview with *Le Temps*, Pitteloud took issue with the initiative's supporters and accused them of engaging in an uncivilized debate: "Demonizing one's opponent is so very contrary to Swiss values!" (Diaboliser l'adversaire est tellement contraire aux valeurs suisses!)

Did it escape Pitteloud's notice that it was precisely the opponents who defamed the proponents as Moscow's "fifth column," even as "servants" of Russia, and spoke of a "Putin initiative"? Politicians from the FDP all the way to the SP constantly resorted to these cheap, killer "arguments." I recently wrote about Pitteloud's accusations in the Weltwoche: "To now accuse the supporters of the neutrality initiative of having waged a kind of anti-Swiss debate is—pardon me—outrageous nonsense."

Pitteloud—who says of himself, "I am a patriot" (NZZ)—is also mistaken in his geopolitical analysis: With the rapid rapprochement with NATO being driven by the Swiss ambassador in Brussels, Switzerland is being drawn ever deeper into geopolitical conflicts. As a result, our country is increasingly becoming a "target." The sanctions policy toward Russia shows this in black and white: Ever since Bern joined the economic war against Moscow, the Putin government has regarded Switzerland as a so-called "enemy state."

Pitteloud, in any case, seems to have complete confidence in the Western military alliance. As early as 2025, the Swiss diplomat raved in an NZZ interview about the Scandinavian countries that had joined NATO ("The Finns and Swedes show that there is another way.") and stated that Switzerland, too, needed to cooperate much more closely. "We should conduct more exercises with NATO," Pitteloud urged. Anyone listening to Pitteloud's statements quickly gets the feeling that the Swiss ambassador has long since adopted NATO's way of thinking.

Swiss media outlets such as Le Temps and the NZZ are enthusiastic about such opinions. The diplomat is regularly given a platform in both newspapers. What readers don't know: Pitteloud has excellent connections to the editorial offices of these NATO-friendly publications. For example, Pitteloud serves on the faculty of

the “NZZ Academy,” which the liberal media group launched in 2024 and which offers courses on topics such as “Geopolitics,” “Technology & Innovation,” and “Environment & Sustainability,” among others.

The NZZ, in particular, is still only too happy to hear Pitteloud’s views; after all, a pro-NATO stance is now all the rage among the newspaper’s journalists. Even diplomat Pitteloud is occasionally happy to get swept up in the trends of the zeitgeist. During his time as Swiss envoy to the U.S., Pitteloud had pictures of Confederate Commander-in-Chief Robert E. Lee and Union General William T. Sherman removed from the “Generals’ Room” at the Swiss Embassy and replaced with portraits of unknown people of color. “The Swiss ambassador is now ‘woke,’” wrote *Die Weltwoche* in 2022.

Today, it is Switzerland’s neutral DNA that Pitteloud is increasingly seeking to eliminate. Ironically, he now refers to the very country he represents at NATO as a “blind spot” and “belly fat.” That’s pretty strong stuff.

ARTICLE TAGS:

Analysis Lutz, Rafael Pitteloud, Jacques Switzerland NATO