

away from Austria and set up a customs and monetary union with its other neighbor Switzerland in 1921⁴³. These arrangements with Switzerland have held to the present day. Liechtenstein applied to join the League of Nations in 1920 but in what was a major setback for its claim to sovereignty it was denied on the grounds of being too small⁴⁴. Despite this Liechtenstein continued to exercise and assert its sovereignty. Liechtenstein remained neutral during the Second World War and raised no military forces to protect itself. The Nazi German regime respected Liechtenstein neutrality alongside that of Switzerland⁴⁵. The key difference being that Switzerland had mobilized its considerable militia based army to defend its borders and engaged in numerous skirmishes and encounters with Axis and Allied forces but it was very clear that it would not defend Liechtenstein territory⁴⁶. Liechtenstein was neutral, unarmed and without allies but even in a time of global war and conquest its sovereignty was acknowledged and respected. Liechtenstein was only faced with a security challenge at the end of the war when an armoured battalion of Free Russian Waffen SS troops rolled over the Liechtenstein-Austrian border. These troops were met by a handful of lightly armed Liechtenstein Police. The Free Russians promptly surrendered and sought asylum in Liechtenstein. This asylum was granted and after several years of negotiations, particularly with the Soviet Union who wanted them repatriated as war criminals, the Russians were resettled in Argentina⁴⁷. Once again Liechtenstein's sovereign status allowed them to defy the requests of the Soviet Union that they be repatriated like other Russians interned in Austrian territory, and this policy differentiated them from their neighbours.

Liechtenstein's history has several key milestones in establishing its credentials as a sovereign entity in international law. It was promulgated as an Imperial Principality in 1719, it was recognized by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and it was further recognized in both world wars where its frontiers and neutrality were acknowledged and respected. It did all of this without a soldier in uniform since 1868, despite sharing a border with a belligerent in both world wars. Since Liechtenstein abolished its Army in 1868 it was granted a new constitution in 1921, which including some amendments remains in force today. Article 44 of the Liechtenstein Constitution states:

1) Every man fit to bear arms shall be required, until the completion of his 60th year, to serve in

⁴³ Jorri Duursma, **Fragmentation and the International Relations of Micro-states**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 149.

⁴⁴ Jacques Rapaport, Ernest Muteba and Joseph J. Therattil, **Small States and Territories: Status and Problems**, (New York, Arno Press, 1971), 115-117.

⁴⁵ Beattie, 104.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 125-126.

⁴⁷ Beattie, 129-132.