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# Federal elections in October A win for the Right?

(G. Pb) The deadline is the 23rd of October, 1983. The Swiss nation will elect the main body of the members of the Federal Chambers; the entire National Council and the majority of the Council of States. Who are the likely winners? The Right Wing with the Liberals, the Radical Democrats, the Swiss People's Party, or even the National Group for People and Fatherland? Who might be the losers? The Social Democratic or Communist Left Wing, the Independent Union? The significant unknown factors: the Christian Democrats, the new parties forming the Group for the Protection of the Environment. It is still anyone's guess what the outcome will be.



since 1959. The four most important groupings – the Social Democrats, the Radical Democrats, the Christian Democrats and the Swiss People's Party – are represented in the Federal Council more or less proportionally, as well as in a large number of cantons and municipalities. This is the magic formula.

In most other pluralistic democracies, the battle for supremacy is fought out between two big parties or coalitions, only one of which finally wields the power of government. On the other hand, in Switzerland, each large party or coalition has a share of this power, which is a startling discovery for the uninitiated observer.

Let us take a look at the Swiss parties, one after the other, and see how they are preparing themselves for this peculiar contest.

### The Social Democrats – avoiding the worst

Up to the end of 1982, the *Social Democratic Party* was predicted to be heading for the heaviest losses in the coming federal elec-