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Distribution of the Parties

(G. PL) – This schedule shows the repartition of forces during the period of legislation 1979–83. The Independent's Union and the Evangelical Party form a parliamentary group; the Party of Labour, the Progressive Organisation and the Autonomous Socialist Party form another one.

	Federal Council	National* Council	Senate**
Radical Democratic Party	2	51	11
Social Democratic Party	2	51	9
Christian Democratic Party	2	44	18
Swiss People's Party	1	23	5
Liberal Party		8	3
Independent Union		8	
Evangelical Party		3	
Party of Labour		3	
Progressive Organisation		2	
Autonomous Socialist Party		2	
National Group for People and Fatherland		2	
Vigilance (Geneva)		1	
Independent Social Christians' Party		1	
Group for the Protection of the Environment		1	
Total	7	200	46

* As a general rule the election for the National Council follows a proportional representation.

** Every Canton delegates two (every Half-Canton one) representatives to the Senate; they are elected according to the majority principle (except in the Canton Jura).

The return of the Nationalists

The Nationalists have one representative from the *Vigilance* in Geneva and two from the *National Group for People and Fatherland* in Berne and Zürich. These are the only survivors of the big explosion of 1971, but their parties appear on the surface again from time to time. The slight increase in the number of foreigners, the influx of refugees, the shortage of accommodation and the level of unemployment – the

interplay of all these factors is giving impetus to these parties.

The Ecological Parties could also make progress. At present they have only the *Group for the Protection of the Environment* (GPE) in the canton of Vaud. However, in preparation for the federal elections, they are attempting to form a «green» union with parties in other cantons, although two trends – a left and a right – have emerged.

The *Independent* Social

Christians' Party has only one representative, in the Jura, but there are smaller, related parties – half of which are of a Social Democratic nature, the other half being Christian Democratic – in the cantons of Fribourg, Valais and Lucerne.

Every one of these fourteen parties has a foothold – or at least a toe-hold – in the Federal Councils, and it seems highly unlikely that any other party will be able to shake their confidence for the time being. It is clear that with fourteen parties, there is a danger not so much of a vacuum, but rather of an excess.

Georges Plomb
born 1938, Reporter in Berne
for «La Suisse»

Instruction by Correspondence for Swiss Children

In the course of last year, the Swiss Teachers' Association has been investigating a proposal whether correspondence courses could be organized for Swiss children temporarily abroad, so that, on returning to Switzerland, there would be no problems or at least smaller ones.

A first inquiry in the «Tages-Anzeiger Fernausgabe» showed that many Swiss abroad for a contracted period had problems with their children's schooling, specially in remote places.

We should, however, like to have some more opinions and appeal to the parents concerned to answer the following questions:

1. Age and school year of the children, and if any of these school years were spent in Switzerland and in which Canton.

2. Present school situation. Kind

of school, distance from home, language in which tuition is given, children's language at home.

3. Have you any experience with correspondence courses?

4. Would you welcome such courses for school children?

5. Do you have any contact with schools or teachers in Switzerland?

We shall naturally consider your

information as confidential, and we thank you in advance for your cooperation.

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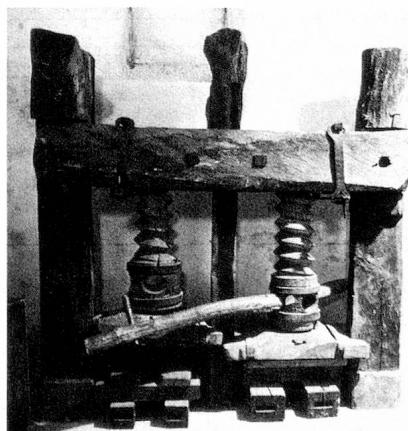
The Basle Paper Mill: An active Museum of Paper, Writing and Printing

1980, one of the oldest buildings in Basle has appeared in old splendour: the Basle Paper Mill in the St. Alban Valley. It contains now the Museum of Paper, Writing and Printing and is not only worthy of the rich tradition of crafts it houses, but also incorporates a good deal of Basle's glorious past. Visitors enter the museum through the café in the adjoining mill and reach a courtyard after crossing the mill-pond near the water-wheel. The entrance leads straight to the workshop of the paper mill. The vat, press, stamper and beater, complete with power from the water-wheel via a king post all correspond with the technical equipment in this mill about 1790 as it is described in journeymen's books of that time. The sizing vessel and glazing equipment are also of this period, whereas the crushing roller is a witness to the mechanisation of the 19th century. For visitors who are unable or do not wish to climb all the way up to the drying lofts on the fourth floor, a small section of the drying equipment has been reconstructed in the mill room. This makes it possible to follow the course of manufacture of a sheet of handmade paper from preparation of the pulp right through to drying, sizing and finishing all in the same area of the building. The oldest entrance to the house leads straight into the heart of the living quarters, where

the history of the building comes into its own. The rag cellar houses the exhibits on the early history of paper in the Far East, whereas the entrance hall is devoted to the history of papermaking and its techniques. The different pieces of equipment used by the European papermaker are on show on the ground floor and in the old cellar, which was once used for sorting and breaking rags. In the cellar there are also an old twin-screw press, which probably dates back to the 16th century, and a flat stamper, reminding one of the forerunners of the European stamping mill.

The old staircase in the entrance hall leads up to the first floor, where the room facing south contains an introduction to the history of script and the alphabet,

Paper press, about 1500 A.D.



The water-wheel of the Basle Paper Mill.

as well as an exhibition of non-alphabetical scripts. The rooms to the east and north take the visitor from the oldest Semitic alphabetical script to the Greeks and the Romans and, in the panelled Galician living room, to the scripts of the Middle Ages. A synopsis of the development of handwriting up to the present day completes this section.

Through the entrance to the old sorting room of the paper mill, the visitor enters the world of technology, starting with Gutenberg's invention. A number of original machines show the history of typecasting. The Haas Room