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FEDERAL ASSEMBLY NAMES CELIO
AS PRESIDENT FOR 1948.

Switzerland's new President for 1948 is Dr. Enrico Celio, a member of the Swiss Federal Council since 1940, and head of the Department of Railroads and Posts. Dr. Celio served his first one-year term as President in 1943, and this year succeeds Philip Etter. Both are members of the Catholic Conservative Party.

The 58-year-old President-elect is a native of Switzerland's Italian speaking canton of Ticino. He was born in Ambri, a small town near the 9½-mile-long St. Gosstahr tunnel, which connects the German-speaking part of Switzerland with the southern canton.

As a boy, Dr. Celio first attended local schools, and then the Salesian Institute of Balerna. After studying in a Jesuit College in Belan, and in the Benedictine Abbey School in Einsiedeln, he majored in philosophy at the University of Fribourg. While a student, Dr. Celio assumed in 1909 the Presidency of the Ticino Catholic Students' League "Lépontia." He did considerable writing and his pieces mainly on literature, appeared in many newspapers and reviews. Dr. Celio then turned to law, and after further studies, set up practice in the picturesque village of Biasca.

Soon after he became a member of the Ticino Assembly, to which he belonged without interruption until 1932. In 1924, when he was only 35 years old, Dr. Celio was elected to the National Council or House of Representatives, and in 1932, he became Ticinese State Senator. After the death of Federal Councillor Giuseppe Motta, another well known Swiss statesman from the Ticino, Dr. Celio became a member of the Swiss Federal Council.

The Federal Council, and not the President, is the executive power in Switzerland. It consists of seven members elected for a term of four years by the Federal Assembly. Two members of the Federal Council hold the offices of President and Vice-President of the Swiss Confederation for one year only. The Vice-President becomes President, and another member of the Council of seven becomes Vice-President.

"RODOLPHE RUBATTEL"

(Successor to Federal Councillor Stampfli).

The newly-elected Federal Councillor Rodolphe Rubattel, was born on September 4th, 1896, at Villarzel (Vaud). He studied Law and later became a Journalist and for a period he was Chief Editor of the "Tribune de Lausanne." From 1930 to 1932, he occupied the office of Chief of a Section of the Federal Department of Economy; as a result of this office, in 1930, he was a member of the Swiss Delegation to the League of Nations.

Mr. Rubattel belongs to the Liberal Party (Radical Democratic Party). In 1933 he was elected a member of the Cantonal Parliament of Vaud, and since 1944, he has been the head of the Department for Agriculture, Industry and Commerce of this Canton. In 1946 he was President of the Cantonal Government. He is now elected a Federal Councillor for a period of four years, at the end of which time he is eligible for re-election.

Dr. Walter Stampfli, who relinquished his office as a Federal Councillor, was born in 1884 in Büren (Solothurn) and studied law at the Universities of Zurich and Göttingen. In 1906 he obtained the degree of Doctor rer. pol. After a short activity in the insurance world he took over the editorship of the "Oltener Tagblattes" in 1908, this position he occupied for ten years.

In 1918 Dr. Stampfli was elected Secretary of the "Solothurn Chamber of

Commerce" and three years later entered into the services of the v.Roll'schen Eisenwerke.

At the early age of 28 he was elected a member of the "Kantonsrat" of Solothurn to which he belonged until 1937. He entered Parliament (National Council) as a Liberal in 1931. In 1940, Dr. Stampfli was elected a member of the Federal Government in succession to the late Dr. H. Obrecht.

Federal Councillor Dr. W. Stampfli has rendered the Confederation great services, especially as one of the promoters of the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance Act, and his leaving the Federal Government is universally regretted.

BRITISH PEOPLE MAY AGAIN TRAVEL TO SWITZERLAND.

According to an agreement between British and Swiss authorities, British people travelling to Switzerland for holidays, will again be allowed to transfer funds as from the 1st of May, 1948.

The amount permitted within twelve (12) months is £stg.35 for adults and £stg.25 for children.

SUNDRY NEWS.

The Austrian Government has decided to open a Consulate-General in Zurich, and has appointed M. W. Peinsipp as Consul-General.

Revenue of the Swiss Confederation during 1948 is estimated at Frs.1,794,800,000 while expenditure is expected to amount to Frs.1,800,700,000, leaving an adverse balance of only Frs.5,900,000. The current year's budgeted deficit amounts to Frs.97,000,000.

On 31st October Swiss notes in circulation reached the record figure of Frs.4,192,000,000, an increase over the previous week of Frs.138,300,000. The latest weekly return of the Swiss National Bank ascribes this increase to end-month requirements. The gold reserve remained almost unchanged at Frs.5,374,000,000, so that the alleged recent gold transfers from England to Zurich and Geneva, reported by an English news agency to have amounted to many million pounds sterling, could not have been for the account of the Swiss National Bank.

Drastic electricity economy measures have been ordered by the Swiss Government. This is the result of the drought - the worst for 100 years in Switzerland - which has affected the output of hydro-electric plants. As from November 1st electric heating in private homes is forbidden, factories must reduce consumption of electricity by 70 to 80 per cent., and the consumption of electricity in hotels, restaurants, shops and places of entertainment must be cut by one-third.

Imports of cars into Switzerland which registered a decrease in the month of August increased again substantially in September, when 2,261 cars with a custom value of 17,500,000 Swiss francs arrived in the country against 1,110 in September, 1946. The United Kingdom heads the list of suppliers of small and medium sized cars, whereas the U.S. supplies chiefly heavy and large cars.

The "Tellspielgesellschaft" has announced that they will again give a number of "William Tell" performances during the Summer, 1948, at Altdorf. During the 1947 season altogether 13,300 persons attended the performances. (A.T.S.)