

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1943)

Heft: 1019

Rubrik: Prepaid subscription rates

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY P. F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telephone: Clerkenwell 2321/2.

Published Monthly at 23, LEONARD STREET, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 25 — No. 1019.

LONDON, DECEMBER 23rd, 1943.

PRICE 6d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

(Monthly issue.)

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	(6 issues, post free)	3/6
	(12 issues, post free)	6/6
SWITZERLAND	One Year (12 issues, post free) Frs. 5.—	

(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postscheck-Konto
Basle V 5718).



NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

To the figures which we published in our last issue showing the constitution of our new National Council may be added the following observations. Roughly speaking, a third of the seats in the lower chamber will be occupied by new councillors. The success of the socialists recalls a similar achievement in 1919 after the last war when the party was returned with a gain of no less than 22 seats (41): in the last elections in 1939 the socialists lost five seats probably due to the hurried mobilisation. With the exception of Neuchâtel they maintained or increased their strength in all the cantons; additional mandates were secured in Berne (3 now 13), Zurich (2 now 12), Glaris (1), Zug (1), Fribourg (1), Basle (1 now 3), Baselland (1 now 2), Ticino (1 now 2), and Vaud (1 now 3). The radical party who now plays second fiddle has consistently been a loser ever since 1925 when it numbered 60 councillors. The third strongest party, the catholic-conservatives, have lost an adherent each in Schwyz, Baselland, St. Gall and gained a seat in Fribourg. Of the remaining smaller parties the Landessring (Duttweiler) is on the down-grade in Zurich, Berne, Basle and Geneva.

* * *

The new States Council (Ständerat) is now composed of 19 catholic conservatives, 12 radicals (2 less than before), 5 socialists (2 more than before), 4 farmers, citizens and artisans, 2 liberals, 2 democrats.

* * *

National Councillor Ernest Wetter, our "Chancellor of the Exchequer," has resigned for reasons of health from the Federal Council of which he was the doyen. Born at Winterthur in 1877 he started his career as a local schoolmaster, studied national economy in Zurich, Paris and London subsequently taking up an appointment at the "Handelsschule" in Zurich. At the age of 45 he occupied the post of director of the Commercial Division at Berne and was elected to the National Council in 1919. After a close contest with his socialist opponent Klöti (Zurich) who obtained 98 votes against his 117 Wetter entered the Federal Council in 1938.

The National and States councils assembled in common session on the 15th of this month to elect our cabinet ministers for the coming year. 232 Councillors were present and the first one to be elected was Federal Councillor Marcel Pilet-Golaz who secured 154 votes — a notable success in view of the generally accepted belief that the socialists intended to have him replaced by one of their own leaders; he is the only representative of the French-speaking cantons. The nominee of the socialists Henri Perret from LeLocle remained second favourite with 59 votes. Federal Councillors Philippe Etter and M. Celio were confirmed with 163 and 164 votes respectively and M. Kobelt with 163. The remaining two Stampfli and von Steiger were returned with flying colours having 194 and 183 ayes in their favour. The seventh seat, formerly held by Ernest Wetter who resigned for reasons of health, was filled by Ernest Nobs, the socialist president of the town of Zurich, who was supported by 122 councillors. The New Federal Councillor hails from Aarberg and has been a member of the National Council since 1919; for the last 28 years he has been a prominent member in the civil administration of Zurich.

* * *

Federal Councillor Stampfli was elected president of the Confederation with 197 votes and Pilet-Golaz vice-president with 147 votes.

* * *

A total of 532 million francs were subscribed when the eighth Federal war loan was offered for subscription; it was submitted in three lots of 100 million each, viz 2½% cash bonds with a currency of five years, Federal stock of 3¼% with ten years and third lot 3½% with 20 years' currency. The amount will cover about a tenth of the mobilisation expenses so far incurred. The result of the subscription affirms afresh the unshakeable confidence of our people in the Federal Council and its financial policy.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les Membres sont avisés que

L'ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE

aura lieu mardi le 11 janvier à 7h.15 et sera précédée d'un dîner à 6h. précises au Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1.

ORDRE DU JOUR:

Procès-verbal.	Démissions.
Admissions.	Divers.

Cette Assemblée sera en forme d'un "Bierabig mit Esse." Les Membres sont priés de s'inscrire par écrit pas plus tard que le 4 décembre auprès de Mons. P. A. Moehr, Hon. Sec., Imperial House, Kingsway, W.C.2. Prière de s'abstenir de téléphoner.

LE COMITE.