

**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:** - (1954)

**Heft:** 1219

**Rubrik:** News at random

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# 11094 199258 The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED IN 1919 BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER.

**The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain**

Advisory Council: R. DE CINTRA (Chairman); O. F. BOEHRINGER, L.S. CHAPUIS, J. EUSEBIO, GOTTFRIED KELLER, R. J. KELLER, R. PFENNINGER, A. STAUFFER, G. E. SUTER.

EDITED BY A. STAUFFER WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE SWISS COLONY IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 2321/2.

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

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

Vol. 29. No. 1219.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15th, 1954.

PRICE 11d.



## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

The Swiss electorate voted last month on the new articles that the Government proposed to add to the constitution. The first — accepted by 670,747 votes to 158,333 — enables the Federal Government to take the necessary measures against water pollution, which has dangerously increased in lakes and rivers.

The Swiss are the only European people who are called upon to vote on financial questions, and who can decide on the amount of taxes they are willing to pay.

Last month, for the second time in 18 months, they rejected — this time by 487,364 votes to 353,962 — the scheme submitted to them for supplying the Federal Government with the financial means it needs.

Here are the particulars of the poll:

	...	New Finance Scheme		Protection against Water Pollution	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Zürich	...	85,659	84,023	154,366	15,568
Bern	...	62,732	72,905	102,880	33,614
Luzern	...	10,889	28,330	29,555	9,842
Uri	...	3,205	2,382	4,146	1,205
Schwyz	...	3,394	3,711	7,672	4,565
Obwalden	...	753	2,774	2,093	1,401
Nidwalden	...	936	2,829	2,802	944
Glarus	...	3,574	3,981	6,380	1,184
Zug	...	2,481	4,578	5,533	1,508
Fribourg	...	5,529	13,242	12,837	5,782
Solothurn	...	16,248	17,011	27,138	5,166
Baselstadt	...	13,974	17,352	29,832	1,874
Baselland	...	10,361	11,525	18,792	3,167
Schaffhausen	...	7,114	7,262	12,945	1,493
Appenzell I.Rh.	...	597	1,588	1,388	793
Appenzell I.Rh.	...	597	1,588	1,288	793
St. Gallen	...	19,850	42,144	37,364	10,263
Graubünden	...	15,203	7,542	18,802	3,655
Aargau	...	34,156	39,712	57,279	16,822
Thurgau	...	12,824	19,703	26,626	6,025
Ticino	...	8,155	8,376	12,748	2,788
Vaud	...	14,515	40,597	41,745	17,077
Valais	...	8,088	11,638	12,248	7,157
Neuchâtel	...	7,241	11,678	15,367	3,382
Genève	...	3,308	20,614	22,703	541
Total		353,962	487,364	670,747	158,333

59 per cent of the electors went to the Poll.



On account of the Swiss electorate having rejected the Government's plan for federal income tax, Federal-Councillor, Dr. Max Weber, head of the Federal Finance Department, has tendered his resignation.

Dr. Weber was elected a member of the Swiss Government in 1952, in succession to Mr. Ernst Nobs.

He was born in Zurich, and studied economics and afterwards became Editor of the Socialist paper "Volksstimme" of St. Gall. From 1926-1940, he was an active collaborator of the "Schweizerischen Gewerkschaftsbundes" (Trade Union Council) of which he became its Secretary, and in 1944, its President. In 1948, Dr. Weber was appointed Professor of National Economy at the University of Berne. He has sat in Parliament (National Council) since 1939 as a Socialist.

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The Swiss Federal Assembly, or joint meeting of the two Chambers of Parliament have elected Federal-Councillor R. Rubattel, President of the Confederation for 1954. He obtained 185 votes out of a possible 227; the other votes were blank or invalid.

President Rodolphe Rubattel was born in 1896, at Villarzel, in the Broye valley. On completion of his school education he studied law at the University in Lausanne, where he obtained the degree of doctor of law. He then took up journalism as a profession, and in turn was Editor of the "Feuille d'Avis de Montreux", "Tribune de Lausanne", "Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne" and "La Revue".

In 1933, he entered the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud as a radical, and eleven years later (1944) he became a member of the cantonal government. He was elected a member of the Federal Government in 1948.

\* \* \*

Federal Councillor, Joseph Escher was elected Vice-President of the Confederation. He was born in 1885, in Simplon-Dorf (Ct. Valais). Mr. Escher studied *juris prudence* at the Universities of Bern and Berlin after which he established himself as a lawyer and notary in Brig. From 1912-1920, Escher was a member of the Municipal Council of Brig, and from 1920-1928 occupied the post of President of the Urban Council of Glis-Brig. He sat from 1915-1932 in the Grand Council of the canton of Valais as a representative of the catholic-conservative party.

In 1931, he entered the cantonal government, and three years later (1934) Dr. Escher was elected President of the government of the canton of Valais. In 1925, he was elected a Member of Parliament (National Council) in which he sat from 1925-1932, and again from 1932-1950, when he joined the Federal Government.

\* \* \*

The two Federal Chambers have elected Dr. Hans Streuli (Zurich) as a member of the Federal Government in succession to Dr. Max Weber, who has resigned from his post.

The new Federal Councillor was born in 1892, and is a citizen of Wädenswil and Richterswil. He studied architecture at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich and the University of Munich. From 1928-1935, he was President of the Commune of Richterwil.

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In 1935, Dr. Streuli was elected a member of the Government of the canton of Zurich where he took over the Finance Department, which position he occupied until his election to the Federal Council. In 1940, the University of Zurich honoured him with the degree of *doctor honoris causa* in recognition for the work he had rendered as President of the Organisation Committee of the "Landesausstellung" in 1939. In the army he holds the rank of Colonel. (Engineering Corps).

The Swiss Cabinet now comprises four Radicals, two Catholic Conservatives, and one Agrarian. The Socialist party, after participating in the coalition Government for 10 years, has returned to its former opposition as a result of the rejection of the federal tax scheme.

\* \* \*

M. Jean Louis Barrelet (Rad. Neuchâtel) has been elected President of the States Council. M. Barrelet was born in 1902 in Boveresse (Ct. Neuchâtel). He studied at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich, and from 1927-41, held the post of teacher at the Cantonal Agricultural School in Cernier. In 1942 he was elected a member of the government of the canton of Neuchâtel. He entered the States Council in 1945.

\* \* \*

Mr. Armin Locher (Cath. Cons., Appenzell I- Rh.) has been elected Vice-President of the States Council. He was born in 1897 at Oberegg. For ten years, he occupied a post in an embroidery firm at St. Gall,

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and since 1927 he has been co-proprietor of the brewery Johann Locher in Oberegg. In 1937, he was elected a member of the Cantonal government. He entered, the States Council in 1937. In the army, he holds the rank of Colonel.

\* \* \*

Dr. Henri Perret, has been elected President of the National Council. He was born in 1885 in Le Locle, and after his University studies became a teacher. In 1914, he was appointed Director of the "Technikum" in Le Locle, and from 1933-1950, he occupied the post of Director of the "Technikum" in Neuchâtel. He entered the National Council in 1928 as a representative of the Socialist party.

\* \* \*

Dr. Hermann Häberlin (Rad. Zurich) has been elected Vice-President of the National Council. He was born in 1894 in Zurich.

On the completion of his University studies in Zurich, Munich and Berlin, he obtained the post of Secretary of the Liberal Party, and Editor of the "Zürcher Volkszeitung". Since 1929, he has been connected with the Press Service of the "Arbeitgeberverbandes schweizerischer Maschinen und Metallindustrieller". Since 1939, he has been a member of the "Kantonsrat", Zurich, and since 1943 a member of the National Council.

\* \* \*

Monsieur Walter de Bourg, Swiss Minister in Dublin is shortly relinquishing his post on reaching retiring age.

Minister de Bourg was born in 1888 in Solothurn, and studied law at the Universities of Berne and

Rome. In 1916, he entered the Diplomatic service and was in succession at the Swiss Legations in Paris and Bucarest. In 1942, he was transferred to London with the rank of 1st Secretary of Legation, and ten years later (1954) he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation.

Monsieur de Bourg left London in 1957 to take up the post of Consul General in Munich, and a year later was transferred to Vienna in the same capacity. In 1942, he was sent to the Swiss Legation in Washington. Returning to Berne in 1945, he was sent, a year later, to Dublin as Chargé d'Affaires. In April, 1951, he was appointed Minister in Dublin.

\* \* \*

Dr. Eric Kessler, Chargé d'Affaires at Bucarest, has been appointed Swiss Minister in Dublin, in succession to Minister de Bourg.

The new Minister was born in 1897 in Winterthur. He studied at the Universities of Zurich, Geneva, Paris, Berlin and Göttingen, after which he took up the profession of a Journalist. From 1929-1939, Dr. Kessler was London correspondent of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", and at the outbreak of the last war was appointed Press Attaché at the Swiss Legation in London. In 1946, he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation, and transferred to Washington where he remained until 1950, in which year he was appointed Chargé d'Affaires in Bucarest.

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has appointed Monsieur Beat von Fischer, at present Swiss Minister in Egypt to the post of Swiss Minister in Portugal, in succession to the late Minister Alfred Brunner.

Minister von Fischer was born in Berne in 1901, and studied law at the Universities of Berne, Fribourg, Munich and Paris. In 1926, he received the title of doctor of law from the University of Berne.

He entered the services of the Confederation (Political Department) in 1929, and three years later was sent to Swiss Legation at The Hague as Attaché; subsequently he was attached to the Swiss Legations in Buenos Aires, Warsaw, Bucarest, Riga and Helsinki. In 1942, when in Bucarest, he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation, and five



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years later (1947) was sent to Egypt, where he was appointed Minister in 1949.

\* \* \*

Britain has thanked the Swiss Government for its Diplomats help in restoring Anglo-Persian relations.

\* \* \*

Sir Lionel Lamb, the newly appointed British Ambassador, has presented his credentials to Dr. Ph. Etter, and M. M. Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne.

\* \* \*

Monsieur Imre Kutas has presented his credentials to Monsieur Rubattel, Vice-President of the Swiss Confederation and M. M. Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, as Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic of Hungary.

\* \* \*

Mr. Joseph Birchler has been nominated Swiss Consul at Nice, in succession to Consul Manz, who has been transferred to Trieste.

Mr. Birchler was born in 1907 at Einsiedeln and entered into the service of the Political Department in 1930. He was employed successively at the Swiss Consulates of Breslau, Bremen, Stuttgart, Dijon and Nice, and at present at the Swiss Legation at Budapest.

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has decided to convert the Swiss Consulate at Sao Paulo into a General Consulate. M. Oswald Morand, Secretary of Legation, will be in charge as Consul General. He was born in 1911 at Bassecourt (Jura Bernois) and is a citizen of Günsberg, (Ct. Solothurn). In 1936, he entered into the services of the Political Department in Berne, and was successively sent to Dacca, Lisbon, Brazil and Rio de Janeiro.

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. sc. techn. Max Oesterhaus to the post of Director of the "Eidg. Amtes für Wasserwirtschaft". He was born in Gadmen (Ct. Berne) and was Vice-Director of the above office.

Mr. Fernand Chavaz, (born 1903) of Onex (Ct. Geneva) has been elected Vice-Director.

\* \* \*

M. Georges Falquier, formerly at the Swiss Consulate in Tangier, has been appointed Swiss Consul in Dacca. He was born in 1905, and hails from Veytaux (Ct. Vaud). M. Falquier has been since 1930 in the service of the Political Department, and occupied posts in Singapore, Brisbane, Sidney and Tangier.

As successor to M. Falquier in Tangier, Mr. Heinrich Jung has been nominated. He was born in 1909 and hails from Basle. He entered the Political Department in 1931, and saw service at Lyon, Besançon, Marseilles and Casablanca.

\* \* \*

Customs receipts for the month of November, 1953, totalled 53.7 million francs, or 6.5 million francs more than in November, 1952.

During the first eleven months of the current year the receipts amounted to 422.2 million francs, which exceeds by 28.5 million francs the figures for the same period in 1952.

During the month of October 1953, the Swiss Federal Railways have carried 16.99 million passengers or 580,000 more than in October of the previous year. Receipts: 24.29 million francs. (Oct. 1952: 23.47 million frs.)

Goods traffic is returned as 1.96 million tons carried, which exceeds last year's October figures by 149,000 tons.

**Cantonal**

Dr. h.c. Wachter of the firm of "Gebr. Volkart", Winterthur, has made a donation of 20,000.— francs to the "Herrenstuben Gesellschaft", Winterthur, this amount to be used for charitable purposes.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Burglars entered the premises of the jewellery firm of Schild in the Langenstrasse Zurich-Aussersihl, and decamped with watches and jewellery to the value of 60,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

The Hotel "Bergfrieden" at Reichenbach (Bernese Oberland) was partly destroyed by fire. The damage caused is estimated to exceed 100,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Mr. Ernst Hess, formerly Director of the "Kur- und Verkehrsverein" Adelboden, has been elected in the same capacity to Interlaken, in succession to the late Hans Roth. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The American Ambassador, Miss Francis Willis, was officially received by the rector of the University



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of Fribourg, Abbé Othmar Perler. On this occasion she presented the cantonal library with 300 volumes dealing with American history and literature.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The late Abbé Jules Desfassez, a former priest of Jaun, Heitenried and Ueberstorf, has left various legacies amounting to 46,000.— frs. to charitable and church institutions. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The University of Basle has bestowed the degree of *doctor honoris causa* on Mr. Carl Burckhardt, Silk Industrialist, Basle, on the occasion of his 80th birthday. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Dr. Joseph Gantner, Professor of historical Art at the University of Basle, has been elected rector of this University for the year 1954. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Mr. Paul Schnyder, (aged 75), for 41 years conductor of the "Basler Liederkranz" has vacated his post for reasons of health. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The late Federal Councillor Dr. Johann Baumann of Herisau (Ct. Appenzell I.Rh.) has left an amount of 55,000.— frs. to various charitable institutions.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Dr. Arne Thons, a member of the government of the canton of Grisons has been nominated an honorary citizen of the commune of Thusis. [A.T.S.]

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The recently deceased Industrialist, E. Guyer-Schläpfer of Waldstatt (Ct. Appenzell) has left an amount of 30,000.— frs. (10,000.— frs. for charitable purposes and 20,000.— frs. towards a Fund for a new school building in the commune of Waldstatt.)

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The commune of Bremgarten (Ct. Aargau) has received two legacies amounting to 18,000.— frs. for charitable purposes. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The Arnold Reymond Prize, amounting to 1,000.— frs. has been awarded to Professor Hermann Weyl of the Institute of Advanced Studies in Princeton (U.S.A.). Mr. Weyl was formerly Professor of Mathematics at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich and at the University of Göttingen.

\* \* \*

A presentation has been made to M. Louis Casai, a member of the government of the canton of Geneva on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of his entering the cantonal government. [A.T.S.]

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Charles Perret, Assistant Manager of the "Schweiz. Bankgesellschaft" Geneva, in Spain (owing to an Air accident), at the age of 71.

Francis Burgener, formerly President of the commune of Visp, and for 35 years, President of the "Amtsgericht" Visp, in Visp, aged 79.

Dr. Bernhard Richard, Chemist, in Basle, at the age of 83.

Ernst Graf, from 1943-1952 "Telefondirektor" of the town of St. Gall, in Berne, aged 63.

Hermann Allemann, a former Editor of the papers "Neuen Einsiedler Zeitung", "Neue Aargauer Zeitung", "Landbote", Winterthur, and "Nation", in Zürich, at the age of 71.

Dr. med. Alfred Reinhart, Chief-surgeon at the "Bürgerspital" Solothurn, in Solothurn, aged 64.

Auguste am Rhyn, architect, in Lucerne, at the age of 73.

Dr. med. Max Richard, since 1939 head-surgeon at the "Krankenhaus" Rorschach, and a well-known specialist on goitre diseases, in Rorschach, aged 57.

Maurice Hofer, Manager of the "Maschinenfabrik Joseph Petermann, S.A. Moutier, in Moutier, at the age of 68.

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