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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

The Federal Assembly, composed of the two Chambers sitting together, elected Dr. F. T. Wahlen to be President of the Swiss Confederation for 1961, and M. P. Chaudet to be Vice-President. The new President, who belongs to the Peasants', Artisans' and Bourgeois Party, is head of the Department of Public Economy. He was born in 1899 in Gmeiss (Ct. Berne) and is a citizen of Trimstein-Rubigen. He studied at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich, where he obtained the degree of Doctor of Science and Ing. Agr.

From 1922 to 1929 he resided in Canada, occupying from 1924 the post of Chief of the Canadian Agricultural Department. In 1929 he returned to Switzerland and was appointed head of the Federal Agricultural Testing Office in Zurich, which appointment he relinquished on his nomination as Director of FAO in Washington, where he became Vice-General-Director in 1957.

Mr. Wahlen was awarded the Marcel Benoist Prize for Scientific Research; he is also a *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Zurich. From 1942 to 1949 he was a member of the States Council, and in December 1958 he was elected a member of the Federal Government in succession to the late Dr. Markus Feldmann.

M. Paul Chaudet (Radical), Vice-President, is head of the Federal Military Department. He was born in 1904 and is a citizen of Corsier, near Vevey. By profession he is a vine-grower. He became Mayor of Rivaz — where he was born — and a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud. In 1946 he was elected a member of the cantonal government. M. Chaudet became a member of the Federal Government in 1954, as successor to Federal Councillor R. Rubattel. He was President of the Confederation in 1959.

Dr. Emil Duft (Conservative Christian Socialist) has been elected President of the National Council. He was born in Flawil in 1895 and is a citizen of Kaltbrunn (St. Gall) and Zurich. He studied Economics in Berne, London and Zurich. In 1929 he became founder and director of an important private banking house, and in 1944 was elected President of the Christian Socialist Party of the canton of Zurich. He has sat since 1947 in the National Council. Dr. Duft enjoys the reputation of being an expert on financial matters.

\* \* \*

Mr. Walther Bringolf (Socialist) has been elected Vice-President of the National Council. He was born at Schaffhausen in 1895. In 1924 Mr. Bringolf was elected a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Schaffhausen, and in 1925 a member of the National Council. He has occupied the post of Mayor of the town of Schaffhausen since 1932.

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