

**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:** - (1964)

**Heft:** 1446

**Rubrik:** [Impressum]

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 23.02.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED IN 1919 BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER.

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

*Advisory Council:* R. J. KELLER (Chairman), GOTTFRIED KELLER (Vice-Chairman), DR. E. M. BIRCHER, O. F. BOEHRINGER, J. EUSEBIO, A. KUNZ, A. STAUFFER, G. E. SUTER.

EDITED BY MRS. MARIANN MEIER 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. 50. No. 1446

FRIDAY, 10th JANUARY 1964

## THE SEVEN FEDERAL COUNCILLORS

The Constitution of the Swiss Confederation provides in Article 96 that the seven members of the Federal Council shall be elected for four years by the Federal Assembly consisting of Swiss citizens eligible as members of the National Council. The same article prescribes that after every re-formation of the National Council the Federal Council, too, shall be reconstituted, that is to say every four years. Up to now this renewal has always been made individually with each member of the Federal Council having to stand personally for re-election.

The last confirmation of the seven Federal Councillors took place on 12th December. It took place in an unusual atmosphere as the ceremony was transmitted on Television, which meant cameras and bustling photographers — a great deal of fuss which disturbed the dignity of the Council Chamber. There was considerable criticism of such forced publicity.

The new President of the National Council, Mr. Otto Hess (Thurgau), was in the chair. The elections proceeded in order of seniority of office.

Federal Councillor Paul Chaudet, Chief of the Military Department, in the Government since 16th December 1954, was elected with 185 votes (absolute majority 96).

Federal Councillor F. T. Wahlen, Head of the Political Department, in the Government since 11th December 1958, was confirmed by 197 (absolute majority 110).

Federal Councillor W. Spuehler, Chief of the Department of Communications, President of the Confederation in 1963, in the Government since 17th December 1959, was elected with 164 votes (absolute majority 89).

Federal Councillor Ludwig von Moos, Head of the Department of Justice and Police, Vice-President of the Confederation in 1963, in the Government since 17th December 1959, was confirmed with 160 votes (absolute majority 92).

Federal Councillor H. P. Tschudi, Chief of the Department for Home Affairs, in the Government since 17th December 1959, was elected with 204 votes (absolute majority 103).

Federal Councillor Hans Schaffner, Head of the Department for Economic Affairs, in the Government since 4th July 1961, received 195 votes (absolute majority 98).

Federal Councillor Roger Bonvin, Chief of the Department of Finance and Customs, in the Government since 27th September 1962, was confirmed with 190 votes (absolute majority 96).

Ever since Federal Councillors have been re-elected it has happened only once that one of them did not receive a sufficient number of votes and had to leave the Government. It was expected that the elections were purely a matter of form and that all seven Councillors would be confirmed. Nevertheless, the results are not very flattering, and it shows that the M.P. is not prepared just to be a "Yes-Man".

In an article in the "Basler Nachrichten" the Parliamentary Correspondent, Mr. Arnold Fisch, comments on this "Doubtful Examination for the Federal Councillors". The relatively low number of votes which some of the seven members of the Government registered could give the wrong impression. Mr. Fisch maintains that popularity is a bad measure for the real performance and accomplishment of a Federal Councillor. Above all, he says, this popularity is subject to considerable fluctuation, may be high one day and low the next. Mr. Chaudet received a reasonably high total, but he, too, has registered poor results in the past. Though some military credits are still the subject of heated argument, in general there are no complaints against him. His quiet, pleasant way of accepting criticism apparently reconciles his opponents.

Mr. Wahlen, polled the highest number of votes — not being very exposed to conflict of interests in his domain. On the other hand, the outgoing President of the Confederation has had to face considerable criticism regarding the handling of his department. This was reflected in a low number of votes. The next candidate, the then Vice-President of the Confederation, Mr. von Moos, polled the lowest number of all, which Mr. Fisch considers the result of unfair party politics — the Socialists taking revenge for the bad support accorded to their member Mr. Spuehler. Fortunately, the opponents did not continue this kind of competition, on the contrary, the next Socialist, Mr. Tschudi, achieved the second best result. Mr. Schaffner still had to feel some of the Socialists' indignation and only polled a meagre 171 votes. It must be mentioned that the man in charge of economic affairs has to face some very unpleasant tasks at the moment — the fight against the excessive economic boom rests on his shoulders. Finally, the Parliamentary Correspondent describes Mr. Bonvin's result as surprisingly high, seeing that there had been quite some displeasure at his handling of federal finances.

It is also typical of the Swiss system that though Federal Councillor von Moos received the lowest number