Welfare for Swiss girls

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British subsidiary is set for a bright future as attested by the recent extension of the Administrative Block and present plans for new investments. It presently controls 20 per cent of the British meter market in a tight competition with three other firms – General Electric, Ferranti and Sangavo – and is the first British exporter in this field thanks to its strong position in Commonwealth markets. It is gratifying to know that a Swiss firm is helping Britain's balance of payments problems and defending Britain's technological reputation abroad.

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members of the Federal Government in Berne.

To fill these three vacancies some 12–15 names of possible candidates have already been mentioned and are, indeed, being canvassed. Who the three new Federal Councillors might be is, as yet, quite impossible to say. But in spite of this uncertainty and in spite of the large number of "papabili", it can be said with certainty that the power structure between the four governing parties will not undergo any changes. This power structure which provides for two Liberal-Democrats, two Social-Democrats, two Christian-Democrats and one People's Party Representative to share the highest responsibility has its writ running from 1971 to the end of 1975 and is, consequently, today exactly in its halftime. The three retiring Federal Councillors belong to the Christian-Democrat Party (Mr. Roger Bonvin), the Liberal-Democrat Party (Mr. Nello Celio) and the Social-Democrat Party (Mr. Hans Peter Tschudi). This means that each one of these three parties will, without any doubt, nominate its own new candidate for the election on 5th December.

With near certainty it can also be said that the three regions Romandie (French speaking Switzerland), Ticino (Italian speaking Switzerland) and Deutsche Schweiz (German speaking Switzerland) will once again insist on being represented in the Federal Government in Berne. This system and the famous formula of 2: 2: 2: 1 are of a certain rigidity and are sometimes complained of as impediments against the choice of the best men. They have, however, on the whole, served the country well enough and are anyway the price of Federalism as such.

In view of all this the race, for which many starters have already been unofficially named, will be taking place *inside* the three named parties, and not in rivalry between them. For the first time, incidentally, the name of a lady is being mentioned – a lady who has been one of the first ones to be elected to become a member of the Federal Parliament in Berne. She is Madame Girardin from Geneva. With the appearance of her name amongst the candidates the question "Is Switzerland ripe for a female Federal Councillor?" has cropped up and is being discussed in the press.

Is Switzerland ripe for a female Federal Councillor? It is to be hoped so. Equally it is to be hoped that the three parties will not simply present one name each as their final choice to the United Federal Assembly. For if this were to be the case, the two chambers of the Federal Parliament could, on 5th December, do no more than become the rubber stamps which sanction what three political parties have decided beforehand. But if each of the three parties had the political courage to submit at least two names, then the election of 5th December would not only become a real one, but one which could be quite fascinating. At any rate, the race for three seats in the Federal Executive in Berne is on. And it takes place in a somewhat uneasy kind of atmosphere, with everybody agreeing that the inflation has to be fought, but nobody as yet really knowing how to beat it.

Gottfried Keller

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MANCHESTER

For Friday, 28th September, 1973, the *Swiss Club, Manchester,* had arranged a new type of social come-together which took the form of a "Disco-Dance". For a modest fee and thanks to the cordial hospitality of the Clayton Aniline Co. Ltd., at Clayton, near Manchester, we could assemble in their very lovely new canteen. Dr. A. V. Lang and his charming lady acted as hosts and made us very quickly welcome, everybody sitting down to enjoy the splendid selection of a free buffet. Cold or warm drinks also being available, everything contributed towards a warm and happy atmosphere.

Although the invitations stated that no-one was too old to attend, nevertheless it turned out to be an evening for the young, as it was meant to be, and of what I heard afterwards, the aim of the organisers was fully achieved, our young friends expressing the hope for an early repetition of the event. It was on this happy note that the evening came to its close around midnight, to be remembered as most enjoyable and successful affair.

E.B.

LEEDS

Our friends from the Yorkshire Swiss Club inaugurated the Winter Season with a special meeting at the Leeds Council of Social Service, St. Mark's House House in Leeds. The President, back from the Ausland-Schweizer-Tagung in St. Gallen, was able to give a short but comprehensive talk about it and his general impressions. Slides taken in St. Gallen and the Appenzeller-Land could not be shown because of the strike situation at the Kodak works.

It turned out to be a specially happy and lively evening and besides doing some useful work we could taste the exquisite refreshment provided by our ladies, drinks being offered by our President. We were specially pleased to make the acquaintance of the Swiss Vice-Consul of Bergamo, Italy, and his wife, who were on a prolonged visit to England. It was felt that they were both very happy to sample northern hospitality – somehow different from what they are used to across the Alps.

E.B.

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