

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 3 (1976)
Heft: 1

Artikel: Swiss political life
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-907925>

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Swiss political life

26th October 1975

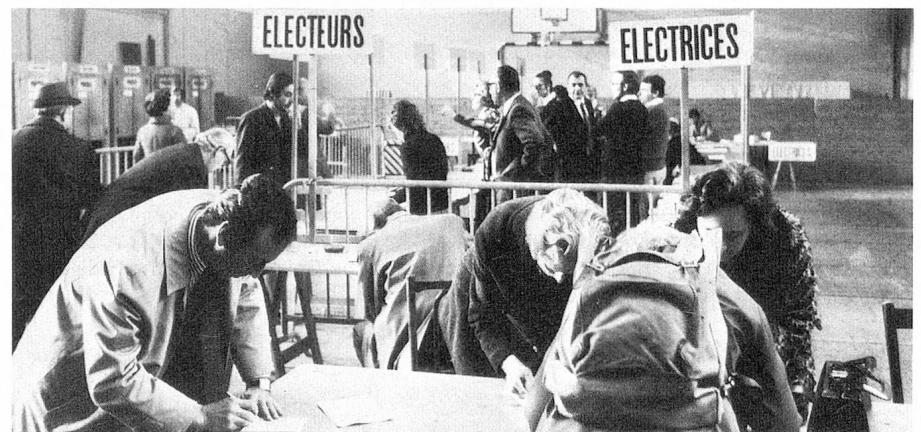
(G.Pb) The Swiss men and women voters elected their Parliament on 26th October 1975. In one go they renewed the whole National Council and the largest part of the Council of States. In the Swiss Confederation, these two Chambers have exactly the same legal rights. The distribution of seats is as follows:

	National Council	Council of States
Social Democrats	55 (+9)	5 (+1)
Radical-Liberals	47 (-2)	15
Christian Democrats	46 (+2)	17
Members of the People's Party	21 (-2)	5
Independent members	11 (-2)	1
Liberals and Evangelicals	9	1 (-1)
Republicans and Nationals	6 (-5)	-
Members of the Workers' Party	4 (-1)	-
Autonomous Social Democrats	1 (+1)	-
Total:	200	44

Several important occurrences marked the elections of 26th October 1975, as for instance:

- Combined success of the four parties which have been represented in the Government since 1959: The Social Democrats, the Liberals, the Christian Democrats and the members of the Swiss People's Party attained a total of eight more seats in the two Councils.

In a voting local (Photopress)



- Individual victories by the Social Democratic Party and in a smaller measure the Christian Democrats. The former conquered 10 seats more in the large Chamber, the latter two.

- Remarkable break-through by the French-speaking Left in the Council of States. It has never happened before that three French-speaking Social Democrat representatives have sat side by side, the Genevois Willy Donzé, the Vaudois Jacques Morier-Genoud and the Neuchâtelois Pierre Aubert. Thus the French-speaking delegation in the Cantonal Chamber very nearly corresponds to the general proportion amongst the Parties (3 Social Democrats, 3 Radical Liberals, 3 Christian Democrats and 1 Liberal). In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, however, the People's Party and the Radical Liberals have an over-strong representation. As hitherto, this is due to several factors: simple majority system for most of the elections to the Council of States (the National Council has been elected according to proportional representation since 1919); frequent alignment against the Left Parties and the «outsiders»; equal number of seats per Canton.

- Stagnation or retrogression of

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most of the medium or small formations. The losses are particularly grave for the Republicans and the adherents to the National Action of all tendencies. These were the main winners in the 1971 elections in the whole of Switzerland.

10th December 1975

(G.Pb) The Federal Council was re-elected on 10th December 1975 for a further period of four years. The seven members of the Swiss Government have passed the test brilliantly. In Switzerland, there are the 244 members of the Federal Assembly (combined National Council and Council of States) who have to elect the Government. As for the past 16 years, the Federal Council again consists of representatives of the four largest political parties in the country:

2 Social Democrats,

Pierre Graber (Neuchâtel) since 1969

Willi Ritschard (Solothurn) since 1973

2 Radical Liberals

Ernst Brugger (Zurich) since 1969

Georges-André Chevallaz (Vaud) since 1973

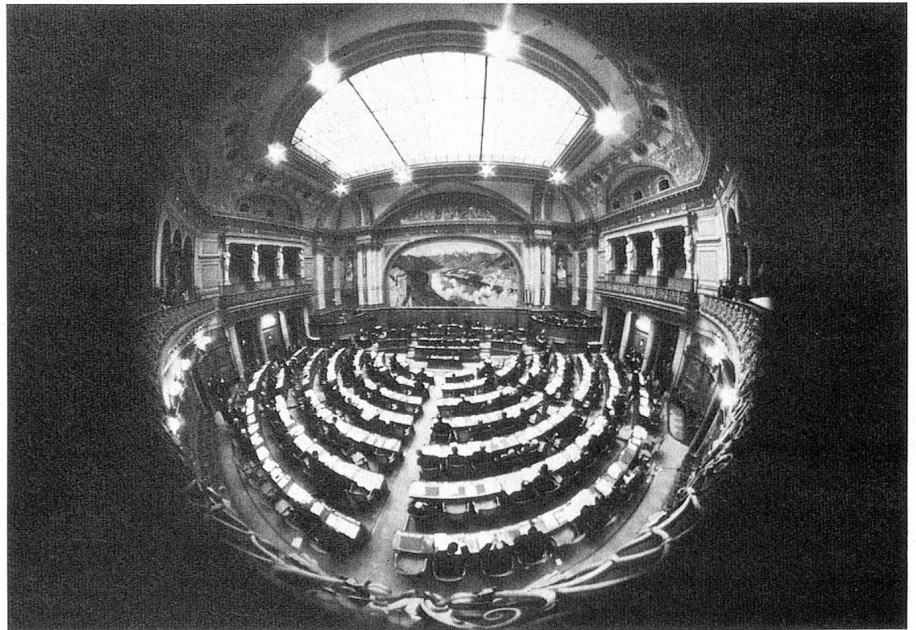
2 Christian Democrats

Kurt Furgler (St. Gall) since 1971

Hans Hürlimann (Zug) since 1973

1 member of the People's Party

Rudolf Gnägi (Berne) 1965



The National Council

(Keystone)

There was nothing to trouble the elections of 10th December. No opposition groups resisted the existing equilibrium. The idea to concentrate on the generally acknowledged most open parties, the Social Democrats and Christian Democrats, could not be realised. Even the failure of the negotiations amongst the four large parties regarding common legislative aims, had not the faintest influence (the first of these agreements dates back to 1971-75). From now on, the country's policies will be evolved only along the

«great course», a unilateral declaration by the Federal Council (it was made two legislative periods ago).

Annoyance in French-speaking Switzerland

In spite of that, some important details regarding the 10th December 1975 caused some surprise:

● Pierre Graber and Georges-André Chevallaz, the two French-speaking members of the central Government, scored the least flattering results. The population in the French-speaking part of the country has acknowledged this with some annoyance, specially as the abilities of the two Federal Councillors are by no means in question. On the other hand, Willi Ritschard and Ernst Brugger, two of the five Federal Councillors, have been re-elected with a remarkably high number of votes – incidentally a well-deserved sign of appreciation.

● Rudolf Gnägi was elected President and Kurt Furgler Vice-President of the Federal Council for 1976. Karl Huber, another Christian Democrat from St. Gall will be Federal Chancellor for a further period of 4 years.

The federal authorities in 1976:

President of the National Council: Rudolf Etter
 President of the Council of States: Willi Wenk

President of the Confederation: Rudolf Gnägi
 Vice-President of the Federal Council: Kurt Furgler
 Chancellor of the Confederation: Karl Huber

President of the Federal Court: Pierre Cavin
 President of the Federal Insurance Court: Kans Korner

Composition of the Federal Council and allocation of departements:

Political Department: Pierre Graber
 Department of the Interior: Hans Hürlimann
 Department of Justice and Police: Kurt Furgler
 Military Department: Rudolf Gnägi
 Department of Finance and Customs: Georges-André Chevallaz
 Department of Public Economy: Ernst Brugger
 Department of Transport, Communications and Energy: Willi Ritschard