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Portraits of the parties (postscript)

Stop press parties

Following our survey of parties taking part in the federal parliamentary elections on October 22, here are brief portraits of four groups which are also putting forward candidates in some cantons.

Ladies first. To begin with, a women's group. This already has one member of parliament who has joined the Social Democratic parliamentary group.

Women in Politics (FraP)

Women in Politics (Frauen machen Politik) is a group of feminists in some regions of German-speaking Switzerland. There is no equivalent in the French or Italian language areas. Women in Politics won a Zurich seat in the National Council four years ago. The group, which does not want to be called a party but rather a feminist political agenda, was born in Zurich in 1986. It will put forward lists in five cantons in the coming elections and hopes to get the five seats it needs to

form a parliamentary group of its own. It does not have an executive but works on the principle of self-management.

Democratic Social Party

At the national level this party first saw the light of day as recently as June 1994. However, it has been in existence in Basle-City since 1981 and in Fribourg since 1989. It is made up of Social Democratic dissidents. The party is run by a triumvirate. Its members want to create a society which will enable all sections of the population – particularly the disadvantaged and those on low incomes – to live in dignity. They are in favour of a social market economy and national defence. They consider themselves not as competition but as an

alternative to the mainstream Social Democrats.

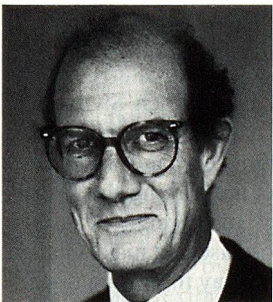
Christian Conservative Party

The name was originally going to be the Catholic Conservative Party but they finally opted for Christian Conservative. They aim to attract all those wishing to defend Christian social ethics, the family, small industry and farmers and to work against the loss of traditional Christian values and the lack of direction felt by so many people. The Christian Conservative Party was founded at the end of last year by Flüeli Ranft in the half canton of Upper Unterwalden, where Nicolas de Flüe had his famous hermitage. It may put forward lists in Aargau and Thurgau.

Renaissance Switzerland Europe

Created almost two years ago, Renaissance Switzerland Europe aims – quoting its electoral slogan – “to reinvent Switzerland”. The party is made up of young people of different political hues who believe that the traditional parties are in no position to bring about the reforms needed in Switzerland. It intends to present lists for the October elections in five cantons at least. Renaissance Switzerland Europe is in favour of a dynamic, European and social Switzerland. It is one of the five movements which launched a popular initiative last February in favour of Switzerland joining the European Union.

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National Council candidates (from left): Hans Ulrich Pestalozzi, Elisabeth Hall-Zeller and Pierre Jonneret. (Photos: zvg)

cerns of their compatriots living all over the world.

Even before the introduction of the vote by correspondence eligibility for the National Council did not depend on residing in Switzerland. But in connection with these three candidates the practical question arises for the first time: Is it possible to travel from abroad to the parliamentary sessions? “To come from Paris to Berne by train I need five

hours, exactly the same as a national councillor from St. Moritz”, Pierre Jonneret could answer. “With daily direct flights from London to Berne I can get there even more quickly”, would rejoin Elisabeth Hall. With Brazil it is a bit more difficult admittedly, but Hans Ulrich Pestalozzi already lives part of the year in Switzerland.

René Lenzin

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