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ELECTIONS IN THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY

On 11th December, the new President of the National Council opened the meeting of the Federal Assembly (National Council and Council of States combined) to elect the President of the Confederation for 1969. The Vice-President traditionally moves up, and Federal Councillor Ludwig von Moos, Head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police, received 166 out of the 212 votes. 227 voting slips were returned in the election of the Vice-President, and with 168 votes, the Head of the Federal Department of the Interior, Federal Councillor Hans Peter Tschudi, was elected to the office.

At the same time the Federal Assembly elected a new Federal Judge in succession to the retiring Dr Kurt Schoch, in the person of Dr Adolf Luechinger (40), Social Democrat from Zurich. Dr Hans Korner, Lucerne lawyer and National Councillor, was elected as new **Versicherungsrichter** as successor to the late Dr A. Boner. Dr Silvio Giovanoli was elected President of the Federal Tribunal for 1969/70, and Dr Paul Schwarz Vice-President. The present Vice-President of the Insurance Tribunal Dr Rene-Frank Vaucher was promoted to its President, whilst Dr Petro Mona was elected as his successor.

NEW PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION

The President of the Federal Council who will be the head of the Confederation during 1969 is Federal Councillor Ludwig von Moos. He was born on 31st January 1910 at Sachseln (OW), his commune of origin. He was the eleventh child of the local stationmaster and grandson of a **Regierungsrat**. Bundesrat von Moos went to school at Sarnen and Sachseln and finished his schooling at the Benedictine College at Sarnen in 1930. He studied law for three years at the University of Fribourg and graduated as licentiate of law. He became Commune Clerk of Sachseln and a year later he was elected to the **Einwohnergemeinderat** and to the **Burgergemeinderat**. He presided over the former from 1941 to 1946.

From 1936 onward he was in the Cantonal Court of Justice. He was also active as editor of the "Obwaldner Volksfreund" and belonged to the Cantonal Council for two years.

The "Landsgemeinde" of 1943 elected him as Councillor of States and three years later into the Government of Obwalden. Four times he was **Landammann**. In 1946 he became a member of the Obwalden Cantonal Bank and in 1954 Chairman of its

board. He was also a member of the board of the Swiss Federal Railways and of many other organisations and institutions, such as Radio Berne.

On 17th December 1959, Ludwig von Moos was elected to the Federal Council as the first citizen of Obwalden and became chief of the Federal Department of Justice and Police, a position he has held ever since.

Federal Councillor von Moos became President of the Confederation for the first time in the EXPO year of 1964. He was then the first citizen who had reached the top in the 115 years of history of the present Confederation. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by Fribourg University the same year.

The new President is a Catholic Conservative and father of seven children. He served as **Luftschutz** soldier in the war.

NEW TRENDS IN SWITZERLAND: FEMALE SUFFRAGE

In quite a number of places, women went with the men, some for the first time. Several Communes, especially in the Canton of Berne, granted their women the vote, and by Christmas, 172 out of 472 Communes had introduced women's suffrage. At first, the Jura Communes were the pioneers, but during the year, also the "Old Canton" has made progress, especially the Emmental and Seeland. In the Jura, five new women have been elected to the local Commune Councils, but also at Langenthal, three women will sit with their male colleagues for the first time, two Socialists and one Liberal. A woman will be President of the Commune of Villeneuve (Vaud). There have been plebiscites in several Communes in order to vote on women's suffrage, where it has been denied them, some in the Jura, others elsewhere like Daerligen (Lake of Thun) and Zweisimmen.

The same goes for the Appenzell Commune of Huttwil where suffrage was refused them by 197 to 192. All 19 Evangelical Communes of Appenzell-Ausserrhoden, on the other hand, have granted them the vote. In the Grisons, five Communes have votes for women so far; Chur and Landquart were the first, now to be followed by Marmorera (Oberhalbstein), Sils (Domleschg) and Pontresina. The women there had previously been consulted to find out their own attitude, and it had been found that out of 299, 120 were in favour, 114 against, 46 abstaining and 19 absent from home.