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Autor: Sigerist, Henry

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EDITORIAL

So Switzerland has provided itself with its second female Federal Councillor (see article in this issue). It did not come about without problems though. Despite the general feeling that it was time to have another woman in the Federal Council, the Swiss parliamentarians tried to evade the issue and still elected a man for that position. But in a twist most unusual in Swiss politics, the man refused to accept the job and the whole matter had to be deferred for a week to allow some new nominations to be brought forward. This time three women were in the running and eventually one was chosen.

After the first experience with Mrs. Elisabeth Kopp, the Swiss were concerned about seeing another married woman at the top of the Federal Government. Not that Mrs. Kopp had been incapable of performing her duties. On the contrary, she was a highly intelligent and capable lady but, unfortunately for her, she let herself be entangled between her duties as a Federal Councillor and her role as a married woman trying to extricate her husband out of a rather tricky situation by using classified information to forewarn her husband of some impending investigations. This of course was unforgivable and Mrs. Kopp had therefore to resign.

But this time the wily Swiss had learnt their lesson. They elected an unmarried woman to this lofty position, hoping by this choice to avoid a repetition of the previous debacle. Unlike other nations, the Swiss do not like to change their Federal Councillors too often. Frequent changes are disruptive and the Swiss do not like it when things are not going smoothly, we all know that. The longer the Councillors stay on, the better, even if you do not particularly like them. So we wish Mrs. Ruth Dreifuss, the new Federal Councillor, all the luck in the world for a long and prosperous stay at the top.

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JET-SET QUINTET



Most of you should recognise some familiar faces in this photo. It is the "Streichmusik Alder". The photo was taken after their tour to the USA, Russia and South America and sometime before their trip to New Zealand last November.

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