

INTEREST GROUPS IN SWITZERLAND



BY DUSAN SIDJANSKI

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**ABSTRACT:** This article is a general presentation of Swiss socioeconomic groups and associations and of the role they play in Swiss political life. While the main organizations were created before 1900, the evolution of the associations corresponds to the general trends of industrialization and division of labor. Swiss groups are characterized by a high concentration of their central bodies in Zurich and Berne and by federal structures reproducing the cantonal divisions of Switzerland. Consultation, based on constitutional provisions, is highly developed not only in internal politics, but also in foreign policy matters. One specific feature of this process is the existence of both the referendum and the initiative which constitute an element of the bargaining power of different associations. To illustrate this process, I draw on two examples: one related to the law on cartels and the other to the inflation policy. The last, but not the least interesting, aspect is the perception of this process by the public. In fact, our Swiss survey of 1972 gives a good idea of how the public perceives the influence of different groups and their capacity to defend its interests. It is clear that if the legitimacy of these associations and their activities is generally recognized, the Swiss voter condemns all violent forms of action and is reluctant even to approve demonstrations. On the other hand, normal activities of socioeconomic groups are supported by a large consensus.

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EXCEPT for a few cases of transformed the structure of the Swiss economy and the decision-making process. No less than 1,100 socioeconomic groupings came into being between 1871 and 1972.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Liste des associations professionnelles et économiques de la Suisse*, 12th ed. (Bern: OFIAMT, 1968).

FIGURE 1

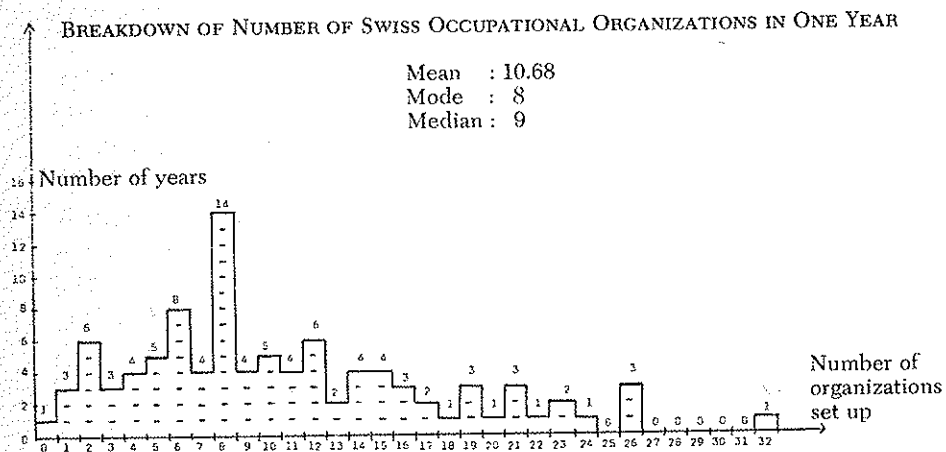
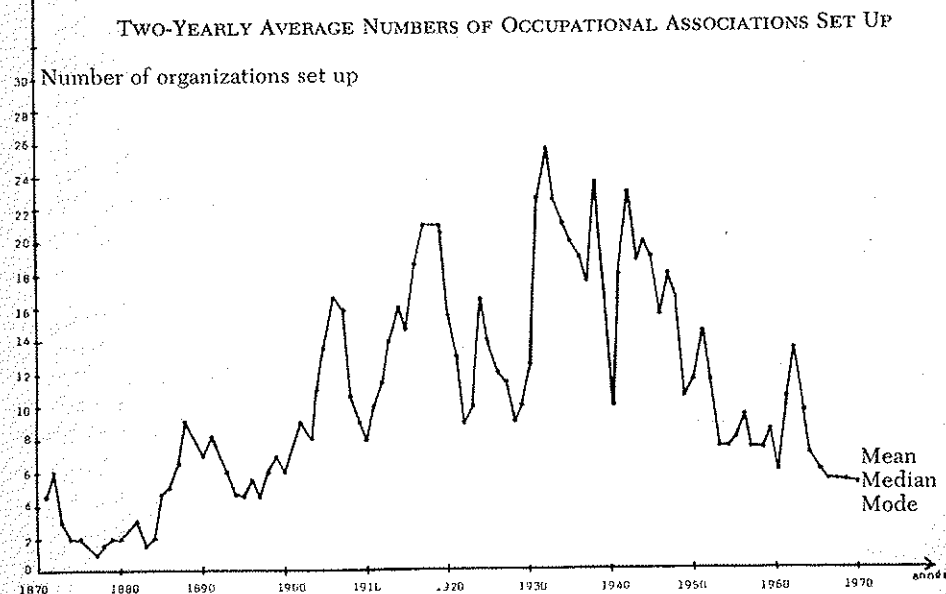


FIGURE 2



## THE PATTERN OF INTEREST GROUPS

*Development and numbers*

As is shown in figures 1 and 2, this process was at first comparatively slow; the yearly average between 1871 and 1904 amounted to 3.5. The period from 1905 to 1922 witnessed a sharp acceleration—264—with a yearly average of 15.5 and three peaks—21 new organizations in 1907, 23 in 1917 and, again, in 1919. For the period 1923 to 1931 the yearly number of new associations fell to an average of 13, but in 1932 an all-time high was reached with the formation of 32 groupings. That year marked the beginning of a period which, coming in the wake of the Great Depression, was the most active in terms of new organizational structures; no less than 336 groupings were formed over sixteen years—from 1932 to 1948—an average of 21 per year. From 1949 to 1972—the period for which data are available—the annual average was a more modest 8.8. For the entire period under review—1871 to 1972—the mean was 10.7 per year, with a median of 13 and a mode of 8.

The most important associations—above all, the big four which are central to the entire consultation process—all came into being during the initial period. Thus, *Vorort*—the Swiss Commerce and Industry Union—was set up in 1870 and was followed shortly thereafter, by *Union Suisse des arts et métiers* (USAM)—the Swiss Union of Arts and Crafts—in 1879 and the *Union syndicale Suisse* (USS)—Swiss Federation of Trade Unions—in 1880. Thus, from the very beginning, the rapidly expanding secondary and tertiary sectors had central organizations of their own on both the labor

and the management side. Not much later, in 1897, the farmers were also to organize at the federal level. By 1900 the big four, which to this day have remained a constant factor in all consultations, had been established. Sectoral organizations were to develop later; the timing for the principal employers and workers organizations is shown in table 1. Once these major sectors of activity were covered, the development process followed a path of increasing specialization in line with the wide diversification of the economy. Table 1 also reveals a parallel between the establishment of employers and workers organizations.

The 1967 breakdown of the 1,081 occupational associations then in existence is shown in table 2. While these are only rough indications, they do give an idea of organizational density in relation to the size of the active population on a sector-by-sector basis, by revealing an over-all ratio of 1 organization for every 2,600 people as compared with 1 per 2,000 in the service sector—the highest density; 1 per 2,500 in agriculture; and the markedly lower ratio—substantially lower, in fact, than the general average—of 3,140 in industry. This is so because the large trade union organizations are found mainly in this sector, the outstanding example being the USS with its 440,000 members.

*Main features*

These groupings may be described in terms of, among others, the following four characteristics: (1) type of grouping, (2) geographical concentration, (3) network of affiliations and (4) federative structure.

Of the 1,081 associations: 728 are employers associations; 159 are wage earners or salaried employees

TABLE 1  
FOUNDING OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATIONS

	YEAR	EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATIONS	YEAR	EMPLOYEES TRADE UNIONS
CENTRAL ASSOCIATIONS	1870	<i>Vorort</i> —Swiss Commerce and Industry Union		
	1879	Swiss Union of Arts and Crafts	1880	Swiss Trade Union
SPECIALIZED ASSOCIATIONS	1882	Swiss Society of Chemical Industries		
	1883	Swiss Society of Machinery Manufacturers	1888	Swiss Federation of Metal Workers and Watchmakers (FOMH) (Wage earners)
	1900 (1876)	Swiss Chamber of Watchmakers	1903	Textile, Chemical and Paper Workers Union
	1905	Swiss Employers Association of Machinery Manufacturers and Metalworking Industries		
	1906	Chemical Industries Employers Association		
	1912	Swiss Bankers Association	1917	Swiss Bank Employees Association (Salaried employees)
	1897	Swiss Society of Building Contractors	1922	Swiss Federation of Building and Wood Workers

TABLE 2  
ECONOMIC AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUPINGS BROKEN DOWN BY SECTOR\*

	AGRICULTURE, MINING AND QUARRYING	INDUSTRY AND CRAFTS	SERVICES	TOTAL
Number of associations in 1967	79	448	554	1,081
Active population in 1969 (thousands)	200 /2.5	1,421 /3.14	1,119 /2	2,740 /2.6

\* No data showing the share of gross national product per sector are available.

associations; and 194 are of other types. The trade unions axiomatically try to mold themselves according to the structures of the employers organizations; however, the differences in number between employer and trade union associations reflect basic differences in membership, organization, degree of concentration and importance of the main sectors. By and large, the existing groupings may be

said to cover essentially all of the needs arising within the Swiss community.

From the point of view of concentration, Zurich is the location of two-fifths—419, including 375 for the city of Zurich—of all associations. Bern comes next with 293—224 for the city of Bern. Together, these two cantons account for two-thirds of the total—712 out of 1,081. The reason for this concentration is

the economic and industrial predominance of Zurich and the presence of the federal government in Bern. The remaining associations are disseminated as follows: 74 in Basle; 53 in the canton of Vaud, including 40 in Lausanne; 35 in Geneva; 32 in Aargau; 31 in St. Gallen; 26 in Neuchâtel; and 25 in Lucerne and Solothurn.<sup>2</sup> As for the network of affiliations, 184 national associations are affiliated with the USAM, 113 with the *Vorort*, 30 with the Central Union of Employers Associations,<sup>3</sup> 34 with the *Union Suisse des paysans* (USP), 15 with the USS, 13 with the Swiss Federation of Salaried Employees, 11 with the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions and 9 with the Federated Union of Staffs of Public Administrations and Enterprises.

If one were to draw a diagram, the USAM would be at the center of the diagram; it has both the largest number of affiliates and the most organic links with other organizations, which are made up of various handicraft units and small- and medium-sized enterprises. Although occupying a less central position, the *Vorort* (USCI) is most strategically placed. In addition to the 60 organizations exclusively affiliated to it, it has several common affiliates with the USAM, with *Fédération suisse des importateurs et du commerce de gros* (FSICG)—Swiss Federation of Imports Business and Wholesale Commerce—and, of course, with the Central Union. Concurrent affiliation with others is less frequent. On the other hand,

the farmers (USP) and their network are more marginally located, while the USS constitutes a system of its own.

As do equivalent organizations in other countries, the four central organizations—the USCI, USAM, USS and USP—include vertical associations or occupational federations, as well as the regional groupings—including the associations of the French-speaking part of Switzerland—which, in turn, form regional central organizations. Typical of the Swiss system is the pattern of organizations at the level of the cantons, with each central canton section including canton sections of the socio-economic federations covering the main areas of economic and social activity in the canton. In many cases these organizations predated the setting up of the first associations at the federal level; they enjoy wide autonomy and have their own differentiated functions. This federative pattern, which reflects the diversity of the country and its political organization, influences the decision-making process within the national associations; for, in spite of the important part played by the permanent central secretariat and the leadership at the national level, the making of decisions and policies is often based on a consultation procedure involving affiliated associations and sections. The process may be modified, particularly in view of the urgency and concentrated character of certain economic and social issues; in such cases the influence of the national organizations and leadership is correspondingly strengthened.

Finally, two traits characterize the working of the organizational pattern under the Swiss political system: namely, the procedure for con-

2. *Liste des associations*, pp. 4, 8.

3. There are in Switzerland, as in Germany, two employers associations, one of which—the Central Union—is responsible for social affairs.

sulting socioeconomic groupings and the manner in which pressure groups use the initiative and referendum procedures. Provisions in the federal Constitution for the consultation of associations and the widespread practice of such consultation are—in addition to semidirect democracy—among the distinctive features of Swiss political life.

### THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

#### *The basis and the issues*

The consultation procedure laid down in certain provisions of the Constitution—Articles 27ter, 32 and 34ter—has developed extensively.<sup>4</sup> In various fields the drawing up of legislative bills and, also, the preparation of many decisions are subject to the consultation process. Though based on the concept of contribution by groupings to public policy, this mechanism also affords scope for the play of interests by enabling the groupings not only to assist the authorities in their preparatory work, but also to influence their decisions. These aspects of the problem have been discussed in a number of political science studies.<sup>5</sup>

4. Article 32: "The provisions laid down in Articles 31bis, 31ter, second paragraph, 31ter and 31quinquies may be established only through laws or orders subject to the popular vote. For emergency cases arising in times of economic upheaval, Article 89, third paragraph, shall be reserved. The cantons shall be consulted in the drawing up of implementing legislation. As a general rule, they shall be charged with the execution of federal provisions. The economic groupings concerned shall be consulted in the drawing up of implementing legislation and may be called upon to cooperate in the application of implementing provisions."

5. Erich Gruner, *Die Wirtschaftsverbände in der Demokratie* (Zürich: Erlenbach, 1956); Jean Meynaud with A. Korff, *Les Organisations professionnelles en Suisse* (Lausanne: Payot, 1963); Leonhard Neid-

The interest of scholars in these matters is hardly surprising; what is more noteworthy is the increasing attention they are receiving from the Swiss political leadership.

Parliamentary reports and debates exhibit an increasing preoccupation with preventing occupational or economic groupings from acquiring such leverage over the preparation of legislative texts as might affect the National Assembly's freedom of decision. Signs of this are frequent in recent debates of the Council of States; its Management Committee, while for the time being endorsing the present separation of functions—as did the National Council—adds that:

This must not, of course, preclude paying close attention to each step of the preliminary procedure and making every effort to ensure that, from both a political and practical point of view, preliminary decisions are not irreversible.<sup>6</sup>

This is an important aspect of the influence of groupings, which by no means excludes the full range of pressures, both direct and indirect. This whole question of relations between pressure groups and the federal government was vividly highlighted by the Federal Council in the conclusion of its message to the Parliament; the Federal Council warned against the weakening of the public spirit in the following terms: "The main concern of individuals and groupings is to secure for them-

hart, *Plebizit und Pluralitäre Demokratie: Eine Analyse der Funktion des schweizerischen Gesetzreferendums* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1970); Karl Meyer, *Verbände und Demokratie in der Schweiz* (Olten: Dietsch, 1968).

6. Report submitted to the Council of States by its Management Committee on the extension of administration control, ad. 9194, 12 February 1966, p. 13.

selves the largest possible share of goods and services." Clearly, the influence of pressure groups has become a public issue.

#### *General consultations*

According to Jean Meynaud,<sup>7</sup> the stages of consultation—once action on a matter has been initiated—may be summarized as follows: (1) inter-department consultation; (2) referral of the matter to one or more experts for preparation of a preliminary draft or for advice; (3) verbal contacts and discussions with canton governments and occupational groupings likely to be affected by the proposed legislation; (4) appointment of an expert commission if the issue is of national importance—in addition to independent experts, such bodies include experts from occupational organizations which are thus associated with the legislative process; (5) referral of the draft to canton authorities and the concerned occupational organizations for written consultation; (6) preparation of the final draft by the administration and transmission to other departments and to the Federal Council for decision. Once adopted by the Federal Council, the draft is sent to Parliament and sometimes submitted to popular vote.

During the first stage—steps (1), (2) and (3)—the administration prepares the preliminary drafts with occasional assistance from an outside expert, particularly where the subject matter is important or specialized. It then approaches the canton authorities and the socioeconomic groupings. This is the second stage—that of consultation proper. In view of the influence of consultative committees on the

7. Jean Meynaud, *Les Organisations professionnelles*, pp. 274–279.

preparation of the final draft and, hence, on the decision-making process, the choice of the experts to serve on the commissions and their working methods are of particular importance. As has been stressed by Walter Buser, vice-chancellor of the federal government, the choice of commissioners has from the start been a controversial issue: so much so that on February 7, 1950, the Federal Office of Industry, Arts and Crafts and Labor (OFIAMS) substituted for its internal directives of March 1, 1939, exhaustive guidelines concerning the consultation of associations and the appointment of commissioners. This document makes it clear, albeit indirectly, that the administration is faced with more than gentle pressures in both their choice of groupings to be consulted and the selection of members to be appointed to commissions.

The major commissions include representatives of the federal department concerned and other federal services, as appropriate, the cantons, the scientific community, employers, workers, consumers and, possibly, other interested circles. The appointment of members is the responsibility of the competent federal administrations. It is not arbitrary. Under the OFIAMS guidelines—applied, by analogy, by the other offices and divisions—the cantons and groupings are invited to nominate a number of representatives exceeding, if possible, that of members to be appointed so as to give the administration a choice. Finally—and this is a typically Swiss constraint—the experts must be appointed with fair regard to regions and languages.<sup>8</sup>

8. Walter Buser, "Le rôle de l'administration et des groupes dans le processus de décision en Suisse," *Annuaire suisse de science politique*, 1969, pp. 122, 123.

According to the federal government's yearbook for 1971-1972, there are 142 commissions of which 32 were set up in 1971, with the following breakdown: Political Department, 8; Department of the Interior, 38; Department of Justice and Police, 5; Armed Forces Department, 38; Department of Finance and Customs, 10; Department of Economic Affairs, 28; Department of Transport and Energy, 15. By way of example, the 32 commissions set up in 1971 are composed of 487 members.

As may be seen in table 3, while

TABLE 3  
COMPOSITION OF CONSULTING COMMISSIONS

	ADMINISTRATION	OUTSIDE	TOTAL
Full membership	136 28%	351 72%	487 100%
Chairmen	13 41%	19 59%	32 100%
Secretaries	25 78%	7 22%	32 100%
Other members	98 23%	325 77%	423 100%

only 28 percent of all members and 41 percent of the chairmen come from the administration, the latter provides the secretariat in a large majority of cases. About three-quarters of all members come from outside the government—that is, from private industry, occupational associations, independent experts; two-thirds of all the chairmen are also outside people.

In this process of consultation the federal administration is the main target of pressures and influences. These are brought to bear by the groups in several ways, initially through the expert commissions—members are, of course, in a privileged position from this point of

view. At the same time, however, there may be parallel attempts to influence administration and government policies, particularly by groups having only minority representation on commissions. These attempts may take the form of direct contacts and exchanges—for example, special reports, visits and audiences—or more indirect methods, such as mobilization of opinion or demonstrations—a favorite form of action with farmers. They also provide a natural outlet for groupings which are not a part of the established consultation machinery.

The system of communications and influence at the federal level is supplemented by general consultation, usually in written form, with the authorities and, through them, with socioeconomic groupings in the cantons. This results in regional diversification by providing a framework within which regional organizations can express themselves and by allowing for differences among canton sections affiliated to a federal association. The opportunity enjoyed by such organizations to influence public policy at the canton level gives them, in effect, an indirect leverage over the federal administration and government.

#### *Consultation in foreign policy matters*

A similar process applies to foreign policy in the trade, economic and social fields. Roughly speaking, three stages may be distinguished in the drawing-up of economic and trade agreements: namely, consultation and preparation; negotiation; and conclusion of the agreements, themselves.<sup>9</sup>

9. Dusan Sidjanski, "Les groupes de pression et la politique étrangère en Suisse," *Annuaire suisse de science politique*, 1966, pp. 28-45.

In the preparatory phase the federal administration consults, in writing, various federal-level occupational associations, in particular the *Vorort* and the Swiss Farmers Union. This request for advice may be preceded by direct contacts with the social and economic groupings mainly concerned. In preparing its reply, each association takes soundings in accordance with its usual methods.

The views received from the various occupational organizations provide the initial basis for the formulation of the federal administration's official negotiating position which is determined through direct consultations involving, apart from the national bodies, those federations concerned by the proposed agreement. It thus represents the outcome of a concerted effort by the federal administration and the representatives of the circles mainly concerned. As in the other consultation procedures, a few especially important national organizations are always associated with the various stages of the process. Following this preparatory phase, a report is drawn up by the official in charge of trade agreements and transmitted to the Federal Council which, on the basis of this report, issues its instructions to the Swiss negotiators.

In the negotiations the Swiss delegation includes, in addition to the government officials, representatives of the *Vorort* and the Swiss Farmers Union or the Watch-makers Federation. These representatives are treated as government delegates: their travel and subsistence allowances are paid by the federal administration, and sometimes they are granted additional facilities—for example, office space for the *Vorort* representatives. As government officials, they must observe secrecy.

This practice, which has been formalized, is a peculiarly Swiss institution; if found in other countries—for example, the Netherlands or Central America—such instances represent exceptions to the rule of the administration, alone, negotiating on the government's behalf. In Switzerland, by contrast, interpenetration is such that it is impossible to assess the extent of mutual influences. What can be said is that in this case cooperation is substituted for pressure, all the more so because in the area of foreign relations a strong degree of convergence between the interests of the public and private sectors is a fair assumption. Such pressure as might be brought to bear at this stage could emanate from a federation which was not associated in the consultation process and had divergent interests of its own or simply from a business grouping or enterprise seeking to defend or increase its share in the anticipated benefits. This kind of action usually takes the form of direct contacts or attempts at persuasion supported by the most solid and convincing documentary evidence.

These relationships, whether of cooperation or pressure, are characterized by a substantial degree of trust and personal contact. In the small circle of political and socioeconomic leaders involved, everyone knows everyone else and there can be no secrets. Conflicts and clashes of interests may arise, but the size of the Swiss community and of its network of leaders facilitates personal relationships and mutual watchfulness. Respect for established positions has nevertheless often stood in the way of fresher and more dynamic elements.

After the agreement has been negotiated, the public factor tends

to reassert itself. Parliamentary control, in particular, is exercised at the time of ratification.<sup>10</sup> The chances of any changes being made at this stage are, however, slight; the Federal Assembly is unlikely to disapprove an international text upon which the Federal Council, which decisively controls foreign policy, and a foreign government have agreed. Therefore, it is a plausible assumption that, as a rule, pressures on Parliament will serve no purpose.

A system similar to that governing trade agreements operates in the areas covered by international economic organizations of which Switzerland is a member. In a multilateral setting, however, the work takes place at a more abstract level and is concerned with general rules, global concessions and over-all policies. In the case, for example, of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), consultations before, and often after, international meetings have assumed a permanent character within an administrative agency, *Délégation économique*

10. Foreign agreements are concluded by the Federal Council, subject to approval by Parliament, in all cases entailing new international obligations for Switzerland. Such approval is, however, not necessary in the following cases, for which Parliament has delegated authority to the Federal Council: traffic in goods and payments—federal order of 28 September 1956, 28 September 1962—technical cooperation—federal order of 20 December 1962, 10 December 1964—protection and incentives for investment—federal order of 27 September 1963—and consolidation of debts—federal order of 17 March 1966. By far the greatest number of economic agreements are covered by the delegation of authority, although the tariff agreements based on the Swiss Customs Tariff Federal Act of 19 June 1959 constitute an exception. The free trade agreement with the European Economic Community was submitted both to parliamentary approval and to the popular vote.

*permanente; Ständige Wirtschaftsdelegation*—the Permanent Economic Delegation. It is made up of senior officials from the competent federal administrations and representatives of the *Vorort*, the Swiss Farmers Union, the Swiss Federation of Trade Unions and the Swiss Union of Arts and Crafts. It has a secretariat, under the responsibility of an official of the administration. Needless to say, for the more specialized matters, other occupational bodies are also consulted.

Extensive consultations also attended the preparation and negotiation of the free-trade agreement between Switzerland and the European Economic Community (EEC). The Swiss delegation included, in addition to the eight government representatives, four members of the *Vorort* and one from the Swiss Farmers Union. Among the matters on which negotiations were most arduous, two—namely, those concerning rules of competition and rules of origin—were dealt with especially by the *Vorort* representatives. Both matters were of quite special concern to the *Vorort*, and both had been the subject of a preliminary study. However, while the *Vorort* took a very active part in the preparatory work preceding the negotiations, it stayed pretty much in the background during the referendum campaign which preceded the vote of December 3, 1972.<sup>11</sup>

#### *Resort to the popular vote*

The Swiss system is characterized by the initiative and referendum procedures which afford further

11. See, M. L. Gänger and S. Burrus, "Action du *Vorort* durant les accord Suisse/CEE" (Paper presented at Political Science Seminar II, conducted by Dusan Sidjanski, University of Geneva, Switzerland, April 1973).

scope for action by groups wishing to initiate legislation or considering themselves adversely affected by a decision. While these procedures enable groupings to appeal to the people, they also provide a means whereby decisions favoring them can be challenged. Whereas the negotiation process usually leads to accommodation and compromise, the outcome of referendum and initiative is a clear-cut, brutal choice: a matter of yes or no. This is why resort to optional referendum or initiative is comparatively limited (shown in table 4).

The optional referendum and initiative procedures are, in practice, open only to organized groups. As is often pointed out, the cost of any campaign on a reasonable scale comes to about half a million francs—a sum clearly beyond the means of the average citizen. Apart, however, from organized socioeconomic groupings, promotional action can be initiated by a committee enjoying the support of political parties or occupational organizations.

The popular vote has been used on several occasions—for example, by the Migros cooperative grouping which tried to secure a position in the Swiss economy against the opposition of the cartels and then to introduce certain innovations into the Swiss system. It could again be used in the future by marginal, but dynamic, groups bent on change and innovation. However, the results of past optional referendums and initiatives suggest that the people incline more often towards conservative solutions. Nevertheless—and in spite of the fact that their direct use is comparatively infrequent—these means can easily be turned into weapons which groups can use to exert pressure either on the authorities or on their peers.

#### THE ROLE OF INTEREST GROUPS

##### *The framing of the law on cartels*

The process which led to the adoption of the law on cartels affords

TABLE 4  
REFERENDUMS AND INITIATIVES, POSITION AS OF JANUARY 31, 1974

	INITIATIVES	INTRODUCED	WITHDRAWN	VOTED	
				YES	NO
1,891		108	36	without counter-proposal—48	6 42
				initiative and counter-proposal—7	1 6 5 2
				Counter-proposal only—7	5 2
Compulsory referendums—1,848		104			82 22
Optional referendums—1,874		73*			28 45

NOTES: Affirmative vote on initiative = antigovernment attitude; affirmative vote on referendum = progovernment attitude.

\* From 1874 to 1970, 1,044 laws and orders were, in principle, subject to optional referendum, but only 73 were submitted to popular vote.

an example of the three successive stages of administrative preparation, parliamentary discussion and popular intervention. The preliminary phase—from 1937 to 1947—led up to the adoption of the new economic articles of the federal Constitution. Under these provisions the federal government is empowered, among other things, to order measures aimed at remedying the noxious effects of cartels. The first phase in the process proper included two separate cycles. The first was a round of preparatory work—1950 to 1957—which ended in the presentation of the report of the Commission for the Study of Prices; the commission's eight members included five university professors, three representatives of occupational organizations, an expert, a consultant and a three-member secretariat drawn from the administration. Thus, from the preparatory stage, consultation is provided through the participation of the major central employers associations, the trade union organizations and independent experts, with the widest possible regional representation designed to take account of the federative principle. While the experts' work was in progress, the Independent Alliance and the Migros Cooperative launched, in 1955, a popular initiative aimed at the prohibition of cartels. This was opposed by both the federal administration and the trade union and employers organizations. Though rejected in 1958, it had the merit of compelling the various groupings to define their positions. For example, in its campaign against the initiative the Swiss Commerce and Industry Union stated that its opposition was not unconditional and declared its readiness to sup-

port cartel legislation, provided that it was reasonable.<sup>12</sup>

The second phase began with the appointment of a commission of experts at the time of the campaign preceding the July 1957 vote. Its members were drawn from several categories and regions; they included, firstly, university professors, judges and government officials; and, secondly, representatives of occupational organizations.<sup>13</sup> The position of the members of the commission may be summarized as follows:<sup>14</sup> the USAM, the USCI and their affiliates wanted to restrict the scope of the law, while the other members tended to favor wide powers for the Federal Commission on Cartels. However, it may be presumed that occasional differences arose even within the employer group. For example, while the USAM and the small enterprises generally favored comprehensive controls including monopolies, the USCI and the large enterprises were by tradition opposed to such controls. On this, as on most of the issues, the commission adopted a compromise solution. For example, the commission compromised on the issue of boycotts; it met the demands

12. Claude Alain Burnand; "L'USCI et la législation fédérale sur les cartels" (Paper presented at the Political Science Seminar, University of Geneva, June 1964).

13. The thirty-three members included five academics, three government officials—including the director of the OFIAMT—three trade unionists and eleven employer leaders—representing more than one-third of the total membership—a representative of consumer interests and a delegate from Helvetia Union—salaried employees federation.

14. See, the study by Yvette Montangero, *Commission d'experts de la législation sur les cartels* (Geneva: University of Geneva, Department of Political Science, 1972).

of the employer groupings, who felt boycotts should be considered illegal, to the extent of providing for far-reaching exceptions.

In April 1959 the commission of experts handed in its report to accompany the bill. This marked the beginning of the consultation process proper which, under the federalist approach, associates both the canton authorities and the federal-level economic groupings.<sup>15</sup> According to the executive authorities, the views received from seventeen cantons, most of the associations concerned, certain political parties and a number of prominent jurists and economists showed that the experts' proposals represented an intermediate solution between divergent, although—from a political point of view—equally acceptable, conceptions. The executive authorities considered that there were no reasons for modifying the bill<sup>16</sup> which, in effect, represented a compromise resulting from a lengthy process of consultation in which the major occupational associations had taken part from the beginning. This phase ended with the adoption of the bill by the executive and its transmission to Parliament on September 18, 1961.

The third phase took place at the parliamentary level. Through either the political parties or their own, direct representatives, the groupings sought to secure modification before a hypothetical referendum—in this case, regarded as rather un-

15. These central groupings are to consult their affiliates—that is, industry federations and regional sections.

16. Federal Council message of 18 September 1961, p. 15. This is hardly surprising, since the groupings mainly concerned had already participated in the drafting of the bill within the commission of experts.

likely—could be called. The Swiss Commerce and Industry Union, for example, succeeded in having a few minor amendments adopted. It appears that rather than risking a show-down it accepted the law as a lesser evil, while hoping for lenient application. It did not press for a referendum, preferring to abide by a compromise which reflected a general consensus. It could, moreover, hardly reverse itself after making various commitments during the campaign against the initiative launched by the independents and, later, during the consultation process. As Jean Meynaud points out, while consultation gives the participants an opportunity to make themselves heard, at the same time it implies certain constraints, since the positions to which they must commit themselves are bound subsequently to restrict their margin for maneuver.<sup>17</sup> The other groupings appear to have been similarly motivated. After the law of December 20, 1962, had been voted and after the expiry of the referendum deadline—the referendum procedure not having been used—the law came into force on February 15, 1964. The fifteen-member Application Commission was appointed at the same time. As a rule, experts having participated in drawing up the law also sit on the commission, thus guaranteeing continuity between the law-making and enforcement processes. The making of the decision and its implementation thus remain largely open.

### *Inflation policy*

Decisions aimed at controlling an overheating economy are speedy,

17. Jean Meynaud, *Les Organisations professionnelles*, p. 279.



but nonetheless open. For constitutional reasons—that is, lacking powers of intervention either explicitly laid down or implied—the federal executive cannot make decisions in isolation, as in France or England, but must seek parliamentary approval and resort to the referendum within the one-year deadline. The preliminary phase was marked by various control measures: the 1960 gentleman's agreement between the Central Bank and other banks, the financial decisions of 1962 and the 1963 order limiting the work force in enterprises. With economic crisis threatening at the end of 1963, the federal executive drew up a number of draft-legislative-texts to deal with the overheating economy. Considering the urgency of the matter, it carried out consultations from January 7 to 14; meetings were successively held with representatives of canton governments, employers, labor unions and banking circles. In so doing, the executive complied with its constitutional obligation to consult the main groupings concerned before taking an important and urgent economic policy decision. The draft was drawn up and sent to Parliament ten days later. The parliamentary phase, too, was shortened, because of the need for urgent action. In most countries decisions of this kind are closed ones, but in Switzerland they are, at present, open. The process was the same as that which, following consultations—vote of December 2, 1973, on the four federal orders respecting the economy—led to the imposition of controls on wages and profits, credit and construction. On the basis of the order of January 10, 1973, the Federal Council set up an Advisory Commission on Prices, Wages and Profits.

The official in charge of administering the control measures, Professor Leo Schurmann, is chairman ex officio. The commission further includes four representatives of the employers, three representatives of labor unions, two representatives of salaried employees and civil servants unions and one representative of the Swiss Farmers Union. Substitute members responsible for technical matters—which are dealt with at special meetings—are distributed in the same way, except for an additional representative of civil servants. In 1974 the commission drew up the draft of an agreement between central employers and workers associations concerning the control of prices, wages and profits and stipulating, among other things, that the total increase in social charges may not exceed 10 percent over a period of twelve months. This draft agreement will be submitted for consultation to the member organizations and their affiliates.

#### Observations

Studies on the part played by Swiss economic groupings show, by and large, that the main thrust of their action is aimed at the federal executive—that is, essentially the administration. It is clear from the foregoing that, through consultative commissions and the rest of the consultation machinery, occupational associations have an official channel of communication with the federal administrations. The importance which they attach to the Parliament as such seems to be declining, as evidenced by the decrease in the number of officers of occupational associations holding seats in the National Council; at present there are only seventeen

of them, along with sixteen representatives of farming interests. It is significant that industry and commerce are largely underrepresented, with only 9 percent of the entire National Council membership. These groupings are noticeably less interested in seeing their members or representatives elected to the federal Parliament. This seems quite normal in light of the nature of the decision-making process: the decision-making process essentially takes place at the pre-parliamentary level, while Parliament confines itself, in most cases, to adopting the Federal Council's proposals with only minor changes—proposals which reflect a compromise between the views of the Federal Council's administrative apparatus and those of the major occupational organizations.

#### PUBLIC OPINION AND THE INTEREST GROUPS

##### Perception of influence

The Swiss electoral survey of 1972<sup>18</sup> provides a picture of Swiss

18. This public opinion survey based on national random sample (N 1.917) was carried out by the Department of Political Science of the University of Geneva with

public opinion with regard to the influence of groups and their effectiveness in defending the interests of the various sections of the citizenry (see table 5). The replies received implicitly suggest that the activities of the groups—occupational organizations—are accepted as normal. In other words, not only do the political leaders and those charged with political responsibilities consider interest groups as legitimate—on the basis of the constitutional provisions and the large extent to which consultation with groups is practiced—but so, apparently, does the public at large.

It is clear that the influence of big business is perceived as too great—60 percent—as well as, to a somewhat lesser extent, the influence of banks—46 percent; correspondingly, only 21 and 27 percent consider it to be just right. The situation in regard to the trade unions and the farmers associations is the reverse: only 15 and 16 percent feel that they have too much influence, compared to 39 and 30 percent who think that they have

collaboration of the University of Zurich and with the support of the Swiss National Fund for Scientific Research (Grant No. 1437/70).

TABLE 5  
DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF INTEREST GROUPS AS VIEWED BY VOTERS

INTEREST GROUP	TOO MUCH INFLUENCE (%)	JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT (%)	NOT ENOUGH INFLUENCE (%)	DON'T KNOW (%)
Big business	60.0	21.0	2.0	17.0
Trade unions	15.0	39.0	21.0	25.0
Political parties	14.0	45.0	14.0	27.0
Farmers association	16.0	30.0	21.0	33.0
Churches	12.0	43.0	23.0	22.0
Federal Assembly	9.0	57.0	13.0	26.0
Banks	46.0	27.0	1.0	26.0

just the right amount and 21 percent who think that they do not have enough. This indicates indirectly that these two groups have much public support—60 percent for trade unions, 51 percent for the farmers associations—if it is accepted that people who answer “just right” and “not enough” can be considered as accepting the influence of, and being generally in favor of, those groups. If this interpretation is admitted, then it can be concluded, *a contrario*, that big business and banks have more limited general support—23 and 28 percent—and face a more hostile attitude in relation to their influence, which is thought to be exaggerated.

Finally, it will be observed that the influence of political parties and that of the Federal Assembly are considered as being just right by 45 and 57 percent, respectively. These answers concerning political parties have to be related to the opinion that their role is very important—28 percent—and fairly important—46 percent. Generally speaking, the public regards their role as being rather important—74 percent—as compared with 8 percent who regard it as not so important or not important at all.<sup>19</sup> Even compared to pressure groups, political parties are not considered to be very weak.<sup>20</sup>

Moreover, the judgment of the distribution of influence as rather satisfactory—with the exception of big business and banks—faithfully reflects the general support for the Swiss political system: 66 percent consider it to be a very or fairly good system and 25 percent, passable; subject to these qualifications, 91 percent express their support, as compared to those who consider

it not so good—3 percent—or bad—1 percent—and those who “don’t know”—5 percent.

The degree of satisfaction with the government is lower, but still remains high. To the question: “how do you feel about the way the Swiss government runs the country?” 68 percent answered that they were very—12 percent—or fairly—56 percent—satisfied; 24 percent, that they were not too satisfied—21 percent—or not at all satisfied—3 percent (see table 6). As expected, the degree of satisfaction is still lower if the question refers directly to people’s interests or problems. The voters were asked: do you believe that the federal authorities at Berne and the canton authorities are concerned with your problems; would you say that they look after your problems very much, somewhat, not much or not at all? The answers to these questions reveal a decreasing pattern in which general support for the system represents the highest point—91 percent—and satisfaction with the manner in which the people’s interests are defended the lowest—46 percent (table 6).

*Defense of interests*

Furthermore, it is interesting to see how people react to the manner in which other organizations or representatives defend their interests. The question was phrased as follows: “to defend the interests of people such as you, on whom do you rely the most?” The answers to this question give one an estimate of the effectiveness of those organizations whose main task is defending people’s interests (see table 7).

If we consider trade unions as occupational organizations in the broad sense, these come first with

35 percent, as compared to 17 percent for elected representatives and only 8 percent for political parties. Even if parties are not considered as very weak compared to pressure groups, only 8 percent of the persons surveyed considered them to be effective, while elected representatives obtained a higher score—17 percent. If we distinguish between the answers of men and women, we observe two main differences: first, 48 percent of men rely on trade and professional unions, as against only 28 percent of women; secondly, the proportion of “don’t know” answers, which is very low for men—8 percent—is fairly high for women—27 percent.

There appears to be a cleavage between members and nonmembers of occupational organizations. Out of the 1,906 individuals in the sample, 531 were members of occupational organizations—28 percent of the population, yet, only 111 women compared to 420 men. Among 1,375 nonmembers, 902 are women and 473 men, the percentage of women’s rate of affiliation being 11 percent compared to 47 percent for men. Table 8 gives a more accurate picture of people’s estimates of the organizations’ effectiveness. Nonmembers predictably proved far more sceptical about the effectiveness of occupational organizations in the defense of their interests: only 26 percent of them designated occupational organizations, while 26 percent replied “none of these organizations.” By contrast, a majority of the members designated the occupational organizations—53 to 69 percent. A similar difference was observed in the “don’t know” group: 23 percent for the nonmembers as compared with only 5 to 9 percent of the members. On the other hand,

TABLE 6

	SUPPORT FOR THE SYSTEM (%)		SATISFIED WITH THE GOVERNMENT (%)		SATISFIED WITH FEDERAL AUTHORITY (%)		SATISFIED WITH CANTON AUTHORITY (%)	
	Very good	Fairly good	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	A lot	Enough	A lot	Enough
Passable	11	55	12	56	5	49	4	42
Not so good	25	66	21	68	30	30	30	30
Bad	3	91	3	24	7	37	7	37
Don't know	1		8		16		17	

87

814

815

816

19. Question number 55.

20. Question number 56 (4).

TABLE 7

TABULATED RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: TO DEFEND THE INTERESTS OF PEOPLE SUCH AS YOU, ON WHOM DO YOU RELY THE MOST

RANK ORDER	ORGANIZATIONS OR REPRESENTATIVES	PERCENT (TOTAL)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
1	Trade unions Occupational organizations	35 {14 21	48 {18 30	25 {11 14
2	Elected representatives	17	16	18
3	Political parties	8	9	7
	None of these organizations	21	19	23
	Don't know	19	8	27

NOTE: N = 1,903; men = 893; women = 1,010.

there was no such difference in the case of parties and elected representatives: the political parties scored low among both members—7 to 9 percent—and nonmembers—8 percent. Elected representatives did better in all cases—10 to 21 percent—except among members of labor unions, where they scored only 8 percent.

Without overstressing the significance of this fact—which is confirmed by the replies concerning the influence of the various categories of groups—it may be observed that the members of labor unions also happen to be the ones who, in large majority—69 percent—rely on occupational organizations to defend their interests. By and large, these results confirm one fact: that those who join an occupational organization implicitly recognize its effectiveness, in that they look to it for better protection of their interests. Confirmation is also afforded of the soundness of the Swiss voters' assessment of the working of the Swiss political system, in which two forces occupy privileged positions: the authorities—government and administration—and the occupational organizations.

Considered by a large majority as a good political system, the Swiss democracy ensures, on the whole, peaceful change and manages to resolve political and social conflicts—social peace between employers and workers. This was confirmed by the answers to our question: "different groups sometimes resort to demonstrations, strikes, or civil disobedience—for example, sit-ins, refusal to pay taxes—in order to get what they want; in which situations do you think that such actions are justified? For each of the following situations, would you please indicate whether one of these three actions is justified or not (multiple responses allowed)." Results are listed in table 9.

*Attitudes towards demonstrations, strikes and civil disobedience*

The use of more or less violent means, such as demonstrations, strikes or civil disobedience, does not, by and large, seem to be condoned by Swiss citizens—a fact all the more remarkable in view of their frequency in neighboring countries, where they are a more or less normal occurrence. The proportion of those who reject them

TABLE 8

TABULATED RESPONSES BY SECTOR TO THE QUESTION: TO DEFEND THE INTERESTS OF PEOPLE SUCH AS YOU, ON WHOM DO YOU RELY THE MOST

SECTOR	TRADE UNIONS (1)	PROFES- SIONAL ORGANI- ZATIONS (2)	PROFES- SIONAL ORGANI- ZATIONS (1 + 2)	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES	NONE OF THESE ORGANI- ZATIONS	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Nonmembers	145 11%	206 15%	351 26%	110 8%	247 18%	356 26%	311 23%	1,375
Members of professional organizations A + B + C	130 24.5%	198 37.3%	328 61.8%	37 6.9%	70 13.2%	53 10%	43 8.1%	531
Employees unions Trade unions	A 114 42%	59 21%	173 63%	18 7%	28 10%	28 10%	25 9%	272
Business organizations Professional organizations	B 14 7%	108 53%	122 60%	14 7%	33 16%	20 10%	15 7%	204
Agricultural unions or organizations	C 2 4%	31 56%	33 60%	5 9%	9 16%	5 9%	3 5%	55
Totals	275	404	679	147	317	409	354	1,906

NOTES: Row (var. 255; S. 19a): Would you tell me according to this list if you belong to a professional organization, to a union, or to any organization of these types?

Column (var. 119, Q.46): To defend the interests of people such as you, on whom do you rely the most?

altogether varies from 36 percent—Number 1, top of the scale—to 57 percent—Number 8, bottom of the scale. Admittedly, 7 to 19 percent gave "don't know" answers, while 15 to 25 percent answered "it depends"—which means that they could either approve or disapprove. However, even the total number of those who hesitate and those who express approval is only slightly in excess of a bare majority for items 1, 2, 3 and 4—49 to 53 percent—and well below it for the other items—43 to 32 percent. As to the various forms of action—demonstrations, strikes and acts of disobedience—it is clear that demonstrations are most commonly felt to be justified, whereas strikes—although both legitimate and legal in most coun-

tries—and, above all, acts of disobedience are condoned by very low percentages.

Also, one may note that three out of the eight questions refer specifically to forms of trade union action—that is, dismissals, wage claims and participation. Not unexpectedly, it is in relation to these matters that strikes are most widely approved—by 13, 11 and 7 percent, respectively. Even so, the extent to which this form of action is supported in regard to issues of specific trade union concern remains surprisingly low. The years of social peace appear to have shaped the Swiss attitude towards strikes. As for acts of civil disobedience, they reach the maximum approval—4 percent—in regard to the protection of political,

TABLE 9

## DEGREE OF PERCEIVED JUSTIFICATION FOR RADICAL TACTICS IN VARIOUS SITUATIONS

SITUATION (RANK OF a + b + c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	SUB- TOTAL (a) + (b) + (c) (%)	(d)		DON'T KNOW (%)
	DEMON- STRATIONS (%)	STRIKES (%)	CIVIL DISOBE- DIENCE (%)		IT DE- PENDS (%)	NONE (%)	
1) In order to prevent an undesirable building—for example, atomic energy plants or highways	28	2	3	33	20	36	11
2) In order to prevent dismissals	18	11	2	31	22	37	11
3) In order to put a stop to unjust treatment of a political, religious or other minority	25	2	4	31	18	38	13
4) In order to obtain a wage increase	12	13	1	26	25	42	7
5) In order to allow workers to participate in management decisions	11	7	3	21	22	44	13
6) In order to pressure public authorities or the Federal Assembly	18	2	3	23	15	48	14
7) In order to progress towards a more humane society	13	1	2	16	17	48	19
8) In order to limit the number of foreign workers	10	1	2	13	19	57	11
Average of eight issues	17	5	2	24	20	44	12

religious or other minorities. The question of the Jura may well have something to do with this.

These few indications confirm that the use of violent means by pressure groups would be unlikely to receive more than very marginal support. This is corroborated by the replies under item 6, which refers to pressures on the public authorities or the federal assembly: here

only 18 percent are ready to condone demonstrations, 2 percent strikes and 3 percent acts of civil disobedience.

To illustrate the relative disparity of opinions concerning the various means of pressure on the authorities, we measured the spread between the opinions of individuals belonging to different parties or occupations and those of the average

Swiss citizen. This was calculated as a percentage, using the difference between frequency anticipated—based on marginal probability—and frequency observed—based on the actual breakdown of replies.<sup>21</sup>

The radical tendency is represented by the Socialist and Labour—*parti du travail*—party sympathizers, who favor mainly demonstrations as a means of pressure—11 percent more so than the average citizen. On the other hand, they are reticent as to the other two techniques. The supporters of the Independent Alliance also favor demonstrations—11 percent. The spread is too small in the case of most other parties. The Christian Democrats tend to be undecided; the Radicals and Liberals rather reticent; while sympathizers of the Agrarian Party are closest to the average citizen. The nonpartisan group, among whom the proportion of those failing to answer was highest, are less inclined to condone radical means of pressure and, in particular, demonstrations.<sup>22</sup> Table 10 illustrates the spread between the various occupations and the average voter.

Despite the lack of wide differences, it was most surprising to find the highest measure of approval for acts of pressure—demonstrations—among civil servants. The same tendency was observed, though to a lesser extent, in the professions and among senior execu-

21. Of the results obtained, only a limited part could be considered as valid, with a level of significance of  $\alpha = 0.01$  (symbol +) and 0.05 (symbol ++). The other results could not be taken into consideration, either because the spread as compared with the average was too slight or because of the small number of party members or supporters.

22. The conclusions concerning the non-partisans and the Socialists are more reliable in terms of statistical coverage.

tives and top management. Skilled workers and foremen did not emerge clearly, the spread here being insignificant. Middle management seemed most hesitant, with a higher incidence of "it depends" replies than other groups. Junior executives came very close to the average, although exhibiting a slight preference for strikes. Among craftsmen—a very small cell—disapproval of all of these means of pressure was more frequent than among the other groups. A large proportion of farmers—a small number—failed to answer. Finally, unskilled workers—day laborers—exhibited both the smallest proportion of answers favoring demonstrations and the largest proportion of failures to answer.

Two conclusions emerge: first, civil servants and senior executives are readiest to condone demonstrations; secondly, skilled workers, foremen and day laborers are very close to the average citizen in their reticence towards all of these methods; while junior executives, alone, show a slight preference for strikes.

## CONCLUSIONS

The occupational organizations established at the national level have emerged as negotiating partners for the central government, supplementing the forces and authorities of the cantons. Since their very vocation is to think and to act in national terms, they have contributed not only partnership, but also support to the federal political process. Not surprisingly, the Federal Council has sought to stimulate the setting up of national occupational organizations and has even subsidized them in their beginnings. Nor is it surprising that these organizations should be concentrated mainly in Zurich, the industrial

TABLE 10

## DEGREE OF JUSTIFICATION FOR RADICAL TACTICS AS PERCEIVED BY VARIOUS PROFESSIONS

PROFESSIONS	(a) PRO-DEM- ONSTRATIONS	(b) PRO- STRIKES	(c) PRO-CIVIL DISOBE- DIENCE	(a) + (b) + (c) PRO- RADICAL- ISM	IT DEPENDS	AGAINST	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Civil servants	30.6* +12.4 44	3.5 +1.2 5	2.8 +0.2 4	36.8 53	12.5 -2.2 18	42.4 -5.8 61	8.3* -5.6 12	144
Liberal professions, senior executives, top management	23.6** +5.5 52	1.8 -0.6 4	3.6 +1.0 8	29.1 64	17.3 +2.6 38	47.3 -0.9 104	6.4* -7.6 14	220
Skilled workers foremen	20.3 +2.9 73	1.4 -1.0 5	3.1 +0.4 11	24.7 89	12.8 -2.0 46	51.1 +2.5 184	11.4 -2.7 41	360
Middle management	16.9 -1.2 40	3.4 +1.0 8	4.2 +1.6 10	24.6 58	21.2* +6.5 50	47.5 -0.9 112	6.8* -7.2 16	236
Junior executives	15.1 -3.0 34	4.4** +2.0 10	3.1 +0.5 7	22.7 51	16.0 +1.3 36	44.9 +3.5 101	16.4 +2.4 37	225
Others	17.0 -0.9 16	2.1 -0.3 2	0 -2.7 0	19.1 18	18.1 +3.4 17	52.1 +3.9 49	10.6 -3.3 10	94
Craftsmen	15.1 -3.0 19	0.8 -1.6 1	1.6 -0.8 2	17.5 22	15.1 +0.4 19	54.0* +5.7 68	13.5 -0.5 17	126
Farmers	15.7 -1.1 22	0.7 -1.4 1	0 -2.6 0	16.4 23	12.1 -2.6 17	50.0 +1.8 70	21.4* +7.4 30	140
Unskilled workers	12.0* -6.1 47	2.3 0.0 9	2.0 -0.3 8	16.3 64	10.5 -3.9 41	44.9 -1.8 176	23.2* +10.3 91	392
Total	18.1 347	2.3 45	2.6 50	23.1 442	14.7 282	48.2 925	14.0 268	N = 1,917

Table constructed by M. Sliwinski.

NOTES: The percentage with + or - indicates the difference between expected value and observed value.

\* Indicates the level of confidence equal to  $\alpha = 0.01$ .

\*\* Indicates the level of confidence equal to  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

and economic center of the country, and in Bern, the seat of the federal government. Moreover, the network of Swiss organizations has developed mainly around the USAM and the *Vorort*.

Owing particularly to the growing demands placed on them and their comparatively limited administrative capacity, the federal authorities have striven to develop the con-

stitutional concept of preparliamentary consultation. As the foregoing survey shows, this largely pragmatic process has become the kingpin of economic and social policy formulation. Resort to the popular vote, although it remains limited, nevertheless provides a kind of safeguard and means of action for minority groups. The examples given illustrate, albeit imperfectly, the

manner in which the system works and, particularly, the interaction between referendum and initiative on the one hand and the normal law-making process on the other. However, they leave out of account one fundamental aspect: namely, that of implementation, a stage at which groups having accepted a compromise may try to block its application. Finally, it has been seen that the activities of interest groups in Switzerland are supported by a broad consensus of voter opinion. The evidence suggests that the average citizen tends to regard the normal activities of socioeconomic organizations as legitimate, while refusing, in principle, to condone more or less violent forms of action. There are, to be sure, signs of occasional challenges to this image of an ideally peaceful political and social order. The Swiss compromise is sometimes exposed to tensions, if not to outright conflicts.