

Busy swiss electors

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BUSY SWISS ELECTORS

Three Cantons and several Communes went to the poll on 2nd and 3rd October. In Berne, the cantonal electorate, with a participation of about 20%, accepted five proposals. Two concerned changes in the Constitution (equal rights for people residing and those temporarily living in the Canton and eligibility of women to all tribunals). The others are laws dealing with civil defence, education and welfare (replacing the "Armenpolizeigesetz" of 1912) and expropriation.

The electors of the Canton of Zurich sanctioned five proposals. The controversial change in the law re holidays for employees proposed by the Socialists, was accepted with 74,718: 65,319 votes. Additional Cantonal Schools are to be started in addition to those in Zurich, Winterthur and Wetzikon, as well as "Frauenbildungsschulen" like in Zurich and Winterthur. The other three proposals concern the application of the Federal Decree regarding sickness and accident insurance, contributions to the cost of building three nursing homes in Zurich (Bachwiesen, Käferberg and Bumbach) and a change in the law governing hunting and bird protection.

With a participation of just under 20%, men and women voters of the Canton of Vaud approved the change in the Cantonal Constitution according to which the "Eglise Nationale and Eglise Libre" unite and become the State Church of the Canton.

The municipal electors of Zurich (48%) approved higher cost of living grants for old-age pensioners. At Horgen, 67% of the citizens entitled to vote granted with a 2:1 majority a credit of 4.81 million francs for renovating and enlarging the home for old people. Hans Pfister (Liberal), builder at Horgen, was elected into the District Tribunal. Several Communes elected their communal authorities. At Uster, a proposal to purchase land for extending the cemetery found approval. Wädenswil electors accepted an extension of the water reservoir Schlieregg and the erection of a double kindergarten and fire brigade equipment hall, but rejected the proposal to renovate the "Bürgerheim"; a new old people's and nursing home is visualised by a committee opposing the first plan. In Winterthur, the electorate (68%) agreed to join the "Gasverband Ostschweiz A.G.", approved credits for building staff-homes at the sanatorium Leukerbad and for enlarging the Hofhurri school at Wülflingen and a civil defence post in the same school. But the voters rejected a revision of the Commune Regulations. At Zollikon, the electors chose Dr. Max Haupt (Liberal) as their new Commune President.

The voters in the town of Berne agreed to a 15-million franc project for civil defence. Langenthal electors rejected the dentists' Initiative for adding fluoride to the drinking water and refused the credit to buy land for a new administration building — this reflected the concern about the high price of land generally. Fürspreh Dr. Walter Schwarz (BGB) was elected "Regierungsstatthalter" of the district of Signau. The Steffisburg citizens agreed to a credit of 35.8 million francs for a waste-water plant. The Tavannes electorate granted credits for renovating the Commune House, building a home for old people and buying a vehicle for the public services. Thun's voters gave their Commune authorities increased financial competences.

Just under 40% of St. Gall's electors went to the poll to accept the proposal that the town should join the "Gasverband Ostschweiz A.G.", which means expendi-

ture of 8.8 mio. The electors at Waldkirch were unanimous in deciding to join the group water supply Berg-Hägenschwil-Wittenbach.

The Herisau citizens rejected an Initiative by the Social Democrats, which asked for better remuneration for the Commune Councillors. They agreed to the increase in pay (from 12,000 to 20,000 francs) for the "Gemeindehauptmann." The proposal to give financial support for the rebuilding of the Casino was also rejected.

The electors of Habsburg (Aargau) refused to elect the new Commune Council. In the third poll all the voting slips were blank; the Commune asks the Cantonal Government to investigate the reasons,

[A.T.S.]

FEDERAL MOSAIC

Switzerland has made a fifth contribution of \$65,000 (about Fr.282,000.—) towards the cost of the UNO action in Cyprus. The Federal Council also decided to take part again in the civil operations by UNO in the Congo; Switzerland's contribution will be in telecommunications. In 1963, the Confederation spent 1.2 mio francs on the same assistance, and a similar sum on medical aid.

After the historic conversation between President Johnson and the President of the Confederation Federal Councillor Tschudi via "Early Bird" in June, U Thant's visit to Geneva where he was welcomed by Federal Councillor Wahlen, and a visit to the President of the Confederation by an American boy scout with personal greetings from President Johnson, the latter sent a message to the Swiss people in September when the second International Fair for Industrial Electronics was opened in Basle.

The Nouvelle Société Helvétique published a new project of a Foundation for Federal co-operation on 22nd September. At a press conference which was attended by President Tschudi, the plan was explained. It is intended as a kind of staff office for Federation and Cantons, whose activities should help to develop an efficient Swiss federalism. The NSH are willing to grant an initial capital sum. The Foundation should also be a forum for discussions aimed to provide the basis for a partial or total revision of the Federal Constitution.

The Federal Council has agreed to examine whether Swiss Chambers of Commerce abroad should be compensated for services rendered which are of general benefit and relieve diplomatic missions. The granting of regular subsidies would, however, be contrary to the basic regulations that Chambers of Commerce should be carried by private enterprise.

At the International Sugar Conference in Geneva, the Swiss delegate stated that a new international sugar agreement was desirable to relieve the crisis on the sugar market. He also pointed out that Switzerland imports annually some 200,000 metric tons of sugar.

The Federal Council has decided to donate a total of Fr.350,000.— to the UNO Institute for Training and Research for the first three years.

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