

# Busy Swiss Electorate

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## Busy Swiss Electorate

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Radicals (+5), 22 Liberals (as before), Social Democrats 38 (—4), Progressives 11 (as before), Workers 8 (—2), Christian Socialists 1 (+1). The "Landesring" was not successful. Comparing distribution over the past 12 years, the 115 seats have not suffered any real changes in Party distribution. Nine women were elected.

The Valais voters agreed to two laws, trade police and water protection and to the building of a home for the mentally retarded at Monthey.

### Berne and Zurich

In Berne, a new *Regierungsrat* was elected in the person of Ernst Blaser (Zaeziwil), an agronomist, member of the BGB Party, as was the other candidate. The Jura districts did not help in the elections; in each one, the blank polling slips were in the majority.

Early in May, the voters of the Canton of Berne agreed to financial support for private railways becoming anchored in law, accepted new trade and industry laws, one on vocational training, granted a 19.8-million credit for a University Chemistry building, and to an increase in capital of the Bernese Power Works from 56 to 90m. francs.

Bienne citizens accepted the changed budget. Twice the Moutier

voters went to the poll to grant large sums of money for a school building, the re-conditioning of a quarry, a civil defence centre, etc. The first time, voting participation was only 10%.

The Burgdorf electorate gave the authorities more financial competence, agreed to new election methods for the Municipal Council, but rejected the proposed agreement between Citizens and Inhabitants Communes regarding *Gymnasium* and Secondary School. With Women, voting participation was 32.7% with men 51.7%.

The Zurich voters elected or confirmed 24 District Attorneys. The former detective Kurt Meier, known as "Meier 19" was not elected — most of the Parties opposed him as he had been sacked from Police Service some years ago. The Zurich municipal voters agreed to a 2-million grant for regional traffic planning and to 2.5m. for a new work depot on Hardau.

The Winterthur electorate accepted seven proposals (63% participation): Welfare dental service for young people, increased subsidy for children's home Büel and several grants for the development of the Gruezefeld — Seen district.

Adliswil voters agreed to a shooting range, those of Zollikon to a gymnasium and civil defence centre, and those of Volketswil to a school centre.

(By courtesy of "Agence Télégraphique Suisse".)

## LAST MINUTE INFORMATION

The Federal Council has published a message to Parliament proposing to ratify two agreements regarding space development.

The Federal Councillors Schaffner and Spühler represented Switzerland at the EFTA Ministers' Meeting in Geneva early in May. Federal Councillor Spühler attended the Ministerial Committee meeting of the Council of Europe in London early in May.

The Geneva National Councillor Olivier Reverdin has been elected President of the Council of Europe in succession of Sir Geoffrey de Freitas (G.B.) This shows how the relation between Switzerland and Europe has changed and increased in importance.

A social security agreement has been signed with Liechtenstein.

Federal Councillor Spühler and UNO Secretary-General U Thant addressed the Golden Jubilee ceremony of the League of Nations in Geneva at the end of April. Monsieur Spühler also made a declaration on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Council of Europe, in which he referred to Switzerland not yet having signed the Human Rights Convention.

For the first time, Old Age pensions surpassed the two milliard franc limit in 1968.

The Federal Constitution is to be translated into English and Spanish.

The New Helvetic Society want to improve the image of Switzerland abroad by collective efforts.

(By courtesy of A.T.S. and "Basler Nachrichten".)

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