

It happened in Central Switzerland

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On Sunday, 26th May, the electorate had to vote on this Initiative. The proposal was decisively defeated by 450,488 against and 273,355 for.

"The Times" said on the morning after polling day that "Switzerland is thought to be the only country in which the people are given a chance to decide directly whether they believe their armed forces should have nuclear arms". The people decided in 1962 that they should, and they have now left the final decision to Parliament.

	RESULT		Participation
	Yes	No	
Zurich	58,103	99,707	—
Berne	44,304	60,901	41%
Lucerne	4,805	26,029	43.3%
Uri	1,241	5,129	74.4%
Schwyz	1,598	7,372	40%
Obwalden	168	2,454	40.11%
Nidwalden	455	2,630	50.7%
Glarus	1,529	3,920	52%
Zug	1,104	4,276	—
Fribourg	5,229	8,916	30.2%
Solothurn (Provisional)	7,622	18,098	47.2%
Baselstadt	11,717	10,829	33.5%
Baselland	7,789	9,831	42%
Schaffhausen	5,505	7,878	—
Appenzell Ar	1,894	6,262	—
Appenzell Ir	122	1,274	37.7%
St. Gall	13,319	37,304	52%
Grisons (2 small communes missing)	3,781	14,593	—
Aargau	23,024	46,392	74.6%
Thurgau	6,895	20,783	66%
Ticino	9,569	7,553	36%
Vaud (3 small communes missing)	22,531	15,532	31%
Valais	8,423	16,444	50%
Neuchâtel	13,346	5,859	46%
Geneva	19,282	10,522	—
Total	273,355	450,488	

Accepting Cantons: 4½
Rejecting Cantons: 17½
Participation: 47.75%

(Based on reports received by courtesy of the Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)

MUSIC AT MONTREUX

Montreux and Vevey on the lovely shores of Lake Geneva rank among the leading music festival towns in Europe. This year's programme for the "September Musical" (1st to 26th September) is all set and features twelve symphony concerts by the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Warsaw, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and the Orchestre National de Paris. Besides a Polish and a Swiss chorus, music lovers will be able to hear famous soloists such as Alexander Brailowsky, Zino Francescatti, Arthur Rubinstein, Isaac Stern, Nathan Milstein, Pierre Fournier, Robert Casadesus and Leonid Kogan. Leading the orchestras will be Witwold Rowicki, Paul Klecki, William Steinberg, Ernest Ansermet, Istvan Kertesz, Antal Dorati, Dean Dixon, Wolfgang Sawallisch and Stanislaw Skrowaczewski.

[S.N.T.O.]

IT HAPPENED IN CENTRAL SWITZERLAND

URI

The accounts for 1962 of the Canton of Uri showed an increase of income over expenditure of Fr.87,139.— (total income Fr.15,009,987.—). The Cantonal authorities have asked for a thorough examination of all water supplies of drinking water, all reservoirs and watermains, so that no mishap similar to the catastrophe of Zermatt would surprise Uri.

The Uri electorate had to vote on the programme of road building and it accepted a credit of 22 million francs by 4,534 to 943 votes. Three weeks later the citizens accepted the proposed fire-police bill and elected a new Cantonal Councillor in the person of Landrat Anton Arnold, Buerglen, who will replace the resigning Councillor Alois Mueller.

According to the Cantonal Constitution the Uri Parliament consists of one representative for every 500 Swiss inhabitants. Based on the census of 1950, the number amounted to 54 "Landräte". According to the last census of 1960 the population has increased and seven new representatives will have to be elected when the Cantonal Parliament is renewed in 1964.

From 5th to 21st May the Diocesan Bishop of Chur was on visit in Uri to give the sacrament of confirmation all over the Canton.

The last week-end in May the Swiss retail traders met at Altdorf and Fluelen for their annual meeting.

When digging near the mouth of the Seewern (Lauerzersee) a workman found a well-preserved sword which is believed to date back to the Battle of Morgarten in 1315. [A.T.S.]

Beautifully hand-carved neck and wrist rings in pure gold featuring intricate relief images of semi-animal heads are now on exhibit at the Swiss National Museum in Zurich. These masterpieces of Celtic goldsmiths dating back some 2,300 years had been founded at Erstfeld, on the St. Gotthard rail line in Uri, and are described as Europe's most precious archaeological discovery in the last three decades. It is believed that a merchant using the ancient North-South Alpine mule-trail either lost or buried the treasure here. Two Italian construction workers, who received a rich finder's reward, had unearthed it from a depth of thirty feet while operating a dredger on the site of a barrage which is being built at Erstfeld to protect the Reuss valley against the threat of the avalanches from the steep mountainside. The treasure — the most important of its kind found in Switzerland since 1906 — consists of four neck-rings and three bracelets, all unused, which may indicate that the Celtic merchant fell victim to one of the prehistoric earthslides or avalanches. [S.N.T.O.]

SCHWYZ

The Cantonal Council of Schwyz consists today of 105 members, but proportionately to the number of citizens it should be increased to 119. This is considered too high and the Council have proposed to limit the Cantonal Parliament to 100. The Council decided to agree to the proposed increase in the Canton's subsidy to the Technical College of Lucerne. This will mean Fr.30,000.— p.a. (Fr.8,000.— more than hitherto).

The District Commune of Schwyz met early in May in the historic "Ring" at Ibach. A number of credits were passed, amongst them one for the renovation of the St. Georgskapelle at Arth and the Church and Charnel House of Steinen.

The citizens of Kuessnacht a/Rigi passed the annual accounts for 1962, which showed a surplus of Fr.203,000.— (total expenditure 2,167 million Francs). The meeting passed credits of 2,457 million Francs for the erection of a fire-brigade station at Immensee, a secondary school with a first aid post for civil defence, a new lighting installation on the sportsground Seematt and an increase in expense allowances of the members of the Civil Service. 1,468 (against 416) Lachen (March) voters accepted a project to enlarge the district hospital.

Several Communes have been studying projects for the protection of lakes and streams, including sanitation. Ten million Francs will be spent and a subsidy from the Federation and the Canton is expected.

At Sachseln a seminary was held which included discussions between young Swiss and students from developing countries studying in Switzerland. Minister Dr. A. Lindt, the Federal Delegate for Technical Assistance, gave a talk in which he referred to the analogous position of Switzerland in the thirteenth century to that of the under-developed countries of today.

The tenth singing festival of Central Switzerland took place at Schwyz during the last week-end in May, at which twenty-eight members societies and thirty-nine guest choirs took part.

A fortnight previously the Rotarians held a district conference and working party at Schwyz.

Fr.300,000.— have been generously given by an anonymous woman for the building of an old age home at Kuessnacht a/Rigi.

For sixty years an inn has been run on top of the Etzel, the mountain with a marvellous view of the upper Lake of Zurich, Einsiedeln, the Sihlsee and the Schwyz mountain panorama. The owner was anxious that the inn should not be put up for speculative sale on her retirement, and she offered it to the Swiss Alpine Club. Thus, the future of this unique vantage point will be secured and no motor road will be built. The present inn will be replaced by a new building which will also take some 250 guests.

A mass grave was discovered last summer at Seewen, which is believed to date back to the plague of the beginning of the seventeenth century. A new expedition was sent early this year into the caves of the Hoehloch and several hundred metres of hitherto unsurveyed passages have been found which brings the total to over 76 km.

[A.T.S.]

OBWALDEN

The accounts of Obwalden ended in a surplus for 1962, and the Cantonal Council increased its contribution to the Lucerne Technical College from Fr.9,500.— to Fr.13,000.—. It also put up family allowances. The revision of the education act will allow a change in the start of the scholastic year from spring to autumn. It was decided to make the Wichelsee between Sarnen and Alpnach a nature reserve with a subsidy from the "Natur-schutzbund".

The electorate accepted an alteration in the Cantonal Constitution which provides for a simplification of the legal organisation and for the creation of a juvenile court for

which women will be eligible. All the parties had been in favour of the new building regulations and this proposal was surprisingly defeated by 1,990 to 1,002.

Sarnen, too, had a surplus of a quarter of a million francs in 1962 with an income of a million and a quarter.

The voters of Engelberg empowered their Commune Council to buy shares for Fr.50,000.— of the Truebsee-Kleintitlis railway. Also at Engelberg, in the course of excavations in the Monastery, were found some valuable manuscripts which are believed to have been hidden during the French Revolution.

At Melchsee-Frutt a ski-ing course for blind and invalid people was organised in early April. Some new "crutch skis" have been acquired which make the pleasure of ski-ing available also to one-legged invalids.

NIDWALDEN

The 1962 accounts of Nidwalden showed a deficit of Fr.134,598.—. The Cantonal Council decided on the introduction of a police car and on improving the police radio system. After long debates the Council accepted the proposal received from Lucerne to consider the boundary between the two Cantons in the middle of the Lake of Lucerne. Thus, an old conflict concerning the fishing waters which has been going on since the beginning of the century and has been lying with the Federal Court in Lausanne since 1934 will be settled out of court.

The "Verkehrsverband Zentralschweiz" held its general meeting at Stans on 15th May. A record result was reported for 1962 and it was stated that Germany and Great Britain headed the visiting tourists.

On the Buergenstock a farmer found a tin box containing one hundred gold pieces when he was felling a fir tree. Apparently a foreign woman had hidden three such boxes before the war and on her return afterwards she could only find two of them. It has not yet been decided who is the rightful owner after more than twenty years — the owner of the land, the finder, or the previous owner of the money, which amounts to several thousand francs.

[A.T.S.]

IMPORTANT TUNNEL PROJECTS IN ST. GOTTHARD REGION

Detailed study by the competent authorities in Berne of a series of suggestions to assist the railway and road traffic on the St. Gotthard route, the main North-South artery in the Alps, has led to selection of two projects. They will not only serve road traffic in winter but also increase the capacity of the St. Gotthard railway which should be able to cope with ever growing traffic for decades to come. Road traffic which during the winter must be carried by rail through the St. Gotthard tunnel is to have its own underground passage from Göschenen to Airolo. It will be a 10-mile tunnel about 3,300 feet above sea level. Estimated cost: 861 million Swiss Francs. Besides the existing tunnel which runs from Göschenen to Airolo, an additional base tunnel at 1,350 feet above sea level is to be built for the Swiss Federal Railway. This will be 27 miles long (length of the present tunnel: 9.25 miles) and will link Amsteg directly with Giornico. Estimated cost: 789 million francs.

[S.N.T.O.]