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IT HAPPENED IN NORTH-WESTERN SWITZERLAND

SOLOTHURN

Elections took place in the Canton of Solothurn at the second weekend in May. With a participation of 83.65%, the citizens re-elected the five members of the Cantonal Government, Dr. U. Dietschi and Dr. H. Erzer (Liberal), W. Vogt and W. Ritschard (Socialist), Dr. F.-J. Jeger (Conservative).

At the same time, the 144 members of the Cantonal Parliament had to be elected. They are 68 Liberals (hitherto 69), 39 Social Democrats (41), 37 Conservative Christian Socialists (34). The new Parliament (100 old and 44 new members) met for their first meeting on 8th June. For the first time, an ecumenical church service at the "Jesuitenkirche" preceded the opening session.

The President of the Cantonal Council, the Conservative L. Rippstein, opened the session with the full number of Councillors present. The first business transacted concerned the cantonal accounts for 1964, which, for the first time since 1959, ended with a deficit of Fr.823,000.—. Two new Judges were elected: Dr. W. Luder (Solothurn) and Dr. W. Baehler Günsberg).

The previous Parliament had increased the widows' pensions, a call on public funds of seven million francs.

Building activities in the Canton reached a total of 329.89 million francs last year, and for 1965, this sum is estimated to reach 486.36 million francs. For civil defence measures in the next ten years, an amount of 190 million francs is estimated, seven million francs to support the privately owned cantonal railways and a further five million francs for road construction.

The "Rathaus" in Solothurn is to be extended, and over 11½ million francs have been granted for the new building of the district hospital Thierstein and the renovation of the old people's home Dorneck-Thierstein. An annual subsidy to the "Laboratoire Suisse de Recherches Horlogères" in Neuchâtel has been agreed to.

There is a great shortage of teachers in the Canton. It is hoped that the project for a Middle School at Laufen for the Laufenthal and the "Schwarzbubenland" will be realised without delay. The Cantonal Students' Home in Solothurn was opened in February. In order to counteract undesirable activities by young layabouts, playing fields, gymnasiums and swimming pools are planned.

The Communes of the Canton Solothurn spend annually some 163 million francs as compared with 132 millions by the Canton. Road construction (national and cantonal), correction of the "Jura waters", water protection and buildings will be an ever greater burden for the Communes.

On 1st January, the town of **Solothurn** counted 18,561 inhabitants. The main post office is to be moved, and the "Franziskanerinnenkloster St. Josef" (seventeenth century) has been renovated. 31 million francs are to be spent on a waste water plant. The "Leihkasse" has celebrated its centenary.

The paper factory at **Biberist** can also look back on one hundred years. The R.C. Priest Isidor von Arx from **Breitenbach** was killed in an accident with his gliding aircraft. At **Dornach**, the anniversary of the death of the well-known Jura geologist Amanz Gressly (17.7.1914 – 13.4.1965) was commemorated. Early this month, the electorate of **Grenchen** agreed to a pay revision for municipal employees of about 12%. As a result of a decrease in TB, the sanatorium Allerheiligenberg near **Haegendorf** is to be

used as a multi-purpose sanatorium. The citizens of **Luterbach** object to the nature reserve of "Aemmespitz" being used as part of a waste water plant. **Nunningen's** extraordinary Commune Assembly voted for a share of 1.2 million francs in the water purification plant in the Kaltbrunnental.

BASLE

The Council on the Constitution for the new Canton Basle which is to re-unite the two Half-Cantons, is continuing its work under the new Chairman Pfr. Paul Manz from Rothenfluh. In the meantime, the opponents of the "Wiedervereinigung" carry on their campaign for an independent "Baselbiet".

Early in June, the two governments of Baselstadt and Baselland elected an educational commission and accepted the regulations for the new technical college of the two Basles. Social housing and regional planning are also to be looked after by a communal commission. Other questions discussed by the two governments concern rifle range problems, a new hospital agreement, late closing hours in the shops, etc.

BASELSTADT

The accounts for 1964 are even better than in the previous year. Fr.33,704,000.— more were received than in 1963, mainly thanks to increased revenue from taxation, nearly 70% of the total income. For 1965, the estimated deficit is 14½ million francs. The Citizens' Commune also predict a loss of Fr.118,000.—. The hospital alone estimates a deficiency of 24.3 million francs.

The natural history museum is to be extended (8 mio); traffic planning will cost 50 mio; the Baroque Town Hall will be renovated (2.1 mio); the Heuwaage Viaduct project, including parking, road correction, civil defence posts, workshops, etc., will require 52 mio; a police gymnasium including a grand stand and civil defence post on the "Old Boys" site of the Schützenmatte (12 mio) cannot at present be realised, but the credit is held for the moment the restrictions on building are lifted. An increase of 32% was registered in house building compared with the previous year. 489 dwellings were constructed. The "Bürgerspital" project (third stage of the extension) has been approved by the electorate and a credit of 132 million francs has been granted. The new part of the "Frauenspital" has been opened, and the "Postscheckamt" has moved to the Sternengasse. The garbage incinerating plant has to be enlarged at a cost of 47.2 mio; rubbish in Basle and the twenty surrounding Communes has increased annually by 6%. The slaughter-house will cost another 32 mio, but a Referendum has been taken against the proposed construction of a cycle track in one of the halls of the Swiss Industries Fair. Two electric vehicles for passenger transport have been bought from the EXPO by the Hoernli Cemetery, the largest in Switzerland. A medical telephonic emergency station was opened on 1st June. For the Municipal Theatre a 4.4 million-franc grant has been given, and the competition for a new theatre has been won by the architects Felix Schwarz/Rolf Gutmann-Gloor. Archaeological research in the Cathedral and at Augst, is receiving grants, and a speech laboratory for the upper schools is planned for learning foreign languages.

The University is short of space, and several millions are required for students' homes as well. It is exactly one hundred years that the Grand Council drafted the new University laws. At that time there were hardly one

hundred students. A "Societas Ethica" was founded in October, a federation of professors, lecturers and research scientists. In January, the students organised a "ball of fifty-four nations" at the Binninger Schloss. Amongst the honorary degrees awarded by the University is one to W. Th. J. Morgan, Professor of Biochemistry in London.

Basle has acquired two more studios at the "Cité Internationale des Arts" in Paris, for the use of Basle artists. Three charity campaigns were successful — on 1st April, 55,000 buns ("Schnecken") were sold for family welfare; on 26th May, the tombola in aid of Basle's cultural institutions was held, and the 100,000 tickets were already sold by midday (every ticket a winner); on 31st May, the parish of Oekolampad held its festival in aid of the old people's home; the olympic equestrian gold medallist H. Chammartin drove a veteran car Gregoire 1910 through the town.

In 1963, tourist traffic in Basle had experienced a slight setback. Last year, however, an increase of 2.7% was registered, a new record of 692,919 nights in Basle hotels (the total increase for the whole country was 4.2%). The well-known Hotel Schweizerhof celebrated its centenary in December.

Another jubilee was that on 6th May, when it was 70 years since the first tram was run to the Badischer Bahnhof, then on the site of the present Industries Fair. During the first year, nearly two million people were transported, and the income was Fr.223,472.—. This year, during the ten days of the MUBA alone, well over 2½ million passengers were carried, and revenue amounted to nearly a million francs. When the "Verkehrsverein" celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in May, they called their annual report "How many were where?", and from it may be gleaned that after the "Mustermesse" with 865,000 visitors, the Zoo came next with only 10,000 fewer. There were nearly half a million theatre goers, art museum and galleries registered 169,000 and other museums (trade, sport, Cathedral, fire brigade, natural history, etc.) from one to sixty-five thousand visitors.

The Swiss "Co-ops" (VSK) celebrated their seventy-fifth anniversary in June, and earlier in the year, it was 125 years since the "Pilgermission" was founded in the little badly damaged chapel of St. Chrischona.

There was a Shakespeare exhibition in Basle, and in April, the Hallé Orchestra from Manchester gave a concert. In May, there was an international dog show, but the most important event was the inauguration of the new bridge, the Luzernerring flyover. The opening was marked by great festivities, the elephants from the Zoo were the first to cross the bridge.

A final word regarding the annual report of the Basle Stock Exchange, which gives figures not available anywhere else. The turnover for 1964 was well over five million francs, 4.4% higher than in the preceding year. The use of TV in the transmission of prices to all the Basle banks are a great improvement in service to the clients. The new President of the Stock Exchange Chamber is the banker Alfred E. Sarasin, who, at the same time, also became the new President of the Swiss Bankers' Federation.

BASELSTADT

The number of foreign workers in the Baselbiet has gone back by an eighth since the record total of last August. The building trade has increased its foreign employees, but agriculture, catering and domestic service register a drop. A few weeks ago, figures were published showing that there were 548 factories in the Half-Canton

last September (537 in 1963). 28,490 workers (207 more than in the previous year) were employed, 45.2% of whom were foreigners (2% more than in 1963). After many years, the total of overtime has fallen.

At the end of last year, the "Landrat" debated several costly schemes, and credits were granted for road construction (31.3 million francs for motorways), waste water plants (Binningen and Boeckten connections) and the water purification plant Frenke II. Stricter control of oil tanks which are sunk into the ground has been demanded for the protection of the ground water. In 1964, 815 oil tanks installations were inspected, 81 of which had to be repaired and 40 replaced. The Referendum had been taken against the purchase of houses for teachers at Muttentz, and the electorate defeated the proposals. A new project has been submitted to the Cantonal Parliament for a second cantonal hospital near Binningen. The land alone will cost five million francs.

On the other hand, Baselland is one of the few Cantons which has co-ordinated its extension and building programmes. The Finance Commission has reduced the budget from six to 5.5 million francs. All projects are to be classified in order of urgency, and an increase in taxes will only be visualised when no more savings can be effected. However, teachers and civil servants including pensioners will receive an increased cost of living grant of 22% (18% previously).

The welfare of alcoholics is safeguarded in a new law, and the Cantonal Government has proposed a change in the Constitution to give women the vote gradually. The first three attempts in the Baselbiet were defeated, the last one in 1954 by 7,070 to 5,496 votes.

The Swiss psychiatrists met in Liestal for their congress at the end of May. The theme was on organisation and planning of psychiatric hospitals. About the same time, the Zurich Chamber Orchestra (with Edmond de Stoutz) gave a second instructive youth concert in Liestal on "Dance Music in the Concert Hall".

The well-known inn "zum Rössli" at Allschwil was completely gutted by fire in March. The daily paper "Landschäftler, Tagblatt der Landschaft Basel" stopped publication in its 116th year.

AARGAU

Studies of economic and social conditions and tendencies reveal that the Canton of Aargau will have 503,000 inhabitants in 1980, an increase of 140,000 on the figure of the last census in 1960. The economic growth, too, is expected to be far above that of the rest of the country. There is a co-ordinating committee to which studies of economic and social development and town and country planning are referred. A new cantonal building law is also being worked out which should provide useful and necessary powers to the State, but also protection to the individual.

The new "Landammann" is Regierungsrat E. Schwarz and the new "Landstatthalter" Dr. K. Kim.

For the first time since 1950, the annual accounts of the Canton of Aargau show a deficit. This amounts to 4.4 million francs in the ordinary administration, 2.9 in the extraordinary account for TB welfare, specially in connection with the losses of the sanatorium Barmelweid, and 13.2 million francs on road construction. The total deficiency for the year amounts to 17.8 million francs. The accounts have just been published in a book of 300 pages.

The Wynental- and Suhrental, and the Wohlen-Meisterschwanden railways are to receive subsidies

amounting to 13.3 million francs from public funds (40% from the Confederation, 60% from the Canton).

There is opposition to navigation on the Upper Rhine, but Aargau fishermen are in favour of the Aare being made navigable. The Oberrheingau section for the protection of the Aare demand the water purification of the rivers Aare and Oenz before the construction of the new power works of Neubannwil.

Agreement has been reached on compensation for the farmers of the Fricktal, who have been suffering fluor damage due to the aluminium industry.

Aarau citizens have launched an Initiative to create a Municipal Parliament rather than keep to the Commune Assembly. The necessary number of signatures has been surpassed by seven (855). **Baden** has shown a slight decrease in the number of visitors to the spa, but it is still one of the most frequented thermal spas in Switzerland. The regional planning group has found that some 200 million francs will be needed in the next decade to realise all the desirable projects. In February, the new "Aargauische Hochschulverein" met in Baden. The Aargau is considered one of the best regions for a fourth university in German-speaking Switzerland. Since April, a study commission has been working on the problem of how the Aargau could best contribute to the Swiss academic system. In March, the tenth federal congress for conductors took place in Baden, and in May, the "Aargauischer Apothekerverein" was 125 years old and celebrated the jubilee in the same town.

The **Frick** Commune Assembly has granted permission for an airfield between Schupfart and Hellikon to the Aeroclub Fricktal. The beautiful chapel of the **Jonental** (partly in the Canton of Zurich) has been successfully renovated and is one of the little-known treasures of the "Heimatschutz". **Koelliken** has voted Fr.1,800,000.— for sewerage and sanitary installations. At the invitation of the Institute for Strategic Studies in London, an international meeting on the problem of nuclear arms took place at the Castle of **Lenzburg**. On 25th May, 600 members of the Leutwyler family met at their place of origin **Leutwil**. There is a committee dedicated to this family dating back to the twelfth century.

The **Maegenwil** authorities regret that the "Mittelland-Raffinerie A.G." has decided to construct its refinery in the Canton of Lucerne. The working party "Clean Reuss" demanded water protection in the Reuss valley when it met at **Mellingen**. The "Klosterkirche" **Muri** is 900 years old, and the Muri district hospital is to receive 70% of the cost of a new staff home from the Canton. The Commune of **Staretschwil** wants to be separated from **Oberrohrdorf** with which it forms a political unit at present. The village of **Oberrohrdorf** also looked back on 900 years of existence last autumn. The **Safenwil** Church Parish Assembly has decided to renovate its church. **Unterentfelden** celebrated its millennium in April, and both villages, also **Oberentfelden**, have had special festivities in June.

The Commune of **Villmergen** will contribute 4.4 million francs to the cost of the new school buildings (6.4 mio). **Wettingen** has now new Commune regulations governing the activities of the new Inhabitants' Council of fifty members; the electorate accepted it, and it will become law on 1st January 1966. **Wohlen** citizens generously granted a million francs towards the realisation of old people's homes. New regulations for the Inhabitants' Council of forty members have been accepted. In order to get the citizens acquainted with the candidates for the Cantonal Government prior to the elections, the K.V.

Wynental arranged a round table conference with them, which was extremely useful and successful. At **Zeihen**, civil defence troops were used for the first time to demolish a church which was built in 1932, but never matched the surroundings and is to be replaced as part of the cultural centre planned two hundred years ago, but only to be realised now. The school building has already been erected.

Zofingen will have new buildings for its Office of Works; its Commune Assembly generously granted 9.4 million francs for the project. The temporary buildings of the branch of the Aargau teachers' training college were opened at Zofingen in April. A workman, believed to be poor, left Fr.110,000.—, most of it in gold and notes hidden in his flat at **Zufikon** near Bremgarten. At **Zurzach** a new warm water source has been discovered; a flow of 2,000 litres per minute and at 39°C, and only at a depth of 64 metres.

(News by courtesy of Agence Télégraphique Suisse, "Schweizerisches Kaufmännisches Zentralblatt" and "Tages Anzeiger").

RECENT DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND

Correction and apology: In our issue of 28th May, we announced the death of Frau Helene Bally-Huenerwadel (85), Schoenenwerd, widow of the late Max Bally. We have been asked to correct this, as Mr. Max Bally is still alive, and we apologise for the regrettable mistake.

The following deaths have been reported:

- Carl Albert Angst (89), Geneva, sculptor and painter, creator of the Geneva monument to the soldiers who lost their lives in the two wars; his sculptures are in the Federal Tribunal building in Lausanne and in many museums; citizen of Zurich, but honorary citizen of Geneva; holder of the Knight's Cross of the French Legion of Honour and Gold Medal of the City of Munich.
- Maurice Clerc (83), Neuchâtel, *Doyen* of the Neuchâtel notaries, President of the Chamber of Notaries.
- Paul-Guillaume Nusslé (71), La Chaux-de-Fonds, well-known industrialist and historian; concerned in the development of the town; Custodian of the Castle of Valangin.
- Dr. Alphonse Koechlin (80), Basle, Theologian, Minister at St. Martin's from 1921-1954; President of the "Schweizerischer Evangelischer Kirchenbund" from 1941-1959; active in the Basle Mission Society; Vice-President of the World Federation of Y.M.C.A. and member of the Executive of the World Council of Churches; Honorary Doctor of Heidelberg University and of the Faculty of Theology of Basle University.
- Prof. Max Gerwig (75), Basle, lawyer and Judge; from 1936 Honorary Lecturer, from 1938 Lecturer and from 1944 Professor of Law at Basle University; author on legal matters.
- Alfred Hopf-Clar (78), Basle, well-known personality in the textile industry.
- Albert Holeiter-Gutknecht (91), Basle, engineer.
- Prof. Dr. Alfons Bronarski (74), Fribourg, in charge of the Press Office of the Polish Embassy in Berne from 1927-1945; at the same time Lecturer and later Professor of Polish literature and philosophy at Fribourg University; author.
- Albert Ernst (59), Lucerne, lawyer, Manager of the von Moos'schen Eidenwerke, Lucerne: owner of the Palace Hotel in Lucerne and the Kulm and Carlton Hotels at St. Moritz; Rotarian and active in many