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IT HAPPENED IN CENTRAL SWITZERLAND

URI

At the end of April, the Urner *Landrat* assembled for their spring session. An extensive discussion took place regarding the construction of national roads in the Canton. Fifteen Cantonal M.P.s and two members of the Government were in agreement that the construction of national roads would lead to financial ruin of the Canton which would never be able to produce 40 to 50 million francs for this purpose; this did not even include the 20 million needed for cantonal roads, nor the annual requirement of about 4m. francs for the upkeep of the national highways.

On the first Sunday in May, which used to be the "Landsgemeinde" day, the citizens of Uri had to elect their *Landammann* for the next two years, which they did in the person of *Statthalter* and Councillor of States Josef Danioth. They also elected their *Landesstatthalter* by appointing the present *Landammann* National Councillor Dr. Alfred Weber. The electorate approved the new film law according to which the minimum age for cinema visitors has been reduced to 16, as is already the case in seventeen other Cantons.

On 19th June, the citizens agreed to the new dance laws which, for the first time, allow public dancing on Saturdays up to midnight and closed party dancing up to 2 a.m. The law regarding supplementary benefits to the AHV insurance scheme was also accepted with a large majority.

A special federation for refuse disposal was formed, to which all the Uri Communes belong except Seelisberg which is unable to join for topographic reasons.

On 13th March, the dreaded Entschigtal avalanche came down near Wassen and buried the Gotthard route for about 70 metres. The same day, in the Schaechtental, an avalanche destroyed three stables and moved a mountain farmer's hut. A mighty avalanche of wet snow and rock damaged an alpine hut and house on the Maettenwang at the end of April, when it came down from the Jaegerstoecken.

The annual accounts of **Aldorf** ended with a smaller deficit than expected, expenditure Fr.2,367,850.— and income Fr.2,311,713.— The electorate agreed to the renovation plans of the boys' school house and the teacher's flat. The Aldorf "Tellspielgesellschaft" is facing serious financial problems. 18,673 visitors came to the twenty-two performances in 1965, and there was a surplus in the accounts, but this was not sufficient to cover the heavy cost.

SCHWYZ

The electorate of the Canton of Schwyz had to go to the poll on several occasions recently. In March, the citizens rejected the new proposals for a new law regarding elections and plebiscites. Early in May, the elections took place of the *Bezirksbehoerden*. A fortnight later, the Communes elected their authorities. The citizens also agreed to the proposal that the fight of foot-and-mouth disease be financed by the Canton.

The annual accounts of the Canton ended with a small surplus, revenue standing at just over 43½ million francs.

The Teachers' Training College of Rickenbach has to be enlarged as it is no longer able to accept the increasing number of students. The "Lehrerverein" of the Canton has just been celebrating its golden jubilee with a meeting at Einsiedeln attended by 500 people.

The Rathaus in Schwyz is to be renovated, and at the same time, administrative offices are considered and the

re-building of the Cantonal Library which is in a rather bad state.

The Canton has to pay 8m. francs for the construction of the national road on its territory; this is 8% of the cost, the rest being borne by the Confederation. Work is progressing, and the new tunnels through the Blattberg will do away with the bottle-neck conditions at the moment. The Canton has to pay a share of ¼m. francs towards the final melioration of the Linthebene. The Confederation pay 60% of the 4.5m.-franc project.

Early in May, a new light petrol catalyst plant became operational in Schwyz; the gasworks were founded in 1911, and until the new system allowed production of non-poisonous gas, this had been produced with the help of coal.

Monday has been declared a day of rest for fishing in all streams on cantonal territory. Another old custom has been discontinued, the obligatory collecting of cockchafers; this is no longer necessary as the use of chemicals ensures their destruction. The new law regarding plant protection came into force a few weeks ago; there are now eight plant reserves in the Canton.

The Schwyz Parliament, at the extraordinary one-day meeting in March, decided to donate their *Taggeld* of 30 francs per member to the hungry population of India; a few weeks ago, Fr.3,500.— have been sent to the Swiss Caritas Organisation, to be used for the purchase and transport of milk powder.

Early in April, the electorate of **Schwyz** accepted seven proposals, amongst them a credit of 4½m. francs for a waste-water plant, an old-age and nursing home at Ibach and even two requests for naturalisation. In May, the citizens granted Fr.180,000.— for a bus loop line and lavatories in the Hofmatt.

The *Dorfgenossenschaft* of Schwyz is 550 years old. It was founded in the early fifteenth century when the Emperor Sigismund granted market rights; it still looks after the water supplies of the town. More archaeological finds have come to light during work on the Pfarrkirche St. Martin. So far, five older church buildings have definitely been established, the earliest dating back to the seventh or eighth century.

The Commune of **Arth** is to be the school centre for the district according to a plebiscite in March. The defaulting "Kurdirektor" of **Brunnen** was arrested in Vienna; Bernhard Reutener (Thun) has been elected his successor.

The citizens of **Einsiedeln** decided that a ballot should be used for deciding material Commune matters. With a participation of 68%, the citizens rejected the plans (7m. francs) for a new secondary school building on the grounds that the estimated figure was too high and the project insufficient on account of climatic conditions of Einsiedeln. **Freienbach** is to have a waste water plant, and **Goldau** now has a "Bergsturmuseum" commemorating the mountain slide of 1806 in which 457 people were killed.

The district of the old *Land* of Schwyz held its traditional "Bezirkslandsgemeinde" at **Ibach**. The annual accounts of the district were accepted and a new *Bezirkslandammann*, Councillor Willi Heinzer elected. The new "Generaloberin" of the Sisters' Congregation of **Ingenbühl** (9,000 members) is Sister Maria Edelfrieda Haag from Basle.

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The Commune of **Kuessnacht am Rigi** unanimously elected Pfr. Josef Kessler an Honorary Citizen of the district. It also agreed to purchase land reserves for 1.3m. francs. The citizens of **Lachen** agreed to credits for enlarging the cemetery, the construction of a transformer station, the first stage of improved water supplies, the renovation of the gymnasium, the constitution of the federation for a communal waste-water plant; but they rejected the proposal to do away with rent limits for social housing. **Muotathal** has introduced a ticket tax, i.e. 10% of all admission prices to public entertainment. In May, a new and final plan for the Church Community Hall at **Pfäffikon** was accepted by the electorate; the cost will be 1.38m. francs.

The traditional *Gedenkschiessen* at Rothenthurm took place at the end of April in memory of the battle on 2nd May 1798. A new record of 1,200 marksmen from all parts of the country attended. With a participation of 88% the electorate of **Unteriberg** elected the Socialist Edwin Marty as Commune President.

OBWALDEN

The Cantonal Parliament of Obwalden accepted the annual accounts which showed a deficit of nearly 670,000 francs in the ordinary and a surplus of not quite that sum in the extraordinary transactions.

On 24th April, the "Landsgemeinde" took place on the Landenberg above Sarnen. 2,500 citizens attended. *Kantonstierarzt* Dr. Emil Blaettler, Kerns, was elected to the Cantonal Government in place of the retiring Eduard Infanger, Engelberg. Eight speakers participated in the discussion whether the "Landsgemeinde" should be kept in being. On 15th May, the electorate decided to keep it. With a participation of 68%, there were 2,656 voters for and 1,707 against. Various proposals were accepted, but the citizens rejected the *Besoldungsgesetz* which should have provided higher pay for the members of the Government. The dangerous wild streams West of the Sarnersee are to be corrected. A credit of 4m. francs was asked at the "Landsgemeinde".

A well-attended Commune Assembly at **Alpnach** approved a general project for water supplies, which will cost 6.5m. francs. **Engelberg's** guests will in future be able to enjoy golf, table tennis, bowling and shooting in the new indoor sports centre which has facilities for seating 2,000 people at concerts or meetings.

The Corporation Assembly of **Kerns** awarded honorary *Korporationsrecht* to Chaplain Dr. Pater Anselm Fellmann who celebrated the golden jubilee of his priesthood, and the Inhabitants' Commune presented him with an air ticket to Rome. The Benedictine Convent of **Melchtal** celebrated its centenary.

NIDWALDEN

The annual accounts of Nidwalden ended with a deficit of just over half a million francs, revenue standing at 17.17m. In the extraordinary accounts for communication improvements and the new hospital building, the loss amounted to 2½m. francs, expenditure reaching the 20-million mark. The "Landsgemeinde" met in the "Ring" at Wil near Stans on 24th April. The 3,000 participants showed clearly that they did not agree to too many members from Stans in the Cantonal Government and elected August Keiser, Hergiswil, German Murer, Beckenried, and Adolf Wuersch, Emmetten. Dr. Alfred Graeni is *Landammann*, and Walter Vokinger *Landesstatthalter*, both members of the Government. The citizens approved a plan to nationalise the Canton Hospital. The new Chief Surgeon there is Dr. Alfons Seeholzer, Lucerne.

A new organisation "Vereinigung Rund ums Stanserhorn" has come into being. It aims at making the district more popular for holidays and excursions. The new Lopper route is much in demand, at Easter, the automatic traffic counting machine in the tunnel showed as many as 1,900 vehicles per hour.

LUCERNE

The accounts for 1965 showed a surplus of ¾m. francs in the ordinary administration (revenue 154.56m. francs). Special accounts dealing with Cantonal Hospital extension, water protection, social housing, civil defence, Technical College and road construction, showed a loss of 7.7m. francs (revenue 46.5m. francs). The Lucerne civil servants have been awarded an increased cost of living grant.

The new Councillor of States is the Conservative *Regierungsrat* Dr. Franz Xaver Leu in succession to the late Dr. Peter Mueller. Dr. Leu's successor in the Cantonal Government is *Spitaldirektor* Dr. Felix Wili, Hitzkirch. The new Editor of the "Innerschweizer Bauernzeitung" is Jakob Koch ("Hochwacht" Winterthur).

Domestic employees are to have a contract laying down their rights and duties. Planning a University of Central Switzerland is going on. The Canton is also concerned with water protection; all the Communes now have projects for waste-water plants.

On 19th June, much damage was done in the Canton of Lucerne by hail and thunderstorm. Crops were ruined, there were floods, and the sailing regatta had to be cancelled. The Lucerne Society for the Protection of Animals celebrated its centenary in April.

The town of **Lucerne** is badly in need of schools, and temporary buildings are to be erected to relieve the shortage. Also short of space is the Municipal Administration. The enlarged building of the Swiss *Baeckerfachschule* "Richemont" was opened in April; 15-1800 people visit its courses annually, and the school includes a laboratory and archives. The settlement Eichhof for old people was finally inaugurated early in April; it consists of a 15-storey tower block and three buildings connected by arcades, and there are 80 one-room and 20 two-room flats available. Plans for a nursing home for at least 150 people are in hand.

Other plans concern a by-pass for Lucerne, which means that considerable land purchases will have to be made. The town's electorate has agreed to a loan to the Lucerne-Engelberg A.G.

The International Festival of Music will take place in Lucerne from 13th August to 8th September, and in May next year, the town will be host to the Federal Singing Festival. The new President of the "Winkelried" Foundation is Leopold Zimmermann; the Foundation benefits sick soldiers or men who have had an accident during military service.

The Lucerne Municipal Police Force has recently started employing policewomen to direct and control the traffic of the town. There is no doubt that this innovation will introduce a friendly tone, and it is also to be expected that parking fines will be paid with better grace when they are requested by a charming policewoman in a smart uniform!

On 19th May, the traditional "Auffahrtsritt" took place at **Beromuenster**. Three hundred men on horseback and over a thousand people on foot participated. At **Altwis** and **Hitzkirch**, a commemorating service took place in honour of the 100th anniversary of Bishop Anastasius Hartmann's death. The small Commune of **Rothenburg** agreed to spend 2 million francs on collective waste-water

pipes, and at **Sursee**, a deer park is planned at the "Seezunge".

ZUG

The Canton of Zug has increased scholarship awards and study loans. More money has been voted, too, for looking after foreign workers. Social housing is to be given priority.

The **Zug** municipal electorate agreed to a credit of 15m. francs for a school centre Loreto, which is to combine all secondary and higher school classes and which will provide room for 900 boys and girls. A separate credit had to be given for a first aid post in the same area. A smaller school building project had already been accepted by the electorate in March (Neustadt). The Liberal Albert Gruenenfelder was victorious in the election as Town Clerk.

The Commune of Steinhausen granted nearly 3m francs for water protection, sanitary installations, a water reservoir, de-dusting of public roads and the purchase of land as a reserve.

GLARUS

The Canton of Glarus had budgeted expenditure of well over 23m francs. The accounts showed 28.4m. and yet, a surplus is shown on the income side of Fr.7,000.—.

The "Landsgemeinde" took place on Sunday, 1st May with a participation of at least 6,000. The Conservative Hans Meier, Niederurnen, was elected in place of the late *Regierungsrat* Franz Landolt. Amongst the proposals accepted by the citizens is a refuse disposal machine which will do away with the so-called *Huerbenen*, the ugly refuse heaps. Help to the farmers who had suffered in the foot-and-mouth disease epidemic, contributions to the Sanatorium Braunwald, tax reform, increased children's allowances and a credit of 1.8m. francs were all accepted by the electorate in the "Ring".

The Glarus administration has introduced the five-day week from 1st May. The water protection laws will be revised, and by 1972, all waste-water and purification plants should be completed.

The Editor-in-Chief of the "Glarner Nachrichten", Dr. Hans Truempy, has retired after 29 years and on his 75th birthday.

In April 1966, there were 15,000 head of cattle, 133 horses, 5,087 pigs, 1,229 goats, 1,400 sheep and 1,555 bee-hives in the Canton. Four hundred hunters took part in the last *Jagd*, and in 1965, 556 chamois were shot, 44 stags, 78 marmots (144 in the previous year), 75 roebucks, 172 hares, 339 foxes, etc.

The Commune of **Mitloedi** have elected Fritz Voegeli Honorary Citizen in recognition of his devoted services as teacher and citizen for half a century. At the end of March, a tremendous snowdust avalanche descended from the Wiggisgrat, which caused much damage; fortunately, neither man nor beast was killed.

On 14th April, the traditional "Naefelserfahrt" took place to commemorate the battle of **Naefels** on 9th April 1388.

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

FRAUENFELD — ALPINE WRESTLING MEET

The Allmend, a field in this city, famous for its Whitsuntide horse races, will be the scene of the annual Alpine Wrestling Meet on 13th-14th August, when 260 of the nation's strongest wrestlers will compete for the national crown. Although Frauenfeld, capital city of Canton Thurgau, also plays host to flag-wavers, yodlers and stone-hurlers (who use the 182 lb. "Unspunnen Stone",

named after the historic Unspunnen ruins near Interlaken), no other event is as popular as the Alpine Wrestling Meet. This variety of wrestling had its origins in the mountains and is still popular in Alpine regions, despite competition from more modern sports events. The best wrestlers generally come from North-Eastern and Central Switzerland and the Berne region. First prize in the contest will be a young thoroughbred steer. Grandstands for 30,000 viewers are being erected in Frauenfeld.

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