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# IT HAPPENED IN THE CANTON OF ZURICH

## CANTON

The annual budget for 1966 estimates revenue for the Canton of Zurich of 868 million francs and expenditure of 897.3 m. in the ordinary accounts. The extraordinary budget which covers mainly building and construction of national roads, expects income of 112.1 m. and expenditure of 177.2 million francs. The development of the financial situation is considered grave, and the *Regierungsrat* presented a finance plan for the next few years, as vast sums will be needed for roads (260m.), for hospitals and schools. Within the next five years, the *Strafanstalt* Regensburg will have to be rebuilt, the road traffic bureaus of Zurich, Opfikon and Winterthur have to be added to; the military establishment at Birmensdorf, the agricultural college Strickhof, the Women's Hospital and the surgical ward at the Cantonal Hospital, the Cantonal School Oerlikon, various much-needed buildings and laboratories of the University, the Botanical Institute, the Winterthur Technical College and the *Heil- und Pflegeanstalt* Rheinau, all either need new buildings or are to be renovated.

One million francs has been granted for projects of the protection of monuments.

In 1965, 8,815 flats were built in the Canton of Zurich, slightly more than in the previous year, though 22% less than in the record year of 1961. On 1st January, the Canton's population amounted to 1,039,200, 7,800 more than on the same day in 1965. The price of land has gone back for the first time since the war, and the average price per square metre was Fr.16.— last year. In the light of tax revenue, Zurich enjoys great affluence. The average of tax per head of the Canton's population was well over 310 francs, five times the amount paid in 1939. Tax revenue increased from 38m. in 1939 to 320 twenty-four years later.

The Canton is short of nursing staff as well as of teachers. The Cantonal Government has submitted a proposal for a change in the Constitution to enable Zurich women to vote in cantonal matters.

Noise abatement is being tackled in the Cantonal Parliament. Amongst matters the electorate had to decide in a poll, was an Initiative against land speculation, which would have given the Communes a preferential right to buy land and property. 98,000 against 60,000 voters rejected the proposal; voting participation 58.4%.

Fishing was successful in 1965, and 28,600 kg. of fish were caught in Zurich rivers and streams and 168,700 kg. in lakes; both figures show an improvement over the previous year. Nevertheless, fishermen have complained about water pollution, especially of the Sihl, and the lake police have introduced new apparatus to fight it.

The aerial cableway across the lake has definitely been closed down. The idea of a tunnel under the lake has been dropped for the time being, but a project for an underground railway line from Dietikon to Kloten (27 km. long) is being studied. The Kaeferberg tunnel has been broken through, and on 18th March, Oerlikeon celebrated a *Tunnelfest*.

## ZURICH TOWN

The population of the town has increased by 1,374 in February and counted 436,444 at the end of the month. This is, however, 4,804 inhabitants fewer than twelve months before.

Tourist traffic in 1965 went back again; 831,532 visitors spent nearly two million nights in the 124 hotels and inns, over 12,000 fewer guests than in 1964. The accounts of the town were balanced at 488.3 million francs. The Commune Council rejected a proposal to spend a quarter of a million francs on some works by Giacometti. 5.3 million francs are to be spent on an electronic data computer.

A school will be built for spastic children, and a double project for a home for old people and flats for teachers at Wollishofen has been accepted. Six removable pavilions are to be built on the Hoenggerberg to house students of the University.

Over 42 million francs have been granted by the electorate for a new two-level bridge across the Limmat. But there will be no bridge across the Bahnhofplatz, where re-building has begun. The voters also agreed to a project of extending the power works of Oberhalbstein in the Grisons.

Scandal, too, has had its run in Zurich; at Pestalozzi's old and venerable dwelling house "Zum Roten Gatter", a gambling saloon has been opened. Several fraud and embezzlement cases occurred; millions of francs were involved in a number of bank crashes.

In the middle of February, the Zurich Commune Council ended its four-year period of office. Early in March, elections took place for the 125 seats. The Social Democrats have 41 (up to now 46), the Liberals 23 (14), the "Landesring der Unabhängigen" 22 (14). Others are much the same, except for the Communists who have managed 2 seats (0). Nine members were elected into the Municipal Government, but none of the candidates for the President (in place of the retiring Dr. Landolt) received the required number of votes. A new election will take place on 24th April.

The latest proposal which has been made to the Municipal Council is that there should be twelve districts, as against eleven now.

## WINTERTHUR

In Winterthur, too, the electorate went to the poll to elect its legislative authority. As a result, the Socialists lost four of their twenty-three seats; the "Landesring" gained two, and "Junge Loewen" got two seats for the first time.

The Town Clerk, Dr. Jakob Bretscher, is leaving his office after 21 years of service. He will be replaced by Dr. iur. Karl Spuehler from Thalwil.

Road construction causes problems, too, and will require large sums over the next few years. The "Alte Stadthaus" dating from 1790 is to be renovated. The new refuse incineration plant was inaugurated in November. A sub-station for the power works will be needed to cope with the increased demand for electricity. 2.19 million francs have been asked for its construction at Toess.

Winterthur's population was 87,944 at the end of last year, an increase of 30 in twelve months; this figure includes 15,470 foreigners, 77 fewer than at the end of 1964.

## COMMUNE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Early in March, Commune elections took place in the majority of villages and towns in the Canton. In most Communes, the results did not affect political representation; but in some places, some significant changes

took place: at Meilen, the Social Democrats lost their seat to the Evangelical People's Party. At Pfäffikon, two polls were needed to elect the liberal Otto Meier as Commune President, the Socialist being defeated. At Buelach, none of the three presidential candidates received the absolute majority, and thus the office is vacant at the moment. At Uster, the Liberals lost a seat to the Christian/Socialists, and the replacement for the retiring Liberal President could not be achieved, as the official candidate of the B.G.B. Party received some 300 votes too few to reach the absolute majority. At Duebendorf, ten candidates were put up for the Commune Council of seven, and apart from two Democrats, two Socialists and a BGB man who have been confirmed in office, a Christian/Socialist and Dr. Alfred Keller of no Party, were elected. At Duernten, there was a hard fight, as the present representative of the Evangelicals had been attacked because of his dual role as building contractor and architect and head of the building section of the Commune administration. But the citizens re-elected him, and the Council shows no changes, except for one seat which the BGB Party lost to the Liberals. On the other hand, the Commune President, the Democrat Konrad Huber, reached only 440 votes (403 being the absolute majority), whilst, surprisingly, a Socialist who had not been put forward by his Party, polled 175 votes. Finally, a record number of voters went to the poll at Greifensee; out of the 127 citizens entitled to vote, 123 took part, which equals 96.85%.

#### COMMUNE NEWS

The Communes of Feuerthalen, Flurlingen, Uhwiesen and Dachsen are planning a home for the old and the sick, since some of the Communes rejected the proposal to have a district hospital some time ago; the Canton is expected to contribute two-fifths of the cost (about 10 million francs). At Baeretswil, the Education Council did not propose a secondary teacher any more, objecting to his methods. The electorate, however, confirmed Mr. Domenik Planta with a large majority. Egg's citizens voted 1.7 million francs for sewerage and water protection, and Erlenbach agreed to 5m. for various projects: water protection, road construction and a contribution to the extension of the Maennedorf Hospital. Maennedorf, too, is to improve its water supplies.

At Maur, the secondary teacher Max Meier was not re-elected for his leanings to Communism. Oetwil am See had all its proposed expenditure agreed to by the citizens: water protection, new instruments for the brass band, civil defence rooms, more money for the new double kindergarten and for a further teaching post. Rueti's new trade school has been opened, and the Commune Assembly of Staefa granted a contribution to the Zurich Municipal Theatre. Uster is to renovate the primary school at Naenikon, but the electorate rejected a proposed cloakroom hut for the football club. A large fire at the "Kehleistenfabrik Schwab" on 24th March, caused damage of about Fr.300,000.— Zurich's latest Youth Hostel is at Wollishofen, an ultra-modern building reminiscent of Arab architecture, with accommodation for 360, already dubbed the "Casbah of Youth". Zumikon's Commune Assembly did not grant the credit asked for the Zurich Opera House, but agreed to 3.1 m. francs for a fire brigade building.

[A.T.S.]

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