

It happened in the canton of Berne

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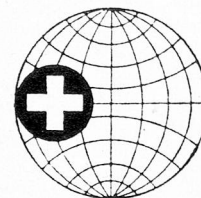
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1966 THE YEAR OF "FIFTH SWITZERLAND"

FIRST OF AUGUST IN SWITZERLAND



The Swiss National Day Celebration was organised with a difference in many parts of Switzerland. In the year of "Fifth Switzerland", Federal President Schaffner spoke over radio and television from St. Moritz and Federal Councillor Bonvin from Crans. The former Federal Councillor Wahlen and Federal Councillor Chaudet spoke to Swiss colonies abroad. The Swiss Club of Freiburg i/Br. celebrated on the Ruetli, and a number of prominent Swiss resident abroad addressed their countrymen at celebrations at home, amongst them Mr. Th. Nagel from Sweden who spoke in Zurich (member of the Commission of the Swiss Abroad).

At Burgdorf, it was not a prominent citizen, but a *Jungbürger* who gave the patriotic address. In Berne, a picturesque procession was organised before the celebration on the Münsterplatz. At Romoos (Lucerne), three television sets were put up for the citizens to watch the Federal President prior to the usual *Bundesfeier*. The young people of Kerns (Obwalden) decided to celebrate the day by a cleansing effort of streams and woods. In the Ticino, the celebrations were troubled because of the disappointment the population felt with regard to the proposed introduction of a fee for passing through the new Gotthard road tunnel.

The highest bonfire of the evening was set on the Dom (4545m. above sea level). The two guides C. Zurbriggen and B. Lochmatter and two mountaineers, Miss G. Sciarini and T. Baccaglia, reached the top after great difficulties climbing the rarely tackled Dom-Ostwand.

An American boy scout presented a message of congratulations from President Johnson to the Swiss people.

The new Swiss National Anthem "Trittst im Morgenrot daher" was transmitted by Studio Basle on 1st August, and this time it had a new ending which will be much easier to sing.

Finally, a novel experiment was made by the "Gesellschaft für das Schweizerische Volkstheater" at Thalwil. Early in July, they arranged a course with the motto "Ist die Art und Weise wie wir unsern Nationalfeiertag begehen, noch zeitgemäss?". At the specimen celebration, a Commune Councillor and a woman school councillor hoisted the communal flag, two young citizens, a boy and a girl, the cantonal emblem, two non-commissioned officers the Swiss flag and an *Auslandschweizer* and a foreign worker the Europe-flag. A pageant, "The Conscience of Switzerland" was presented at two levels. The organisation is publishing a brochure in which a new form of National Day Celebration will be advocated. [A.T.S.]

IT HAPPENED IN THE CANTON OF BERNE

CANTON

The annual accounts for 1965 ended with a deficit of Fr.54.4m., the estimated loss having been put at 29.9m. Contributions to hospitals, school buildings, communal roads, water protection, civil defence, private railways, etc., amounted to 430.4m. francs, 35.5m. more than in the previous year.

In April, the elections took place. There were 849 candidates for the 200 seats in the Cantonal Parliament. The BGB and Evangelical People's Party have 81 seats (3 gains), the Social Democrats 66 (2 losses), the Liberals 33 seats (6 losses), the Christian/Socialists 11 (one gain), "Landesring" 3 (2 gains) and "Junges Bern" 4 (2 gains). Elections take place every four years.

In the Franches Montagnes, voting participation was 90.5%, at Les Pommerats even 100%. In the rest of the Canton, it was 61.5%. The highest number of votes for the Government fell to the new *Regierungsrat* Simon Kohler (Liberal) who collected 80,717 out of the 266,800 available votes. Another new *Regierungsrat* is Dr. Ernst Jaberg (BGB).

On 6th June, the Cantonal Parliament assembled for the constituent meeting. Werner Hadorn (Spiez) was elected President, a member of the BGB.

Every year, new civil defence installations are put up in the Canton, and by now, 12,880 posts would give cover to about 285,000 people.

Grossrat Walter Hirt (Utzenstorf) has been elected President of the "Berlinerischer Handels- und Industrieverein" in succession to Hans Giger (Berne). The net

profit of the "Bernische Kraftwerke A.G." amounted to Fr.3,638 million which is a little more than in the previous year.

The Lauterbrunnen-Muerren Railway celebrated its 75th anniversary in May, and the last steam engine of the Bruenig-Bahn has been installed as a monument to the "good old days" on the Bahnhofplatz at Meiringen. The steamer "Bluemlisalp" on the Lake of Thun, dating back to 1906, has been renovated and brought up to date. The artificial lake of Niederried and part of the region where Aare and Saane join have been declared a protected area.

In June, the new buildings for the Veterinary Hospital in Berne (Hintere Laenggasse) was opened. The "Akademische Turnerschaft Rhenania" celebrated its 150th anniversary.

The Bernese Cantonal Gymnastic Festival took place in Bienne in July with a participation of 200 groups and 1,500 individual gymnasts.

A herd of wild boars caused a great deal of damage in the Franches Montagnes at the end of July; an immediately organised hunt was without success.

BERNE TOWN

At the end of June, the town of Berne counted 168,422 inhabitants. Hans Aregger has been appointed delegate for planning. 11% of the jurors in Berne-Stadt are women (12 out of 109). The finance plan for the Commune of Berne estimates investments of 425.3m. francs over the next five years, about 85m. *per annum*.

4.6 million francs will be spent on modernising and

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altering the *Stadtgärtnerei*. Rents have risen by 6.7% in one year. The new *Gymnasium* Neufeld in Berne was officially opened in June, though it has already been in use for a year. A new *Gewerbeschule* for applied arts will cost about 13 million francs.

The Berne suburbs of Bremgarten, Bolligen, Muri and Zollikofen are to make payments to the two municipal hospitals. The foundation stone for a new twenty-storey building of the *Inselspital* has been laid; the house will have room for 762 patients.

The new Manager of the Berne Electricity Works is Konrad Jud, Davos, in succession to Ed. Binkert who has retired. The most modern Foundry in Europe was opened at Ostermundigen (*Firma Zent A.G.*). The *Kramgasse*, once called the most beautiful street in Europe by Goethe in 1779, was the "Rendez-Vous" of the world during a campaign in June. In conjunction with *Swissair*, an international shop-window competition was arranged.

The Berlin Burgomaster Willy Brandt presented a bear to the Berne Bear Pit; at the same time, he expressed thanks to the Swiss families who gave hospitality to Berlin children.

OTHER COMMUNES

The Commune Assembly of **Adelboden** decided to buy a *Hammermühle* for disposing refuse. The renovation of the church at **Aeschi**, dating back to the tenth century, has been successfully completed.

At the end of February, **Bienne** had a population of 67,324, of whom 11,118 were foreigners. During the year, the number of foreign births has gone up from 23 to 33% — every third child born in the town is an alien.

In May, the electorate accepted the new budget which estimates a small deficit and provides for an increase in taxes. The voters did not sanction, however, a number of loans which the Commune authorities had already taken up. Over 1½m. francs have been allocated to road construction by the Municipal Council. Both the *Bezirksspital* and the *Schwesternschule* showed a deficit for the past year. The former is being enlarged at the moment, and plans for the extension of the latter include a class for French-speaking girls of the Jura. A school for women was opened in May, where preparatory courses may be followed for nurses, teachers, laboratory assistants, etc. The new school at the rue de la Poste (3.3m. francs) was opened in June. Ernst Geiger is the new Principal of the *Berufsschule*, in succession to Rolf Heuer who retired for reasons of health.

In June, there were Bulgarian Gastronomic Weeks in Bienne and, later in the same month, the Jura Music Festival at which over 1,000 musicians took part. Early in July, the 30th "Braderie" took place. 35,000 spectators assembled to watch the procession. Early in August, a fire broke out in the Cité-Marie, in which forty Italians became homeless.

A voluntary working group under the leadership of Commune President Paul Michel have started to renovate the valuable houses at **Boenigen**. Every year three such buildings are being restored, and the artistic façades dating back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries add greatly to the attraction of the village.

The **Burgdorf** Region is to have a waste-water plant, and a planning federation has been founded. The Municipal Parliament has decided to forego the building of a meeting hall which has occupied the citizens for some time. A private firm may now carry out the project. Eighty new parking spaces are to be made near the Kornhaus and the Cattle Market.

The population of **Delémont** shows little fluctuation, the number of inhabitants remaining around 11,100. The electorate rejected the proposed purchase of land for the erection of a primary school building. The Commune of **Etzelkofen** has elected "Regierungsrat" and Councillor of States Dewet Buri as Honorary Citizen. At the same time, the 300th anniversary was celebrated of the Commune's leaving the Canton of Solothurn and joining Berne.

The "Regierungsstatthalter" for **Interlaken** has been elected in the person of the Social Democrat *Grossrat* Fritz Oester, Commune President of Unterseen; this is in succession to the Liberal Fritz Balmer. In July, a "Mozart-Woche" was held at Interlaken. The two Communes of **Koeniz** and **Langenthal** voted a credit of nearly 12 million francs for a loan to the Oberaargau *Verpflegungsheim* Dettenbuehl. A new nursing ward, a staff home and an improved water supply system have to be procured.

Krauchthal will spend 1,755m. francs for a new school building. Pfr. H. H. Huber has been in the Commune of **Leissigen** for forty years. Dr. Ernst Siegfried, Commune President of **Lyss** and his wife, have been elected Honorary Citizens. A jubilee of a special kind has been celebrated at **Meiringen**: 75 years ago the Rev. Canon Horsley first took a party of English visitors to the Haslital. This has been repeated every year, and now it is the Canon's son, the Rev. J. W. Horsley, who takes English visitors there.

Roger Macquat, Municipal President of **Moutier** has been elected as the new *Regierungsstatthalter*. The Commune Assembly voted a revision of the statutes, and proposed the creation of a General Council. Valuable old documents have been discovered under the old R.C. church at Moutier. The Jura "Touring Club" has celebrated its Golden Jubilee at Moutier. At **Neuenegg**, a communal radio and television aerial plant has been put into operation. At long last, the Commune of **Nods** has agreed to a loan for the chairlift to the Chasseral. Minister Zurlinden has donated valuable glass paintings to the church of **Oberbipp** where he was christened and confirmed. **Oeschenschbach** has elected a woman Commune Clerk, Mrs. Hedwig Fuhrmann-Lerch.

As every year on the day after Ascension Day, pilgrims came to the village of **Pumpfelfel** to remember St. Fromont, patron-saint of cattle. Processions were again held and the celebration turned into a *Volksfest* in the evening. **Reconvillier's** citizens rejected the credit of Fr.400,000.— for a kindergarden. Out of 729 voters, 502 made use of their rights.

At the former pilgrims' church of **Kleinhöchstetten**, which has been restored, divine services are again being held. The church dates back to the seventh century. The 63rd National Horse Show and Market took place at **Saignelégier** early in August. About 400 horses were sold, and there were competitions, riding and pageants. **St. Imier** was the venue of the 19th Cantonal Yodelling Festival. Flag tossers and folkloristic bands also took part. At **Spiez** the "See-und Sommernachtsfest" was held on 16th July.

At **Thun**, a five-storey building, the new "Baumeisterhaus", was opened in June; it will serve as training college, especially for bricklayers. At **Trubschachen** the third exhibition "The world of the farmer" was held in June, a show of 180 pictures from many famous collections and museums. Young artists have made an experiment at **Vinelz**, too, where they opened an exhibition in a barn.

(Based on news received by courtesy of
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