

It happened in Eastern Switzerland

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IT HAPPENED IN EASTERN SWITZERLAND

The bad weather in the summer of 1966 had its effect also on the tourist industry in Eastern Switzerland. Nevertheless, the region is becoming more and more of a favourite, and the tourist authorities have asked for an airfield to be used by modern aircraft on short routes. Since the Walensee road carries the heavy traffic between Zurich and the Grisons, the Kerenzerberg has become peaceful again. At Filzbach, on the Southern terrace, a sports centre is to be created similar to that at Magglingen. The ground for it was bought by the Canton of Zurich.

The North Eastern electricity works (NOK) have a share capital of 166 million francs, which is to be increased to 200m. Nine Cantons belong to it as shareholders, and 600 people are employed by the concern. Energy turnover is given as 5,551 milliard kWh. The atom powerworks at Beznau are making progress. Production should begin in 1969.

The Canton of St. Gall (thirteen Communes) have now also joined the garbage clearance federation Toggenburg-Hinterthurgau.

67m. francs has been spent on protecting the Lake of Constance in 1966. At Kesswil, the lake water-works have become operational; 22,000 people and 5,000 head of cattle are being served with clean water. The Muensterlingen water purification plant has been joined by more Communes, and the plant is to be enlarged to take in further Communes.

The automatic weather signalling station at Romanshorn now has direct contact with the eight Swiss and thirty-one German and Austrian light signals on the lake; thus the warning system has been much improved. Concern has been expressed at two bad accidents since the oil pipeline Genoa-Ingolstadt, which passes between Bregenz and Lindau, has been opened, when thousands of litres of oil flowed into the lake. This will affect also the fish. 1966 was a reasonably good year for fishermen. *Blaufelchen* catches have been much reduced.

The new SBB boat "St Gall" is the largest of the Lake of Constance fleet and carries 650 passengers. On the other hand, the last *Flussraddampfer* "Schaffhausen" has had to be scrapped after 54 years of service on one of the most romantic parts of Rhine and Untersee. 10 million cars have used the ferry Constance-Meersburg since its opening in 1963.

THURGAU

The new Councillor of States for the Thurgau is the Liberal Dr. Hans Munz, lawyer from Amriswil, successor to the late Dr. Jakob Mueller). The President of the Thurgau Parliament has been chosen in the person of *Oberrichter* Alois Bommer from Rickenbach, and the President of the Government is Willy Labhart (Liberal/Farmer. The new Attorney General is Dr. Max Mueller (Wiesendangen).

The Thurgau Parliament has accepted a Motion regarding introduction of women's suffrage. In the discussion, the Government of the Canton stated its view that a gradual introduction would show better results than trying to introduce it in one go.

The accounts for 1966 showed a surplus of 1.9m. francs, the budget having predicted a loss of over 9m. Expenditure stood at 110m. francs. The budget for this year estimates revenue of 107.6m. and a deficit of 8½m. francs. New increases in the pay of civil servants will cost 4m. annually. The Thurgau electricity works at

Arbon gave up Fr.400,000.— to the State, to be used for financing AHV (old-age pensions). Customs receipts at Thurgau customs centres amounted to 56m. francs, 14.4% more than in the previous year; the increase being mainly due to higher fuel duties. At Constance alone, 22m. francs was collected.

The electorate accepted the revised law concerning increased children's allowances, a housing scheme for about 500 homes towards whose rent the Canton would contribute 6m. francs, and the new sickness insurance law which will cover half of the Thurgau population. Supplementary contributions by the Canton to finance AHV amounted to 5.5m. francs in 1966.

At the end of 1966, nearly 1,000 more foreigners were registered as compared with 1965. 936 foreign children were born. Total: 27,168, not counting the 3,800 seasonal workers. 4,600 firms were on the trade register at the end of the year, a steady increase, though the Canton cannot yet be called industrial. Factories have gone up from 409 to 575, employees from 19,296 to 31,023.

The largest building project in the history of the Thurgau, 65.5m. francs for a new Cantonal Hospital at Frauenfeld, was accepted by Parliament. The international centre for the blind at Landschlacht has helped 220 blind people and their companions, and their library now has 1,500 volumes. At Muensterlingen, a school for hospital orderlies has been opened, and at Frauenfeld a *Vorschule* for nursing staff.

Over 33m. francs was collected in school taxes in 1966, and the school fund now stands at 13.37m. The *Volkshochschule* Kreuzlingen celebrated its silver jubilee at the end of the year, during which period over 110 courses and lecture cycles were held. The VHS at Steckborn is 10 years old. 26 girls and 24 boys have passed the exams at the Kreuzlingen Teachers' Training College. This year, boarding school arrangements can be taken up again now that the College has been fully rebuilt after the fire in 1963.

Ermatingen with only 2,000 inhabitants has bought land for 1.35 m. francs to build a school — a rare undertaking for such a small Commune. Credits for new schools have been granted at Ettenhausen, Frauenfeld (Huben), Herden, Mammern, Samsach Hungerbuehl and Sulgen.

The Evangelical Synod of the Canton has accepted a Motion asking for legislation for women's suffrage in church matters. Weinfelden's church electorate has already granted the vote (446:137). A new R.C. church is to be built at Muellheim and a Reformed one at Bischofszell. The renovated and enlarged Church at Kreuzlingen-Kurzrickenbach was inaugurated in November. The renovated Chapel at Castle Gachnang is now used by the Reformed Community, since the R.C. Parish could no longer use it, having built its own church and vicarage. Two million francs have been granted for the renovation of the St. Nikolaus Church at Frauenfeld. An even larger sum will be spent on the *Stiftskirche* at Bischofszell. The beautiful Baroque St. Martin's Chapel near Sirnach is to be renovated, too, whilst renovation of the Gothic St. Michael's Chapel outside Weinfelden has been completed.

The social institution looking after *wandernde Gesellen* has outlived its usefulness and thus the "Thurgauische Verband für Naturalverpflegung" has been dissolved. Its capital of Fr.210,000.— has been passed on to the Commune social services.

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There has been an increase in motorised vehicles in the Canton where there are 191 cars for every 1,000 inhabitants. This means that the number has doubled in ten years, or, including motor cycles doubled in three years.

On cantonal territory, there are now air-raid shelters for 36% of the population. The Canton has spent 1.63m. francs in a year for land improvement. Improved fruit cultivation has already shown success, and no fewer than 22,000 fruit trees were felled in the Thurgau last winter. A new society for the re-introduction of the beaver has been founded, and already two wild animals have been caught and later set free near Kreuzlingen.

The two Communes Muellheim and Langenhart have been united as Muellheim, and the new Waengi comprises Abetswil, Krillberg and Tuttwil. Obersommeri and Untersommeri are now joined as Sommeri.

The electorate of Bischofszell has rejected plans for a full-time *Gemeindeammann*. Erlen is to have a Commune Hall which is to house the post office and flats for sale.

Frauenfeld wants to spend another 3m. francs on waste-water plants. With a 76.6% participation, the electorate agreed to the extension of the swimming baths. The Municipal Council has been re-elected, and in the 40-seat Commune Council, the Liberals have gained two seats and now have 12, two more than the Socialists. The Art Gallery "Gampiross" has had to be closed because the decreasing sale of pictures no longer justified its activities.

The Kreuzlinger Executive has been re-elected. The town's financial requirements for the next ten years will be 36.4 million francs, mainly for buildings, road construction and a garbage plant. It is the first long-term programme of the Canton.

The Commune of Muenchwilen has 3,260 inhabitants of whom 660 are foreigners from twelve nations, including Tibetans. More foreign children are born there than Swiss. The Socialists managed to get back a fourth seat on the Romanshorn Commune Council, which they lost to the Evangelicals in 1964. The first Thurgau first-aid centre has been opened at Romanshorn. The Steckborn electorate refused to grant the necessary credit for a new landing pier. After 17 years in office, *Gemeindeammann* Otto Mueller was not re-elected. Weinfeld is to have a large shopping, cultural and social centre, with which first-aid post, military canteen, hotel, transformer station and offices are to be combined.

ST. GALL

The Cantonal Parliament empowered the Government to participate in a central office for electronic computer work; this should not cost more than 2.5m. francs. The new law governing the use of Initiative and Referendum is to replace the one dating from 1893. St. Gall was the first Canton which introduced the people's veto against legislation in 1831 and thus paved the way to direct democracy in the Cantons without *Landsgemeinden*.

An extensive public poll in the Canton resulted in interesting answers. Generally, private undertaking is considered less expensive than building construction by the State. 4,806 of those questioned would be ready to work longer in order to solve the foreign workers problem (with 1,227 against). A 3:2 majority was for a ninth school year. A similar proportion was against votes for women. Generally speaking, the citizen is satisfied with the present regime, expects more savings by the State, especially on defence; but he would be prepared to pay more for water protection.

The new President of the Cantonal Parliament is Dr. Alfons Furrer of St. Margrethen. The accounts for last year showed a deficit of 3.8m. francs, with revenue at 247m. The budget is slightly higher and estimates a shortage of 3.4m. francs. Salary increases would cost 5.3m.

The renovation of St. Gall Cathedral will soon be completed. A commemorative coin is to be sold. The Chapel in the Calfeisental will be preserved, and the old church of St. Verena at Magdenau is to be renovated and used again. The new church at Altstaetten was blessed early in spring. The Gossau Church and the Monastery of Mels have new organs. The St. Gall *Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft* has celebrated its centenary.

The international technical college at Rapperswil will be ready in 1971, and the commercial school "Burghof" in the same town has opened a new building. The cost of extending the Cantonal School will be 4.3m. Three new primary schools were opened in St. Gall early in July, but the electorate rejected the credit for the new *Gewerbeschule*. The widow of *Erziehungsrat* Naef has created a Foundation to secure good teaching staff at the future Cantonal School at Wattwil. Ebnat-Kappel, Uznach and Buetschwil have or are to have new school buildings, and at Herbrugg, a new *heilpaedagogische Schule* was opened.

A number of Communes have agreed to construct waste-water plants, but Wittenbach has rejected the plan. The first Swiss *Gaskugelbehälter* has been put to production in St. Gall. 80m. francs is to be spent on road construction in the next five years..

The municipal electorate of St. Gall agreed to social housing plans, and St. Gall's new telex centre has become operational. A sports centre has been planned at Gruendenmoos. The Municipal Theatre is to be run on a wider basis, and a co-operative society has been founded for the purpose. The Cultural Prize (every four years) has been awarded to Prof. Dr. Georg Thuerer for his activities as teacher, citizen and artist. EFTA weeks were held in the town from 22nd May to 4th June to inform the inhabitants of the importance of the European Free Trade Association.

Amden is to have a new sports centre and swimming baths. The children's village St. Iddaheim near Luetisburg (1877) has been added to and now comprises nine family pavilions and extensive sports facilities. Montlingen in the Rhine Valley has received a *Heimatmuesum* in the school building. In the same Commune, a new Rhine bridge was opened in May. The "Obertoggenburger Wochenblatt" has ceased to be after 80 years and has been taken over by the "Toggenburger Nachrichten".

The Dramatic Society of Rapperswil has celebrated its 75th anniversary. The Nobel Prize winner Prof. Dr. Walter Rudolf Hess was honoured by a plaque at the house "Pelikan" at Rapperswil. The late Honorary Consul in the Lebanon, Arnold Niederer, has left 2.4m. francs to his Commune of Rheineck. The Rorschach electorate agreed to a new civil defence centre and the extension of the Eastern promenade. St. Margrethen is to house the new co-operative mill whose construction will cost 5.3m. francs.

Schmerikon is to have a sports centre. The first public *Apotheke* at Uznach was opened a century ago; it has remained in the same family and is now an undertaking employing over 100 staff. Gifts for charity and the local kindergarden have been made to mark the centenary. *Musikpflege* Wil is 250 years old; formerly the "Caesiliengesellschaft", the "Orchesterverein" now enjoys great popularity.

APPENZELL

There has been opposition to the plans of the Confederation for spending 400m. francs to take over and 200m. for developing the BLS railway and possibly 500m. for the construction of a base tunnel, whilst cutting down help to private railways, amongst others in the SBB-free Canton of Appenzell.

Under the scheme "Experiment in International Living", six Indians spent some time in the Appenzell where they lived with individual families.

The "Milchverband St. Gallen-Appenzell" at its meeting at Herisau decided to move its centre to Gossau. The new building is to cost 12.8m. francs.

INNER-RHODEN

The "Landsgemeinde" took place on the fourth Sunday in April on the historic "Landsgemeindeplatz" after the traditional church service. National Councillor Broger was elected as Governing *Landammann*. Changes in the educational law were accepted, also the regulations for the new federal road law. The new Director of the Cantonal Bank is Johann Faessler.

AUSSER-RHODEN

This year's "Landsgemeinde" took place at Hundwil and was attended by some 9,000 citizens carrying their traditional swords. The annual accounts were accepted and the Cantonal Government re-elected, the new member being Otto Bruderer (Teufen). The law governing the Cantonal Psychiatric Clinic was accepted, but three times votes had to be counted until it was established that the

credit of 1.3m. francs for the building of a *Werkhof* for the Cantonal Building Administration was rejected.

With revenue at over 27m. francs, the budget for 1967 estimates a loss of half a million. Motor tax is to be increased by 20-30%.

The number of foreign workers has gone down by 7%. Buehler is to have a new Commune centre, and Herisau electors granted handsome credits for old-age housing but rejected contributions for houses at cheap rents. Herisau's water will in future be carried from the Lake of Constance. Speicher is to have a covered swimming pool, and Waldstatt's citizens agreed to a heated pool and a new school and sports centre.

(Compiled from news received by courtesy of Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)



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