

# 1st August in Switzeland

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## 1st AUGUST IN SWITZERLAND

The National Day this year was celebrated in beautiful summer weather practically all over Switzerland. The outer shape and form of the celebrations varied greatly from one part to the other, even from one Commune to the next. In the Jura, some of the traditional processions were cancelled because of the watchmakers' holidays. The same applied to some Solothurn Communes. In Solothurn itself, the *Jungbürgerfeier* was held on the St. Ursenbastion: all young men and women reaching the age of 20 were received as fully fledged citizens, a ceremony legally anchored in the Cantonal Constitution since 1938. In Olten, a twenty-two gun salute opened the commemoration, and fireworks were let off on the Aare.

Ambassador Max Graessli gave the patriotic address in Aarau, and he spoke about the way foreigners looked upon Switzerland. In Schaffhausen, where the First of August is a legal holiday (the "Landesring der Unabhangigen" started an Initiative which was accepted by the people two years ago), some 20,000 people watched the illuminations of the Rhinefall. The reading of the Pact of 1291 was read by a recruit at the celebrations in Zurich; Municipal President Widmer addressed the large crowd, and the afternoon ceremony near the Buerkliplatz was again devoted to old and handicapped people.

The President of the Council of States, Dr. Willi Rohner, gave the main speech at Gossau (St. Gall). He pleaded for giving the women their rightful place in public life. In Chur, at the *Jungburgerfeier*, a young woman spoke after one of the town's elders. A woman, Mrs. Hedwig Moll-Obrecht, even gave the main patriotic address in the farmers' Commune of Aedermannsdorf in Solothurn (Thal district). This gesture by a small community is important because the Solothurn electorate will soon have to decide whether women should be granted the vote in cantonal matters.

Another woman spoke in the capital, appealing to the citizens to become more active participants in national public life. She followed Federal Councillor Gnaegi who gave the official address outside the flood-lit Cathedral.

Federal President Bonvin addressed the people of Switzerland over radio and television. He reminded listeners and viewers that the path to happiness is not even, and that we can only fulfill the purpose of our lives if we make efforts in the field of spiritual values in at least the same measures as our material progress increases. Federal Councillor Bonvin also spoke at two local celebrations, in the Valais at Lens and Champery. In the Valais, several mountaineers carried logs up to peaks of over 3,000 metres, where bonfires were lit. Fires shone from many peaks up and down the country, some even in towns, like in Winterthur where the celebration was held on a meadow near Waldhof. In the afternoon, visits were made to hospitals and homes for the aged to whom song recitals were given.

Because of increased traffic, the Fluelen Commune Council arranged this year's celebration up at the church where, for the first time, an ecumenical service took place. In the valley of the Reuss alone, some twenty *Hohenfeuer* were visible.

A special service was held on the Ruetli, and the former Federal Councillor Chaudet addressed a gathering at Caux where a Conference on Moral Re-armament was being held. For the first time, the international organisations in Geneva had been asked to participate officially in the Swiss National Day, and many of them allowed the badges to be sold on their premises.

An unusual way to commemorate the origin of the Confederation was taken at Burgdorf where young men and women took part in a cultural/political forum, and they issued the following appeal:

*"We believe that one of the major causes of the present malaise is the lack of a real dialogue between the exponents of the various political views. We invite the politicians, to make an increased effort for a dialogue with the public, to agree to talk with politically engaged writers, artists, theologians, scientists, etc., and we beg the political Parties to remember their principles anew, to look for new forms of interparty-dialogue and to provide increased opportunities for the citizen, especially before plebiscites, to engage in contradictory talks based on sound information. And finally, we beg the so-called non-conformists, not to remain aloof with their ideas, but to take part in the political every-day work."* (News by courtesy of Agence Telographique Suisse.)

## AVIATION NEWS

At the end of 1966, 1,182 aircraft were registered in Switzerland (1,078 in the previous year). Of these, 805 were engined planes, 15 helicopters, 347 gliders and 15 balloons. Of the 44 registered large aircraft, 33 were with Swissair, 6 with Balair and 5 with Globe Air. At the same time, 9 airports and 48 airfields were available, as well as 42 *Gebirslandeplatze*.

Zurich's International Airport has kept its eighth position amongst the most important European airports. As regards freight, it has moved up to sixth place. Take offs and landings increased by 13.4% to 137,145 which equals a daily average of 376 (331).

Zurich handled 55.4% of passengers, Geneva 33.4 and Basle 11.2%. Freight was 62.3 for Zurich, 27.3 for Geneva and 10.4% for Basle. Mail was 57.6, 31.1 and 11.3% respectively.

During 1966, the financial result of Zurich Airport showed an increase of 32.6% to 21,175,045 francs which meant a profit of over 8m. francs.

Kloten Airport still proved a great attraction to visitors, and over 1.1 million people visited it, a quarter of a million more than in the previous year. The airport is being enlarged further, especially the restaurant, the freight building and the wharf. The second stage in the extension should be completed by 1970 and will then provide ample accommodation for the jumbo jets.

The first helicopter landing port in Central Switzerland was opened at Erstfeld (Uri) by the Heliswiss company. By decentralising the helicopter landing ports ("heliports"), great savings are effected.

The Federal Department of Communications and Energy issued new regulations for aircraft and flying personnel on 1st July, which should provide for even greater safety. [A.T.S.]

## SHEEP IN THE SERVICE OF NATIONAL ROAD UPKEEP

The *Tiefbauamt* of the Canton of Zurich (Road Inspection Department) in an effort to save money, is trying to find ways and means to lower the cost of the upkeep of the National Roads on its territory. As an experiment, sixteen sheep have been put into service on the grass verges of N3 near the Stotzweid-Boschung. It is expected that the cost of upkeep can be cut considerably if sheep are used on the verges.

(Schweiz. Landwirtschaftliche Zeitschrift "Die Grune".)