

It happend in the canton of Zurich

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IT HAPPENED IN THE CANTON OF ZURICH

Zurich has lived through more than its usual share of unpropitious events during the last year. Two bomb explosions shook the city. One of them blew the main entrance and all the windows of the police headquarters in Uraniastrasse to smithereens. The other one wrought damage to the town hall to the tune of 95,000 francs. Fortunately no one was hurt. A 10,000-franc reward was offered for information leading to the arrest of the culprit.

An employee in a large laundry of Kusunacht got rid of 2,500 litres of phenol in the mains. Owing to a malfunctioning water pump, this poisonous chemical flowed in the Lake of Zurich, whence it found its way into every household of the town, giving the water a bitter-sweet flavour which few appreciated. The city of Zurich sued for the costs of this blunder.

Four Arab nationals machine-gunned a commercial Israeli plane as it was taxiing towards Kloten airport's main building. One of them was shot dead by an Israeli agent who was among the passengers. (See previous S.O. issues).

A mentally deranged person set fire to the Hottingen telephone exchange, thereby depriving 30,000 households of the use of a telephone for a month. The army rigged its own exchange, which was used for emergency purposes. (Also reported in detail).

Zurich has not properly got over the battle which flared up between youth and police on 28th June of last year in front of the "Globus" department store. 16 young people who had participated in the fray were accused of throwing pavement stones and other projectiles at the forces of law and order and were sent to trial. The hyper-active "association of progressive workers, students and schoolgoers" claimed for a postponement of the trial, because they believed there had not been a proper enquiry into the alleged misdeeds of the accused. The judicial authorities having rejected this request, the progressists organised a sit-in and a teach-in at Bellevueplatz on 11th June, blaring through their loudspeakers about the "swinish methods of the police". The traffic, always compact in the notorious bottleneck of Bellevueplatz, was clogged in complete chaos. A frazzled mob of 200 then marched to the lawcourts, where they splashed blood-coloured paint on the newly surfaced sandstone walls. The police contained themselves and did not intervene. These happenings produced outcries and interpellations in the Cantonal Parliament, which discussed in earnest the possibility of raising a multi-cantonal police strike force to deal with similar events in the future. Tempers on both sides had however sufficiently cooled down two weeks later for the "Zurich Manifest" groupement to stage a peaceful demonstration commemorating the "Globus Battle" that had been waged a year before. On

June 28th Bürkliplatz was transformed to a kind of speakers' corner, where eminent people like Dr. H. Braunschweig, Cantonal Councillor, Dr. H. Rotter, member of the City Council and author André Chamson voiced their views. An exhibition displayed photographs of police atrocities perpetrated during and after the "Globus Battle".

After a trial of many days, six youths were condemned to suspended sentences averaging a month. On the other side, a policeman got seven days' jail (against which he appealed unsuccessfully) for being rough with a photographer.

So much for destruction and violence . . .

In serious danger of being congested in its teeming traffic, Zurich is to make great investments in streamlining it. After plans for laying the future penetration of national highway 3 above the river Sihl (which would have been relatively cheap) were abandoned, the highway will be built underground on the left bank of the Sihl at a cost of 145 million francs. It will join the N.2. and be linked at the very heart of the city to three giant underground car parks spaced at three points along the Sihl (at Sihlhoelzli, the Kaserne and Sihlquai) housing a total of 13,000 cars and costing about 245 million francs.

Meanwhile, a smaller car park is being dug out underneath the "Jelmoli" department store. Bellevueplatz is to be replanned: traffic is to be rerouted through a web of one-way streets. The Cantonal Council has voted two million francs for an extensive feasibility study for a Zurich Underground. It would be 26 km. long, start at Kloten and end at Dietikon, and have eleven stations in between. Meanwhile, the city's trams, probably the best in the world, are still prospering. They are celebrating their 75th birthday this year, and are going to do without ticket collectors, who are being made redundant by ticket-machines at tramstops.

On the outskirts, extensive works on the Forch-Bahn have been completed. The regional planning committee of the cantonal Unterland has advocated a resurrection of the Buelach-Baden railway.

The gigantic underground shopping centre in front of the main station is nearing completion. It will have no restaurant, and that has caused some controversy. A unique café has been opened in the Nüscherstrasse. It is called the "Investors' Club" and is open to all. Its decoration consists of five big television screens and other electronic gadgets displaying the latest stock exchange markings all over the world.

Zurich is to have a new opera and municipal theatre. A new youth centre is to be erected. It will have a foyer, a hotel, a restaurant and facilities for music, photography and other hobbies. A model in welfare state! A new arts

and crafts museum, called the "Belle-rive" Museum, has been inaugurated in Hoëschgasse. The widow of art collector Werner Baer has donated a number of masterpieces to the Kunsthaus. Chagall is going to paint the windows of the renovated Fraumünster Church.

Zurich housewives will soon be cooking on the natural gas processed in the new Schlieren gasworks. Staefa is to have a brand new highschool at the cost of 15 million francs.

The population of the Canton is 1,085,336, that of Zurich, 432,368. The accounts of the town for 1968 were better than balanced, revenue amounting to 729 million francs and expenditure to 694 million.

The Social Democratic Party has been urging for a change in cantonal tax law and has been asking for the exemption of progressive taxation for small and medium wage earners. The population of Winterthur endorsed an "initiative" in favour of women's voting rights. The cantonal government has drafted a law allowing for the optional introduction of women's voting rights in any Commune. The "Landesring" of Zurich has asked that 1st May be considered as a bank holiday. The people of the Canton have voted for greater cantonal responsibility in cultural encouragement. A national scheme to increase old age pensions was among the topics of study by the Cantonal Council. The lowest rate would rise from 3,000 to 3,900 francs per annum for single people, and from 4,800 to 6,240 for couples.

The business community has experienced a record financial year. Stock Exchange dealings totalled 41 billion francs and Zurich sheltered three quarters of the world's gold trade, amounting to sales of three tons a day.

A "city vineyard" is to be planted on the slopes of the Höggerberg.

A public opinion poll disclosed that 70% of Zurichers were in favour of doing away with the midnight closing-time of public establishments.

After being candidate to the Winter Olympiads of 1976, Zurich has backed out, considering that the necessary investments for this event would not bring sufficient long-term advantages.

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

TEACHING AIDS FOR GROWN-UPS

A certain desire to brush up one's knowledge and to take part in and keep abreast of the new branches of progress being made in scientific and technical matters, or just the wish to widen one's knowledge in a general sense, or it may be the desire to make progress in one's business career — these are the things which act as an incentive and prompt grown-ups to renew their studies in