

# The returns of the federal voting of February 26th

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tion. There were abundant public means, social and defence problems were easily solved, and thus there were sufficient matters of equal importance of the Right and the Left. In the 'sixties' changes began to appear in Switzerland, first social and then political: erosion of traditional values, problems of ecology, students' revolts and «over-foreignisation» caused somewhat negligently. Yet all these manifestations and signals discernable quite early, were not able to rock the political boat.

It was only the economic recession in the 'seventies' and the decline in public funds which introduced a process with political consequences which has by no means come to a conclusion. The

youth disturbances in Zurich, Berne and Basle showed for months just how far society had broken down. At the same time, it became obvious that the period of open-handed distribution in all directions had passed, and the moment for consolidation had arrived. The surface is still intact, but underneath it, strong change has begun. Just as we lived for a long time with all the pleasant aspects of an economic boom, we now have to face the consequences. We have already lost a lot of substance, socially, culturally and also state-politically – the students' revolts showed it clearly.

So far, a definite majority was in favour of remaining in the Government at the Social Democrat

Conference. But it was the middle and older generations who are still part of the traditional trades union system who turned the scale. We no longer live in a life of unquestionable security. What we should urgently concern ourselves with is the inner situation of our country.

Oskar Reck

<sup>1)</sup>The expression «Magic Formula» describes the special composition of our Government, which is based on tacit agreement of the political parties.

Since the Social Democrats joined the Federal Executive in 1959, the seven seats in the Federal Council are distributed according to their share of the votes. We thus have two Radical Liberals, two Christian Democrats, two Social Democrats and one representative of the Swiss People's Party on the Federal Council.

## The Returns of the Federal Voting of February 26th

For years, the Confederation has been trying to find new sources of income in order to balance its accounts. To reach this goal, new revenue must be found and savings achieved. The electorate has a say in the matter, and it is by no means simple to convince it, especially since we are in a state of economic recession.

On 26th February, two new measures were put to the vote, both limited to ten years; tax on heavy vehicle traffic and a motor-

way vignette. With these measures, it is hoped to get half a milliard Francs a year.

The Swiss people have accepted the first proposal with 58,7% and the second with 53%. The French-speaking Cantons have rejected both proposals uniformly, whilst nearly all other Cantons accepted both schemes.

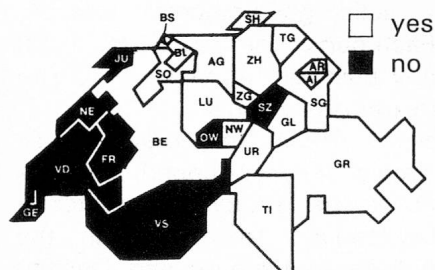
It is expected that the cost of goods transport by road will increase slightly by 1985. Private motorists will have to purchase a

sticker at 30 Francs for their cars if they want to travel on National Roads. Foreign vehicles are also subject to these taxes, even if they are only in transit through Switzerland. In comparison with our neighbouring countries, the cost of the vignette is low.

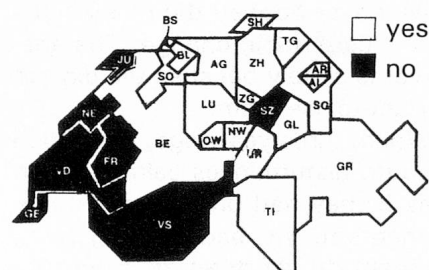
A third proposal put to the electorate was responsible for the exceptionally high participation of 52,2% of the voters.

It was the Initiative for a civil (as opposed to military) service,

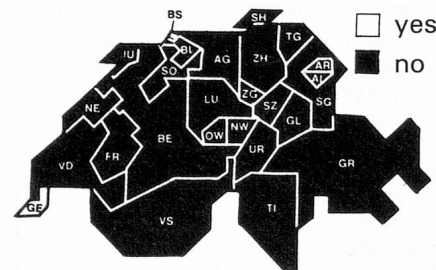
Tax on heavy vehicle traffic



Motorway vignette



Initiative for a civil service



which was rejected by a majority of 63,8%.

This matter was one of great controversy. The fundamental values between Citizen and Commune, Commune and Army were up for discussion. Once again it was confirmed that the majority of the population was in favour of general military service. This was already clear in December 1977 when the electorate rejected the

«Muenchenstein» Initiative with a majority of 62,4%. On the 26th February 1984, only two Cantons approved, Geneva with 51,3% and Baselstadt with 53,1%.

Thus military service will remain compulsory for all citizens. The changes proposed by the Initiative committee were too onesided and fundamental; the proposal would have given the citizen free choice between military service

and renunciation of military service. This would have been a first and decisive step towards a professional army. In this Initiative, the commitment to a civil service would have become a matter of minor importance, and there would no longer have been any question of the people concerned making any contribution whatever towards the security of national independence.

SSA/Franzoni

## Ernest Ansermet

### Biographical Sketch

Ernest Ansermet was born in Vevey on 11th November 1883. His father was a geometer and his mother a teacher, and he was brought up in an actively musical family circle. Music played a particularly important part in the household of his maternal grandfather, a farmer in Mont-la-Ville, where he spent his childhood holidays and learned to play the clarinet and some brass instruments. As well as pursuing his school and later university studies, he took music lessons in his native town with such a degree of success, that his first piano composition *Conte d'Avril* was published a full three years before he was awarded his degree in science and mathematics from the University of Lausanne in 1903. He then went on to teach in the Ecole normale in Lausanne.

1905, the year of the composition of Debussy's *La Mer*, found Ansermet in Paris, where he attended the **Sorbonne** to study mathematics and the **conservatoire national** to study music. On returning to Switzerland, he married Marguerite Jaccottet, a friend of C.F. Ramuz, in 1906. 1909 saw him on the way yet again, this time to Munich and Berlin, where he attended rehearsals and concerts given by Weingartner, Richard Strauss, Mottl and Ni-

kisch. He played in the percussion section of the Blüthner Orchester. On his return to Lausanne, he earned his living by teaching and by writing pieces of music criticism. In 1910 he met Debussy in Paris after the first performance of the *Rondes de Printemps*, and in 1911, Ansermet conducted his first symphony concert in Lausanne. The programme consisted of: Debussy (*Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune*), Jacques-Dalcroze and Beethoven (*4th Symphony*). It was a resounding success.

In 1912 Ansermet was called upon to succeed Lacerda as conductor of the Kursaal orchestra of Montreux. The years up to 1914 were to be marked by intense activity, the programmes considering the time and milieu would be broadly based and the encounters of this period decisive for the history of music. At Clarens, Ansermet's neighbours were Stravinsky, whose *Rite of Spring* was first performed in 1913, and Ravel. It was due to An-

sermet's hospitality that Ramuz, Budry, the Cingrias and Aubersonois were able to meet these musicians, and thus were laid the foundations for the **Cahiers vaudois...**

In 1914 on the declaration of war, the Kursaal orchestra was disbanded, and Ansermet assumed the leadership of the **Association symphonique romande** in Lausanne, an enterprise which, because of the enormous difficulties involved, lasted only three months. In Geneva however Stavenhagen died, and at the beginning of 1915, Ansermet was called to take over as director of the subscription concerts. At the same time, Pierre Monteux having been called up for military service, Diaghilev found himself without a conductor and, on the recommendation of Stravinsky, asked Ansermet to conduct the orchestra of the **Ballets russes**. Ansermet was to carry out both commitments simultaneously during the course of several hectic years. As an example, the

#### Dates and Places for the Ernest Ansermet Exhibition

7th June – 24th June 1984:

12th July – 15th August 1984:

September 1984:

12th October – 27 October 1984:

3th November – 1st December 1984:

12th December '84 – 11th January 1985:

March 1985:

September 1985:

Boston: Boston University

Buenos Aires: Teatro Colon

New York: Public Library

Strasbourg: Bibliothèque Nationale

London Barbican Center

Brussels: Bibliothèque royale Albert 1<sup>er</sup>

Paris: Centre Poussepin

Budapest: Théâtre Erkel