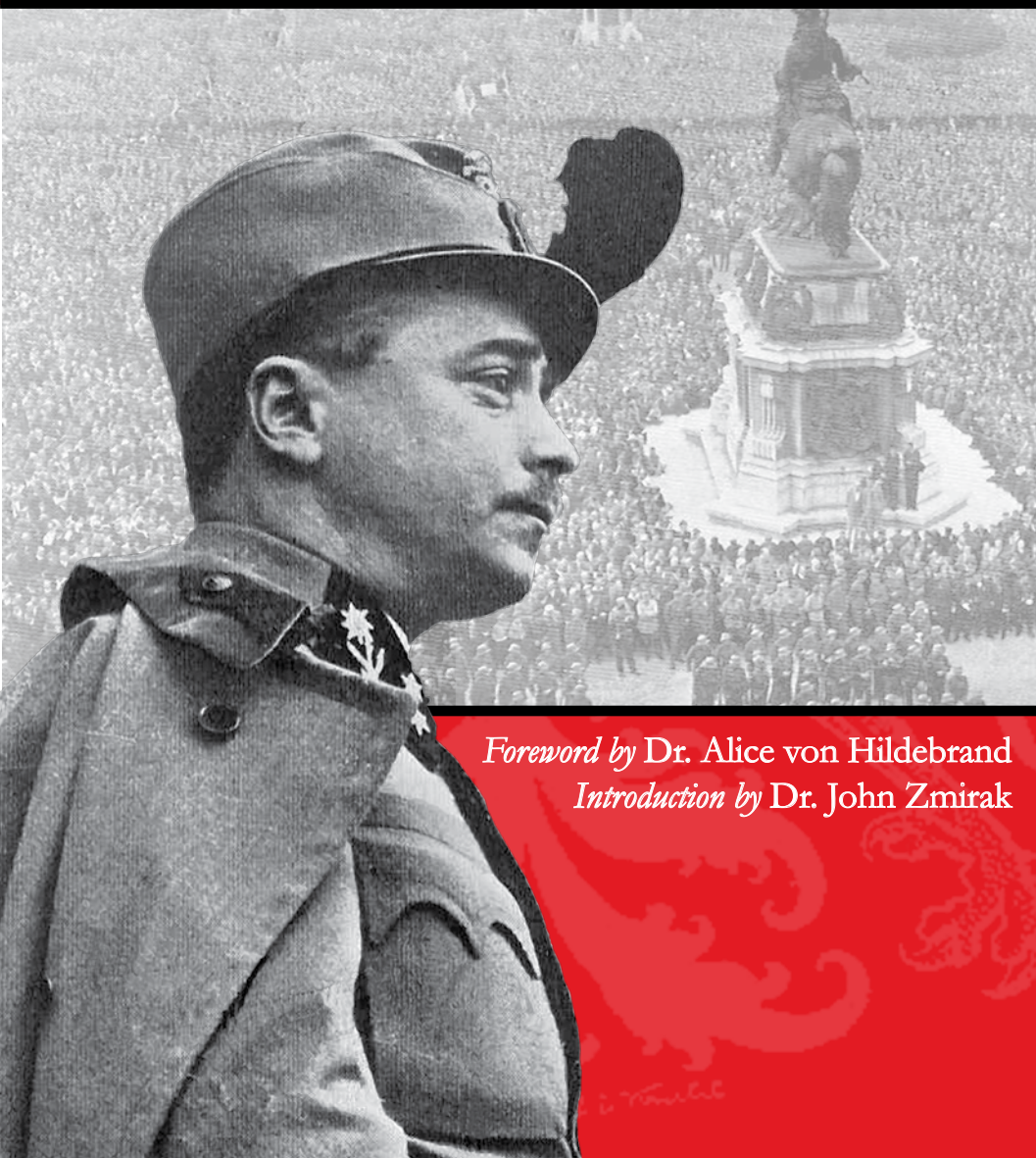


*Fr. Johannes Messner*

# DOLLFUSS

An Austrian Patriot



*Foreword by Dr. Alice von Hildebrand*

*Introduction by Dr. John Zmirak*



DOLLFUSS  
AN AUSTRIAN PATRIOT

*To Christian statesmen throughout history who  
have pursued the politics of Jesus Christ.  
And to those yet to come who will do likewise.*

# DOLLFUSS

## An Austrian Patriot

*by Fr. Johannes Messner*



"I came, I saw, God conquered." —KING JOHN III, 1683

Norfolk, VA  
2004

Dollfuss: An Austrian Patriot.

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The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc.

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*Dollfuss: An Austrian Patriot* was originally published in Austria as *Dollfuß* (Innsbruck, Wien, München: Tyrolia, 1935). The English translation was published the same year by Burns, Oates, & Washbourne, Ltd., which translation forms the basis for the present edition. Minor formatting changes and editorial corrections have been made to the BO&W edition.

ISBN-13 (eBook): 978-1-932528-36-7

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Messner, Johannes, 1891-

Dollfuss : an Austrian patriot / from the German of Johannes  
Messner.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-9718286-6-0 (alk. paper)

1. Dollfuss, Engelbert, 1892-1934. 2. Statesmen--Austria--  
Biography. 3. Austria--Politics and government--1918-1938. 4.  
Fascism--Austria--History. I. Title.

DB98.D6.M42 2003

943.605'1--dc21

2003009212

Printed in the United States of America.

Gates of Vienna Books is an imprint of IHS Press.

For more information, write to:

Gates of Vienna Books  
222 W. 21<sup>st</sup> St., Suite F-122  
Norfolk, VA 23517

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ENGELBERT DOLLFUSS (1892–1934)

*“Simple, homely, without demands on life, highly intelligent, with absolute integrity as a fundamental of his character, social, jolly, always on the move, swift – sometimes too swift – in decision, a foe to all pose or ostentation, yet carefully mindful for the respect due his office of representing the Fatherland; direct and courageous, effective by reason of his personality, which needed to put no distance between himself and his surroundings to carry his purpose – and this despite the fact that his actual person was certainly not impressive – all these he was. A loyal friend to companions and fellow-workers, always ready to be helpful; a man of faith and ideals, a true son of the German people, yet a fanatical believer in his Austria – as such we have seen and known him, we who were privileged to be at his side at the height of his activity, from the beginning of his public life, along that path of success and fortune, and up to the hour of departure – we who now bear witness, and will so long as life is granted us, for Engelbert Dollfuss and his Austria.”*

—Kurt Schuschnigg  
*My Austria*, 1938



## ENGELBERT DOLLFUSS A CATHOLIC STATESMAN

**J**OURNALISM has its ironic side. How often are long columns devoted to the obituary of a man whose name, just a few months after his death, will be buried for ever. Dostoyevsky's biting humor had this in mind when he wrote in *A Raw Youth*: "...all these talented gentlemen of the middling sort who are sometimes in their lifetime accepted almost as geniuses, pass out of memory quite suddenly and without a trace when they die."

On the other hand, there are some truly great men who are so maligned by an antagonistic press during their lifetime that, even though their names make the headlines when they die (or are murdered), history must "rediscover" them. How grateful, then, must we be to IHS Press for republishing Johannes Messner's book on Engelbert Dollfuss. Written by someone who knew the Chancellor of Austria – who was later to be murdered by Nazi agents – it makes us realize that this victim of National Socialism deserves to be placed upon a pedestal as one of the very great political leaders of the twentieth century – and possibly as one of the finest Catholic statesmen of all time. Why, then, should his name be unknown to the overwhelming majority of American and English citizens who have no sympathy at all for National Socialism and who should therefore be eager to have an acquaintance with one of the most remarkable of its opponents?

Dollfuss was one of the few political leaders of the day who saw with matchless clarity the evil of the National Socialist philosophy and who, in spite of the weakness of his country, which had been largely dismembered in the wake of World War I, became a new David confronting a new Goliath, Adolf Hitler. It is for this reason that the book by Johannes Messner is to be highly

welcomed: he gives the reader a superb view of who this man was, of his philosophy, of the inhuman difficulties that he was facing, of his courage and wisdom, of his goodness and sense of justice, of his deep Faith, and of his martyrdom. It is thanks to Messner, then, that history will finally do justice to Engelbert Dollfuss.

This is a book that fascinates the reader. Well translated, it presents facts with precision and clarity. It offers innumerable quotations taken from the writings and speeches of Dollfuss, and it permits the reader to draw his own conclusions. It should be welcomed not only because of its historical value, but also because it teaches contemporary statesmen a lesson: that one can be a good Catholic *and* a fine statesman; and that being a *Catholic* statesman means being someone who serves his country selflessly, someone for whom political power means to be at the service of his country, someone who is not ambitious, someone who does not seek to fill his own pockets, someone who does not seek to be served, but merely seeks to serve.

Men rarely forgive those who give them a bad conscience. Just men cannot expect to be loved in their lifetime because their very integrity loudly condemns those whose conduct deviates from truth and justice. To be loved by everybody can be a back-handed compliment: an insignificant person who keeps a low profile is not likely to encounter or enflame opposition. Alas, history reminds us that it is dangerous to be good. Aristide was hated because he was just. Socrates was put to death. And Christ – *the* Holy One – was crucified.

Some political leaders are hated because they deserve to be hated. Some are hated because they have the courage to oppose the *Zeitgeist* – the spirit of the age – and proclaim boldly a truth that is unpalatable to man's fallen nature. Dollfuss was much loved by those who understood that he was their friend: as a Catholic, as an Austrian patriot, as one of "them." But his very goodness and his political clear-sightedness were bound to trigger the hatred of those who had endorsed evil causes: be it National Socialism, Communism, or Liberalism. Alas, those animated by hatred are usually more active than those who love. Evil usually *seems* to triumph, even though it cannot and will never have the

## FOREWORD

last word. The greatest seeming victory of evil was at Calvary – but it was followed by the Resurrection. Thus, the fact that Engelbert Dollfuss aroused violent opposition from all kinds of people enamored of evil should be no surprise; nor should his murder be a surprise, for evil doggedly pursues its malign logic.

\*\*\*

No one could have foreseen that the talented, modest, little man who was Engelbert Dollfuss – born of peasant parents, raised in rural conditions and accustomed to hard, agricultural work, devoted to his country, first serving humbly in the army during World War I and then pursuing a modest career of public service – would ultimately be compelled by circumstances to rise to meet some of the most decisive challenges that Austria would face during the first turbulent years of the 1930s.

When on March 4, 1933, the Austrian Parliament was dissolved, Dollfuss, who was already serving as Chancellor, saw with remarkable clarity that the call of the hour was to create an authoritative government which alone would have a chance of opposing the terrible threat *outside* its borders – National Socialism – and the violent threat *within* its borders – Communism. Hitler had taken power in Germany just thirty-three days earlier, and Dollfuss understood that only a strong, internally united government based upon Catholic principles could raise Christ's banner and wage a spiritual war against the paganism of Nazi Germany and the atheism of Soviet Russia.

To understand the drama that personally confronted Dollfuss, it is worthwhile to recall his peasant background, which gave him a strong belief in the participation of the Austrian population in the workings of the State and Nation, in their just and measured proportion, and a sincere sympathy for the idea of *Anschluss* – of some form of union between Austria and her larger, German-speaking sister nation. But from early in 1933 it became apparent to the Chancellor that, regardless of his affections for German civilization and the greater Germany, the Nazism of Berlin was quickly becoming yet another force that was contributing to the mortal divisiveness that was plaguing the country during this period. Divided

between supporters of Nazism, Communism, and Liberalism, the latter two of which Dollfuss had already begun to contend with, the Austrian political situation looked as if it were beyond human repair. Many were those who, hating Communism, became ardent Nazis; and many were those who, hating Nazism, turned to Communism – most failing to understand that these two seemingly opposite views were animated by the same anti-Christian ethos. Dollfuss, however, saw that only a philosophy based on Christian principles, and following the precepts of the wonderful encyclical of Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, could build a dam to protect Austria. He understood that while fighting for Christianity, he was also fighting for Austria, because to live up to the demands of the Church was simultaneously to fight for the very life of Austria, a country which for centuries had been nourished on Christian principles, and one whose culture was deeply marked by Catholicism. Dollfuss, the modern David, knew that he was fighting a Goliath, but, like the man who was to become a great king to his people, he put all his confidence in God. His duty was to be faithful, and to put all his talents at the service of the Church and of his country. Victory was to be expected from God alone.

Thus it was that Dollfuss used all the means at his disposal to save his country from the severe crises which confronted it during his brief Chancellorship. The most severe of those crises was probably the socialist revolt of February, 1934, during which Dollfuss was compelled to employ the army, and several hundred troops and agitators lost their lives. The tragedy of the situation was only magnified by the treasonous way in which some leading Catholics, including the philosopher Jacques Maritain, who had just two months before expressed to my husband, Dietrich, his admiration for Dollfuss, slandered the Chancellor as one who trampled upon the workers. Maritain even went so far as to organize a public protest and collect signatures condemning the Austrian head of state. To his (not surprising) credit, however, Chesterton saw the truth of the matter, and of Dollfuss's career. Writing in *The End of the Armistice*, he praises Dollfuss as "a small man of poor and peasant ancestry, stood up by the ancient instinct of such ancestry, resolved to save the remnant of the Roman civilization of Germany."

## FOREWORD

My husband, like Messner, knew Chancellor Dollfuss personally, and was both inspired by his Catholic statesmanship, and filled with profound sorrow when he was murdered. Dietrich had sought earnestly to do his part to assist the Dollfuss government in reaching its objectives, and he had been personally encouraged by the Chancellor to put his writing, teaching, and philosophical talents at the service of Austria. And thus Dollfuss supported my husband's effort to establish a journal that would attack both Nazism and Communism *simultaneously*, which in those days was a unique enterprise. Through his chief of official communications, Edmund Weber, Dollfuss established Dietrich as the editor of *Der Christliche Ständestaat* (*The Christian Corporative State*). While Dietrich had wanted a name for the journal that emphasized specifically the fight against National Socialism, Dollfuss's associates insisted that the journal be named after the chief idea of the "new" Austria. That the Dollfuss government took such a position on the importance of the Corporate ideal is not surprising, given the Chancellor's own commitment to the medieval heritage of Social and Corporate Catholicism that he was seeking to build upon. Hence his comment to my husband upon their first meeting:

Today, political questions are no longer purely political; they center on questions of *Weltanschauung*. For me the fight against National Socialism is essentially a fight in defense of the Christian conception of the world. Whereas Hitler wants to revive the old Germanic paganism, I want to revive the Christian Middle Ages.

In support of that great idea, and out of devotion to its greatest modern exponent, my husband composed his own work on the Chancellor shortly after his assassination: *Engelbert Dollfuss: Ein Katholischer Staatsman*.

Messner's book, meanwhile, emphasizes the crucial aim of Engelbert Dollfuss: to establish a truly Catholic state. Shortly before his murder, Dollfuss said:

It is not power or riches that will make for the happiness of nations, but interior peace, agreement and harmony among individuals. For this we do not need empty piety; but we do in-

## DOLLFUSS: AN AUSTRIAN PATRIOT

tend to be upright, honourable and resolute men. We do intend to become better and nobler men in accordance with Christian principles, and to behave as such in regard to our fellows....

And “it is sound statesmanship,” he continued, “to foster and encourage a life of religion.”

It is likely that because of those high ideals, the death which Dollfuss died – a direct consequence of his commitment to them – was that of a martyr. That martyrdom, too, Messner relates with poignancy and emotion. His book, however, ought not to be merely the occasion for learning about the sacrifices, struggles, and death of a great Catholic leader. It must also be an encouragement to imitate him in all the actions of our own lives.

Alice von Hildebrand, Ph.D.

May 4, 2004

Feast of St. Monica



1930s map of Eastern Europe, showing also the previous extent of the Austro-Hungarian Empire on the eve of World War I.

## INTRODUCTION

**A**S A STUDENT of twentieth century political history, I find the story of Engelbert Dollfuss a great anomaly, a golden sign of contradiction in an age of wretched extremities. His life and thought are a small, welcome respite from a century that produced so many powerful criminals as to throw the very concept of Authority under suspicion, so many false patriots as to threaten the legitimacy of Nationhood itself. In the thought, writings, and speeches of this short-lived leader of inter-war Austria, we breathe a spirit which is alien to the dark twentieth century, heavy as it is with the smell of blood, mustard gas, and burning cathedrals. In Dollfuss's modest, emphatic words we encounter once again the pure atmosphere of the High Middle Ages, or at least of Maria Theresa's baroque Vienna – for in them we find a blessed complexity, a willingness to embrace the great diversity of life and work that constitute a civilized, free society. Instead of grimly reducing politics to a Manichean caricature, in which a single race, or nation, or class embodies goodness and its opposite pure evil, Dollfuss followed Catholic social thinking which finds in every station of life the potential for virtue as well as sin, just as St. Paul named the various functions within the Church the “members” or limbs of the Body of Christ.

Himself the son of peasants, who worked all through his early years in unforgiving agricultural labor, Dollfuss stands as a noble contrast to the resentful idler Adolf Hitler, the narrow-souled pamphleteer Lenin, or the dreary Socialist time-servers of the French Third Republic. His actual experience of rural life inoculated Dollfuss against intellectual fantasies that romanticized the lifestyle, exalting as “folkish” whatever narrow and bigoted ideas a (typically urban) polemicist wished to promote. Nor had Dollfuss

any patience for those on the Left who dismissed the peasantry as a reactionary barrier to progress which must be liquidated. Indeed, he saw the maintenance of a strong, independent farming class as a critical guarantor of both the nation's cultural continuity and liberty and its economic security. If anything, Dollfuss followed the Popes of his era in seeing the proletariat as the one class which must be "redeemed" – not liquidated, of course, but rather delivered from their dependence on the vagaries of employment in factories, and granted a share in the means of production, either in the form of land, or small businesses, or at least some say in the administration of the industries which provided their livelihood.

More than most self-appointed defenders of the working man, Dollfuss knew the bitterness of hard labor, and what a privilege it is to enjoy afterwards a truly liberal and humane education. But the severities of his youth did not lead Dollfuss to resentment against those who had earned or inherited greater wealth; as a faithful student of human nature and son of the Church, he knew that the diversity of conditions within society is part of the hierarchical nature of the State, and the inevitable result of human freedom and natural inequalities among individuals. Instead of working to collapse or exploit these differences, to punish the achiever or repress the needy, Dollfuss struggled in all his writing and work to bridge the gaps of understanding that divided rich from poor, urban from rural, skilled from unskilled. In his "Corporate State," which Nazi putschists strangled in its infancy, he sketched out one attempt to forge links among the classes, by uniting men politically according to their particular trades – regardless of their station. Thus factory workers and owners, farmhands and landowners, tailors and fashion designers, respectively, would be represented in "corporations," whose variety was meant to displace the partisan multiplicity of political parties. The desire to do away with factions must have seemed especially urgent to a citizen of a nation whose two most prominent political movements were a variant of Socialism, one "German" and National, the other Bolshevik and International.

Inspired by the writings of Pope Leo XIII and Pius XI, Dollfuss sought to create the first state directly modeled on



## INTRODUCTION

Catholic Social Teaching – drawing on the recent organic traditions of guilds and crafts unions which for so long had flourished in Austria, to forge a political experiment in solidarity among classes, and charity among men. Before we dismiss this idea as quixotic, we ought to note that the same idea was in fact partly implemented in post-war West Germany; to achieve labor peace, and avoid the historically crippling effects of general strikes, the Adenauer government instituted a mechanism it called “co-determination,” through which labor unions were granted important voting powers on the corporate boards of their companies. On a smaller scale, we see here the very “corporations” which Dollfuss hoped to construct. And indeed, this institution largely succeeded in eliminating strikes, and reducing the polarization that once pitted workers against their employers in murderous hate.

Whereas National Socialist ideology sought to cancel class conflict by channeling aggression outward towards neighboring countries or potential colonies, Dollfuss sought to diffuse it altogether, by concretely encouraging men to view their economic relationships as cooperative, rather than competitive. If there is some necessary tension between the interests of an employer who seeks low labor costs, and a worker who yearns for a higher wage, it is nevertheless true that they also must cooperate if either of them is to profit; in fact, this truth is primary, essential if anything is to be created or accomplished. Whatever ways in which these men’s interests diverge are secondary to the greater truth of their mutual dependence. Where this ceases to be the case, where mutual interests are outweighed by conflicts, it’s time to dissolve the business relationship and find a new employer or worker.

Instead of making international affairs the realm of sublimated aggression, pseudo-Darwinian competition, or grandiose “historic” crusades, Dollfuss saw that the relations between governments must be ruled by the same laws of justice and charity that should prevail in families, among co-workers and employers, even among competitors in the same business; because he accepted the Natural Law as a universal mandate, which applied equally from the microcosm up to the macrocosm, Dollfuss was never tempted to delusional notions of the significance of the nation, to the grand-scale national egotism that so often masqueraded as pa-

triotism – usually to the ruin of the actual, concrete nation. Since the rump of post-Imperial Austria was not a promising candidate for territorial expansion, men who were tempted to such dreams of empire tended to gravitate towards the parties at the political extremes – the Socialist partisans of a universal Bolshevik revolution, beginning in Moscow but radiating throughout the world, or the National Socialists who abandoned their homeland and its tender claims, identifying instead with a bloated, expansionist Germany that sought to gobble up bleeding hunks torn from its weaker neighbors.

Dollfuss was tempted by neither of these crass alternatives. Instead, he remained loyal to his concrete *patria*, his little fatherland with its local customs, its variegated texture and internal contradictions, its ancient traditions and deep-rooted Catholic Faith. For all its imperial past – which had provided such a rich cultural background and immeasurably enriched Vienna – the new German Austria was more akin to her ancient rival Switzerland in population and political importance. The patriotism which Dollfuss championed and attempted to awaken throughout his countrymen in his short term of office in many ways resembled the proud particularism one finds among those mountain cantons – a human-sized loyalty to genuine human goods, instead of a grandiose attachment to fetishes of gigantism. For an image of the contrast, compare one of the tiny, jewel-like onion-dome churches of Tyrol or Carinthia with the hulking constructions Albert Speer threw together for Hitler. The former still shine after centuries, while Speer’s very marble, revealed by a few decades as defective, rots away with each year’s rain. Like another great opponent of National Socialism and defender of the moral component of economic life, Wilhelm Röpke, Dollfuss found the spirit of greatness amidst the small things of this world.

Of Dollfuss’s life and death, others are more qualified to write. The narrative which follows is a little window into the life of a saintly and courageous man, whom history has neglected most unjustly. When people write of the first opponents of Adolf Hitler, how many think of Dollfuss? He is dismissed, by the typical left-leaning historian, with the label “clerico-fascist,”

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as if the term signified anything beyond an author's biases. In fact, it is simply a leftist slogan of abuse. What this book makes clear is that Dollfuss ought to be remembered alongside all other principled, patriotic opponents of totalitarianism. When he held supreme power in Austria, Dollfuss used the minimal force necessary to repress terrorist groups of the extreme right and left, each of which cherished openly treasonous plans to turn their homeland over to foreign invaders or revolutionaries. In the depths of the Great Depression, he attempted bold economic and political reforms, experiments such as have never been tried before, in the attempt to defuse the hatred that separated social classes, and prevent the poison of biological racism taking root in his homeland. He never imposed Catholic Faith or practices on religious minorities, and rejected the wild anti-Semitism that was appearing across the Continent at the time. How many men in positions of leadership recognized the evils of their day so clearly, fought them so forthrightly, and offered their lives so bravely, as this little-remembered Austrian peasant statesman? The list is sad and short. The book that follows will forever enshrine Dollfuss in his rightful place in that list. A humane, generous, brave and decent man, Engelbert Dollfuss's merits ought someday to commend him to the attention of the Church. If I may speculate, let me suggest that this book may someday serve as the first exhibit proving Dollfuss's heroic sanctity. How fitting it would be if the humble Dollfuss someday joined his last sovereign, the Blessed Emperor Karl, among the saints of the Roman Calendar. Reading his story, one cannot help thinking Dollfuss would be embarrassed by the attention.

John P. Zmirak, Ph.D.

May 24, 2004

Feast of St. Vincent of Lerins



Dollfuss addressing the Fatherland Front, 1934.

## AUSTRIA

by G. K. Chesterton

**L**AST YEAR, the representative of all that remains of the Holy Roman Empire was murdered by the barbarians. As an atrocity it has been adequately denounced; and it breeds in some of us rather a dumb sort of disgust, almost as if it had been done not by barbarians but by beasts. Perhaps the only further fact to be noted, on that side, is the fact that this is the only kind of effort in which these clumsy people are not merely clumsy. The Nordic man of the Nazi type in Germany is a very slow thinker, and incredibly backward and behind the times in science and philosophy. That is why, for instance, he clings to the word "Aryan," as if he were his own great-grandfather laboriously poring over the first pages of Max Muller, under the concentrated stare of the astounded ethnologists of later days. He is slow in a great many things; as, for instance, in releasing prisoners who are admittedly innocent; or in answering questions put by foreign critics or Catholic bishops. We have good reason to know that he is slow in paying his debts; to the point of ceasing to pay them. He is very slow in bringing about the Utopia that he promised to the German people, the complete financial stability and the total disappearance of unemployment. He is slow in a thousand things, from the length of his meals to the lengthiness of his metaphysics. But in one thing he is not slow but almost slick. He is swift to shed innocent blood; he really has a certain technique in the matter of murdering other people; and the prospect of this sport alone can move him to an animation that is almost human. Hitler really killed quite a creditable number of people for one week-end holiday; and the assassination of

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\* *This article is taken from The Well and the Shallows (1935), in which it appeared as a chapter.*

Dollfuss did show some touch of that efficiency which the Nazis once promised to display in other fields of activity.

But it is much more important to insist on the large human and historic matters mentioned at the beginning of this article. Dollfuss died like a loyal and courageous man, asking forgiveness for his murderers; and the souls of the just are in the hands of God, however much their enemies (with that mark of mere mud that is stamped over all they do) take a pleasure in denying them the help of their religion. But Dollfuss dead, even more than Dollfuss living, is also a symbol of something of immense moment to mankind, which is practically never mentioned by our politicians or our papers. We call it for convenience Austria; in a sense we might more truly call it Europe; but, above all (for this is the vital and quite neglected fact), it would be strictly correct and consistent with history to call it Germany. The very fact that the name of "Germany" has been taken from the Austrians and given to the Prussians sums up the tragedy of three hundred years. It was the tale of the war waged by the barbarians against the Empire; the real original German Empire. It began with the first Prussian shot in the Thirty Years' War; it ended with the shot that killed the Austrian Chancellor.

Whether we call it the Empire, or the Old Germany or the culture of the Danube, what Austria meant and means is this. That it is normal for Europeans, even for Germans, to be civilised; that it is normal for Europeans, even for Germans, to be Christians; and, we must in historic honesty add, normal for them to be Catholics. This culture always incurred the hatred of the barbarians to the north-east; and in the nineteenth century a barbarian of genius, named Bismarck, actually managed to transfer to Prussia the prestige that had always normally belonged to Austria. That is the broad fact which is always left out in all modern enlightened discussion; for it involves two things: an elementary knowledge of history, which is rare, and an elementary knowledge of recent history, which is much rarer than a knowledge of ancient history. There is always a chance that about six politicians have heard of the Roman Empire; and perhaps two and a half politicians have even heard of the Holy Roman Empire. Among the scholarly

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leader-writers who have hitherto hardly noticed the existence of the Austrians, there are some who have read something about the Ostro-Goths or perhaps (if they are very scholarly) really do know much more about Austrasians than about Austrians. It is sometimes possible to arouse faint interest in anything remotely historic and always possible to arouse a fashionable fuss about anything prehistoric. But the facts which led up to the facts which stare us in the face, those are known practically to nobody in the age of newspapers. And perhaps next to nobody among our rulers will know what is meant by saying that the filthy butchery at Vienna was but the continuation of a policy expressed in the invasion of Silesia and the victory of Sadowa.

We have at least learned one lesson today: that old things return. This is simply that very old remembrance of our race: the barbarian invasion. This is not the Corporative State; or the Fascist Theory; or the thousand theories, including our own, for improving our ancient civilisation. This is the Turks besieging Vienna. If indeed it be not an injustice to the stately, the stable, and the reverent religion of Mahomet to compare it with the feverish fads and fallacies that chase each other across the half-baked and half-baptized Teutonism of the North. This is, at least, what all men meant by the Turks besieging Vienna. It is the centre of our civilisation in peril; it is the blow of the barbarian when for once, in his blindness, he happens to aim at the heart.

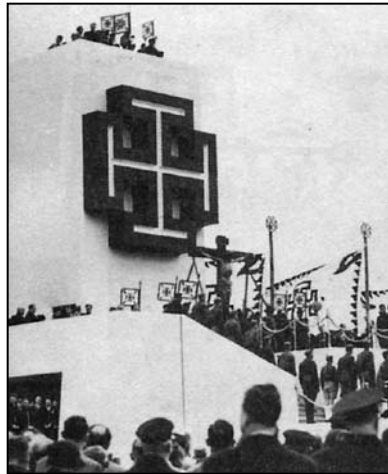




Prince Starhemberg speaking at a ceremony on September 12, 1933, commemorating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory of the Christians over the Turks at Vienna in 1683. Starhemberg stands before a monument to his ancestor who led the defense of Vienna. Dollfuss and Maj. Fey are standing on the far left.



Prince Starhemberg and Maj. Emil Fey (1886–1938), leaders of the Austrian *Heimwehr*.



The red and white cross of Austria on public display. During the Dollfuss era it became a symbol of Austrian independence and social reconstruction.





Fey, Dollfuss, and Starhemberg at the *Heimwehr* rally of May 14, 1933.



Three principal figures of Austrian public life listen to a speech by Dollfuss: Kurt von Schuschnigg, Prince Starhemberg, and Theodor Cardinal Innitzer (1875–1955), Archbishop of Vienna.



Workmen in Austria celebrating the Constitution of the Christian Corporative State, May 1, 1934.



A scene of the audience at the Vienna State Opera House, where Verdi's *Requiem* was performed in Dollfuss's honor, directed by Arturo Toscanini.



Memorial to Dollfuss at the Church of the Dormition in Jerusalem.



A massive crowd gathered in the Heldenplatz in 1934 pays respects to the murdered Dollfuss. His death mask hangs in the arch.

## DOLLFUSS: AN AUSTRIAN PATRIOT

### CHAPTER I

#### FROM EARLY YEARS TO MANHOOD

**I**F YOU STAND UPON THE HEIGHTS ABOVE THE DANUBE WHERE the superb monastery of Melk dominates the landscape and look towards the south, you see first an undulating plain, then wide and sweeping hills and wooded heights, and behind them the towering mountains of Mariazell. Nestling among the first of the greater foothills of the Alps, still in Lower Austria, are the communes which were the home of Engelbert Dollfuss.

The house of the Dollfuss family, where he was born on October 4, 1892, belongs to the hamlet of Great Maierhof, which together with a dozen other peasants' dwellings forms part of the commune of St. Gotthard. It stands some distance back from the road leading to Texing – it was in the parish church of Texing that the future Chancellor was baptized – and the little house with its old thatched roof is almost entirely hidden by the surrounding fruit trees, in this neighbourhood an important source of income for the peasants. The property, which has been in the hands of the Dollfuss family for centuries, is now occupied by a maternal uncle of the late Chancellor. On the ground-floor to the left of the main door is the room in which Engelbert Dollfuss was born. It has remained unchanged. In the corner is a great table with the sign IHS inlaid in the middle. Its smoothly polished surface shows that many generations have sat to eat at it.

Not far away is the commune of Kirnberg, and it was here, in his stepfather's house, that the Chancellor spent the days of his youth. On the road itself are only a few houses. As you approach

the village the first thing that meets the eye is a massive church tower, already indicating that the church itself is an unusual one. The way to it leads through a pleasure-garden and under the archway of a monastic building which surrounds the sacred edifice. Thus enclosed, yet standing by itself, the little church, which in part dates from the year 1336, towers high above the surrounding building. This latter, once the home of a community of hermits dedicated to St. Jerome, now serves as a country house for the bishops of Vienna. It was one of these who contributed with the parish priest to the expenses of the young Engelbert's education, which his parents were not in a position to bear alone.

The home of the Chancellor's parents is situated at some distance from the road. It is a small detached farm-house, and to reach it you must cross the stream and walk about two miles uphill. The farm is surrounded by pasture and arable land, planted with the fruit trees characteristic of the neighbourhood. From here the little 'Engel,' as he was called at home, had quite a long walk to go to school at Kirnberg. Though he had to be there at an early hour for his various duties, as well as being occupied in the church, he had also to help at home whenever he was available. He would often be out of doors looking after the cattle – only a couple of beasts, it is true, but enough for a little fellow to manage. When on Sundays his stepfather walked round their little estate Engel would often accompany him. Sometimes his father would stop to look intently at the trees or at the ground, and the little boy would ask: "What are you looking at, Father?" And when he received the reply: "To see whether anything is growing, and whether we are going to get anything to eat and drink," then he too would look earnestly with his father, as if he also understood that, in a small farm where there is never anything forthcoming more than the absolutely necessary, the prospects of the harvest are a matter of the greatest importance. Such was the lesson which the young Engelbert learned from his earliest years: that life is work, and that work gives life its meaning and value. To this very day his mother, an elderly but still sturdy peasant woman, refuses to rest in spite of her ailing foot. "I cannot sit and look on," she says, "when I see how much work there is to be

done; I feel I must help.” And so her ailment is never cured. On Sundays after returning from church she lies in bed to give her foot a rest, so that she may be able to do her share of the work during the week. For if home and farm are to prosper everybody must do his part. This typically peasant attitude towards life Dollfuss retained until his death. As Chancellor he was driving one day in the neighbourhood of his home, and talking with a friend about the new Constitution. He pointed out the roads which had been familiar to him since childhood and upon which he used to accompany his father to market. Then he said:

From my youth upwards I have experienced the economic struggle with poverty. If I have always had a deep interest in economics it is because I learned it here, where there was never anything over and economy was always necessary. That is how I gained an insight into the economic needs of the people and learned to appreciate them.

When he went to the high school at Hollabrunn his brothers and sisters were most unhappy, for they were very fond of him. One of his brothers, as the mother still loves to relate, could hardly be comforted, and towards the end of the school year used to count the days until Engel came home for the holidays. He took it for granted, even as a student, that during his holidays he must help with cutting the corn, binding the sheaves, stacking and loading the hay, or with any other work that the day might bring. When he was free he might be glad sometimes to lie out in the open air with his books, or else to go for a trip into the mountains with the young peasants of the village. Every day he would be at the church down in Kirnberg, and he would often serve the bishop's Mass when he was in residence at his summer house. The boy noticed that his fellow-students were able to do all sorts of things and enjoy many entertainments during the holidays; but he never asked for anything of the kind for himself. He appreciated that even to supply the necessary funds for his education meant already a heavy burden for his parents. Nevertheless, he was thankful during the early years of his time as a student to be able to spend a few weeks of his holidays at Wieselburg near

Pöchlarn with the former parish priest of Kirnberg, who had been instrumental in sending him to school. After the death of this priest he lacked even this recreation. In consequence he was thrown more and more into the company of peasant folk; and later in life he was always as much at home with his relations and schoolfellows as if he had never been separated from them. Hence he was able, a few days after the first attempt on his life, to answer the cruel calumnies of his political opponents by an appeal to the peasants of his native place:

Here you may find the competent judges of my life's work. To them I shall always appeal to give testimony that I have always been an upright and honourable fighter for the freedom and progress of my native land, for I am conscious that I have done nothing else but devote the whole of my powers to its service. Here, where my parents and relations live, where the friends and companions of my boyhood live, where everybody has known me for years, they will tell you that I am not an ambitious man, but that throughout my life I have done nothing more than my duty, fulfilling those tasks which have been entrusted to me by the confidence of my fellow-citizens.

On the day after his death his native parish answered his appeal. When prayers were offered after Mass for their best son, nobody could say them aloud for weeping. A general sobbing filled the church; so much did they love him.

At the end of his course at the high school he thought at first that he had a vocation to the priesthood, and began to study theology at the University of Vienna. But after a few months he discovered his mistake. Hard though it must have been, both for himself and for his parents, to change his course of studies, we know now that Providence had chosen him for a great work which as a priest he could never have accomplished. At the beginning of the year 1912 he devoted himself to the study of law, earning a livelihood in the meantime by giving lessons, and even then having often to accept his meals from strangers. A certain family preserves with reverence a small kitchen table at which Engelbert Dollfuss used to take his meals as their guest during the summer of 1914. Coming as he did of hard-working folk, even in the city

he felt himself drawn to the working-classes. He enrolled himself in the Students' Social Movement, an association of students who devoted much of their free time to social and charitable work among the workers. It was a great satisfaction to him when at a Patriotic rally of the Christian workers reference was made to the time when as a young student he had taken an intimate part in the social movement on behalf of the workers, and had belonged to that proud generation of students whose life's programme it was to be servants of the people. He warmly thanked the speaker for recalling this fact, and added:

It is true that as a student before the War I was an active member, so far as I was able, of the Students' Social Movement. As a matter of fact I spent many an evening at the Workers' Home of the third District, teaching typewriting to young workers. It is my special happiness to be associated with all that makes for the progress of Austria, and to take part in all ventures whose object is to reconstruct this country according to Christian and German principles. (Graz, November 19, 1933.)

In the summer in which the War broke out he was at Vienna, the guest of a family who gladly welcomed the earnest, modest but happy-tempered student to spend his holiday with them. In an hour so fateful for his country he could not stand aside; he must go to the front. But he was rejected by the inspection officers as being two centimetres below the minimum stature required. Only for a moment was he at a loss. It was characteristic of him that he never allowed himself to be turned from any purpose on which he had set his mind, however great the difficulties in the way might be. On the very same day he took train for St. Pölten where the recruiting commission for his district was sitting. On his way he saw detachments of the Tyrolese militia, later known as the Kaiserschütz, on the point of setting out for the front. Fired with enthusiasm, he presented himself before the Commission. They would have rejected him for the same reason as at Vienna, but he protested that "What others could do he could do also," and so he was accepted. As a volunteer he had the right to choose between three regiments. Decided by his recent encounter, he chose the Tyrolese militia.

With his warm-hearted temper, his readiness to serve, and his pleasant familiarity, the little volunteer soon made friends of all his comrades. His zeal, trustworthiness and quickness of thought attracted the attention of his superiors and he rose quickly to the rank of corporal. At the end of the War he was a first lieutenant, having served in the front line on the Tyrolese southern front for thirty-seven months. Soldiering for him meant to carry out orders promptly, simply and without fuss. When in 1915 he was at Enns with a recruiting Commission he knew no peace; he wanted to be back at the front with his comrades, sharing their joys and their sorrows, their needs and their dangers. Suddenly he disappeared and nobody knew where he had gone. Information came subsequently from his regiment at the front that he had rejoined it. His courage and fearlessness showed themselves in every contingency. In October, 1916, as lieutenant he had to hold a mountain pass which for hours had been under heavy shell-fire. The Alpini were attacking in force, and by evening there were only forty men left fit for service. Yet the position had to be held at all costs; and held it was. It has been called the "Dollfuss pass" ever since. Relief came at last. Dead tired, Lieutenant Dollfuss led his men behind the lines. It was then that they were met by that young man of whom the story has so often been told. He was to be court-martialled for an attempt at desertion. When he saw Lieutenant Dollfuss he wrenched himself away from his escort and begged and implored him to help. If he were convicted his mother would never survive it. Lieutenant Dollfuss did not hesitate. In spite of his fatigue he trudged the five hours' journey back with the deserter to intercede with the captain on his behalf and to obtain a postponement of the trial. It was granted. Contented, he set out one more upon the journey to rejoin his men. It was always his greatest joy to be able to help anybody, his comrades or his country. And just as during his military service his one aim was to do his duty simply and promptly, without fuss and without talk, so it was also when he was again called to fight for his country as Chancellor: "Believe me," he said in reply to an address at a Tyrolese rally,

your cordial greeting gives great joy to one who over fourteen years ago fought for more than three years on your frontiers in



defence of Austria, and especially of the Tyrol. My friends, who during those days were either my comrades or my leaders, we have none of us forgotten that great experience, during which at the risk of health and life, without false pathos or false conceit, we did our duty to our country as men and comrades. However hard those times may have been, we look back upon them with pride and with satisfaction. The duties and the tasks which are mine today I regard in the same light as I did those which I had during the War. Just as we did our duty then without asking whether it was for the good of our health or not, so now my life is lived in a sphere of duties and obligations, in which all respect of persons and personal pride count for nothing; and I will do my duty. (Innsbruck, April 22, 1933.)

Dollfuss was always fond of good company and joviality, both as a student and during his military service. When he was Chancellor his favourite recreation was a cosy chat with his friends. Grave subjects alternated with gay in these conversations, and the atmosphere was always one of brightness and cordiality. But the full richness and generosity of his temperament became manifest when he spoke of home, family and peasant-folk, when he acknowledged the debt which he owed to these, saying what such things could do for Austria. Games, which after the manner of peasant-folk he had loved from his youth, were also a favourite pastime with him. Even as Chancellor he would join his friends regularly on a fixed day every week to play ninepins, if it was only for a quarter of an hour long after midnight, when he had finished with affairs of State. His hours of recreation became gradually shorter and shorter. But his sense of humour remained with him to the last in spite of the heavy responsibilities which weighed upon him. One of his friends had always to collect the latest "Dollfuss stories," and relate them to him on a journey by train or car. Like all great men who are sure of themselves, he did not mind being the victim of the people's wit, though it was not always as delicate as it might be. He would be delighted and laugh heartily when, having inquired outside Vienna for new Dollfuss stories, he was regaled with "stale" ones. "So there's nothing new here in the South," he would say; "then I shall have to tell you some myself."

The outcome of the War was a great grief to him. He saw in it the collapse of the existing order of things. But he was not one to remain despondent. He was soon ready to work with unremitting energy for the reconstruction of his country in the sphere in which he now found himself. This was the University. In close cooperation with some friends he worked after the War to form Catholic students into the German Students' organization. Moreover, he saw clearly where the fundamental principles lay for the reconstruction which must follow a collapse of civilization. Soon after the War his acquaintances found him making a retreat. As in all vital respects so in religion, too, Dollfuss remained always a true son of the soil. He was as fundamentally and naïvely religious as the peasants of his native village, who grew up, lived and died with their Church and their God. This intimate religious conviction, whenever it showed itself publicly, always moved his hearers even though they themselves might have lost it. Everybody listened with rapt attention when in his famous speech in the Trabrennplatz he illustrated the new social community which was to be established in Austria by a picture of the peasant's home, where farmer, wife and children sat at a common table with servants and maids, and then in the evening said the rosary together. To his friends who accompanied him to his native village he would show the roads by which he used to go with his mother on pilgrimage to Maria-Taferl or Mariazell. Of this latter sanctuary he was especially fond, and when in 1933 he accompanied the men's pilgrimage to Mariazell he was able to say to his thousands of fellow-pilgrims: "My presence among you today is not an act of courtesy or of political scheming. Making pilgrimages is one of my lifelong habits." And a year later:

For centuries our fathers have made this pilgrimage to refresh their souls and to make up for their failings during the course of the year. We too must keep these pilgrimages alive, we too must make pilgrimages to foster our piety and to make ourselves better men. So will this shrine bring grace upon our homes and upon our country. (Mariazell, July 7, 1934.)

Only he himself knew all that God, the Church, grace and prayer meant to him. But his friends knew that whenever he was

faced with a difficult decision, whenever he made any progress in his work, he lifted his heart in prayer and thanksgiving to God. After the first attempt upon his life, his first visit, as soon as he was able to leave his house, was to the cathedral of St. Stephen. There, visibly moved, he knelt before the altar of the Blessed Sacrament. Then he went to the picture of Our Lady which adorns the first pier to the left of the sanctuary, prayed for a while, and before leaving, according to the popular custom, touched the grille in front of the picture. When in the hour of his death he prayed so earnestly for the Viaticum he did not pray in vain. His murderers refused it to him. But he could think of Mariazzell. He had received it there.

Dollfuss had not yet completed his studies at the University when he obtained a post in the Lower Austrian Peasants' Union, which relieved him of the material anxieties that had dogged the whole of his career as a student and moreover gave him a task which was to develop all his powers. He had to organize the peasants to protect them against the disintegrating influences rife at that time, especially against Marxian Socialism, and at the same time to sow the seeds of recovery. His extraordinary powers soon became known, and he was sent to Berlin to continue his studies. As he himself told me, he did not like all his professors there. Liberalism and Socialism were the dominating influences in the University. In his own studies he devoted special attention to the German and Christian principles of economics. It was here that he found weapons against the two errors above mentioned, as well as the foundations for the building of a new Christian and German social order, while he gathered practical experience from his work in the Federation of German Peasants' Unions and in the cooperative Preussenkasse. In Berlin also he made the acquaintance of his future wife, Alwine Glienke, the daughter of a Pommeranian family. During his free time he often went to see Carl Sonnenschein, that leader of social activity among students and the pioneer of the Catholic movement in the capital of the Reich. It is to him, as well as to his own experience gained by an untiring and daily activity, that he owed much of the enthusiasm for social work which characterized his life.

Back in Vienna, as secretary to the Lower Austrian Peasants' Union he took a leading part in consolidating that industry to which he had now entirely devoted his energies and with which he had been associated intimately since childhood. He was mainly instrumental in founding the provincial Chamber of Agriculture of Lower Austria, whose secretary and director he became; in organizing the Federation of Agriculture and the Agricultural Labourers' Insurance Institute; in forming the new Agrarian policy of Lower Austria and in laying the foundations for the corporative organization of agriculture. A few years later as representative of Austrian agriculture at the International Agrarian Congress he attracted such general attention by his exposition of principles and by his practical suggestions that his name in this sphere became internationally famous. Still more important is the fact that by reason of his practical knowledge, his personal character and his universal success, he became recognized as the leader of the peasantry. Supported by these, he was able to maintain his position in the fight for the Fatherland until he was recognized as the leader of the whole Austrian nation.

The organizing ability of which he had given evidence in these various fields of activity leaves it no matter of surprise that at a comparatively early age he was appointed (on October 1, 1930) to the responsible post of President of the Federal Railways. The task which thus lay before him – that of restoring order in this, the greatest industrial corporation in Austria, freeing it from the Party isolation in which it had been imprisoned by Marxian Socialism, and making it once more a factor in national prosperity – was one which must have appealed to the heart of a man whose social and economic ideas were always directed to the good of his country. But the short period during which he held this office was also of the greatest significance for his future political life. He gained an insight into what was for him a new sphere of economic life, he came into close contact with all branches of industry, he had to test his strength on a public department of vital importance to the State. In the short months of his work with the Federal Railways he was able to work out the principles upon which they could become once more a concern serviceable to the

economic life of the State. In the critical moments of his leadership a few years later the Railways stood almost unanimously by their duty to the State.

But Austria needed him for another and much more responsible post. In March, 1931, he was appointed Federal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry. None possessed in a more eminent degree the qualities which such a post required. Nevertheless when the news was brought to him of his appointment he looked serious and apprehensive. Devoid of ambition or self-interest, he saw only the responsibility, the difficulty of the task. But he also saw his country's need, and this was an appeal which he could never refuse. The sense of duty was always for him the deciding factor. It was so, too, when in the hour of his country's greatest need he answered the call to the Chancellorship.

Even as Chancellor, Dollfuss always acknowledged that he belonged to the peasantry whose child he was. To those who suffered poverty and distress he proclaimed that he too was the son of poor people. And those principles of simplicity and austerity which he had learned in his peasant home guided him during the whole of his political life. Consequently the people understood him, trusted him and followed him. He, who had never wanted to push himself forward, who had never thought of himself but only of others, his own peasant-folk, his people, his country, was now the Federal Chancellor. When his influence in the Christian Social Party had now become paramount and his name a symbol of reconstruction in Austria, he said on the occasion of a rally at Salzburg:

Now a personal remark. It seems that among the German peoples a name is the equivalent of a banner. I look at things from a soldier's point of view. I have simply to do my duty: I have to serve my country by being its leader. But do not try to introduce into Austria the worship of a mere name. That is un-Austrian. Sometimes, I know, it may be necessary. But you will please me best if you will regard me simply as a fellow-worker who wants nothing else but to devote the whole of his energies to the service of the party and thus to contribute to a happier future for our country. (Salzburg, May 6, 1933.)

But if a nation is determined to honour its leader, who can prevent it?

His external habits of life underwent no change during his Chancellorship. He continued to live in his modest dwelling in the Stallburggasse, where he had lived when he was director of the Chamber of Agriculture. It offered nothing beyond the resources of an ordinary house of the middle classes; and it was only by restricting space elsewhere that it was possible to set aside a room for the visits which he had to receive as Chancellor. When he was laid up at home after the first attempt upon his life it was found necessary to hire a room in the neighbourhood, the little house being quite inadequate to cope with the numerous visitors of those days, and at the same time to leave room for the transaction of public business. In other respects also his manner of life remained as simple and natural as it had been from his youth. For his evening meal he always preferred thick cream-soup, or else the vegetable soup which his mother had always made for him at home. Even when he had to be present at a public banquet he did so only for the sake of appearances, and always had his soup at home either beforehand or afterwards. At midday he often took no time for lunch at all. Indeed, so little did he eat that people wondered that he managed to keep alive. For that reason he was a very heavy smoker, and he used often to say in jest that he was the mainstay of the Austrian tobacco revenue. Nevertheless, for his strong will it was an easy task to give up the habit even for months at a time.

To him his family was everything. A picture of his wife and children stood on his office table at the Chancery, and even when he was engaged in some serious discussion one could see his gaze wander towards it in affectionate remembrance. The hours which he devoted to his family were hours of perfect happiness. Then he would sit with his children, play with them and hear of their great and little joys. When he had not seen them for some time they would ring him up at the Chancery to ask if he was coming, and they were only content when told that he should be ordered to come home as soon as possible. Evi is now six years old, Rudi nearly four. His first child, Hannerl, lies in the cem-

etery of Hietzing, having brought joy to her parents for only a year. He himself chose the burial-place for his child, and even as Chancellor he always found time to visit the grave. He paid his last visit a fortnight before his death. Every year on Christmas Eve he would come there with his wife, and with the other children when they were old enough, bringing a little tree, which he would light over Hannerl's grave; he would then remain for a long time in sorrowful recollection.

His wife helped him in every way during his Chancellorship, dealing with much of the correspondence which came daily to the house, receiving visitors and acting as intermediary in their business. The hours which he was able to devote to his family became gradually shorter and shorter, for even at home his time was taken up with the discussion of important affairs with his colleagues, matters for which he could not find a place in office hours. But it was one of his fondest dreams to be able in later life to live entirely for his family and to devote himself to the upbringing of his children when his great work for the reconstruction of Austria was completed.

The Chancellor's methods of work were apt, in the eyes of those who were not in close contact with him, to appear slipshod and haphazard. His appointments were often subject to postponement. The reason was that he always liked to have one matter settled and decided, even though it entailed keeping another waiting. It was his practice to select first the matter which seemed to him most important; and he adopted the same method in according interviews to those who were waiting in his ante-chamber. The consequence was that the same business never had to be dealt with a second time, and decisions were not easily revoked. But it also happened that his visitors often had to wait for hours. However, the Chancellor would come out of his office and, seeing some burgomaster from the provinces who had been waiting for a long time, would say to him: "Come along, my friend, we'll go and have lunch together and talk over our business in comfort." And so everybody was happy.

In the discussions of the Cabinet he would allow no adjournment until the whole of the day's business had been trans-

acted, even though it might take six or eight hours, until long after midnight. He knew no fatigue, and many of his colleagues who prided themselves on their capacity for work were amazed at the tireless energy of the Chancellor, whose mental alertness and superiority showed no diminution, however difficult the questions at issue might be. The Chancellor would reply, laughing, that a peasant's son could stand a lot of work. True, his face, which at the beginning of his Chancellorship had been full and round, became furrowed as time went on with deeper and deeper lines. But his features showed how the consciousness of his great vocation had developed his personality, until it became capable of the sublimest sacrifice that a man can make for his country.

An essential characteristic of the Chancellor, which became more and more marked as his people – as well as the rest of the world – looked up to him with increased respect and admiration, was his modesty. The proofs of popular affection and loyalty, the lively demonstrations of gratitude made to him by numberless thousands, especially in the great rallies of the latter years, the honours paid to him abroad, all this he regarded as a homage to the Fatherland, to the banner which he bore, to the ideals which inspired his work. His own person he wanted to keep always in the background, more even than is possible in a statesman. During the negotiation of the Lausanne Loan his colleagues urged him to follow the example of other statesmen by broadcasting a wireless address to his people; but he could not be prevailed upon to do so, because he thought that he ought not to put himself on a level with the others. At Geneva he had scored a signal triumph as the conscientious, courageous little Chancellor of Austria, who had undertaken the defence of his country against an overwhelming adversary. When on his return he reported on the proceedings before the Christian Social Club, his voice faltered as he described the storm of enthusiasm with which he had been received, and he could hardly proceed with his speech. Finally he was understood to say that it had been a unique tribute to the Austrian people. This modesty, so entirely forgetful of self, was never more apparent than on the occasion of great rallies and massed meetings. With emotion he would thank all those who had come to show



their loyalty to home and country – whereas it is to him, in fact, that the nation owes a debt of gratitude which it can never repay. How little he desired honours or power for himself may be seen in the fact that he had formally decided to lay down the leadership of the Government as soon as his task was done. Asked by his friends what he intended to do afterwards, since the Federal Chancellor could hardly return to his post as Director of the Chamber of Agriculture, he suggested in all seriousness that he might be employed as economic editor to the *Reichspost*. Such was Dollfuss, whose true greatness is nowhere more apparent than in the greatness of his modesty.

In moments of the most intense experience, his thoughts, even when he was Chancellor, went always to his home and country. Writing in the *Reichspost* and describing the deep emotion with which he had assisted at the Mass of the Holy Father on Maundy Thursday, received Holy Communion at his hands and assisted in his presence at the ceremonies in the Sistine Chapel, he says: “At this impressive moment I thought of my home and my own people, and in this Holy Year I asked the blessing of Almighty God upon the future of our nation.” (Rome, April 14, 1933.) To the parish priest of his home parish he sent the following telegram from the Vatican City:

Nineteen hundred years after the first Lord’s Supper the Holy Father has given me Holy Communion with his own hands, and in my hour’s private audience with him he has given his special blessing to my Fatherland and to my own brave Catholic peasant folk.

On his way home to Vienna by air he arranged, as he often did, to fly over his native village and to circle round his parents’ home.

Again and again as Chancellor he would come “unhoped for” – as his mother would say – to spend a couple of hours with his own people. But it was not long before the Chancellor’s car was recognized and a crowd soon collected. Thus his mother never had much of him to herself. However, as she put it in the language of the people, she had the “crust.” If he had time he would look round to see how the farm was getting on, and first of all he

would visit the cattle-shed. His mother still tells with emotion how he once came on Easter Sunday for the early Mass and afterwards spent two hours with them at home. He was there, too, on his mother's feast-day, and that was his last visit. "There are various places to which I ought to have gone today," he said; "but on this day at all costs I was determined to see my mother." His close attachment to home and parents often showed itself in his public life. Thus as Minister of Agriculture he was once addressing the peasants in the North-West Railway Hall, and among those present were many from his own home. "Among the 20,000 active peasants who have come here today," he said, "there are my own father and my three brothers." The shout of enthusiasm which greeted this announcement was a proof that they understood that this love and loyalty to home and parents was one of the most important qualities which a leader of the people must possess.

The secret of the Chancellor's loveliness and cordiality towards all who had personal relations with him lay in the effect of an academic education upon one who possessed all the characteristics of a true son of the people. The result was a nobility of character and of outward manner which lent to his personality a charm quite irresistible. He made no distinctions. To the plain man of the people he was just the same as he was to the great men of the world with whom he came into contact in international conferences and government affairs. All were equally captivated by the natural way in which this inner nobility of character betrayed itself in every word and every gesture. Whenever he saw friends or acquaintances in the street, whether from his own home or from among his former colleagues, he would go out of his way to meet them; if he saw them in a crowd, as on the occasion of some great rally or meeting, he would signal to them; again and again if he saw them passing he would stop his car to exchange a greeting or a few friendly words with them. It was not his fault that as time went on he became less generally accessible, and to one who always wanted to treat everybody alike such official isolation was very painful. Whether he was engaged in some important conference, or whether he was speaking on the Austrian "idea" to thousands of people standing shoulder to shoulder, it was always the appealing manner in which

he sought to bring conviction and to rally support for his great ideal that proved irresistible. It was the true nobility of his character that gave to his leadership its power and its inspiration.

To the workers especially his heart was open. From the days of his youth at home he had lived their difficulties and experienced them, and later as a University student he had felt an inner need to work for their alleviation. His whole care was for them. Once when he was returning to Vienna by air from some meeting in the provinces, looking down he could see the peasants working everywhere in the fields. Turning to one of his friends he recalled the fourth petition of the Our Father, and in a tone of voice which revealed the fullness of his feeling he said: "Look down there; see these good peasants, men and women, boys and girls. Like tiny ants they are bent over their fields, working industriously at their clods. 'Give us this day our daily bread.'" Nothing pleased him more than to be able to visit working folk while they were at their work. Once during his Chancellorship, as he was on his way to the cemetery to visit his little daughter's grave, the road in front of the cemetery was being mended. He alighted from his car and was recognized by the workmen, who saluted him. At once he was chatting with them as if he had always known them. As he was leaving he felt in his pockets for all the cigarettes he had and gave them to the workmen. Ten days before his death he spoke of the emotion which gripped him when he thought of the cheerfulness with which the labourers did their hard work. And the workers too knew that they could speak to him freely and without formality. One of them once asked him whether he could not manage to get them a higher wage. He answered in his serious yet friendly way: "We are a poor little country, and it already means a great sacrifice to be able to put any work in hand on the roads at all; and there are still many thousands for whom work must first be found." They were content because they knew that he did everything that was humanly possible, and that he was spending himself in the endeavour to get work and bread for the nation by reconstructing its economic life.

Dr. Dollfuss, himself a son of working people, was under no illusions as to the position of the professional classes in the com-

munity. Already during the early years of his University career he had made it his endeavour to devote his energies to the betterment of the workers. When as Chancellor he was driving to his native village with a friend he would often say: "If it had not been for the help of good men I should now be at work here among the peasants." When the conversation turned upon the tasks which had been given him in later life his words showed the high esteem in which he held work of every kind, no matter what it might be; but they showed also that he regarded all his powers and knowledge as being at the service of the nation. As an intellectual he could conceive his life only in terms of service to the people, and according to him every intellectual who rightly understands his work is bound in his own sphere to labour for the good of the community. Hence he saw in the gulf between the professional classes and the working classes something unnatural and detrimental to society. How that gulf was to be bridged he himself showed by his own example. Not only to the peasantry, whose leader in the first instance he became, but to every section of the community he was able to make successful appeal. It was clear to him that the intellectual can only give of his best to the nation if his work and life are completely based upon that one foundation which gives to personal and national character their best energies and their highest ideals. That foundation was religion. Dr. Dollfuss was a Catholic "intellectual" in the highest sense of the word. He considered himself pledged to demonstrate in every department of life, public as well as private, the constructive value of the Catholic outlook and of Catholic principles; and also to show of what the Catholic sense of responsibility is capable when it is tested upon the most difficult tasks of public life. A few weeks before his death he expressed his sentiments on this subject:

In the responsible post which I now occupy it is my endeavour to serve and help the nation by a conscientious discharge of my duty, and I am prepared if necessary to govern with an even firmer hand. I intend to prove thereby that Catholic intellectuals, in whatever position they may be placed, make it their endeavour to do their duty to the last man, with the whole of their strength and energy. (Innsbruck, June 30, 1934.)

Fully consonant with this conception of his mission was his determination to retire from the Government as soon as he had completed his work of the reconstruction of Austria. "It is part of my work," he said, "to prove to the world that there are Catholic statesmen who seek nothing for themselves and are not inspired by personal ambition."

The portrait of the Chancellor would be lacking in one of its essential features if we were not to mention his predilection for the youth of Austria. The thought of the younger generation made him devote all his energies to restoring Austria to its historic greatness. "Everything that we do today," he often said, "we do ultimately for our young, for whom we want to build up a safer and a better home." (Klagenfurt, November 5, 1933.) And to the young themselves he spoke in like manner:

I tell you we have not only our own lives to live, not only the few decades of our own generation, we have also a precious heritage to guard, and we have to ensure that the generation which is to come after us will possess a home of their own. Carry away with you the conviction that all that you see about you is your home; be good Austrians and do your duty in the state or condition in which God has placed you. As for us older ones, in the struggle of these days we are making a common effort for reconstruction so that we may be sure that Austrian youth will live in a happy Austria. (Vienna, October 19, 1933.)

For this reason the children's rally in the Stadium in Vienna on May 1, 1934, was one of the greatest joys of his life. Indeed it is characteristic of his whole work that his first speech as Chancellor, and also his last, was made to the young; and it was typical of the man that on both occasions he said that it was a condition for the recovery of Austria that in the youth of Austria the faith and the morality of their ancestors should regain their pristine vigour and strength. Two days after his entrance into the Government he said:

We want with the help of grace and the sacraments to become better men. If our Catholic Youth Movement is so guided that they will learn to avoid vice, cultivate truly Christian charity from an inner conviction, then they will become a young and

## DOLLFUSS: AN AUSTRIAN PATRIOT

healthy source of an entirely Catholic nation.... We must arouse within us a truly Catholic spirit of endeavour. If we succeed in making ourselves real Christians instead of merely make-believe Christians then I have no anxieties about the future. (Kirchbach, May 22, 1932.)

The Chancellor gave Austrian youth the example of a consuming love for his country. "Look at your great capital, Vienna," he said to them. "Look at your beautiful country, Austria! It is a beautiful land, blessed by God. But even though it were poor and mean we should still love it with all our souls." (Vienna, May 1, 1934.) And his example was not given in vain. A few days before his death he was staying in the country with a friend. As he rested in the peace of the countryside he heard the voices of children singing on the road far away. And he looked up with glistening eyes, full of confidence in the future of Austria. For Austria's youth were singing:

"Be thou blessed for all ages  
God be with thee, Austria!"



CHAPTER II  
THE APPOINTED PATH

“The path we tread, I am convinced, is the path which Heaven has appointed. Again and again I have experienced this impression in situations in which for me there has been no other explanation.”

(Vienna, May 14, 1934.)

**I**T WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO ESTIMATE JUSTLY WHAT THE two years of the Dollfuss Chancellorship meant in the history of Austria and of Europe by considering merely what presents itself today as his work. It is necessary to appreciate where Austria stood when he assumed the leadership; the dark and heavy clouds which obscured the horizon; the disruptive forces which were sapping the foundations of the State. One must look back and remember the endless difficulties, the constantly new obstacles, the violence and the treachery of his enemies which hampered every progress in his work. At the same time one must keep in mind the intrepidity, the tireless energy, the foresight and the inflexible determination of this man, the glowing love of country and the unwavering confidence in his sacred cause with which during those two years he bore the banner of Austria and carried it to victory. Finally one must look back over the whole path along which this soldier and leader had to fight his way through to a new Austria, carrying his people with him and rallying to his side a whole host of enemies. Only then will it be understood how within the space of a few months his name came to be regarded as the victorious symbol of the highest ideals of his people.

Dr. Dollfuss was called to guide the fortunes of Austria at a moment in her history when the vital energies of the nation

were being drained, her complete collapse seemed inevitable and a great part of her people were sunk in apathy and despair. The national currency had depreciated to the lowest level; the economic crisis was aggravated by difficulties which were daily increasing; unemployment had reached an alarming maximum; an intolerable debt weighed heavily upon the country since the breakdown of the *Creditanstalt*; and national finance was on the brink of chaos. Finally party government had arrived at the point at which it was evidently incapable of tiding the nation over the extreme peril which threatened it. Indeed it had become apparent that the party system was itself responsible for a great deal of the mischief and was actually leading the country to ruin.

On March 6, 1932, the parties moved the dissolution of Parliament and demanded a General Election, without regard to the fact that during the coming critical weeks an effective Government would thus be lacking, and that even the result of the election must exclude the formation of a Government able to cope with the existing situation. The Buresch Cabinet had to resign. Then began deliberations for the formation of a new Government and once more it became manifest that the ideal of democracy had degenerated into a parliamentarism sacrificed to party interests. Although everyday was precious, given the serious economic situation and the imminence of important financial and political decisions, yet the discussions dragged on for two weeks, constantly delayed as they were by the subterfuges of the various parties which put their own interests above those of the State. A few days after the motion for the dissolution of Parliament had been proposed, Dr. Dollfuss, at that time still Minister of Agriculture, had to address a meeting of peasants at Klagenfurt. He branded the attempt of the parties to secure the dissolution of Parliament as an irresponsible proceeding; they wanted an election merely for the sake of the party advantages which they anticipated from it. He called for a coalition of the parties to form a Unity Front, as a permanent arrangement to ensure an effective Government.

On May 10, Dr. Dollfuss was entrusted with the task of forming a Government, and he was now to realize that his appeal



for a sense of responsibility, in face of the serious situation which threatened the country, had been in vain. Nevertheless he succeeded in postponing the dissolution of the National Diet until the beginning of the autumn sitting. The Pan-Germans having refused their participation, Dr. Dollfuss was invited to form a super-party Government. Time was pressing; in a few days the League of Nations conference on Austria was to take place, and the foreign creditors of the *Creditanstalt* were expected in Vienna to begin negotiations of the highest importance. After innumerable difficulties and setbacks, at midnight on May 20 the Dollfuss Government was formed. Its majority in Parliament was of one vote only. It was therefore the prey of any chance; the illness of only two members of the Government supporters might precipitate a crisis and cripple the administration.

On the very day that the Government was formed, Dr. Dollfuss called upon Dr. Seipel. Ten years earlier, when Austria was politically and economically shattered and seemed to be heading for an inevitable collapse, Dr. Seipel had saved her by his firm confidence in the imperishable mission of the country and by his ceaseless and untiring activity in the authoritative circles of European politics. Once again this German land, blessed with a glorious history, so often attacked, and now especially oppressed and grievously wounded, needed one of her true sons to save her. Nearly a year later, referring to the day on which he took over the Government, he said:

On that day I paid a visit to Dr. Seipel who was then staying at Semmering, and had a conversation with him. It consoled and encouraged me greatly to see how pleased this great Austrian was with the result of the negotiations and with the composition of the new Government. Years ago, at a time when many of us did not see what was coming, this man had anticipated our times and made preparations for them. (May 19, 1932.)

Today Austria realizes that Dr. Dollfuss has carried into effect what Dr. Seipel planned long ago. Greatly as the two chancellors differed in character, social standing, profession and even political standpoint, the essential unity of their work had necessarily

to come to light, for it was the one Austrian conception which took tangible form and reality through the work of them both.

With characteristic confidence and energy, Chancellor Dollfuss now set to work to save his country by first restoring a firm foundation for its economic life. Three things had to be done: the currency had to be stabilized, the country had to be freed from the oppression of the *Creditanstalt* liabilities, the Budget had to be balanced. When all this had been achieved the conditions would be established for a new confidence in the economic life of Austria and for renewed hope in her future. The *Creditanstalt* question had to be postponed while negotiations were in progress for a loan from the Powers. These negotiations had now been transferred from Geneva to Lausanne, where the difficulty was to arouse interest in the subject of Austria, the discussions having centred hitherto upon German reparations. Dr. Dollfuss travelled to Lausanne himself, and he met with complete success. The Loan was to be made available shortly, and thus the stabilization of the currency was ensured and the most important condition for the overcoming of the crisis established.

Having laboured day and night at Lausanne to achieve this result, Dr. Dollfuss returned home only to experience some of the obstacles which a party Government can create for one who has the interests of his country at heart. The Social Democrats and the National Socialists could hardly express forcibly enough their indignation about the Loan. The leaders of the former party went so far as to say that the freedom of the nation and the right of the Republic to self-determination had been sold for a mere pittance, since the economic life of the country, the Railways and the National Bank would now be under foreign control. No less loudly did the National Socialists condemn the Government's achievement at Lausanne as treachery; Austria, they said, had been sold to France; and for this they found support in the Press of the German Reich. Once more the question of an Austro-German union was mooted. But now Dr. Dollfuss was able to announce that he had come to a perfect understanding with the German representatives at Lausanne. Germany, herself groaning under the weight of reparation debts and in the throes of a serious

economic crisis, was certainly not in a position to help Austria. Austria, on the other hand, that land of the best German traditions and highest German culture, was threatened to her very foundations; her existence was at stake. For a statesman fully conscious of his duty to his country, as Dr. Dollfuss was, there could be only one course: to find a bridge which would lead to the future. "I believe," said the Chancellor, "that those who have contributed to saving the German people of the Danube and the Alps from collapse have done good work in the very best national sense of the word." The conditions of the Loan were hard indeed, and none found them harder than the Chancellor himself. But only those should have found fault with them who could have suggested some other means of saving the country.

Thus Dr. Dollfuss returned from his fatiguing experience of negotiating the Loan at Lausanne only to take up the fight for it at home; for he had to obtain a majority in Parliament for its ratification. On August 3 a motion of censure of the Lausanne Agreement was put to the vote. Finally Dr. Dollfuss was able to carry the ratification only by 82 votes to 80, and then only because two members of the Opposition were absent. In the direst need of the State, which above all things demanded a vigorous and far-sighted policy, the Government found itself dependent on a single vote. However, the purpose of the Chancellor was achieved: the currency was safe.

After the battle over the Loan came another, no less fierce, over the balancing of the Budget. The revenues of the national exchequer were so low that it had been found necessary to pay the salaries of government officials and railway employees by instalments. No less than 300 million Austrian shillings were needed to cover the deficit. Here again the measures adopted by the Government to meet the situation were used by the Social Democrats and the National Socialists as a means of fomenting discontent, without, however, any constructive suggestion being put forward as an alternative. By means of a doubled duty, which was admittedly a heavy burden on industry, and by a simultaneous restriction of expenditure, it was found possible at last to make ends meet. The payment of salaries continued to be deferred as

before, but they were not reduced. Moreover, the disbursements provided for unemployed relief in the supplementary budget were not only not reduced but substantially increased.

Now that the worst of the economic crisis was over, Dollfuss the economist could make way for Dollfuss the politician. Those who regarded themselves as the exclusive representatives of the workers, whether they called themselves Social Democrats or National Socialists, did not cease to hamper the efforts of the Dollfuss Government for economic reform and for the solution of the unemployment problem. They took special exception to his use of war emergency legislation, which they stigmatized as unconstitutional. This was an unfortunate line of attack to choose, for if there was ever a statesman who was careful to be constitutional in each step that he took it was Chancellor Dollfuss. There could be no doubt that the conditions which had originally given rise to that legislation, viz., the economic stress brought about by the War, still existed and indeed had become such as to constitute a menace to the existence of the State.

Therefore in spite of all obstacles Dollfuss held on his way because he was sure it was the right one. "When," he said in the middle of October, 1932,

in later years a calm and sober judgement is passed upon these events, I am convinced, in spite of all the disaffection which is being aroused today, that men will admit: 'The Government took the right path; it could not and should not have done otherwise.' And therefore the Government will persist in its present policy. It will devote all its energies, unselfishly and to the best of its knowledge and power, to the economic consolidation of the country. May the day not be far off when the advantages of this will be felt in the lives of every individual.

Political tension became extreme in the autumn of 1932 and the activities of the parties assumed a menacing aspect. Besides the Social Democrats there were now also the National Socialists who, encouraged by successes in the municipal and provincial elections which far exceeded their expectations, were making use of every means to weaken the Government, to undermine its influence and to belittle its success in the sphere of

economic reform. However, the National Socialists still saw in Social Democracy their sworn enemy. Almost every week there were sanguinary encounters between the two parties at meetings, demonstrations and political rallies; and when on the occasion of the visit of Goering, Roehm and Strasser to Vienna for a National Socialist celebration both parties called their people on the streets, only the strongest precautionary measures on the part of the police authorities availed to preserve public order.

If Austria was not to be brought to disaster by party passion and internal dissension, the Government must call a halt to these violent disturbances, which were a menace to the economic existence of the nation. In the middle of October it issued for the city of Vienna the prohibition of all processions and rallies of Communists, Social Democrats and National Socialists. A sigh of relief went through the country; a weight was lifted from men's minds. The Government was showing that it was strong enough to deal with a demagogism which threatened to bring ruin upon the State, and to oppose a party which from the beginning had always relied upon its armaments and spoken of open violence. An exception was made for November 12, the national holiday, but the Government was now in a position to prescribe the ordinances which it considered necessary for the maintenance of peace, and the day passed without incident.

And now Chancellor Dollfuss began to infect the nation with his enthusiasm. By the late autumn of 1932 he had already some 40,000 supporters, and a year later ten times as many had rallied to his flag. In the meantime Social Democrats and National Socialists worked with feverish activity to undermine the influence of the Government. Those who not long ago had been engaged in armed conflict in the streets of Vienna were now joined in a common enmity towards all that was constructive in the measures of authority. The negotiations concerning the *Creditanstalt* having been satisfactorily concluded, the Social Democrats tried to reach the Government in a vital spot by accusing it abroad of violating international agreements. So in January, 1933, there was the Hirtenberg affair. Some old Austrian war material had arrived from Italian territory to be repaired in

the munitions factory at Hirtenberg. The Marxian Socialists immediately spread about the rumour that Austria was conniving at the transport of war material to Hungary. At a time when the international atmosphere was heavily charged with mutual distrust the news could not fail to cause a sensation, and there followed humiliating and embarrassing consequences for the Government. But at home the treacherous methods of the Socialists did not succeed in shaking the position of the Government; on the contrary they recoiled upon their authors, for the workers began to distrust leaders who could thus betray the honour of the nation.

However, the party now determined to play what on previous occasions had always proved their trump card. They attempted to cripple the State by an attack upon the most important nerve centre of public life; they called a railway strike. An excuse was found in the deferred system of salaries which the financial situation of the railways had necessitated. But the summons was answered only by a part of the workers, and the firm stand of the Dollfuss Government, which adopted punitive measures and threatened dismissal in cases of refusal to work, soon put an end to the strike.

If further proof had been necessary that the greatest obstacle to national recovery was a parliamentary system in which one party could choose a moment of the country's greatest distress in order to attack, threaten and betray the nation, then this latest action of Social Democracy would have provided it. With unexpected suddenness history pronounced its verdict without it being necessary for anyone to move a finger; a frivolous circumstance brought the whole of the unwieldy mechanism to a standstill. A dispute over a voting paper caused the resignation of the first President of the National Diet; he was followed by the second and the third. On March 4 the National Diet had eliminated itself, for according to the Constitution nobody has the power to summon or close the Diet during a session save the President of the Diet himself. The party system had thus involved itself in its own crisis. Now the country could live. The way was now open for an effective government, which a parliamentary system dominated by party passion had rendered impossible, and

which now in the time of the nation's extreme stress and difficulty was especially necessary.

Austria knew the next day that she had the leader she needed. Chancellor Dollfuss left no room for doubt that he intended to use the greater freedom of government now available in order to put into effect many long-needed reforms which had hitherto been hindered by a minority in Parliament. He would not depart from the Constitution; but he had no intention of allowing the Opposition to violate it either. He therefore expressly declared that the way was still open to them for an honourable cooperation in the government of the country, if they were prepared to take it. Hence it is clear that the parties of the Opposition were not in good faith when they contended that the Government wanted to establish a party dictatorship. But they had soon to realize that their propaganda in the Press and public meetings, and especially their threats of civil war, were producing the opposite effects to what they had hoped. Their behaviour forced the Government to use every constitutional means to protect the community. Measures were passed prohibiting public meetings and marches, repressing abuses of the freedom of the Press and imposing other restrictions for the safeguarding of public order.

The enemies of the Government now prepared for the final conflict. The Social Democrats had already threatened civil war. Now the National Socialists also gave full publicity to their intention of using every means for the overthrow of the Government. The situation was serious; both the opponents of the Government possessed strong, well-trained and well armed forces, and they were prepared to fight to the death. The Chancellor did not shrink from the conflict, though he saw that he must fight on two fronts against two determined foes. Either of them, it is true, would have been prepared to come to terms with him, but only at the price of a compromise which would have sacrificed the country's good. Not for a moment did Dollfuss dream of adopting those methods which in the past had been responsible for so many evils. He was recalling to mind his experiences in the War when, addressing the Christian Socialists on March 13, 1933, he said: "We stand in a shelled position, bombarded from right and left. This

position we are going to hold without turning aside. With our friends we will fight through this struggle to a finish." And when anxiety was expressed whether the Government would be able to maintain its position he said a few weeks later: "My friends, I can relieve you of this anxiety. We are determined to continue in the way we have begun, whatever the consequences may be."

And in fact the Government did not allow itself to be deterred from passing all the measures it considered necessary for the situation. State employees were forbidden to take part in party politics or to wear party badges during working hours. In the Social Insurance Institutes the excessive salaries of the employees – almost exclusively Marxian Socialists – were reduced to the level of those of State officials; placards of Socialistic propaganda were subjected to previous censorship. Then followed the prohibition of political strikes or of any strike in Government departments. Important schemes – such as road-building and the provision of facilities for tourists – were put in hand for the relief of unemployment; theatres which served an educational purpose were freed from the entertainment tax; and finally the notorious measure which forbade any influence to be exerted upon children in the matter of religious practices, and which had done great harm to religion, was annulled.

Of decisive importance was the Government's insistence on the prohibition of massed marches, even for May 1. As this day approached the Socialist leaders became more and more restless. They could not believe that their great march was a thing of the past. The police gave warning against any attempt at public demonstrations and, supported by detachments of the Federal Army, barred the approaches to the centre of the city. The day, both in Vienna and in the provinces, passed in almost complete calm.

"Our primary object," said the Chancellor on May 1, 1933, "is to suppress Marxian Socialism." He could not bring himself to believe that the National Socialists would persist in their opposition to the Government when they saw how determined it was to crush Marxian Socialism and to reform the State according to the Christian and German ideal. He thought that they must at least recognize the national mission of Austria as the second German



state. He could not yet have even dreamed that a serious rift was in prospect in the relations between Austria and Germany when he said publicly that "our endeavour in foreign policy is to live in friendship with all nations, and especially with the German Reich." Yet no sooner had he made this gesture of friendship than there came an unequivocal reply from across the frontier. The Austrian Government having been compelled, in view of recent excesses, to issue a universal prohibition of party uniforms, Dr. Frank, the Bavarian Minister of justice, spoke on the Munich wireless of the "terrorism" of the Austrian Government, warning it "in all friendship" "that we might be induced to take up the cause of our German kinsmen in Austria," that the German Nazis would take measures to protect their fellow-members in Austria and would keep order in that country in the event of any further restrictions being placed upon the Nazi movement there.

And now the development of events was rapid. The Austrian ambassador in Berlin lodged an official protest against this interference in the internal affairs of Austria, a protest which, in spite of repeated representations, remained unanswered. On the contrary, on May 13 Dr. Frank accompanied Dr. Kerrl, the Prussian Minister of State, on a visit to the Austrian Nazi Party. The visit had indeed been announced in the Nazi Press of Austria and Germany, but the Austrian Government had not been officially informed of it. The Government, therefore, since the protest made in Berlin still remained unanswered, informed the ministers on their arrival that their visit was not desired. At a National Socialist rally which, because it was held to celebrate the centenary of the liberation of Vienna from the Turks had been allowed in spite of the general prohibition, Dr. Frank announced that Chancellor Hitler himself would pay a visit to Austria within the next few weeks, whether such visit was desired or not.

In a speech at Graz on the following day he spoke against the Austrian Government and urged his hearers to offer a stubborn resistance. Further protests were made in consequence to the Foreign Minister in Berlin, together with the request that the German ministers should be immediately recalled. In reply the Government of the Reich protested against the incident which

had attended the arrival of the ministers in Austria. The Austrian Government answered that the visit of the said ministers had not been announced through the ordinary diplomatic channels, and that they had entered the country for purposes of political agitation. Indeed Dr. Frank himself had publicly declared at Graz that his visit "was intended not for the Austrian Government, but for the Austrian people." To the protest of the German Government Chancellor Dollfuss replied that he could only consider that question after a reply had been received to the protest of the Austrian Government concerning the wireless talks of Dr. Frank. However, it was still, as it always had been, his earnest wish to contribute in any way possible to further the mutual friendly relations between Austria and the German Reich. A day later the *Völkischer Beobachter* stated that Austria's independence was out of the question, and that she could only choose between Berlin and Paris. Therewith began a systematic campaign against Austria in the German Press and over the wireless with a view to fomenting political and economic discontent in the country, and in order to break the opposition to the National Socialist Party. At the end of May the German frontier was closed against tourists to Austria by the imposition of a visa-tax of 1000 marks. The breach between Austria and Germany was now complete. There could be no further doubt that National Socialism was resolved by all possible means to bring about the Austro-German union which it desired.

But already the watchword, "Austria awake!" which Chancellor Dollfuss had issued at Innsbruck, had run like fire throughout the country. On May 14, when the 40,000 men of the Heimwehr marched through the streets of Vienna, it must have been evident even to the most obstinate sceptics that Austria was indeed "on the way." Prince Starhemberg echoed the general sentiment when he thus addressed the Chancellor:

Chancellor, for fifteen years we have lived a politically unworthy existence, for fifteen years we have gnashed our teeth as we looked on at the disruption and disintegration of our country through party passion, internal strife and class hatred. Austria's people needs a saviour. Austria's people and Austria's Heimwehr

calls upon its Chancellor: "Be our saviour, and be convinced that in your fight to save Austria you have the support of us all."

It was then that the Chancellor first spoke of the "Austrian Front" which he intended to establish; and he unfurled the red, white and red flag as its symbol. It was soon to be replaced by the Patriotic (or Fatherland) Front whose ranks under the leadership of Dollfuss were to lead the Austrian ideal to victory.

As if in answer, in June, 1933, the first wave of Nazi terrorism swept over the country. It began with the attack upon the provincial commander of the Tyrolese Heimwehr, and continued with various bomb outrages. The Government disbanded the military organizations of the National Socialists and prohibited the party in Austria; Habicht, the local Inspector of the Nazi Party, was banished from the country. The exiled Inspector continued his propaganda by sending over a foreign aeroplane which distributed pamphlets exhorting the people to persist in their resistance to the Government. There followed attacks with bombs and tear-gas, the cutting of telephone wires, bomb-attacks upon railways and public buildings, to prepare Austria for the coming of National Socialism. The Government replied by forming a volunteer force to support the State executive, enlisted from various units already in existence. In the meantime it did not cease its work of removing the debris of the revolution. The dissolution of the Communist Party was followed by the prohibition of newspapers containing immoral pictures or drawings, and by the abolition of the Freethinkers' Union.

At the beginning of July came Habicht's talks on the Munich wireless with their violent attack upon the Austrian Government and upon all the efforts which it was making towards national unity and recovery. Representations made in Berlin concerning this proceeding, which violated the first principles of the comity of nations – and especially of brother nations – remained without result. True, the Vice-leader of the movement, Hess, had declared officially that the Nazi movement in the Reich deprecated any interference in political affairs outside the German frontiers, or the formation of any section of their party outside those borders. But in view of the absolute validity of the *Führer* principle, there can

be little doubt that there was no departure from it in the whole of the party's activities regarding Austria. But the Munich wireless talks had other effects besides prejudicial ones for Austria. They made it quite clear to the world that this little country, humiliated by the Peace treaties, sapped of its life-blood and so often thought to be dead, must now stand forth free and independent as an essential element in the European system, and as a symbol of Western civilization. Henceforth the whole world looked on in admiration as this little country engaged in its fight for freedom under the lead of its little Chancellor; and they made its cause their own. The unique reception given to the Chancellor at the World Economic Conference in London and at the Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva was a proof that the eyes of all were upon his heroic struggle.

Since the New Year everybody had been looking forward to the great German "Catholic Day." For this occasion the whole German people was invited to come to Vienna; for it would be five hundred years since the great tower of St. Stephen's Cathedral reached completion, two hundred and fifty since that time so critical for the Germanic peoples of Central Europe, when the Turks were driven back from the gates of Vienna. And it would be eighty years since the last time the Germanic peoples together had made public profession of their faith in Vienna. In Vienna, the cradle and citadel of Christian civilization in the West, the German Catholics of Central Europe were to assemble, there to consider the new menace to that civilization from the anti-Christian forces of the day and to prepare an army of defence to meet it. The Catholic Day was thus a proof to the world that it was the *Catholic* Austria which in these critical days was once more awakening to a sense of her true genius and of her German and Catholic mission. Austria required a reorganization of her public life which should be at the same time German and Christian. And therefore when in the Trabrennplatz at Vienna on September 11 Chancellor Dollfuss, the leader of the new Austria, announced the new German corporative Christian State, and thereafter marched into the city at the head of countless thousands enthusiastically declaring their loyalty to Austria and her

leader, there was a national demonstration such as is seen only once in centuries.

On October 4 a murderous hand was raised for the first time against Chancellor Dollfuss. Indeed, only one thing could now arrest the victorious advance of the standard, and that was the death of the standard-bearer. Miraculously he was almost unhurt, although two shots were fired at him point-blank, one bullet striking him just over the heart without wounding him, the other causing a flesh wound in the right forearm. The hand of Providence had intervened to save Austria's leader in the moment of her greatest peril. Heartfelt prayers of thanksgiving went up to heaven from the whole country. The Chancellor's first visit was to the Cathedral of St. Stephen.

He bore his enemies no ill will, still hoping that all misunderstandings would be cleared away, and once more he offered the hand of friendship to the National Socialists. His appeal to them remained unanswered. But the Austrian nation gave him public proof that he had understood them aright when he said that the event of the first days of October would result in "a new wave of enthusiasm passing over the patriotic Austrian people." The final balancing of the Budget rendered it necessary to call for a national Loan. Would the nation respond? Would it respond in spite of the economic crisis which still existed; in spite of the financial straits to which the country was reduced; in spite of the efforts which were being made over the frontier to make the people believe that Austria was on the verge of bankruptcy? The result astounded even the most optimistic, the sum required being over-subscribed many times. The nation had indeed spoken with no uncertain voice.

The advance of the Patriotic movement, as everybody had to admit at the end of 1933, was irresistible. However, it still had to make its way between the two opposing fronts which were ready at any moment to hamper the work of reconstruction. But still Chancellor Dollfuss refused to believe that their opposition was so determined that they could not be won over to his side. Once more, at the end of October, he appealed for peace and understanding. "We are always ready to take any course compat-

ible with our honour to clear away misunderstandings and to remove tensions. But our honour, our freedom, the independence of Austria are matters upon which there can be no bargaining or compromise." It was on the same basis that an attempt was made at reconciliation on the German "Catholic Day," when conversations were arranged to take place between Chancellor Dollfuss and Theodore Habicht. The conditions named to the German envoy by Chancellor Dollfuss were those which he had always laid down in his public utterances: the cessation of acts hostile to Austria, the recognition of Austria as a free and independent State with full rights of self-determination, the acknowledgment of the claim that no party should exist in Austria which received its leadership and its instructions from abroad.

But on January 5, when the date of the conference between Chancellor Dollfuss and Habicht was settled, a new wave of Nazi terrorism began, continuing until January 8, the day upon which the conference was to take place. Chancellor Dollfuss saw the hopelessness of the step which, in spite of the many annoyances which he had suffered through the activities of Habicht, he had nevertheless been prepared to take. Moreover, in his anxiety for peace the Chancellor had until the end of the year pursued a policy of restraint with regard to the National Socialists in Austria which had in no small degree prejudiced the progress of the Austrian movement. The Chancellor was conscious at the same time that he was thus putting the patience of his own adherents to a severe test. For the National Socialists on their side knew no such reserve. Nazi partisans entered public offices with even greater freedom than before, and found every sort of new method to oppose the ends of the Government. Unjust verdicts of the courts regarding Nazi terrorists showed how openly the authority of the Government was being defied, and acts of terrorism continued to attack the economic life of the country. Publicly the Nazis expressed their confidence that victory would finally be theirs. Openly they sneered at the restraint of the Government as a sign of weakness. All this was not without its effect upon the adherents of the Patriotic Front, many of whom began to give way to despondency, feeling that the new Austrian movement must

eventually be checked by the enormous difficulties with which it was faced.

But there was one who never lost confidence, the Chancellor himself, even though he saw that the decisive conflict on both fronts was imminent. Not only was National Socialism constantly resorting to methods of violence; the Marxian Socialists, too, had now quite openly declared for an armed revolution. Their control of taxation in Vienna had indeed been taken from them in November, and in December the Labour Chambers had been liberated from their ascendancy; but they still regarded themselves as paramount in the Vienna municipality, and claimed the first voice in the Vienna Diet.

To them, too, Chancellor Dollfuss made overtures of peace on January 18. He appealed to the honourable leaders of Labour to cooperate with him in the reconstruction of Austria which could now, he said, go forward if they would only recognize the principles laid down by him. The answer of the Marxian leaders was a definite refusal. Indeed its Press renewed its declaration in favour of "Lenin's inheritance," dear not only to the workers of Russia "but to those of the whole world." However, the leaders were soon to recognize that the Chancellor's appeal had been heard by the workers themselves, and they had reason to fear that the process of disintegration which had already begun in the party was likely to continue.

Since it was clear that the Social Democrats were determined to stake all upon one card and to attempt an armed revolution, as they had repeatedly threatened to do, the Government decided to deprive the party of the formidable array of armaments which it was known to possess.

The confiscation of a munitions depot of the Social Democratic Schutzbund at Linz was the signal for the revolt of February 12 in Vienna and several industrial centres. In a few days it had failed. Madness and blindness had brought about a civil war which demanded heavy sacrifices on both sides. The Chancellor suffered sorely during those days, which were the bitterest of his life. And he was no less sorry for the misguided enemies of the Fatherland than for its heroic defenders. Of the

241 casualties there were as many on the side of the Government troops as on the side of the insurgents.

The behaviour of the Government in connection with the February revolt is – unfortunately – without parallel in history. No room was left for doubt that the ringleaders would be punished with the utmost rigour of the law. But the rank and file of the Republican *Schutzbund* were promised an amnesty if they would lay down their arms. Immediately after the suppression of the rising the Chancellor declared that there were to be no reprisals upon men who for the most part had been led astray by conscienceless leaders and by unceasing propaganda. Full pardon was offered to all who were ready to join the new movement, and this in spite of the extreme danger into which the State had been brought by the revolution. While the relief work for the dependents of those who had fallen in defence of the Government was organized by the Chancellor himself, his wife led a similar work for the relatives of the insurgents. Nor was there any question of removing from public office all who had belonged to the Republican Party, although there were plenty of young men of Patriotic sympathies who had long been without work and without food. The chief posts were indeed filled with trustworthy officials and the incorrigible agitators dismissed; but in general a policy of peace and reconciliation was pursued. If the Marxian workers did not immediately recover from their sense of bitterness and distrust, the Chancellor well knew that it was among those who took time for reflection and conversion that he would subsequently find his most faithful supporters.

With the suppression of Austrian Marxism an incubus was lifted from the country and one of the chief obstacles to national recovery removed. But it also became apparent that a new form of Government was necessary. By their mania for class hatred and civil war the Social Democrats had exposed the inner viciousness of the party system. A new system must be found which would eliminate such antagonisms and at the same time enable the people to have that voice in the administration of public affairs which was their inalienable right. Attempts had been made in other countries to supersede the party system, but they had result-



ed only in establishing a party dictatorship. Chancellor Dollfuss, with a sure instinct for the historical moment and a keen insight into the needs of the country, now took the step which no other statesman had hitherto been able to take, direct from the party system to the truly popular State. "If a year ago," he said

anyone had asked whether the parties would remain or not I could not have given a definite reply. The days of February first brought the answer. We asked ourselves whether we could take the responsibility of allowing either Browns or Reds to prevail within the framework of a party system.

There was never any doubt as to the answer. "For," said he, the question was simply this: Was the Catholic population of this country going to take the power into its hands and go ahead with the reconstruction of the State or not? (Vienna, May 15, 1934.)

Here again Dr. Dollfuss was following in the footsteps of his great predecessor Dr. Seipel, who had regarded the existing parties as the artificial creation of a community which has lost its natural form of organization. At that time nobody thought that his prophecy would soon be fulfilled. Dr. Schuschnigg, the collaborator of Dr. Dollfuss in the creation of the new Austria and now the inheritor of his office, had already a year earlier foreseen the manner in which the party system would naturally develop into the Popular State:

We believe the party system to be a thing of the past. But we do not think it would be in the interests either of the German peoples in general or of the Austrian race in particular to replace the party system by a party State. We do not want the party State either; we want the Christian State, in which there is a divine law, immutable and independent of the vicissitudes of time. Therefore we have our own views on the reciprocal relations between politics and economics, on social policy and social reform, and on the limits which God's law has set to the power of every State.

If Chancellor Dollfuss found the way to supersede the party system he also discovered that form of Government which, in spite of differences of outlook and social and party distinctions,

was able to combine the great majority of the nation which wanted a free, Christian, German, corporative Austria. This form of Government, born of the Christian conception of the nation as a society, is without parallel in the history of modern politics. It is not a coalition of parties, nor is it itself a party, like other political movements which have taken place in various countries since the War. In this movement, cultural federations, economic organizations, various defence units are banded together under the leadership of the Chancellor, animated by the one thought of Austria. Any hope that the opponents of the movement retained that differences within the Patriotic Front might lead to its disruption had now entirely disappeared. But nothing shows more clearly the force of the Chancellor's personality than the fact that he was able to enlist the loyalty of the Heimwehr. Prince Starhemberg was appointed Vice-Leader of the Patriotic Front, and entered the Government. The whole movement now stood firm behind Chancellor Dollfuss.

The new Constitution was promulgated on May 1, 1934. Its legitimate continuity with the former Constitution was established by the necessary decree of the National Diet. By a constitutional law the Diet decreed that it was itself automatically dissolved on the day after the promulgation of the Constitution and that it transferred to the Government the plenitude of its authority and legislative powers. The Chancellor could therefore claim that the Christian, German, Federal State of Austria was more constitutional than most others, and certainly more so than any of its immediate predecessors. But in his wireless address on the new Constitution he was able to point to the more important fact that the overwhelming majority of the nation had unmistakably manifested its will:

Far more important than the formal decree is the fact that today in the four thousand communes of Austria the population is gathered together to celebrate Constitution Day. This is the first and vital sanction of the Constitution by the Patriotic population of Austria. An overwhelming majority of the Austrian people have thus given proof of their loyalty to the new Austria. From that great and unforgettable rally of the Patriotic Front in

## THE APPOINTED PATH

the Trabrennplatz last year to the rallies of the peasants in recent months all over Austria, even in the tiniest villages, marked by a unanimity such as this country has never yet experienced – all these demonstrations have been the final sanction of the act of reconstruction, the irrefragable expression of the inflexible will of the Austrian people, which the Government has to serve. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

“The new Austria is in being,” cried the Chancellor on Constitution Day. As he spoke one could hear in his tones that invincible confidence in Austria’s mission which had enabled him to rally the nation to his banner; his humble trust in the mighty hand of God, who must build the house if the builders are not to labour in vain; his gratitude to divine Providence which had so clearly guided his path.

First he had had to fight for the economic existence of his people. He succeeded and was soon able to establish the economic life and the finances of his country upon a sound basis. With a Government depending upon a majority of one vote he had to rule the country. He maintained his position until he was strong enough to take the course which was indicated no longer by party compromises but by the needs of the State. Parliament constitutionally eliminated itself and left the way open for him to begin the work of reconstruction on the foundations already laid. Fighting a heavy battle on two fronts, he was able to stand fast until he had mobilized the nation, rallied them to an Austrian consciousness and established the Patriotic Front. He was now able to crush one of his opponents, Marxian Socialism, which had risen in open revolt against the State, and to liberate the nation from an oppression which had constantly hampered the work of recovery. And by the triumphant progress of the Austrian Patriotic Movement he was able also to defeat his opponents on the second front, the National Socialists, who with their reliance upon foreign help had considered themselves to be invincible. That victory he won when he died for Austria.



CHAPTER III  
FREEDOM AT HOME

“On July 15, 1927, we had a sample of the aims of Marxism. The eyes of our people were opened. They saw that democracy in its actual form was nothing but a stepping stone to power for the Marxian Socialists. And therefore our people decided on positive reforms which should ensure the sound and proper development of our public life.”

(Vienna, April 2, 1933.)

**O**N THE FIRST DAY OF THE YEAR IN WHICH DR. SEIPEL died, Dr. Dollfuss recalled his saying that mistakes once made could be undone, but that there was no cure for a party spirit which had not the slightest regard for the interests of the State. Men little thought at that time that history was so soon to pass sentence of condemnation precisely upon that party which never thought of the interests of the State, but only of its own. The cause of the final break-down of Social Democracy in Austria was that, when men had now come to recognize that party warfare and class hatred are crimes against the community and were beginning to reflect upon the natural laws which govern social and political life, this party still continued to place the interests of party above the good of the State and of society.

Marxian Socialism in Austria was fully conscious that it could only gain permanent predominance in Austria if it succeeded in obliterating the two essential features of the Austrian character: patriotism and fidelity to tradition. It therefore devoted all its energies to destroying everything that could awaken in the German people of Austria the remembrance of their historic greatness. Every symbol that might serve to remind the people

of their glorious past and of their duty to live worthily of that past was removed from public life, and scorn was poured upon all that savoured of patriotism or tradition. But not only were the Socialist leaders prepared to sacrifice all that was dear to the people for the sake of a cold internationalism; repeatedly and openly they betrayed their country to foreign powers in the interests of their party. The Chancellor thus accuses them:

The fact that this Government intends to preserve the independence of Austria as our Fatherland means nothing to these people. All that they care about is that Social Democracy should prevail. They have thus proved that they have educated our good workers to be without patriotism. Otherwise they would be bound to say: "First and foremost we are Austrians, and we must welcome everything that makes for the preservation of the liberty and independence of our country." The leaders of Social Democracy do not know their duty to their country. But I am convinced that the workers themselves understand the love of their country and the duties which it imposes. The line of division will have to be drawn between those – even Labour leaders – to whom love of country means something and between those who have become so internationalized that Fatherland means nothing to them, so long as it be Socialist. (Tulln, November 15, 1933.)

With no less vigour did the Marxist leaders wage war against the religious heritage of the people, to make room for an atheistic and materialistic Socialism. Everything they pressed into their service, from learning to sports associations, from university to kindergarten. By threats of unemployment and starvation they persuaded men to leave the Catholic Church, using methods of terrorism which were a disgrace to civilization, violating as they did the most elementary rights of human freedom. They maintained a systematic campaign to undermine public morality, especially through the cinemas and theatres which they controlled, to say nothing of educating the children of the Socialists to a religious and moral anarchy, instilling a hatred of Church and religion into their childish minds as soon as they were awakened to the light of reason. The Chancellor accuses them roundly:

Religion, they declared, was a matter of private opinion. The achievements of Social Democracy in this sphere show beyond any doubt what their aims really are. Their propaganda to induce people to apostatize, their efforts to exclude children from religious instruction, show what are the real views of Social Democracy. Under the pretext of defending the interests of the workers, great masses of the population have been brought up to be irreligious; and this is a great crime. (Tulln, November 15, 1933.)

To bring up the young to be materialists and egoists, suppressing all mention of the higher power to which they are responsible; to withhold from them the commandments to “love your neighbour” and to “honour your father and your mother”; to deprive them of any grounding in religion, is the greatest sin and the most heinous crime that can be committed against the young. (Vienna, September 11, 1933.)

To many it must have seemed surprising that a gentle, patient, peace-loving people like the Austrians, known throughout the world for their patriotism and their faith, should have been so generally dominated by a party whose terroristic methods were so much at variance with the Austrian character. But it would have been even more surprising had Austria, blessed with an inheritance such as no other European country can boast, deriving her vital strength from an inexhaustible tradition, not returned once more to the realization of her true character and shaken off the Marxian yoke. And in fact, faced with the reawakening of the people to a sense of its high duty and its historic mission, Marxian Socialism was doomed to collapse.

Its doom was certain, even though it had been intrinsically more vital, more powerful, more united in itself. But Marxian Socialism in Austria was already marked out for a collapse before it entered upon its fateful hour. Intellectually it was sterile; during the whole of the post-war period it had not produced one single fruitful idea to relieve the people's distress. In itself it was disunited; various groups quarrelled among themselves as to what represented the true doctrine of Karl Marx. Tactically it was concentrated upon class warfare; and this could not feed a people

which was crying out for bread. Add to this that the growing dissatisfaction of a great section of the Marxian working classes could no longer be restrained when they saw in certain functionaries of the party a manner of life which was entirely at variance with Socialistic principles. The rank and file of the Democratic Party could not reconcile themselves to the enormous incomes of their leaders, which vied with those of Capitalists of the purest water, while in the ranks of the proletariat poverty was daily increasing. The young Socialists especially saw in this the betrayal of their ideals and called for a complete reform of the movement. Not only was the membership of the Socialist organizations decreasing, but even the members that remained began to forsake Marxist principles, as was shown in the utter failure of the railway strike in the early days of 1933. Finally the workers simply could not understand why their leaders did nothing but oppose and hamper the strenuous efforts which the Government was making for the betterment of the economic situation and for the provision of employment and food for the people. Marxism itself quenched the fire which the ideal of Socialism had enkindled in the working classes.

Here, then, was the source of a constant menace to the State – an enemy within its borders which was ready for anything: treason, anarchy, civil war. The revolutionary group among the Socialist leaders, having gained control of the party, seeing the growing popular movement in favour of the new Austria and aware at the same time of defections in their own ranks, made it perfectly clear that they would shrink from nothing, not even from civil war, to maintain their ascendancy. It came on February 12, 1934. They possessed a strongly armed force, the Republican Schutzbund, and plenty of war material; they had made full provision for civil war. Their organization, so they claimed, was the best in the Marxian world, and with the proper watchwords they could set the masses in motion. For great numbers among the working classes were still mainly Marxian in outlook; they were convinced that class warfare or class dictatorship was the only way of ensuring social liberty and of safeguarding the full rights of Labour. Hence the leaders of Social Democracy hoped that in

the case of open warfare the call to strike would be answered by so many that in the general chaos which would result they might be able to hold out until foreign intervention became necessary. With foreign help all the reforms which the Patriotic Front had introduced could be set aside, the party system restored, and the way once more made open for the popular agitation and propaganda upon which they used to thrive in the past. This is what they meant when they claimed that they were forced to fight for the Constitution, for democracy, for the rights of the Worker against dictatorship, Fascism and social reaction. But the workers of Austria, though hitherto Marxian in sympathy, disobeyed the summons to strike by an overwhelming majority. They at any rate did not believe that the Constitution or democracy was in any great danger, for they made little difficulty in accepting the new regime. The Socialist leaders were able to bring a few thousands of the *Schutzbund* on to the barricades, but in the first hours of the conflict they were compelled to acknowledge their terrible mistake. Even then they thought only of themselves; they left their people to die and fled for safety across the frontier.

By refusing to answer the summons to strike, the workers themselves had contributed in great measure to saving the country; and in his first speech after the suppression of the revolt Chancellor Dollfuss thanked them for it:

For years the radical leaders of Social Democracy had been making preparations which sooner or later had to lead to civil war. But the majority of the workers – even those who, little as they liked much of their doings, had remained loyal to their party in the elections – the great majority of them, I say, had nothing to do with these preparations, or at any rate wanted to have nothing to do with them. Our war of defence has never been directed against the workers, and never will be directed against them; it has always been directed against the radical demagogues among the Socialists and against a false doctrine which has bribed and deluded the working classes with false hopes. The fact alone that ninety per cent of the workers, even of those employed in private enterprises, refused to answer the summons to the General Strike, proves that the good workers, whatever may have been



their political opinions before, have now no use for the party. We thank them for it! (Villach, March 4, 1934.)

Repeatedly Chancellor Dollfuss told the workers that the campaign was not directed against them, their rights or their liberties, but against the Socialist leaders and their propaganda of class hatred and class warfare. Class warfare, by fostering disunion, had brought untold misery upon the nation; moreover it was the great obstacle to the work of reconstruction which the establishment of the Corporative State was to bring about. Nevertheless Chancellor Dollfuss did not fail to recognize the justice of the workers' cause. In his appeal to the "honourable leaders of labour," he says:

At a time when the employment of labour was organized wholly according to Liberal and Capitalistic principles it was intelligible – though unjust according to our Christian conceptions – that on the other side class warfare should have been taken as a basis for the defence of the worker. But if among employers of labour there is a sincere readiness to cooperate in the new political, economic and social constitution, a readiness to take as the foundation of social and economic life the relation of man to man, viewed at a new angle and regarded as the source of mutual duties and obligations, then the antithesis of class warfare no longer exists, and Labour must seriously consider whether it is not its duty to show a like sincere readiness to cooperate in the new order of things. (Vienna, January 18, 1934.)

The party leaders of Social Democracy declared that they must make their answer to the Chancellor's appeal contingent upon the maintenance of parliamentary democracy, thus giving one more proof that their only aim was class warfare and nothing else. Therefore the Chancellor said:

The mortal sickness of Parliament and the crisis of our so-called democracy, which has degenerated into a demagogism, has been brought about chiefly, perhaps exclusively, by Marxian Socialism. The eyes of the people have been opened at last, and it is not surprising that citizens refuse to believe now that the Marxian Socialists are honestly striving for a democracy, for self-

government by the people. They are all convinced that for them democracy is only a stepping-stone to a one-sided proletarian dictatorship. (Innsbruck, April 22, 1933.)

The Chancellor emphasized the fact that Social Democracy had no responsibility towards the nation, although it had taken part in the government of the country for the last few years. Every concession for the most elementary needs of the State had to be bought from them by compromises, while they did nothing but foment antagonism towards the Government and the State. This sort of democracy must end. The Chancellor indicated the essential defect in this pseudo-democracy when he said:

There can be no permanent administration in a country when in practice nothing can be done without being approved by those who have no responsibility whatever. Such a state of things must not exist again if we are to advance and not go backwards. (Innsbruck, April 22, 1933.)

Lies and calumnies, the chief parliamentary weapons of Social Democracy, must be "banished from politics":

We want to institute a new order of public life, in which, through the abolition of popular agitation, lies and calumnies will be banished from politics. We intend to arouse a general consciousness that as men we have duties to one another; we intend to exalt man's sense of dignity and the self-consciousness of the individual. (Vienna, April 8, 1934.)

The first condition for the revival of national life is the termination of class hatred:

We intend to prevent demagogism from causing any more harm. The fomenting of hatred must never again be made a political aim. (Vienna, April 16, 1934.)

The principle of making an arbitrary division of the nation into two camps, employers on the one hand and employees on the other, is against our conception of a sound social order and a strong national life. However, we have combated this principle only with the weapons of the mind; we have exercised no tyranny, and I have many a time pacified the rebellious. (Vienna, October 14, 1933.)

The strongest card in the game of the Socialist leaders was – and still is – to terrify the Socialist workers in Austria and abroad with the spectre of dictatorship, Austrian Fascism, or tyranny. Meanwhile the Austrian Government has explained clearly enough its conception of the new State. If democracy means personal freedom, self-government by the people, the participation of all members of the community in the shaping of national life, then the new Austria has been one of the first States to return to the path of true democracy, at the same time avoiding a party dictatorship such as has come about, for example, in Russia. That this is what Social Democracy intended to bring about in Austria is clear from the tactics which they adopted at the end of the War. When they were in power at that time they took advantage of their position to fill every branch of the public administration, including the army and a great part of the police force, with their own men. In addition they created an armed force for their own party – the Republican Schutzbund – which so terrorized the whole of public life that it was only by the employment of every power at the disposal of the State that other parties could be assured the equal rights which they demanded for themselves. The burning of the Palace of Justice on July 15, 1927, was an unmistakable danger signal. They even declared before the whole world that ninety per cent of them were in favour of Bolshevism. And again at the end of 1932 they declared in the National Diet that democracy was not an end in itself, but only a means to their true end, Socialism, that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat after the Bolshevik model. In view of these facts it is impossible to see in the outcry of the Socialist leaders about a dictatorship in Austria anything else but disappointment due to the fact that Chancellor Dollfuss and his Government had succeeded, at a moment of extreme danger, in quelling the Marxian outbreak, in finally defeating Marxian Socialism in Central Europe, and in repulsing a Bolshevik attack upon a central point of European civilization.

Marxian Socialism in Austria had become a standing menace to the community. February 12 made the extreme danger of the State quite obvious. Therefore the Government prescribed the necessary measures for defence, and it continues to do so until

the process of reform has purged the country of the bolshevist poison which still remains. When that danger is past, then the rights and liberties of a true democracy will come into their own, as Chancellor Dollfuss intended that they should. It will be a democracy from which lies, calumnies, popular agitation and imposture will be banished, a democracy which can never again be abused to the detriment of civilization. This has nothing in common with dictatorship. On that point the Chancellor was always clear:

Austria is not the sort of country to want, or to put up with, a dictatorship or arbitrary government. But the fact that the Social Democrats, who have committed the worst possible sins against true democracy, are now arousing foreign prejudice against Austria under the pretext of defending democracy, shows what sort of men they are and the tactics they like to use. (Tulln, November 15, 1933.)

How far removed the Dollfuss State is from any form of dictatorship may be seen from the words in which he himself describes the ideal of liberty:

We want true, honourable and healthy liberty. Liberty in the sense of licence, without regard for others, independent of nature and of God, we do not want. We know that the social life of men requires certain bounds to be set to their action in order to safeguard the necessary organization and the harmony of human intercourse. Anybody who talks of liberty must first show by his own example that he is a man of inward strength and restraint.... Yes, what we want to achieve is the inner freedom of man from what only too sorely constrains us all, whether in our individual action or in our relations with others and with the community at large. In each trade, craft or profession we do not want uniformity among individuals; we want the greatest possible variety. We want to give greater freedom of movement for reorganization, and especially we want to give to the worker more right to self-expression than he has hitherto possessed. If today we talk of freedom in Austria, this is not merely a claim to the independence of our country, it means also working to free ourselves inwardly, to free our nation from the hampering restrictions of

an earlier period, so that we may all cooperate effectively to build up a happier Austria. (Vienna, April 8, 1934.)

Chancellor Dollfuss never thought that Marxian Socialism could be overthrown by the use of mere external weapons. He knew that only an order of social justice could be ultimately victorious; and it was his hope that Socialist Labour would come eventually to accept the ideal of social justice and thus cooperate with him in the reconstruction of the new Austria:

Marxian Socialism will only be overthrown when the members of each craft or corporation become conscious of their mutual fellowship and solidarity, so that not only will the worker be proud of his craft and stand up for it both in and outside his workshop, but the employer too, even outside business hours, will have a personal care for the interests of his workers. I am convinced that the time will come in the near future when the workers, who now perhaps hesitate distrustfully – men who have been misled for over thirty years are not likely to take a header all at once – will see that when the employment of labour is organized in a Christian spirit they will possess a higher standing and a greater dignity as men. When the workers see that the Christian restoration does justice to them as men, their distrust will vanish forever, and then Marxian Socialism is finally and completely defeated. (Feldkirch, June 29, 1934.)

Therefore Chancellor Dollfuss spared no effort to gain the confidence of the workers. He could not believe that his untiring work for the economic life of the country, his solicitous care to provide work and food for the unemployed, his steadfast defence of the rights of Labour could fail at last to be recognized even by the most distrustful sections among them. Again and again he invited them to enter the new national community; again and again he asked them if they would not come into the new house that he had built for them. For it was his firm opinion that the workers, when once they had joined the movement, would be most valuable members of the community:

I have a great respect for these simple workers, who, though they have followed false leaders and adopted wrong methods,

although their behaviour is blameworthy from the point of view of the community, have nevertheless been loyal to one another. Many of them have laid down their lives for what they considered to be just and right. These men are not “proletarians” in the bad sense. To win over these men, to gain the confidence of these men is a sublime task. Workers! We meet you, not with contempt or with distrust, but with the will to gain your confidence, to provide for you the conditions and the necessities of life, and also to give you the power to believe that Christian charity is truly a living thing which embrace all men. (Klosterneuberg, March 25, 1934.)

The behaviour of the workers on July 25 was a significant proof that Chancellor Dollfuss had not offered his hand to them in vain. He had never expected that workers, who for the whole of their lives had preserved a profound faith in the saving power of Socialism, and had fought for their convictions, would immediately follow in the paths by which he wanted to lead them. But the great majority of these workers showed, by their reverent silence in the presence of the man who had given up his life for the liberty of Austria, that their refusal to enter the national community which Chancellor Dollfuss intended to establish was not final and definitive.



CHAPTER IV  
INDEPENDENCE ABROAD

“Interference in our internal political affairs we will not allow from any quarter. The fundamental principles of our general policy are the preservation of our national wealth, independence, the integrity of the land which we have received from our fathers, and the cultivation and development of the intellectual, political and economic potentialities of the Austrian people – in other words the fulfilment of Austria’s historic mission in the German and Central European area. From these principles there must follow necessarily the energetic repudiation of any interference in our own vital development. This is, and will forever remain, our immutable purpose. Any negotiations for the relief of tension which leave this policy intact will, as I have repeatedly declared, find us ready.”

(Vienna, December 31, 1933.)

**I**F NATIONAL SOCIALISM WERE INDIGENOUS TO AUSTRIAN soil it must have developed much earlier than it did, because the economic and social conditions which chiefly favoured its growth in Germany existed already in a high degree in Austria very soon after the War. National Socialism did not become a serious political factor in Austria until it had already begun in Germany to pass beyond the highest point of its development in parliamentary democracy, as shown by the municipal elections and especially by the General Election of autumn, 1932. At a time when National Socialism in Germany had already for a long time dominated the political situation, in Austria it was hardly noticeable. That National Socialism in Austria was not rooted in any definite political tendency among the Austrian people may be seen also from the circumstance that it completely lacked any strong, consistent or supreme leadership. An authorized official of the N.S. party of the Reich – called a

District Inspector – had to be placed at its disposal to make it politically effective. Then began the construction of a comprehensive party organization similar to that in Germany, and an intensive campaign of propaganda was inaugurated. When, in April, 1932, the first National Socialists took their seats in the municipal and provincial Diets, it became clear that various watchwords of the movement had “caught on” in Austria as well; but it was also evident that Austrian National Socialism had no Austrian programme of its own to develop, but confined itself to opposition and attack. Soon also it became manifest that in the N.S. Party in Austria there was concentrated that spirit of “free-thought” which at the end of the last century had been identified with the anti-Rome movement and had designated any attempt to introduce Catholic principles into public life as “clericalism.” It was therefore naturally opposed to any movement towards a Catholic reorganization of the State. The importance of these considerations should not be underestimated. When eventually National Socialism came into power in Germany, the political efforts of the party in Austria became directed primarily to obtaining a share in the Government and ultimately to bringing about the *Gleichschaltung* of the Government with that of Germany. This was regarded as the first step towards their chief aim, which was the formation of a Greater Germany to include in one State all the German peoples adjacent to the frontiers of the Reich.

Austria was thus forced into a struggle for her freedom as an independent German State. Painfully anxious to preserve friendship between the two German States, Chancellor Dollfuss went to every length compatible with the honour of his country in order to heal the breach in its initial stages. As to this he can let facts speak for themselves:

During the Great War I worked for years to defend our German land on the southern front; I myself studied in Berlin for a long time; I have worked in all those organizations whose aim is to cement the relations between Austria and Germany. You may believe me when I say that it is my earnest endeavour to do all I can to live in real friendship with the German Reich. I have collaborated most cordially with earlier Governments.... In Austria



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now there is the same Government as there was a year ago; in the German Reich the Government has changed. But I have always repeatedly declared, even at a time when misunderstandings had already arisen, that I am ready to do anything in my power to maintain full and complete friendship with the German Reich. I have never had an answer to my protestations; from the German newspapers and from the actions which have been taken against Austria it is to be concluded that in Germany they desire the contrary. Readiness for friendship cannot go beyond the limits set by one's self respect and one's own honour. Even little Austria and its representatives cannot take any action which is against the honour of our country. (Hollabrun, June 25, 1933.)

The change in the relations between the two German states affected him the more deeply inasmuch as he had always been an advocate of the idea of a Greater Germany in the sense of the closest collaboration between the two German sister nations in all that concerned intellectual, political and economic life. Like Dr. Seipel, he recognized as a principle that Austria could not stand isolated from Germany in any Central European, or indeed in any European settlement. Not only did he regard their common traditions and their common civilization as indissoluble bonds, but from the economic point of view also he saw in a close collaboration between Austria and Germany the starting point for solving the economic difficulties which affected the whole of Central Europe. To all this their common experience at the front added – in his mind at any rate – a further link between them. It was he who at the end of the War laid the first foundations in the University of Vienna for the German Students' organization, the only association of Austrian and German students in the Austrian university. He recalled this in May, 1933, after the violent attack of the Nazi students upon the Catholic students of the Patriotic Party, and added: "My views have not changed one bit since those days. It is with great pain that I have to declare it."

He, a son of German peasant stock born in Lower Austria, needed no new movement to tell him what was German, what was traditional, what was racial, least of all a movement whose members could not boast of such attachment to the land as he, who derived his best qualities and powers from the German tradi-

tion of his Fatherland, and for love of that Fatherland had fought in the War for three years as a volunteer. Himself filled with the consciousness of his German origin, he expressed the feelings of the whole of the German population of Austria when he said:

From a racial point of view we, the children of a peasant stock which goes back for centuries, have nothing to learn. We live in a country whose rulers for six centuries wore the ancient German imperial crown; we live in a country which for centuries defended and maintained its German nationality against the Turks. We were, we are, and we remain Germans. (Salzburg, October 23, 1932.)

But precisely as the German people in Austria, as that branch of the Germanic people which for centuries held the leadership of the whole German nation, and still today regards itself as preserving the best traditions of German civilization, the Austrian nation must not yield its political independence. That independence is a necessary condition if Austria is to fulfil her task in Europe, which more today than ever is that of being a corner-stone in the European international system. With a glorious tradition of civilization behind her she feels doubly pledged to her past at the present day when Western civilization is more than ever threatened by disruptive forces. In times past the mediator of German civilization to the peoples of the Danube and the imperial ruler of Central Europe, today Austria sees her duty to consist in being once more, but in a new and higher sense, a centre of order and civilization in Europe. This task the German people of Austria can fulfil only in an independent Austria. Thus Austria's struggle against the N.S. Party is a struggle for her Germanic mission:

We are fully conscious of the common destiny which unites us to the Reich. But we are convinced that the German question is not to be solved by adding a couple of thousand square kilometres to the area of the German Reich. Austria has always had her own special mission. The German people of Austria are a connecting link with other nations and in the fulfilment of this task have rendered a great service to the German nation. We want in this way to serve the cause of the Germanic people as a whole and also the cause of European peace. In this way we have

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our own special mission as the second German state, a mission which we intend to fulfil in complete liberty and independence. (Vienna, April 30, 1933.)

Of the fate of Austria in the event of a *Gleichschaltung* there could be no doubt:

That this region, once governed for centuries by the imperial crown, should become a province of Berlin, that our indigenous people should be de-nationalized and put under foreign rule – this is what we have sought to prevent, and this is what we must always prevent. (Retz, November 15, 1933.)

And he is expressing the feeling of the nation when he says to his peasants:

Where it is a question of preserving the independence of our country we must be firm and inexorable. Peasants especially will understand what this means. If a brother of mine has a great estate and I possess a little farm, I would much rather be independent on my own little farm than be a servant to my brother. This liberty and independence we will preserve for our country. (Amstetten, November 26, 1933.)

It is our absolute intention to maintain the liberty and independence of Austria, with the motto: "However little she may be, still she all belongs to me, this Austria!" (Villach, March 4, 1934.)

Austria's fight for her freedom under the lead of her heroic Chancellor became an epic struggle of a little country against an overwhelming adversary such as is almost unparalleled in history. But the battle had not to be fought in open and honourable warfare. War had to be avoided. Hence the N.S. Party, with every means at its disposal which could be provided by a party enjoying unlimited power in a powerful State, sought to gain power in Austria itself and to subjugate this country to the party and the Government that ruled in Germany. Continual attempts were made from Germany by means of the wireless to undermine the position of the Austrian Government and to gain ground for National Socialism in Austria. In order to lower Austria in the esteem of other nations a fierce propaganda was set on foot against

Austria, no less vigorous than that campaign of other nations against Germany of which Germany herself had so much complained. The visa-tax of 1000 marks was levied upon tourists to attack Austria economically in one of her most vulnerable spots, and also to make the Austrian Government unpopular in the country. Still greater harm was done to Austrian trade by outrages upon railways, bridges, telephone wires and power-works, perpetrated at the instigation of the Austrian N.S. leaders in Munich. Hand-grenades, explosives and war material of every kind were introduced into Austria in great quantities. The greater part of the arms and ammunition possessed by the National Socialists in Austria and used by them in their campaign of terrorism was found afterwards to have come from Germany. The leaders of National Socialism who were working for a revolution and had been exiled from Austria for treasonable offences were helped in Germany with added means for the continuance of their activities. Money poured from Germany into the pockets of the N.S. Party in Austria to pay the expenses of propaganda and also the rewards for the perpetration of bombing outrages. When, on July 25, the Nazi revolutionaries made appeal from the Chancery to the German ambassador in Vienna for his intervention, and the latter thought himself bound in fact to intervene, it became undeniably clear, as Chancellor Dollfuss had declared, that:

These phenomena are only possible in the public life of Austria because the whole of the propaganda-material, speeches and the rest are provided from abroad, and because fellows here think that they will soon receive help from the German Reich, and for this belief they are prepared to go to any extremity. (Vienna, February 2, 1934.)

To all the revilings of the German Press he had only one answer:

It is infinitely sad to see what has been written during recent weeks in German newspapers about Austria and her Government. (Vienna, May 19, 1933.)

Nothing could move him from the path which he saw indicated to him by the laws of Christian peace and the reciprocal

duties of brother nations. Personal attacks upon himself or his colleagues left him unmoved. He answered only with the plain and simple statements:

1. That in the conflict between brother nations Austria was guiltless:

It is my earnest endeavour to do everything so that we may live in friendship with the German Reich. In no way have we ever started any quarrel. Everything we do is purely in self-defence. But Austria's self-respect must be maintained. (Dornbirn, June 30, 1933.)

2. That Austria was never the offending party, but had always remained upon the defensive:

Throughout the world we have tried to make friends; and I declare that many people cannot understand why we do not take stronger measures in this conflict which has been forced upon us by a party outside our frontiers. I can say only one thing: We have always been conscious of being Germans. If even our big brother – whether intentionally or otherwise – fails to understand us, and certain misunderstandings persist, then I declare: We have always only defended ourselves and have never taken the offensive. (Vienna, September 11, 1933.)

3. That Austria was always ready to come to an understanding, saving her honour and her liberty:

We have always declared our readiness to cooperate. Our German sentiments have restrained us from taking means for the preservation of our honour and independence which we should have taken in regard to anyone else. I declared in my Government pronouncement fifteen months ago that we want to live in friendship with Germany. We want nothing more than to be able to keep our own home in peace and quiet. The settlement of differences between the various groups among our own people is a matter of internal politics with which we may be left to deal in peace. I do not want to be bitter about this question today. But what is going on here between brothers passes the limit of what would be scarcely possible between strangers. Though we are a little country and a poor country, yet we have a right to our honour. (Vienna, September 11, 1933.)

Austria shrank even from appealing to the League of Nations in order not to bring disgrace upon the German name through the spectacle of one German State accusing the other:

Even during this conflict we have always remained Austrians. We might have taken much stronger steps. We might have replied to the Habicht address with reprisals. To the thousand-mark embargo we replied with a five-shilling duty. We have never taken advantage of the circumstance that the whole world regards our struggle with sympathy, in order to bring our quarrel before the tribunal of the League of Nations, although we might have done so, and although we had justice on our side. (Retz, November 15, 1933.)

Chancellor Dollfuss and the Austrian people demand: Austria's right, Austria's self-determination, Austria's honour:

We Austrians, we German folk of the Alps and the Danube want nothing else but to hold the country which we have inherited from our fathers and to shape it according to the will of our people. We have a heritage to guard which comes to us from centuries of German history and German civilization. I think that in other countries also it should be realized that, apart from the German Reich, Austria is the only country inhabited by a purely German population and that in regard to this domain, although it is small, although it is not National Socialist, at least those international formalities and diplomatic usages should be observed which in regard to other nations are taken as a matter of course. (Vienna, May 19, 1933.)

What Germany demands from the rest of the world, Austria demands from Germany; the recognition of her equality of status:

Our self-respect requires that we Austrians demand equality of political and military rights with all nations...and this equality of rights must be recognized in regard to us by every one – the German Reich included. (Vienna, December 31, 1933.)

Austria intends to ensure for herself that right upon which the comity of nations rests and without which a lasting European peace is impossible:

Our great neighbour will end by realizing that from an international point of view it is an unsafe game to play, that a great

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Power should continually menace the liberty and independence of a country which, though territorially small, is generally recognized to possess a great importance in Central Europe, and indeed in the whole European system. I deplore this the more deeply because it is a question of two countries which are united by the closest ties of blood and by an ancient common history... A country which in practice treats its small neighbour on the principle that might is right, runs the risk of cutting the ground of right from under its own feet when it has to deal with other countries. It is in the interest of all of us, great States and small alike, not to forsake the ground of common justice, the ground of the observance of international agreements and international usages; for the tensions in Europe are serious. (Vienna, January 18, 1934.)

The more obvious it became that National Socialism in Germany was opposed to German ideas of justice and liberty, that it menaced the Christian foundations of German civilization, the more determined became Austria's stand for her liberty and independence. She became the champion of the German ideal:

We are a people which for centuries has held the leadership among the Germanic peoples in Europe. We have remained German, and the peasants of Austria especially can claim always to have preserved the German spirit – and they always will. In our opinion the German spirit must manifest itself in forms other than those in which National Socialism expresses it. We believe in variety. As good Germans we object to being moulded into an enforced uniformity. And therefore in this German land of ours we intend to create new forms, but Austrian forms, civilized forms, to safeguard the future of our people. (Vienna, February 2, 1934.)

We want a German Austria and a free Austria. It is our task to preserve the German spirit in all the variety of its forms, to save it from being moulded into a uniformity. Especially we Austrians are called to form a bridge between the Germanic world and other nations. At a time when the world shrinks from a certain German spirit, we want to show the world that we possess a Christian German civilization. (Dornbirn June, 30, 1933.)

Austria must champion the Christian political ideal among the Germanic peoples:

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Moreover, I am convinced that in this German land of ours it is our duty to refashion social and economic life according to truly German forms, and to give an example to the Germanic people as a whole. It is my conviction that it is our task to give an example of the Christian State. We believe that we are thus doing a service to the Germanic people as a whole. (Retz, November 15, 1933.)

In contrast to National Socialism, Austria must rise in defence of the Christian faith among the German people. Referring to the terroristic methods of National Socialism in one of his last great speeches, on June 29, at Feldkirch, the Chancellor said: "We must oppose an outlook and a conception of society which make such crimes possible."

It is the mission of the German people of Austria today to maintain those principles of civilization by which Germanism and Christianity are bound together in an indissoluble unity:

With us, to be Germans means also to be Christians at the same time. As the German people were once brought by Christianity out of paganism to the highest pitch of civilization, so it is our ambition now once more to realize in our German land a devout, humble and truly practical Christianity. Perhaps the time may come when what we are striving to bring about in little Austria will also be achieved outside our borders, wherever there is a will and a way. (Feldkirch, June 29, 1934.)

In his struggle for the independence of Austria, Chancellor Dollfuss had no other end in view but peace, as he declared with his dying breath; an honourable peace which from those of Nazi sympathies demanded indeed the recognition of an independent Austria, but was willing at the same time to leave the way open for their cooperation in the Government. With the German Reich, too, he wanted an honourable peace, the conditions for which he had clearly laid down. With an unparalleled patience and long-suffering which, as the Chancellor well knew, was not always understood even by his friends, and by his enemies was finally stigmatized as weakness, he appealed again and again for understanding and reconciliation:



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We understand that there should be a certain activity on the part of the National movement in Austria. We know that men will always group themselves in such organizations. But these groups must first get new leaders and recognize their own German Fatherland, Austria. We want to be friends with all Germans, we are always ready – I say it today for the fifth time in public – to seek ways and means to overcome difficulties and misunderstandings. This Government existed before the present Government in Germany and worked in friendly collaboration with the German Government of that time. We will not change. We are still ready to live on terms of friendship with the Reich. But a condition of that friendship cannot and will not be, that a party which lays its hand to bombs and hand-grenades shall take part in the government of Austria. (Innsbruck, June 29, 1933.)

He emphatically reiterates that a movement which commits atrocities against the State shall have no part in governing the community:

A movement which influences youth in such a way that young fellows will proceed against peaceful folk with bombs, hand-grenades and ambushes, a movement which uses methods of anarchy, has shown that it is not fit to govern and that from these people we cannot hope for a solution of the country's difficulties. We shall have no rest, relations with Germany will not be settled, until this movement has disappeared from Austria. (Dornbirn, June 29, 1933.)

Can anybody who is in earnest about the good of his people and the German traditions of Austria or other lands really believe that the German people is going to find the way to prosperity by means of hand-grenades, bombs and ambushes, and by a system of lies? (Vienna, June 24, 1933.)

They must show what Austria means to them before they will be allowed to enter the ranks of the Patriotic Front:

With those leaders who train youth to anarchist methods we refuse to have anything to do. We know that in the National movement there are also forces for good. But if these are to come into operation there must be new and untainted leaders

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who, above all, are in no doubt that Austria is their Fatherland. (Hollabrun, June 25, 1933.)

As the Chancellor's will and testament concerning Austria's relation to Germany, we must take the words which he repeated so often in the course of his speeches:

We were always ready to take any course reconcilable with our honour in order to remove misunderstandings and to relieve tensions. The world today is so full of tensions on every side that we would willingly contribute to relieve them where possible. But our honour, our liberty, the independence of Austria are things over which there can be no compromise. (Gross-Mugl, October 29, 1933.)

Austria is always ready to be at peace with Germany:

Our loyalty to our national spirit has not been lessened by recent events. Now as before we are unswervingly loyal to our Germanic people as a whole. We Catholic intellectuals – I purposely include myself – want everything that is compatible with our national self-consciousness, particularly we want to maintain ourselves in readiness for the day which will once more unite us in friendship with the great country of Germany. (Vienna, September 9, 1933.)



## CHAPTER V

### AUSTRIA THE FATHERLAND

“Austria has defeated her enemies on both fronts. The outcome of the struggle has been a revival of the consciousness, such as was never known in this country before the War – the consciousness that we are Austrians. Only when our Fatherland was threatened did we see what Fatherland and home meant to us. In the time of danger we realized for the first time: This is the soil on which the German peasant has lived for centuries. This is our home, the soil of our fathers. Therefore we said to ourselves: Above all party sympathies there must be a platform upon which as Austrians we all stand together, and so the Patriotic Front came into being.”

(Linz, April 29, 1934.)

**I**T FREQUENTLY HAPPENS THAT AFTER A PERIOD OF HUMILIATION and affliction nations arise with a renewed spirit and with concentrated strength to reach a higher level of historical greatness. And there are always two forces which work together to stimulate a nation at such a time: the remembrance of the glorious ages of the past, which pledges descendants to emulate their ancestors, and the consciousness of responsibility to coming generations who will hold their forbears to account for their fate.

The people of Austria is the inheritor of those powers and characteristics which are the natural outcome of her geographical situation. Dwelling on the banks of the Danube, the main artery of Central Europe, it has always been naturally disposed to friendly communications with neighbouring peoples. Itself the possessor of a high level of German civilization, it was an indefatigable pioneer of the German spirit in the far south-eastern region of Europe. Through contact with other nations, Austrian civilization

received added vigour and richness, so that Vienna became for centuries a great centre of European culture. In the twin monarchy the German race of Austria, building upon the German ideal, created an organized community of nations such as to constitute a miniature Europe; and herein history will always recognize the unique mission of the German people of Austria, a mission which it has still to fulfil in the future. The German people of Austria has always been the champion of that conception of empire which, born of the vital union of Christianity with Germanism, bases the order of the future upon the super-national association of those peoples who are bound together by geographical situation, by natural development and by a common civilization.

But this is only a part of the Austrian inheritance. The Germanic people of Austria have been characterized throughout history by an intimate conjunction of Catholicism with popular tradition. Austrian civilization is of essentially Catholic origin. The country itself is marked by the monuments of an unbroken Catholic tradition, from the beginnings of Christian civilization in the West until the time of the Renaissance. And by rejecting the Protestant schism the Germans of Austria showed once again the inexhaustible fertility of their traditions and the vital power of their Catholicism.

It was providential that the reawakening of the Austrian people took place at a time when Austria was celebrating the greatest event in her history – the liberation of Vienna from the Turks. Chancellor Dollfuss thus recalled this glorious episode:

In this very year Austria is commemorating memorable days which even to those beyond her borders bring recollections of her glorious past. We celebrate the five-hundredth anniversary of St. Stephen's Cathedral, a symbol of the proudest period of our Christian and German history. At the same time we commemorate the saving of Western civilization through the liberation of Vienna from the Turks two hundred and fifty years ago. For a thousand years the course of European history was determined upon Austrian soil, for more than six hundred years the German emperors ruled in Vienna and from this city shaped the world's events. The Austrian is proud of his country, proud of being an

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Austrian. Austria has therefore the right and the intention of shaping her own future in freedom. (Vienna, May 21, 1933.)

Austria, the German State of the eastern border, is pledged to her glorious past:

We Austrians have had the mission for centuries of being the vehicle of civilization to other peoples, and in this community of states and peoples we Germans in Austria have not lost our own individuality. For more than half a millennium Vienna was the seat of the Emperor of the Germans. Let us not be ungrateful to our fathers and their work by forgetting or belittling the achievements of our German race. (Innsbruck, April 22, 1933.)

Austria with her inexhaustible wealth of culture has a European mission:

Austria has a European mission. Situated in the middle of the continent, Austria is the great natural mediator between German civilization, of which Austria was for centuries the most ancient and foremost possessor, and other nations. It is precisely their association for centuries with other nations which has made the Austrians more pliable, more patient, more sympathetic towards foreign civilizations, though they have always been, and still are, intent upon preserving the purity of their own individual form of culture. (Vienna, May 21, 1933.)

Austria, as the connecting bridge between the nations, is the natural custodian of the ideal of empire:

Austria is a country whose population from north to south and from east to west is wholly German, with a fast dwindling number of inhabitants of another language, who nevertheless feel perfectly at home in our midst. We have not only our own actual and political interests to safeguard, but it is our task also to ensure the cooperation of the nations of Central Europe in the interests of Central Europe, and to lend our help to that end. We in Austria have always had the task, and in a certain measure have acquired special qualifications, to be a connecting link between nations, to be a bridge; and we have to fulfil this mediatorship between nations as a German State. (Budapest, February 8, 1934.)

Austria, thanks to the intimate conjunction of German tradition and Catholic Christianity, has produced a high form of civilization:

Here in the course of centuries a great wealth of culture has been created, from here for centuries came the government and the guidance of the German people, from here civilization was carried to the south and to the east. In the "dark" Middle Ages the wonderful synthesis of Germanism and Catholicism built the Cathedral of St. Stephen, which the whole world beholds with admiration. (Vienna, October 19, 1933.)

Austria knows that she has the power to fashion a new social order:

I am convinced that it is the will of a higher Power that we should maintain Austria, this land of ours, with its glorious history, though now on a smaller scale; I am convinced that this Austria is to give an example to other nations in the shaping of her public life, that we in this land of Austria have a great and valuable service to render to the Germanic people as a whole. (September 11, 1933.)

Austria as a Germanic State is to become the nucleus of a Christian reconstruction of the West:

It is our will and intention to organize public life in Austria according to the spirit of Christianity and the principles of religion. In this way we hope to restore this country to economic and spiritual prosperity. In this way we shall keep this Germanic soil, on which our fathers have dwelt for more than a thousand years, this Germanic soil which stretches from the Alpine country to the Danube, German and independent within and without. We Austrians have a great mission. Perhaps it was necessary for us to become a small country, though at the time we did not understand; perhaps it was necessary after Liberalism to make our way through Socialism, or what was still more unpleasant, through a mixture of Liberalism and Marxism, in order to learn the lesson that we must take a new way suited to our people.... We want to give the example of a real, honest attempt at forming a Christian State. (Graz, April 15, 1934.)

Austria realizes that the hopes of the Catholic world are centred upon her:

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We intend that this German land of the Alps and the Danube shall once again be a country which will prove to mankind that under a new form of government and with a social order inspired by the Christian ideal a people can be happy and contented. (Innsbruck, June 30, 1934.)

Austria has thus a special Christian and German mission:

We have faith in our country, we have faith in the Germanic mission of this country on the Danube. We believe in a German nationality of our own special type, just as Austria has always had her own special mission within the framework of the Germanic people as a whole. We will not be unfaithful to the history of our country. With pride we will point to the great things which our forefathers have done. We too will be faithful to our mission, and we hope that future generations will speak with gratitude and respect of those who in a time of economic and spiritual upheaval have saved this nation intact. (Vienna, January 22, 1934.)

In his address on the last day of the year, 1933, Chancellor Dollfuss was able to say:

The watchword, "Austria awake," which I pronounced before 30,000 Tyrolese at Innsbruck at the end of April this year, had already been made an accomplished fact a few months later. Austria, Austrian consciousness, is awake and will never lapse again. (Vienna, December 31, 1933.)

The great movement of reconstruction which was to unite the whole nation in a great effort for the liberty of Austria was the Patriotic Front:

The Patriotic Front does not represent a single movement or a single party; it is an active movement of reconstruction. Freed from the party restrictions of former times, we want to unite all men, irrespective of party, who recognize Austria as their Fatherland, in order to renovate this country constitutionally, socially and economically. (Vienna, January 22, 1934.)

Only the Patriotic Front can enable Austria to fulfil its present task:

This little red white and red ribbon is to unite all Austrians, from north to south and from east to west, all Austrians who rec-

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ognize Austria as their Fatherland; it is to be the badge of all those who declare: We want to bring a free and independent Austria to a better future. (Vienna, June 24, 1933.)

Chancellor Dollfuss thus describes the obligations of those who wear the Patriotic colours:

He who wears this ribbon declares for the independence of Austria his Fatherland....

He who wears this ribbon pledges himself to foster in himself and in others loyalty and devotion to his country....

He who wears this ribbon pledges himself to help to bridge all the differences which may exist among those who belong to the Patriotic Front....

He who wears this ribbon pledges himself not to belong to any association or society which has as its object either the renunciation of Austria's independence or the fomenting of class warfare....

He who wears this ribbon pledges himself not to belong to any society whose aim is the Kulturkampf, which seeks to thrust Christianity out of public life...." (Eisenstadt, July 2, 1933.)

He who wears this ribbon...pledges himself to bring it about that every individual member and every organization in the Patriotic Front shall always have one end in view: Austria. (Vienna, June 24, 1933.)

"Austria," then, is the governing idea which is to weld the Patriotic Front into an indissoluble unity. The various organizations which belong to it are to keep intact their own fundamental principles and aims, as the Chancellor clearly said, but only so far as these did not interfere with the purpose of the Front, to the furtherance of which all are pledged. Nothing in the Chancellor's Austrian legacy is so necessary a condition for the fulfilment of his complete desire as perfect unity in the Patriotic Front, in which he saw the future of Austria.

This little country in the middle of Europe is therefore not content merely to exist and to preserve its own independence, nor can it be satisfied with being merely tolerated by neighbouring States. In spite of its small area it is conscious of being a decisive power in the European system, though the only influence it is



able to exert is of the moral and spiritual order. Though Austria is small it is conscious of being a power-centre of European civilization, and it is persuaded of its mission as a Germanic Christian State to help in the work of leavening and renovating the social, economic and political life of Europe.

The true greatness of a State does not consist so much in the development of its external power as in the contribution which it is able to make to human civilization as a whole. For history shows that it has not been the most powerful States which have given the strongest impetus to man's true and intellectual development. Earlier generations of the Germanic people of Austria have described the Austrian "idea" with the initials:

A. E. I. O. U.

*(Austria erit in orbe ultima).*

Chancellor Dollfuss chose this as the device of the Patriotic banner: "Austria will live forever."



## CHAPTER VI

# ECONOMIC RECOVERY

“We intend to surmount our difficulties by our own power; we intend by our own power to reconstitute our economic life. For we are conscious that the vigour of our economic life is an indispensable condition of our national independence.”

(Vienna, November 25, 1932.)

**F**EW COUNTRIES WERE AFFECTED SO MUCH AS AUSTRIA BY the economic crisis which followed the War. Economic links forged by centuries of historical development were now broken, and whereas previously Austria had predominated in the economic unit constituted by the monarchy, now the various states into which it had been dismembered, striving as they did each to form their own connections, had a restrictive effect upon the economic life of Austria which could not but be prejudicial. The world economic crisis redoubled these difficulties by emphasizing Austria's isolation from the economic arteries which had always sustained her life. Clearly Austria needed a political economist of the first order to save her from complete collapse. True, the Powers which had brought about the situation, but were nevertheless convinced that Austria, as a cornerstone in the Central European system, must continue to exist, intervened once or twice with loans. But unless Austria was to be the prey of her neighbours she must maintain the foundations of her own economic life.

And, in point of fact, Chancellor Dollfuss was twice the saviour of his country. He saved it first by creating a new national consciousness, and secondly by making Austria economically viable. The second feat was as great as the first, and the first would

have been impossible without the second. It is indeed providential that Seipel the politician, who had used the Christian conception of political theory to prove to the world the necessity of Austria's existence, should have been followed by Dollfuss the political economist, who used his knowledge of fundamental economic principles and his own experience in a vital department of national economy to create once more the foundations which should make that existence possible. And if Chancellor Dollfuss succeeded in breaking through the economic barriers which must otherwise have choked Austria out of existence and in giving to Austria a central place in European politics, then this was because his economic learning and experience assured a special place for him among the statesmen of Europe. He was the only political economist among them, and as such he approached the European situation precisely at the point upon which they were all at sea, the economic crisis.

The same is true of his constructive work at home. Here, too, he saw where the work of restoration must be begun. With unique sureness of purpose, prudence and courage he succeeded in an extraordinarily short time in achieving results which are unparalleled in any other country similarly affected by the crisis. But again it was always the establishment of the national economy that he set before the nation as the first purpose to be attained. He thus achieved two things. He exposed the bungling efforts which party politics had been making to solve this vital problem, and the nation now saw that here was a man at work who had made his own those economic anxieties which so sorely oppressed them all. And thereby he was able, at a time when the nation was hopelessly divided, to gain the confidence gradually of more and more sections of the community, first of the peasants and then of others; so that his work of economic reconstruction was the first step towards his assuming the leadership of the whole nation.

To appreciate the Chancellor's work of economic reconstruction it is necessary to recall the financial and economic situation of Austria when he assumed the task of government. It seemed impossible to check the devaluation of the currency; national finances were imperilled both by the extraordinary fall in the rev-

enues and by liabilities in connection with the *Creditanstalt*; the resources of the National Bank were so shrunken that it was faced with the prospect of suspending interest on foreign loans. Thus the very foundations of national economic life were threatened. To restore them was the Chancellor's first care. By his indefatigable efforts both at home and abroad he was able to stabilize the currency by negotiating the Lausanne loan. Having thus restored confidence, he balanced the national accounts, succeeded in reducing within tolerable limits the liability of the Government arising out of the *Creditanstalt*, and in raising a national loan which gave evidence of the general restoration of confidence in the new Austria.

With regard to this feature of his work of reconstruction Chancellor Dollfuss acknowledged the debt of gratitude which Austria owed to Dr. Seipel:

This country was enabled to recover from the shocks of the War and to resume its normal life mainly through the activity of a great Austrian, perhaps the greatest of all Austrians, Dr. Seipel. Dr. Seipel was the first to check economic collapse and to call a halt to the inflation of the currency, and he liberated the nation from the domination of Marxian Socialism. Today and always in the future we must be grateful to that great Austrian who foresaw our present times and our present problems long before any of us did. Dr. Seipel's work rendered the economic revival of Austria possible. (Innsbruck, April 22, 1933.)

The Chancellor's economic policy is characterized by a special emphasis upon agriculture. Admittedly this is partly explained by the fact that he began his public life in this sphere of national economy, and there is no doubt that the experience which he gained there deeply influenced his general policy. Nevertheless the reasons which led him to attribute to agriculture such a fundamental importance were rooted in a basic principle of political and economic science, a principle of especial significance for Austria, now isolated from its former economic connections: No country can be truly free and independent unless its economic life is assured by an agriculture which can sustain it from within:

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If you do not ensure food supplies from within your own country you surrender an essential part of your political and economic freedom. (Graz, November 6, 1932.)

In the second place he fully realized that the peasantry were the ground in which the restoration of the national economy must be rooted, and that therefore their existence must be maintained as a matter of national policy:

The times are past when we needed to be reminded that the peasant is not a mere plaything. We all realize that the peasantry, nationally as well as economically, must be the foundation of a healthy people. (Budapest, June 14, 1934.)

Thirdly, he saw clearly that collapse could be avoided only if the home market were built up by increasing the buying power of the peasants, according to the old recognized rule: If the peasant has money the whole country has it:

I am absolutely convinced, and I venture to declare publicly, that agriculture is the foundation of the economic life of the nation. I say the foundation, not the only legitimate calling. The possibility of development in practically every sphere of economics is not only fundamentally influenced by the situation of agriculture, but entirely dependent upon it.... In my view, especially for provincial towns and markets, the best trade policy is a good agrarian policy. Trade and industry, whether in the country or in cities, can only develop if they have a consistently good consumer in the peasantry. If the peasant has no money then the best of trade policies is of no use. (Haag, Lower Austria, October 3, 1932.)

The basis of the whole of the Chancellor's economic policy was that the world economic crisis had arisen in agriculture, and that therefore it was only in agriculture that the attempt to overcome it could be usefully begun:

It is significant that the first complaints of economic distress heard in the world came from agriculture. The agrarian crisis was the first economic crisis, and it is from this that the world crisis took its rise. This may be taken as an indication of the close and

indissoluble interdependence which exists between the various trades and callings, and as a proof that no one trade can be distressed without the others suffering with it. (Innsbruck, April 22, 1933.)

The results of his economic policy justified the fundamental principles thus stated; for the unique success which he achieved in his economic policy as Chancellor was only possible because he had prepared the ground for it by his work as director of the Chamber of Agriculture and as Federal Minister of Agriculture. But the full scope of that policy only becomes apparent when one realizes how exactly he observed the limits prescribed by the inclusion of agriculture within the general economic policy of the nation. In certain circles doubt had been felt whether he was conscious of those limits. But it soon became clear that his agrarian policy was only part of a general and systematic policy in which the interests of every trade and of the national economy as a whole were equally safeguarded. He regarded it as a principle that:

Austria is economically dead if the peasant goes under. But... peasants cannot live either unless trade and industry flourish. (Salzburg, May 10, 1934.)

With his keen sense of practical realities he could not fail to see what were the special conditions of Austria's economic life and what was needed for its revival:

The very fact that we in Austria have such favourable relations existing between the various productive groups; the fact that we are not a purely agricultural country but that we have a happy blending of production and consumption in every branch of trade and industry is, to my mind, one of the essential guarantees that an organic revival of our economic life is possible. (Salzburg, June 5, 1932.)

Hence in his trade policy he is guided by the principle:

We want to protect every branch of production, not only one trade or calling, but every indigenous production. That is the great aim of our trade policy, to raise our exports wherever possible above the maximum of our imports. (Vienna, July 4, 1932.)

The aim of his trade policy is thus clear: A self-supporting agriculture means a great saving for the country as well as the provision of work for a great section of the community. But this must not happen at the expense of the consumer by inflating prices, and still less at the expense of the industrial export trade. The assured position of agriculture, on the contrary, must give the Government a free hand in its trade policy.

The success of the Chancellor's policy may be seen from the fact that the former trade liabilities of 900 million shillings have today been reduced by a third, with no reduction in the gross foreign trade of the country.

He could rightly make the claim:

I think we may say today that in Austria we have discovered new methods in the sphere of economic policy; that in the matter of dairy produce, cattle-farming and the increase of exports we have achieved things which have hitherto been regarded as impracticable. (Salzburg, May 10, 1934.)

If these words contain an admission that his economic thought is conditioned in system and method by his practical experience in agriculture he has good reasons that this should be so. For he says:

To study agrarian methods is to follow the methods of nature. Who can be nearer to nature, who can better discover the natural laws of economic society than the farmer, the agriculturalist? Our task in agrarian policy is to find new methods of organization which will be natural, and thus to follow the natural principles of economic life. (Budapest, June 14, 1934.)

These natural laws of economic society are contradicted by Socialism and Bolshevism as well as by Liberalism with its unlimited freedom. Neither extreme can lay the foundations of a true economic social order:

We have become firmly convinced that the methods which deprive the peasant of his free right of disposal on the land, the methods which transfer the administration of the land to the State – Bolshevism, in other words – are the worst possible methods for the maintenance of agriculture, and therefore for the

maintenance of the nation. The opposite extreme is unlimited and unrestrained liberty. What evils have resulted from this, the peasants of the last decade have been able to learn by experience. (Budapest, June 14, 1934.)

The true economic system, required by the natural laws of human society, is that which is founded upon a just co-relation of the liberty of the individual to the rights of the community:

It is our task to find the best way possible to safeguard the freedom and independence of the individual, and on the other hand to prevent the abuses of unbridled liberty, in order to render possible a solid and consolidated development. (Budapest, June 14, 1934.)

The guild conception is the foundation of those organizations which the peasantry, with its innate instinct for the natural laws of life, formed for their own protection under the stress of the want and misery which had resulted from the unrestrained freedom of Liberalism:

Thus in spite of ourselves we have been led to organize. It was the needs of the time, the needs of an age dominated by unrestricted economic liberty, that gave birth to our guild system which has supported us in good times as well as in bad. The guild was the first organization, whose purpose it was not to deprive individuals of their economic life but to maintain the independence of the individual, cooperating to regulate the markets and the prices, and thus ensuring for him the foundations of his existence. (Budapest, June 14, 1934.)

It is in a wider interpretation of that same conception that he sees the way to restoring economic cooperation between countries whose geographical situation and historical development seem to design them for economic reciprocity:

We need not only the organization of single branches, but also the organization of the whole economic system and of trade. We come thus to the question of international trade policy. We in Austria also need to create new facilities between nation and nation, to enable us to establish regular commercial relations with neighbouring countries, especially with those connected



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with us by a common tradition of centuries. Therefore we have tried to discover new methods whereby we may not only learn what possibilities there are of reciprocal supply, but also put them into practice. Thus preferences and similar facilities will enable an organized exchange of goods between ourselves and other countries. The recent Roman pacts are a most gratifying proof that international cooperation, truly organizing cooperation, can surmount even the greatest difficulties in order to consolidate economic relations. The more extensively this system is developed and the sooner it is put into practice the sooner will our economic conditions be effectively stabilized. (Budapest, June 14, 1934.)

He had good reason to be pleased that the system of preferences was able to be adopted, for it was he who had discovered therein the foundations of a new regulation of international trade. He was able to state in the early part of 1932:

Already in the year 1930 I declared before the commission of agrarian experts of the League of Nations that I regarded the system of the "most favoured nation" as the chief cause of the crisis in Central Europe. It needed in my view to be supplemented by a new system of agreements based upon the rights of neighbouring nations and preferences. At Geneva, then, I was as one crying in the wilderness. But already a year later countries were giving close attention to the preference question, and in all subsequent agrarian conferences it was the order of the day. Today in Europe the preference system is openly admitted to be the one hope of salvation from the prevailing economic distress. (Linz, March 28, 1932.)

The decisive factor was that by a judicious application of the preference idea new facilities for international cooperation could be created without prejudicial consequences for any of the nations concerned:

A rational, economically conceived system of preferences cannot be detrimental to the State which grants the preference and can only be of assistance to the State which receives it. A sound economic structure is possible on this basis. (Vienna, July 4, 1932.)

He explained this clearly at the World Economic Conference in London:

Countries exporting corn complain that the importing countries hamper the importing of grain by excessive duties and restrictive measures. But it is a fact that, if importing States were to remove their duties on corn, the exporting countries would not receive a cent more for their corn than would otherwise be the case. On the other hand, in the importing countries prices would fall, and such countries could not allow this for the sake of their farming population. It comes to this, then, that the production and the exports of the exporting countries must be regulated in such a way as to eliminate the danger of a fall in prices. Then importing countries which are in a position to cooperate could abolish their duties and thus provide facilities for imports without endangering their own agricultural population. In this case, as in many others, imports have been restricted in order to avoid the consequences of a fall in prices of the commodities concerned, and to prevent wholesale dumping. To perfect our organization is the most efficacious means of establishing rational prices and of removing hindrances to trade. (London, June 14, 1933.)

The Chancellor regarded it as a most important duty to discover new ways of economic cooperation between nations, for he saw in the economic isolation of different countries the original cause of the world crisis:

I see the cause of the world economic crisis in the fact that, during the war in Europe, production among the belligerent nations had been crippled, while in other countries new factories had been built. At first the over-production of the latter was counter-balanced by the necessity of supplying post-war needs. But in later years this led to enormous over-production and to the accumulation of unwieldy supplies. There followed the natural reactions upon industry, trade, agriculture, and also upon the currency. A shrinking process then set in, which must now give way to a re-organization of production. (Vienna, September 3, 1932.)

It would have been surprising if an economic policy which was so clear concerning the causes of the world economic crisis

had not been directed in the first place to the re-organization and reconstruction of economic cooperation in Central Europe. For it was here especially that economic associations had been dissolved. Previously there had been a system of mutual supply. The industrial countries of the west had bought their corn from the east, while the agricultural countries of the east had procured from them the industrial goods which they needed. This economic organism was now shattered, and apparent national or economic interests had led the various countries to abandon the close cooperation of the past. But soon they came to realize that they had thus lost the very markets which were of vital importance to them. Austria was especially affected by this isolation, and found herself forced by the circumstances to do everything possible to re-establish economic contact. Dr. Dollfuss was an ideal leader in such a cause.

Agrarian policy, according to the view of Chancellor Dollfuss, must be founded on the natural laws of human society. And the most important of those laws he saw incorporated in the conception of the guild, or workers' association. There was one fundamental law which dominated his economic policy, and the whole of his general policy was influenced and unified by it. "The central problem in the regulation of human society and intercourse" was, as he said to me a few days before the promulgation of the new Constitution in 1934, "the just relation between unity and liberty." The new Constitution of Austria was to incorporate that just relation and thus make a return to the natural law of human society, a law repudiated by Liberalism and Socialism, but the law which alone could be the basis of true order, whether economic, social or political. It is the law that both the individual and the community have rights, which must be observed if the social order is to subsist. This is the basis of liberty: the liberty of the individual, of the family, of the class, of the various voluntary associations in the community, and of single nations in the community of nations. But it is also the basis of unity: that unity which arises from authority, the right which the Government has to control the members of the community. This law contains in germ the corporative principle, that is, the construction of the

social order according to estates, or vocational groups endowed with autonomous rights. But the same law demands the re-organization of political life on the basis of an authority which acknowledges the law of all nations. And Chancellor Dollfuss was only applying the same principle to the whole European system when he pleaded for a harmonious combination of unity and liberty as the fundamental basis for international peace and cooperation.



## CHAPTER VII

# CORPORATE ORGANIZATION

“The time of the Capitalist system, the time of the economic system based upon Liberal and Capitalist principles, is past. The time of Marxian and materialistic government is over. Party domination is no more.”

(Vienna, September 11, 1933.)

“We intend to take as the foundation of our constitutional life the corporative principle, or organization according to vocational groups, as proclaimed in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. It is our ambition to be the first country to give a practical response in political life to the appeal of this noble Encyclical.”

(Vienna, September 9, 1933.)

**T**HESE SENTENCES MARK THE END OF A PHASE IN AUSTRIAN history. How false was the conception of liberty by which Liberalism had promised to lead mankind to new heights, had become manifest in an unprecedented crisis involving State, economic life, society and civilization. In the name of that liberty the natural and essential foundations of all human society had been shaken. As economic interests became more and more the decisive factor, unrestricted competition caused men to become the prey of blind economic forces, social order lost its coherence, and all those antagonisms came to the fore which have stamped liberalized Capitalism as the social evil of the time. These antagonisms were chiefly due to the fact that the majority of the workers were totally dependent upon the labour market and were thus deprived of an assured living wage and of their social dignity and standing. The disruption of the social fabric became complete when Socialism continued the work of Liberalism, and by propagating the doctrine of class warfare

widened the antagonisms already existing to chasms which it seemed impossible to bridge. When to economic and class warfare there were added party strife and the Kulturkampf, then the final remnant of binding forces in the community also began to disappear.

Hence the first task in the reconstruction of Austria was to fight those forces which had always torn the people asunder: the Liberal idea of freedom and the Marxian idea of class warfare. The natural links in the social life of the community must be restored and the natural foundations of the social structure laid once more. Now it was precisely in this important matter of social reconstruction that Austria was found to be fortunate. She was richly endowed with associations of the ancient guild type, which had remained flourishing until the last generation; and in Austria more than anywhere else men had clung to the corporative idea as the best antidote to the disruptive influences of Liberalism and Socialism.

It was not without reason, therefore, that Austria felt herself called upon to be the first country in the world to put into practice the ideas of *Quadragesimo Anno*. Dr. Seipel, with a burning fever already upon him, had spent his last remaining strength in preparing the way by lectures delivered in Vienna and the provinces. Dr. Dollfuss, having already applied these Catholic principles of social reconstruction so far as it was possible in the realm of agriculture, now proceeded to organize the national community on the basis of vocational groups or "estates." On the day of the promulgation of the new Constitution Chancellor Dollfuss paid a tribute to the memory of his great predecessor:

Let us think today of our great Dr. Seipel...and let us think how he devoted the last years of his life to teaching us the ideal of corporative organization, of corporative reconstruction. Therefore those who in the spirit of the new Constitution help to make corporative life a real thing in Austria are executing the last will and testament of Dr. Seipel, that great Austrian, and moreover are maintaining the inheritance delivered to us by six centuries of German civilization. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

That the reconstruction of the Austrian nation was to be on a corporative basis, Dr. Dollfuss declared immediately after the

automatic dissolution of the National Diet. There was no hope, he said, of ensuring a sound public administration by a merely superficial reform of the Constitution. The only lines upon which the reconstruction of the social order could be undertaken by a Catholic Government were those of the great Papal Encyclical recently issued:

It is now our task to find a new form of representative government: we will discharge this duty conscientiously.... We will see that the German-Christian spirit is once more incorporated in our Constitution. It is therefore a question of finding a suitable form of government so that our Constitution will embody the conception of the corporative organization which for centuries was the foundation of our political life, and is required by the Holy Father in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. I think that we Catholics in Austria may be proud if, during this Holy Year, during this year of the great "Catholic Day," we succeed in reducing to practice the prescriptions of the Holy Father for the reconstitution of the social order. (Vienna, April 2, 1933.)

From the beginning the aim to be achieved is the elimination of class warfare and the laying of new foundations for the social structure of the nation:

Our object in the sphere of constitutional reform is to revive vocational and corporative consciousness in the sense of the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, which has taught us new ways for the reconstruction of society. We want to do away with class warfare. We want to accustom our people again to the idea of vocational solidarity, vocational rights and duties. The idea that master and man, the so-called employer and employee, are in opposition to each other must disappear. They must learn that they belong to each other, that they must collaborate harmoniously in human society for their mutual good and for the good of the community as a whole. (Vienna, May 29, 1933.)

The task which is to be fulfilled by the establishment of the corporative State cannot be achieved by resuscitating any of the old forms of government. The Chancellor especially emphasizes the fact that the corporative organization cannot be a system of political domination, as it was to some extent in the Middle Ages when the peasantry, for example, were not accorded full rights

as an “estate.” All groups must possess complete rights and full recognition. The guild system of later times lost its vitality and became unequal to its new tasks:

In the corporative organization of those days the peasant class did not receive due consideration, indeed it was neglected. Trade and industry had become stagnated in their guilds and led only a formal existence. And the reason was precisely that the privileges of single classes were too much emphasized. So the time came when the defenceless individual became the prey of the power of others, and when finally money entered into power the poorer and weaker section of the community was oppressed. (Vienna, September 11, 1933.)

In a few clear, simple sentences the Chancellor explains in what the essence of the corporative organization consists:

Anyone who speaks of “estate” or corporation, and thinks that it means an employers’ organization, a new political Front, misuses the word corporation. A corporation is not only an organization of the employers, rather it is an organization of all those who owe their existence to one particular trade or profession. Evidently the corporative idea recognizes the authority of the master in the trade or craft, for it is he who ultimately bears the economic risk. But the conception also requires that the apprentice and the craftsman should be recognized as colleagues and as men, that ultimately they should also be partners in the business. Apprentice and craftsman should have an interest in the thriving condition of the business.... For a man his place of work should be his home once more. For this it is before all things necessary that the employer should feel it his duty so to conduct himself as a man that his fellow-workers will feel themselves to be men in their relations with him. (Salzburg, May 8, 1931.)

The Constitution itself had merely to establish the necessary conditions for the corporative structure. With regard to these conditions the Chancellor laid down the following principles: (1) Scope is to be allowed as far as possible for free development, though the leadership in the work of construction must be reserved to the State. (2) The corporations must be built up beginning from below, in order to ensure a real autonomy. (3) But



above all there must be a complete change of outlook in individuals, because only thus can the corporative organization become a real organization of the community:

Evidently, we intend to use in this work of reconstruction the economic organisms already in existence. The Constitution itself will leave wide scope for the development, grouping and organization of the various vocational associations, and the legislation will establish the legal norms according to which they are to be formed. (Vienna, April 6, 1934.)

The formation and re-formation of the estates is not stereotyped by the Constitution. Wide scope is left for free development and for the building up of the various corporations. But if they are to fulfil their purpose they must be more than a mere legal framework; they must be vital organisms. Admittedly, if this is to be so there are many who will need a complete change of outlook and behaviour; many are still under the influence of Liberal or Socialist ideas, and have not yet found the way to the new State. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

I have repeatedly declared that there can be no real and conclusive reformation of the Constitution unless we understand the change in such a way that the whole people becomes, as it were, saturated with the new spirit which is to animate the new Constitution. It is of fundamental importance that men, associated in the first place by their common trade or vocation, should realize that they have obligations towards one another, and that over and above this all economic groups must cooperate in all things in the interests of the community. (Vienna, April 6, 1934.)

The corporative organization must give rise to a renewed sense of responsibility in the whole of public life, since in the natural course of things the lead will be taken in each group, whether on the side of employers or employees, by those who are pre-eminent in their trade or calling and therefore possess the confidence of their fellows:

From the various trades and callings will be chosen those who are to assist in the public administration. That man will prove to be the best administrator in public life who is most conscientious.

tious in the discharge of his own business duties or office. Each must in the first place enjoy the confidence of his fellow-workers, who are in a position to form the best judgement of him. From the various vocational groups the corporations will be formed, and these will act in the federal and provincial administration. (Klosterneuburg, March 25, 1934.)

The corporative system will restore to the estates the autonomy and the rights of self-determination of which they had been deprived during the period of centralization due to the influence of Liberalism and Socialism:

The estates were for centuries the basis of the social structure in this country, and hardly anywhere in the world has this been the case so much as in the countries dominated by a German legal tradition. These vocational groups, which in spite of the Liberal errors of the age have remained deeply rooted in the nation, are now to receive a greater measure of autonomy and self-determination. They are to be reinstated in the position from which they have been ousted in the Liberal and Socialist state. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

The estate is to safeguard the livelihood and the interests of its members:

An estate means the association of all the men who gain their livelihood in a certain calling. The corporative idea means the building up of a great family. (Salzburg, May 8, 1933.)

All the members of the estate enjoy equal rights in matters which concern them all and a voice in settling them:

The corporative structure does not mean an organization of employers, but the representation and cooperation of all those who gain their livelihood in the same calling. The peasantry of Lower Austria will be the first, probably, soon to assume a really corporative form which will include every employee and every domestic servant. Thus a clear answer will be given to those various groups of workers who are wondering whether they are going to receive any consideration in the new order of things, whether they will come into their own again. Every worker, whatever be his calling, his trade or his profession, must believe

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that in the new form of government, which will have nothing in common with demagogical parliamentarism, all workers within their respective vocational groups are called, and must be called, to cooperate and to have a voice in the administration. (Vienna, February 2, 1934.)

Corporative organization must above all restore man's dignity in the economic structure of the nation:

If we regard men's relation to one another from a purely materialistic point of view, then there can be no quarrel with the statement that life is conditioned and determined by the relation between employer and employed, by the opposition of classes. Men must be brought closer to one another by human contacts and by mutual consideration, so as to make life more worth living for them.... Unless we realize that the whole economic structure is intended to serve the interests of men and that men are closer to each other than they are to things, we shall never make our people a happier one. We want to serve the cause of peace in human society, and I am one of those who believe that the association of men according to their calling, the common task, the common workshop, does more to unite men together than any external or formal bond.... Unless we are able to bring masters, men and apprentices closer to each other as men, unless we are able to convince them that as men they are economically and socially bound up with one another, and that each must have consideration for the others, unless we can make workers feel once more at home in the place where they work, then the formal and legal provisions of the Constitution will remain only on the surface and we shall have rendered no service whatever to mankind or to our nation. (Vienna, October 13, 1931.)

But the dignity of men also requires that all those who work together should recognize that they are members of one community. The fact that the corporative organization emphasizes the rights and duties involved in vocational cooperation removes the source of class warfare:

In his own trade or calling a man will not be a mere cipher; he will be considered and treated as a man. The corporative conception gives rights and duties to the master as well as to

the servant.... We must realize that work welds men together. In the peasant's cottage, where after working together during the day farmer and servants sit down together in the evening at a common table, take their soup from a common bowl, you have true vocational solidarity, the corporative conception. And the relation between them is still further ennobled, if after the day's work is done they kneel down to say the rosary together. We must arouse again in us this feeling of solidarity. Only thus shall we banish from our people the Marxian idea of a necessary antagonism between the worker and the employer. (Vienna, September 11, 1933.)

But this community of life and interest should extend beyond the sphere of the daily task, and result in restoring to the worker his proper standing in society:

I hope that the time will soon come when workers and employers will organize social life on vocational lines. We want provision to be made in each trade or calling for libraries, common games, sports, vocal societies and especially for common recreations in industrial districts. What they call in Italy *Dopolavoro* should become an institution in this country. Then we shall take pleasure in our work and we shall realise that it is harmony, and not the stirring up of dissension among men, that makes everybody happy and contented. We shall not only be concerned with material rights and claims; we intend to create a state of things in which the worker will have a higher dignity. (Vienna Neustadt, June 3, 1934.)

Harmonious fellowship among men is thus the aim of the new corporative organization. That fellowship is to be restored after generations of Liberalism and Socialism have endeavoured to destroy it by means of class warfare. And it is to be restored precisely at that point where the disruption of the social body had begun, namely in the workshop, in the business office, in the work by which men earn their livelihood, and by which they render common service to the community. The idea of fellowship is to become living and conscious in the ordinary work of every day; in the daily task men are to learn to realize once more their indissoluble solidarity and the common destiny that unites them.

Moreover as a member of his own estate he becomes conscious also of his solidarity with the nation as a whole, because as the subject of rights and duties he is an active member of the commonwealth, but also because it is through membership of his own estate that he ensures that he shall receive the economic and cultural benefits which are due to him in justice and equity. For these are only secured through the cooperation of all the members of the national community.

In a Papal Encyclical which points out the path which the present century must follow, a world socially moribund is taught the Catholic doctrine concerning “the social order, its reconstruction and perfection conformably to the precepts of the Gospel.” Central in this Encyclical is the idea of corporative organization. In spite of Liberalism and Socialism, Catholic Austria has never lost this idea, and by means of it she has profoundly influenced Catholic sociological thought throughout the world. Having gained the freedom necessary for the Christian re-constitution of its government, Austria now proceeds to base her new Constitution on the principles laid down in this Encyclical concerning the corporative State. It has thus become Austria’s mission to lead the way for the whole world in re-constituting society according to the principles of *Quadragesimo Anno*, and to show the Catholics of every country by what she is doing that the Church is still, in this twentieth century, with perennial youth and undiminished power, fulfilling her office as Teacher of all nations.



## CHAPTER VIII

# THE CHRISTIAN STATE

“We intend to establish the social, Christian, German State of Austria on a corporative basis, under a strong authoritarian government.”

(Vienna, September 11, 1933.)

**T**HE “MAY CONSTITUTION OF 1934” PRESENTS THE FIRST example for centuries of a State setting out to organize its constitution openly and without reservation according to the requirements of Catholic political philosophy. There is no example of it in the history of the modern State. For more than a hundred years constitutions have been shaped according to the ideas of 1789, in which Liberalism was triumphant. And later constitutions, such as that of Fascism in Italy, were based on ideas different from those enshrined in Christian social and political doctrine, and taught to the world by Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI in their encyclicals. Hence Chancellor Dollfuss could say with truth:

May 1, 1934, will remain for all time a memorable day in the history of Austria. It will show the world, and it will show posterity, how a generation of the Austrian people at a time of the greatest difficulty, in an age of unprecedented spiritual, political and economic distress, corrected the mistakes not of fifteen years merely, but of one hundred and fifty years of intellectual and political delusions, and proceeded to make a new house of this little, but free and independent, home of ours. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

Already the preamble of the new Austrian Constitution shows its significance in the history of political civilization: “In the name of God, from whom all right proceeds, the Constitution is

issued for the Austrian people for its Christian, German, Federal State on a corporative basis.” All modern constitutions deny that the authority of the State is subject to the authority of God, and most of them since the French revolution open with the statement that all power is from the people. Austria’s new State clearly and unmistakably recognizes God as the source of its right and authority. It is thus established on the principles of Christian natural jurisprudence as understood by a Catholic nation, and recognizes the moral order as its unwritten fundamental law.

That the parliamentary party system was not destined to be permanent might have been anticipated already at the beginning of 1932, when Dr. Seipel spoke of it in his commentaries on *Quadragesimo Anno*. “Although,” he said,

political parties play such a great part in public life, they are not even mentioned in the Encyclical. And this can easily be understood, since they do not form an organic part of the community. So long as society is in an atomized condition, so long as there is no mediating body in the shape of corporations between individuals and the State, parties are necessary. The formation of parties is an act of self-defence on the part of citizens who, united materially but not vocationally, have to exert their influence on the government of the country by means of a universal and equal suffrage. So long as men have no other way of obtaining their rights they must organize themselves artificially... The danger that the parties become gods, while devoting themselves entirely to their self-aggrandisement; that they lose contact with the people, and even quarrel among themselves for power over the people, this danger is now upon us; but it will not exist in the new order of things.

The party system, formal democracy, and the Liberal form of society, are eliminated by the new Constitution of Austria. In their stead comes the authoritarian State with the corporative organization of the nation, the organization of the State and of society according to the requirements of Christian social philosophy as proclaimed in the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. As the Chancellor puts it briefly:

We have endeavoured to reconstitute public life according to natural principles. (Linz, April 29, 1934.)

And the people understood him when he said:

We asked ourselves the question how this State could be reconstituted in the simplest and most natural way possible. We took as our model the peasant's house and family. Just as there the farmer discusses with his family and with his servants questions concerning administration and the daily work to be done, so in public advisory bodies there should reign a spirit of intelligent collaboration. And as in the peasant's home the farmer must rule the household, so the public administration needs a ruler. And as in the peasant's household that rule must not be arbitrary if progress is to be made, so also in the government of the State there must be no arbitrary rule. (Graz, April 15, 1934.)

And referring to the family and to vocational solidarity, neither of which had any place in the Liberal and Socialist organization of the State, but which in the new State were to be restored to their fundamental place, the Chancellor declared:

To my mind the fundamental difference from the former state of things consists in this, that natural organisms are to constitute the foundations in the new structure of public life. The basis of all society, and especially of every society organized on Christian principles, must be the family.... After the family as a bond comes the trade or calling. A man's calling, the work which he does in common with others, is a closer bond than any programme of any political party, however well designed. In the Corporative State everybody must prove first by his daily work that he is efficient and trustworthy. And from the various trades or callings men will be chosen to play their part in the administration of public life. (Feldkirch, June 29, 1934.)

The Constitution must, above all, be the practical expression of that natural law which for the Chancellor was the lever for the whole of the re-organization of the body politic: the just relation between unity and liberty as embodied in the political philosophy of German jurisprudence and Christianity. In politics this means nothing else than the just combination of the principle of authority with the principle of democracy. Any State which intends to fulfil its proper task must be an authoritarian State, possessing such full powers as to be able under all circumstances to take the



necessary measures for the needs of the nation and for the common good. The Chancellor shows clearly how this was lacking under the parliamentary party system:

Today the State is very much in the condition of a heavily laden cart drawn forwards by a big horse with a smaller horse on either side of him, and dragged backwards in the opposite direction by two other dray-horses, one big and one small. And so the cart can make no progress, especially when the road is so hard and stony and the weather so stormy as it is in the world today, especially, too, when it is followed by people who do nothing to help it on, but only shout "gee-up" or "whoa!" How is the man on the driving box to make the cart go on? And yet he, and only he, only the Government, gets the blame because we do not escape from our difficulties. I need not develop the parable any further. Everybody knows the answer to the question, what is to be done to get things going ahead? (Vienna, March 13, 1933.)

Authority does not mean arbitrary government or dictatorship. It means moral power, and therefore it involves responsibility before the natural moral law and the written laws of justice:

Authority does not mean arbitrary rule, authority means regulated power, it means government by men who have a sense of responsibility, who are unselfish, who are ready to sacrifice themselves. (Vienna, September 11, 1933.)

The principle of authoritarian government is embodied in the May Constitution of 1934 in the following way: The Federal Government does not depend upon any commission from legislative organs, nor is it subject to any political control of such corporations; it has an emergency power of decree (emergency right of the Federal Government) extending to everything except changes in the Constitution, and it alone has the right to introduce draft legislation. The Federal Chancellor determines the policy of the Government, in which the Federal ministers are associated while remaining autonomous in their own spheres of public affairs; his assent is required moreover for the promulgation of any provincial law. The Federal President, elected for seven years tenure of office, cannot be deposed; he determines the number of the ministers and their sphere of competence; he appoints the provincial

Governors after the submission of three names by the provincial diets. He has an emergency right of decree (emergency right of the Federal President) which extends even to altering single provisions of the Constitution.

Everything in the Liberal parliamentary system which had shown itself to be a hindrance to effective government is eliminated. Abolished are the motions of urgency by means of which the parties of the Opposition were able to cripple the whole work of administration. Abolished is the possibility of protracting debates indefinitely, since the Federal Government is able to set a time-limit to the advisory corporations for the introduction of their proposals, so that the obstruction of proposed legislation is rendered impossible. Abolished, too, are the right of interpellation, the right of resolution, the right of investigation – in general the political control which in the parliamentary system constantly hampered the work of government. Abolished is the immunity of the members of the various corporations, which in parliamentary democracy had served to shield the worst political crimes. Abolished finally is the immunity of the members of the legislative corporations, since strict regulations are enforced in the case of any crime committed during a session of the same, resulting even in the loss of membership.

But the democratic principle is as clearly admitted by the Chancellor as is the principle of authority. What he wants, however, is true democracy:

The Government regards it as important that the people should share in various ways in the management of public affairs, and the most rational form in which such participation can be arranged will be the best democracy. But those who by their methods have done everything in their power for years to deprive the people of any joy in self-government, indeed to deprive them of any faith in self-government, are the last to be justified in setting themselves up as the champions of government by the people, and to call on the world to give them support. (Vienna, October 13, 1933.)

However, since we regard popular representation as absolutely necessary, we consider it one of our chief duties to effect a prac-

ticable method of such representation by a suitable change in the Constitution. This Constitution must take account of the natural organization of the people, ensure that all estates alike will have an active part in the conducting of public affairs, while avoiding all those obstructions to legislation arising from the inadequacy of the present Constitution. Such popular representation, being the symbol of the organic life of the community, thus does justice to the State as the visible expression of that organic common life. (Vienna, April 9, 1933.)

The principle of democracy is protected in the Constitution of 1934 by the fact that the Federal Government is given four corporations to advise it regarding the laws which it shall propose to the Federal Diet. These four advisory corporations are: (1) The State Council (*Staatsrat*). It shall number 40 or 50 members, and shall consist of men who may be expected to have a right understanding of the needs of the State. They will be chosen by the Federal President. (2) The Federal Council of Intellect (*Bundeskulturrat*). It consists of 30 or 40 members representing the clergy and religious societies, schools and educational establishments, learning and art. (3) The Federal Economic Council (*Bundeswirtschaftsrat*). It consists of 70 or 80 representatives of the economic "estates" or professional corporations. The chief departments will be represented by special groups, as follows: Agriculture and Forestry, Mining and Industry, Trade and Commerce, Finance and Credit, free professions, Public Services. (4) The Provincial Council (*Länderrat*). To this every province and also the city of Vienna sends two representatives, namely the provincial Governor and his finance member.

The legislative organ is the Federal Diet. It is constituted by 20 representatives of the State Council, 10 of the Federal Council of Intellect, 20 of the Federal Economic Council and 9 of the Provincial Council. The Federal Diet has the right to approve or reject measures of legislation without amendment; it has, moreover, the power to call the Federal Government to account before the Federal Court of Justice; and finally it has the right to certify the constitutional character or otherwise of the decrees issued by the Federal Government in virtue of its emergency power of de-

cree. In the case of such decree being unconstitutional it has the power to nullify it and thus prevent any abuse of the said emergency power. The Federal Diet may be summoned by its President at any time for this purpose. The same right of certifying in respect of emergency decrees belongs also to the Federal Court of Justice. Provision is also made for a public referendum, by the result of which the Government is bound. Appeal may be made to the people if a bill of legislation is rejected by the Federal Diet. The democratic principle appears also in the fact that, although the members of the second and third of the above Councils are temporarily nominated by the Government, provision is made in the Constitution for their election through the various corporations. The whole nation elects the Federal President through the burgomasters, the Governors of the autonomous provinces of Austria. The burgomasters choose from three nominees presented by the Federal Assembly, which is itself composed of members drawn from the four advisory corporations. The principle of democracy is especially shown in the extended autonomy of the estates, essential to the corporative system.

All those phenomena of pseudo-democracy which in the parliamentary system had been the bane of political life for the past decade, are abolished; especially the universal suffrage for the legislative corporations, so that there is now no possibility of a renewal of the demagogical dissensions of the past. There is now a general suffrage only for the lowest representative bodies of the estates, the higher corporations being composed of delegates from these.

Evidently the Constitution of 1934 protects all those liberties which are essential to every free State: the equality of all citizens in the eyes of the law, without distinction of birth, condition or class; public office is open to all patriotic citizens; the freedom of the individual, domiciliary rights, the secrecy of correspondence and telephonic intercourse, the right of citizens to form associations within the limits set by law; the right to address claims or complaints to the proper quarter; the right of every citizen, within the limits set by law, to give outward expression to his opinion by word or in writing, print or picture, in other words the freedom of the Press; finally the freedom of science and learning,

so far as the duties of a public office are not infringed. Moreover, the Constitution guards freedom of conscience and of liberty of private and public religious practices, so far as these are not in conflict with public order or with good morals. Finally it provides for the independence of judges in the exercise of their office.

It remains still to indicate how provision is made for the maintenance of the régime. The State Council is of the highest importance in this connection. Composed of men of the highest character, far-sighted statesmanship and public reputation, this body ensures a sound conservatism in policy as well as an organic development in the life of the nation. Moreover, the Patriotic Front provides an association of men imbued with the Austrian ideal, and a select body of leading politicians indispensable for a State if it is to grow to its full stature and perfection. The Chancellor thus describes the benefits which must accrue from a Constitution which so harmoniously combines the principle of authority with the principle of democracy:

If I am asked whether in the new Constitution the cooperation of the people in the Government is not too much eliminated, then I might point out that precisely in that sphere in which men are adapted by their special qualifications to cooperate immediately and directly in the administration, namely in the province, their choice of a leader remains entirely in their hands. And it is precisely these burgomasters who in the future will be called upon solemnly to choose the man upon whom the whole burden of government and its responsibility will ultimately depend, the Federal President. This is a new form of representation, probably an unprecedented one, but it has always seemed to me that the man who has for years borne the responsibility of government in the province before the eyes of his fellow-citizens is the right man to play an essential part in choosing the leader of the State. I think it is possible that St. Stephen's Cathedral may be the scene of the solemn election of the Federal President. (Vienna, May 28, 1934.)

Let us recall that for centuries in German history a select body of the people have elected the leader of the nation in the framework of a sacred ceremony. On a smaller scale the burgomasters of Austria will have a duty to perform not unlike that of the Elector of the Holy Roman Empire of the German people.

The adherents of modern democracy may prefer the analogy with the electors of the United States of America; it should be remarked, however, that these are chosen only for the single purpose of electing a President, whereas the burgomasters of Austria bear permanently the burden of responsibility in the government of their provinces. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

The political theory underlying the Austrian Constitution of 1934 is both Christian and German. The tradition of German law is apparent in the simultaneous protection of the freedom of the individual and the assertion of authoritarian government; in the autonomy of provincial government; in the principle of unity of leadership which safeguards the whole political organization of the State. Essentially Christian, on the other hand, is the foundation of the whole body politic on the natural moral law; the ultimate attribution of all authority to God; and the observance of the rights that arise from the natural moral law. Catholic statesmanship is shown in the recognition of the *Quadragesimo Anno* as the norm for the reconstruction of the Austrian State, and in the close association of the State with the Church in the prosecution of their respective aims.

The seriously ethical character of the new Constitution appears already in its preamble. In the great fundamental questions of social and individual life it is based upon the inviolable laws of Christian ethics. The prescriptions which concern liberty and autonomy in the practice of religion and in Church matters, the laws concerning marriage, the family and the school in the new State, the laws concerning the administration of justice – all breathe the atmosphere of true and genuine Christianity.... That the German character of Austria, the old eastern borderland of Germany, should be emphasized in the Constitution, that the German mother-tongue should be solemnly recognized in the Constitution as the language of the State, is a matter of course. But what the new Austrian Constitution can claim as special and peculiar to itself is the fact that it has accepted a great number of elements of ancient German law, typical of the spontaneous and unspoiled sense of justice of the German people. Also that love of variety combined with organic unity, which finds expression in the new Constitution in the autonomy of the various historically distinct corporations, is a heritage of the German legal tradition. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

## THE CHRISTIAN STATE

The Chancellor refers to the fundamental unwritten law of all human society, a law which in Christianity only received a new corroboration, when he says:

A new era will only begin when the Christian ideal is handed on by man to man and by woman to woman, and put into practice. And if the new Constitution contains an express profession of Christianity, then the greatest social maxim of all time has become the fundamental law of our country: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." (June 17, 1934.)

With the Constitution of 1934 a Catholic State returns once more to the fundamental principles of political and social philosophy which God's own hand has written in the nature of man, and which, since they are corroborated by the command of Christ, are doubly obligatory upon the Christian conscience. Tragically blind, the modern State has continued to violate these laws, but only to learn by bitter experience that it cannot do so with impunity. To appreciate the significance of the Christian reorganization of the State which is now proceeding in Austria, one should realize how completely the modern State had apostatized from God, how irresistible the progress of anti-Christian forces in godless countries seemed to be, how the disruptive work begun by Liberalism had been so continued and intensified by atheistic Socialism, as to leave hardly any hope that it would ever again be possible to establish a State on Christian, or rather on Catholic, principles. And now in a central point of the Western world a check has been set to the process of eliminating God and the natural moral law from public life. This has been achieved in a country where the wells of a sacred tradition of more than a thousand years of Christian and Catholic civilization had never been fully dried up; where now Christian political theory has become active once more; and at a time when throughout the world the foundations of national life are severely shaken and hardly a country in Europe is immune from fears regarding its future. Austria leads the way to the truly Christian State.



CHAPTER IX  
SOCIAL JUSTICE

“Again and again I am cheered and comforted by the thought that through the reconstitution of the State our working people will receive an improvement in their condition and obtain their rightful place in the community of the nation. I am myself the son of simple folk who their whole life long have worked hard on the soil and struggled with poverty for their livelihood. I know what work is, and I bow in deep reverence before the high dignity which is inherent in all work truly and loyally done, whether at the plough or at the carpenter’s bench, or with the instrument of the mind.”

(Vienna, February 10, 1934.)

**I**T IS FROM THE IDEA OF JUSTICE THAT THE MODERN SOCIAL movement took its rise. It was upon justice that Labour took its stand in the fight for its rights, for the right to existence, the right to a home, the right to a share in economic and cultural progress. The official guardian of justice, the State, had been caught in the errors of Liberalism and, especially during the early decades of the nineteenth century, had almost completely failed in its duty towards those sections of Labour which had been proletarianized. Consequently, when Labour began to organize itself for the purpose of securing its social rights, the fatal idea had already taken possession of the masses that they could only attain their end by force, that the end to be attained was the unlimited supremacy, the dictatorship, of the proletariat, and that the way to achieve their purpose was by class warfare. And so Socialism abandoned the ground of justice as Liberalism had done before it. Soon Capital and Labour stood face to face as two powerful forces, and class warfare waxed fiercer and fiercer every day.



Then Leo XIII raised his voice in his famous Encyclical on Labour, in the year 1891. He recalled the conflicting parties to the ground of justice. Then came the unprecedented economic and social crisis of the post-War period. Again the Pope raised his voice. If the earlier warning from Rome was received only with scorn in Liberal and Socialist circles, now every civilized country listened attentively as the gospel of social justice was preached to the world in the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. The truth of its fundamental principle was only too evident, namely, that the unsettled condition of society was due to a departure from the precepts of social justice. Even those who did not acknowledge the moral order in the Christian sense could not fail to hear this appeal. As for Austria, which had determined to reconstitute the whole of its social fabric on the basis of that moral order, which had expressly adopted the *Quadragesimo Anno* as its guiding norm, the pacification of society in terms of social justice must evidently be its chief aim and purpose.

When the opponents of the Christian reconstruction of Austria tried to persuade the working classes that the movement was serving the cause of social reaction, they were refusing to accept the Chancellor's express declaration to the workers:

We protest against the suggestion that the present Government tends to disregard the rightful claims of the simple worker. We are resolved to maintain the human rights of the simple, good working-man as well as the rights of everybody else. (Vienna, October 13, 1933.)

After the dissolution of the organizations which had fomented class warfare, he was able to appeal to Labour's own experience:

I think that those who in the past have followed false guides and false aims will by now have been convinced that we have engaged in a war of defence solely for the sake of our country's peace. I believe, too, that the behaviour of those responsible and of all their supporters has since convinced them that the workers are not wholly delivered into the power of hostile Capitalistic employers; that there is no need for agitation to secure alleged rights, but that all of us together, Austrians, men and Christians,

are capable of doing our best to protect and secure the rights of workers and employees. (Vienna, April 8, 1934.)

The new State showed that employers who sought to evade their responsibilities would be compelled to fulfil them whether they wanted it or not, as the Chancellor had always promised:

You workers have been told for years that other classes are your enemies. That was a lie, which is now finished and done with. The government itself will take measures to ensure that you get your rights and that all employers who refuse to give them to you shall in future be forced to do so. (Eisenstadt, May 21, 1934.)

For the Christian State recognizes its full obligations in the matter of protecting the rights of Labour as much as the rights of anybody else:

We take seriously the rights of the workers, who live by the work of their hands. It is the duty of the State to protect the rights of the worker by law. If anybody thinks that now the opportune time has come for the reduction of wages, he is mistaken. From the standpoint of Christian morality we regard it as our duty to serve the interests of all those who are with the Government, including our good workers, regardless of the fact that in the past they have taken the wrong path. (Vienna, Neustadt, June 3, 1934.)

The corporative State will eliminate that form of Capitalism which makes the interests of Capital and Labour irreconcilable:

I like the honest man who, free from Marxian ideas and prejudices, shows himself ready to cooperate in the reconstruction of an Austria in which the worker will no longer have to waste his energies in class warfare, since in the corporative State his relation to his employer is fundamentally changed, and Capitalism is divested of its essential character. (Vienna, February 10, 1934.)

His deep concern for the relief of unemployment showed how much he had at heart the lot of the workers. And these were well aware of the efforts which he made to provide work and bread for those who were in need. The extraordinary success which at-

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tended these efforts is the more significant because here, too, he was not content with apparent results, but based his measures for providing employment upon a far-sighted economic policy. What the unemployed have lost in Chancellor Dollfuss may be gathered from the only public utterance in which he made appeal to his own special knowledge:

I have never been great at promises, but I believe that the unemployment problem is not insoluble. I am convinced of this, because I know the possibilities of economic development. (Vienna, May 14, 1934.)

The practical application of social justice in the new Christian commonwealth is to ensure two things for the worker: his share in the social product through a just wage, and his incorporation into the community by means of the corporative organization. Only this can ensure that full vindication of the rights of Labour which was never possible in a society organized according to class distinctions. Moreover, Labour will be assured of having its own rights represented, so that it has the guarantee of being able under all circumstances to secure that those rights be observed:

The workers...are a necessary member of our national community... We are Christians enough to know that as Christians and as citizens of this State we have special obligations towards the man who possesses nothing but the work of his own hands. I have already taken measures to ensure that the dissolution of the workers' organizations shall not cause the collective agreements to remain inoperative.... By decree the Federation of Austrian workers and employees will be created.... By creating a corporative unity, animated by a Christian and patriotic spirit, we shall best be able to safeguard the interests of workers and employees. (Villach, March 4, 1934.)

The decree creating this Workers' Federation as a corporative unity can only be misunderstood by those who think that the moribund trade unions can recover without the help of the State, and who refuse to see that by such a united corporation Labour is far more effectively represented than by all the former trade

unions. It is true that to prepare the way for the corporative organization the State had necessarily to disarm all those forces which made for division and to put a stop to abuses of democracy by establishing the said Federation. But the consolidation of Labour's position by this amalgamation of the workers' unions shows in itself that social justice is the aim of the whole social reform. The same is shown by the formation of the Workers' Association, in which representatives of the workers treat on equal terms with employers concerning questions of Labour organization. But it is especially the Constitution itself which is based upon the law of social justice. The Chancellor calls special attention to this in his wireless address of May 1, 1934, saying that otherwise his work could not be characterized as Christian:

Since the orientation of the whole Constitution is fundamentally Christian, it contains all the elements of the best and purest social philosophy. Thus the worker is incorporated into the national body as a fully qualified member of his own estate, which is juridically and organically linked up with all the other estates. Here, too, the Constitution has not been content to take the ordinary precautions demanded by social policy to protect the rights and interests of the workers. By making the workers an integral and organic part of the community it has given them a guarantee that they are to cooperate in the development of the State and in shaping their own future. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

The fulfilment of social justice, to which the Christian State is pledged, will restore to the worker his full liberty in economic cooperation and his full standing in the national and political community:

The future must not only give the worker his place in the public life of the country, it must give him his full dignity as a man, it must make him a member of human society. We must all realize that anybody who does his duty in his own sphere has the right to be treated as a man. For the standard of manhood is the honourable discharge of duty. It must be made possible for the worker to live on intimate and human terms with others of his own calling or trade. This is the meaning of the corporative idea, properly understood. (Vienna, September 10, 1933.)

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To use the words of a law passed under the Chancellor's administration on behalf of the workers, it is "in the spirit of social justice, Christian charity and love of country" that the new Austria will make every effort to solve the problems which so deeply distress humanity:

Conscientiously and emphatically, I declare that there is no development in Austria which does not take account of the interests of the workers or do justice to their wishes and demands. (Vienna, January 18, 1934.)

Where the order of social justice reigns, Labour cannot fail to obtain its rights. Even when it allowed itself to be led astray by foreign leaders, in the hearts of working folk it was only social justice that was desired. Even when they had set their hopes for the future on class warfare, ultimately it was only social justice that they sought. The social movement could never have been so widespread or thoroughgoing had it not been for the imperishable belief of the masses in the idea of justice. And when *Quadragesimo Anno* speaks of the "deliverance of the proletariat" the root idea is the same, that of social justice, which in the mind of the workers must be freed from the false notions of class warfare and violence. Thus purified, it will restore to Labour all that Liberalism and Marxian Socialism – yes, even Socialism – has withheld from it.

Such is the aim of the new Austria: to apply social justice, which had been held up before the world in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* as the sole remedy for its social evils, to the definitive solution of the problem of social unrest.



CHAPTER X  
THE STATE AND THE CHURCH

“All our efforts would be nothing but paper and outward form if the nation were not fully persuaded that the thing that matters today is the revival of a Christian German spirit in the consciousness of the people.”

(Vienna, May 29, 1933.)

**E**VERY GREAT LEADER WHO HAS ENDEAVOURED TO AWAKEN his people to the duty of fulfilling their traditional task as a State and as a civilized nation, has realized that the inner strength necessary for such a revival can only spring from a religious and moral soil. Any movement which does not arise from this source, however strongly it may affect the nation, will sooner or later prove to have been merely superficial. Hence the true vocation of a national leader may be recognized by the insistence with which he recalls the nation to that which is the religious and moral source of its greatest capabilities.

The whole work of Chancellor Dollfuss is based upon the idea of a spiritual revival in the people:

It is not power or riches that will make for the happiness of nations, but interior peace, agreement and harmony among individuals. For this we do not need empty piety; but we do intend to be upright, honourable and resolute men. We do intend to become better and nobler men in accordance with Christian principles, and to behave as such in regard to our fellows. (Feldkirch, June 29, 1934.)

This religious and moral revival must permeate every sphere of human life:

Since it is our earnest endeavour today to reform this country of ours not only constitutionally but essentially, let us say – to re-

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form the very soul of the nation, it is evident that the foundation for such reconstruction must be the Faith. And our faith must not be a mere sentimental affair. If a man is a practical Catholic and resolved to live according to Catholic principles, then that Catholic life must manifest itself outwardly and in public action. (Mariazell, July 9, 1933.)

### The family:

Hence arises a hard duty, but a duty which is fine and manly, a duty which brings peace and freedom, that of effective and constructive activity in regard to ourselves and in regard to those around us, especially in the family circle. We must make it our endeavour to become better men. We Catholic Christians have to reform life in Austria in this way. If the rest of the world sees that this people is better and more honest, more self-sacrificing and more devoted, more peaceful among themselves, then we have made propaganda for the Catholic ideal in the world outside our borders and contributed to the re-Christianization of the world. (Mariazell, July 7, 1934.)

### Political life:

We in Austria want to enable Catholicism, over and above its influence upon individual lives, to become inherent in our public and political life, and indeed to manifest itself as the formative factor in the development and life of the State. (Mariazell, July 9, 1933.)

### Economic life:

Today we must once more realize that the foundations of our existence and of our collaboration, the great bond which unites us all, is our faith and our common profession of that faith. Accordingly, we must see to it that we are faithful administrators of the goods of this earth, that we order our lives according to our faith, lives which would be valueless unless there were the interior orientation towards God... Then will our emergence from our present difficulties cease to be a merely formal and legal reformation and become a truly inward change to a better time, when the Christian German always ensures that the nation is educated according to Christian principles...that the laws of the State correspond to those same Christian principles, and that conditions are created in which our men...may find the way to God. May

the motto which is written above the doors of our rooms be verified anew: "All things depend on the blessing of God." (Vienna, September 9, 1933.)

Social life:

As Christians and Catholics we must endeavour to be just to others and to understand others. We shall thus achieve human contact with them and perhaps bring them to take the right path.... We can only say that we have got rid of party spirit if we are joined in a mutual Christian endeavour to create the new conditions and, as far as possible, to ensure that everybody receives the benefit of them. (Vienna, March 11, 1934.)

Business life:

But again I repeat emphatically: We must not think that the problem of reform is solved by formal changes in the paragraphs of the Constitution. We must realize that everything depends on whether we can succeed in making the vocational idea a practical reality and make the sense of mutual solidarity and mutual justice a living thing. (Vienna, March 11, 1934.)

The Nazi opponents of the Christian organization of public life resuscitated the old battle-cry of Liberalism and accused the new Austria of "clericalism." The Church has admittedly protested against the injustice done her by Liberalism, she has always demanded the observance in public life of the laws of faith and morals, and she has claimed her own rights in the matters which are within her competence. But she has also always clearly distinguished between what is the right of the State and what her own; she has never officially interfered in spheres of politics which are not her concern, and in Catholic Action she has herself clearly delimited the boundaries of her own sphere. The Chancellor is thus able easily to repudiate the charge of clericalism:

The construction of our State according to a Christian and Catholic spirit has nothing in common with clericalism. Our bishops have proved this by the decision – which for us, too, is a hard one – that priests are to be withdrawn from political life.... The Church has only wished to show thereby that she has no



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wish to achieve a secular or political domination, but that her only aim is that the doctrine of Christ should be more effectively preached among the people, unhampered by false prejudices. (Villach, March 4, 1934.)

Here, as so often elsewhere, he appeals to sane and unprejudiced reason:

Even to those who remain out of sympathy with Christian thought we may say: We think nobody has ever been harmed by his neighbour looking piously up to heaven. I think that if the whole nation would make a serious effort to order their lives more closely according to the principles of religion, hatred, strife and contentions would disappear from human life. (Graz, April 15, 1934.)

To those who thought that race and popular tradition could survive without the spiritual roots to which they owed their vitality, the Chancellor, himself the son of peasant stock which had guarded those traditions for centuries, was able to give brief and definite answer: "For me as a Christian a man's soul is more important than his race." (Vienna, September 15, 1933.)

The Christian State holds fast to the principles that regulate the relation between nationality, State, religion and Church: Religion for the Christian is one of the essential foundations of public life:

It is not enough that we should create the conditions for a moral and religious revival of the nation in the Constitution, in political life, in contracts, decrees and pronouncements. The nation itself must have the will to reform, and every individual must be resolved, with the help of grace and the means of grace, to become a better man. (Vienna, September 9, 1933.)

The Christian State considers it important to foster religious and moral forces and safeguards all the rights of the spiritual power:

Everybody who is responsible for the reformation of public life in this country, whether he be a convinced Catholic or not, must regard it as important that Catholic principles should pre-

vail in the education of the people. Still more must we Catholics be active in this matter. If the young are taught to turn their thoughts towards Heaven, if they are taught what is the supernatural end of man; if they are told what they must do and what they must avoid; if above all they are taught the fundamental precept: "Love thy neighbour as thyself"; if children are brought up, not on mere humanitarian slogans, but on Christian principles, so that they may become men of character, men with a sense of responsibility – then the State is most keenly interested in their education. Therefore those who are responsible for the State must do all in their power to promote this work of education. It is sound statesmanship to foster and encourage a life of religion. (Vienna, September 9, 1933.)

The blessings which the Church can bring even in the earthly sphere, so long as she is allowed free scope for her mission, are as great – according to St. Augustine – as if she had been founded merely to further men's temporal prosperity. Hence the Chancellor said, on the occasion of the laying of a foundation stone of a church in Vienna:

By a harmonious blending of faith with nationality we want to become once more a living unity, and we are convinced that we shall thus lay the foundations for a happier and more peaceful community. As I have already said, politics only have meaning or purpose if they help to alleviate men's struggle for existence and enable them to live more peaceably together. If we, therefore, every one of us, become conscious of our Christian duties to one another, if we look at things from a truly Christian point of view, then our people will be a happier one, and therefore I believe that we can lay no better foundation for the reconstruction of our State than the principles of our Christian religion which we have observed for so many centuries. (Vienna, April 17, 1934.)

Although it is the Catholic political ideal which the new Austria intends to put into practice, together with the Catholic conception of the relation of State to Church, nevertheless other religious bodies retain full possession of their freedom and rights:

We respect and acknowledge religious values, and we allow for the serious religious convictions of other religious bodies. The event will prove that here in Austria the Evangelical churches,

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for example, will enjoy greater religious freedom than does Catholicism in the German Reich. We want all positive religious forces to be put at the service of our national reconstruction. (Mariazell, July 9, 1933.)

It was naturally the first duty of a State whose people are almost entirely Catholic, with national traditions imbued with Catholicism, to regulate the relations between the State and the Church according to the principles of the natural law by means of a Concordat:

The close attachment of the Austrian people to the Catholic faith of their forefathers finds a most expressive symbol in the fact that during the very first hour of the new Austria, soon after midnight when the new Constitution of the Federal State of Austria became law, the Concordat was signed by its Federal President. The first act of the Government in the new Austria was to give solemn sanction to the agreement with the Holy See, by which all questions jointly touching Church and State in the Catholic Federal State of Austria were settled for all time. (Vienna, May 1, 1934.)

All the provisions of the twenty-three articles of the Concordat, as well as those of the supplementary protocol, betoken a spirit of understanding, cooperation and mutual friendly assistance between the two supreme powers, each undertaking to yield fully and completely to the other what is due to it according to the natural law. The Christian State thus acknowledges that it is religion and the Church that truly consolidate its own foundations and its organization. The chief articles of the Concordat are embodied in the Constitution itself: the provisions concerning the sovereign right of the Church and her legitimate public status, concerning the education of candidates for the priesthood, religious instruction, the status of religious orders and congregations, ecclesiastical property, the Church's right of assessment, and the status of Catholic Action. It may be said that the Concordat breathes that spirit which Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclicals designated as the model spirit for the cooperation of Church and State.



CHAPTER XI  
AUSTRIA AND EUROPE

“Never has it been more important than at the present time to remember that beyond the boundaries of States there are men living who are bound together by the same belief in human destiny and human duties. It is not by mutual conflict but by divinely ordained collaboration that States will be able to solve the problems of our age.”

(Geneva, September 27, 1933.)

**T**HE CONCEPTION OF THE NATIONAL STATE IS THE FINAL outcome of the error which dominated sociological thought during the nineteenth century, concentrating all rights in the individual, whether in the individual man, the individual group or the individual nation. But never have the evil consequences which must always attend any departure from the natural laws of human society become so quickly manifest as in post-War Europe, when the European world began to be formed on the principle of the absolutely independent national State. Intent upon securing as much as possible for themselves, the national States were soon forced to observe that economic restriction was daily increasing, to say nothing of the menace to the general civilization of Europe which resulted from national isolation. A new system has become a vital necessity, not only for individual nations, but for Europe as a whole. And one of the first countries to appreciate the menace which the new situation held for European civilization was that country which economically is most closely bound up with its neighbours, and most adapted by its traditions to encourage the friendly and cooperative association of nations.

Little Austria it was that quickly pointed out the ominous character of this isolation policy to the nations which were already

suffering from its effects, and at the same time was able to suggest a new European settlement which would equally safeguard the individual character and interests of the nations concerned. When at Stresa in the autumn of 1932 the question of a new method for the cooperation of Central European nations was raised, Austria took a leading part in the discussion, and it was none other than Dr. Dollfuss who put forward the most suitable suggestion for such re-organization. His guiding principle was: economic cooperation between States based upon agreements concerning preferential tariffs, safeguarding simultaneously the interests of all other European States, and allowing for the entrance of any other State into such common agreement, should it choose to do so.

It was at the Stress Conference of 1932 that Dr. Dollfuss first succeeded in establishing his policy of a close economic cooperation between nations and in securing its recognition as a new principle of organization:

The first stimulus in this direction came from the Stresa Conference of 1932. Today we are making strides along the path there indicated in the direction of consolidating these mutual relations, which – I repeat – are in no sense exclusive of other nations. On the contrary, other nations willing to join in our cooperation are invited to do so and to pool their common interests in an honourable and peaceful collaboration, as Austria, Italy and Hungary have done. (Rome, March 14, 1934.)

The Roman agreement was the first effective application of the new principle, the establishment of which was in great part due to Dr. Dollfuss:

Those days in Rome constitute an important, perhaps an historic page in the history of the efforts made after the War for the reconstruction of the economic life of Europe and the peace of our continent. (Vienna, March 18, 1934.)

The immediate aim of any European settlement must be to finish with the policy of national isolation:

The efforts of our age to achieve a social order which will correspond to the revolutionized state of affairs have reached a critical point, as is evidenced by the economic crisis and by the

radical changes introduced by many States in their political and economic structure. In these restless and difficult times, States are tending more and more to think only of their own interests and to withdraw themselves into themselves. But it is not in that direction that the future of humanity lies. (Geneva, September 27, 1933.)

Practical international cooperation is the basis upon which the European structure must be built up:

True friendship between nations; honourable friendship between Governments; clear and understanding talks about our aims and needs; the effective desire for economic and political cooperation which exists today – these are of more value in my eyes than any piece of paper, however stylish and artistic; because this friendship and this understanding are alive. (Budapest, February 8, 1934.)

And the fundamental principle for such international cooperation is:

That every State must first of all put its own house in order; for how otherwise can the economic and financial relations between one State and another be settled? (London, June 14, 1933.)

It is fundamentally necessary for any peace settlement that agreements must be absolutely sacred. Austria makes the heaviest sacrifices in order to observe such agreements, and she demands the same fidelity from others:

We must remain an honourable country and show that we use our best endeavours loyally to observe agreements loyally made. (Vienna, October 19, 1932.)

Though we are a small country we have the right to demand that treaties which have been made with us shall be observed just as those made with any other country. (Salzburg, May 6, 1933.)

In this European peace settlement, however, Austria demands for herself full equality of rights:

Our self-respect requires that we Austrians demand equality of political and military rights with all States, a demand which we make jointly with all those who share our lot. In principle this

claim is recognised, and also in practice we have already been able to achieve some success. In this connection I refer to the progress made in our system of defence. (Vienna, December 31, 1933.)

The great fundamental law of his European conception is the law upon which according to him the whole of human social life is based, that of the synthesis of unity and freedom:

There are very many who suffer from inhibitions regarding the problem of unity and freedom in Europe, because they fear that unity is irreconcilably opposed to freedom. And yet the problem with which we are constantly faced is to be solved by the just combination of these two forces, unity and freedom. It is my heart's desire that the future settlement that is to be made in Europe should be based upon a proper synthesis between a consistent and regulated coordination and a real and effective freedom. If this task is achieved, if this end is attained, then we shall have made a great step towards the solution of our problem. (Vienna, May 17, 1934.)

While Chancellor Dollfuss showed, by the position which he was able to give to Austria in European politics, that although territorially small, she was not to be a mere pawn in the political game of other States, yet he did not hesitate to declare that the whole policy of Austria must be essentially determined by its relations with foreign powers:

I read recently in a foreign newspaper the statement that Austrian policy is fundamentally nothing but foreign policy. Up to a certain point this observation is just. And the explanation is to be found in Austria's geographical situation and in the fact that it borders directly upon six States, whose economic and political developments are as important in regard to Austria's interests as conversely the internal situation of Austria has an important bearing upon her neighbours. This intertwining of Austria's interests with those of her immediate neighbours, the result of a natural historical development, has therefore a decisive influence upon the whole of our foreign policy, which is necessarily directed to the fostering of friendly relations with every other country, and particularly with our next-door neighbours. As an economic and cultural bridge between north and south and east and west, Austria cannot pursue a policy of self-isolation without

contradicting its geographical situation and the conditions of existence which it dictates. (Paris, April 9, 1933.)

Undoubtedly Dr. Dollfuss was fully aware that for the discharge of her European task "Austria has primarily at her disposal only moral means." (London, June 16, 1933.)

But he could call attention to the fact that in the years after the War a great Austrian statesman, Dr. Seipel, had succeeded by purely moral means in arousing the whole of Europe to a realization of the fundamentally important place which Austria must hold in any European settlement. And the whole work of the man who has continued Dr. Seipel's European policy is a unique demonstration of what can be accomplished in Europe by the use of moral means. Apart from his importance to Austria, Dr. Dollfuss must be counted among those great European leaders who in one of the darkest epochs of European history have pointed to the dawn of a new peaceful settlement. In pursuance of that same policy Austria is convinced that it is her task in Europe to prove that moral means will prevail in the work of European reconstruction, the more so that the Continent is still shuddering from the cataclysm of the World War, and that the future of Europe depends upon whether moral right is ultimately to prevail over a policy of force and might.





CHAPTER XII  
HEROIC LEADERSHIP

**I**N THE SPACE OF LITTLE MORE THAN ONE YEAR CHANCELLOR Dollfuss had risen to the full measure of his vocation and completed the most important part of his task. During that time also he had established himself firmly in the affections of his people. For that was the characteristic of his leadership: people followed him because they loved him. People loved him who had never been near him, had never seen him, never even heard his voice over the wireless; people who lived in remote mountain villages, in the deepest Alpine valleys, who had only heard from others or else read in the newspapers what sort of a man he was, what he wanted, what he said. Suddenly everybody seemed to recognize that here was a man who was devoting his life to the good of his country, who wanted nothing for himself and tried only to help others, whose only motive was love of home and people, and who knew what was best for the happiness of the nation.

Asked to say what it was that gave such influence to his leadership one might mention many of the qualities which distinguished him: his true nobility of character, a goodness which was always ready to help, his warm-heartedness, his firm fixity of purpose, his conscientious energy, his devoted spirit of self-sacrifice. But who can analyse that nameless, secret gift in which personality and grace are indissolubly combined, to make the truly great leader? And he was a leader indeed. When in his plain, simple addresses he left facts to speak for themselves, showing what he intended to do by pointing to what had already been done; when he spoke of the hard work which had hitherto been necessary and would still be needed in the future; when in a few pregnant sentences he referred to the fundamental laws of public

life, explaining them in terms of the everyday experiences of the people; when he professed his faith in home, people and country, thanking those who had come to join him in promising loyalty to the Fatherland; when, in uttering the word "Austria," he gave expression to the love of country that was in his heart – then the nation felt that all that was best in it had come to life in him, that in him Austria was embodied, that he was indeed the leader who had been given to the country in one of the most difficult times of its history.

For him leadership meant responsibility and readiness for any sacrifice in the cause to which he was pledged by his vocation. This consciousness of a vocation was the source from which he drew strength for the task which he saw before him. "So long as I feel that God requires me to devote the whole of my strength to the task of improving our situation and bringing peace to our country, then I am ready to the last." (Klosterneuberg, March 25, 1934.) It was this consciousness of having a vocation from Him who guides the way of nations with His hand, that gave him unflinching confidence in the ultimate success of his work in spite of all the difficulties which constantly threatened it. And this same consciousness which gave him unswerving confidence in God also gave him the strength to devote to the cause himself, his life and his all. "We, upon whom the responsibility rests during these days, are the instruments of a higher power." He spoke these words some two weeks before his death (Langenrohr, July 8, 1934), when setting up a blessed candle which was to burn every year to commemorate the anniversary of his providential escape from the hand of the assassin. Who could then have dreamed that it would soon burn to commemorate the sacrifice of his life, made in the discharge of his mission?

His sense of responsibility was so marked in everything that he said and did that this alone was enough to assure him a following. Nobody in his senses could ever imagine that power, honour or advantage meant anything to him. His whole demeanour betokened a sense of duty which devoted itself in the same spirit to the smallest task as to the greatest. His words carried conviction when as Chancellor he declared that he had no other thought than that

of a soldier at the front: to do his duty. The responsibility that rested upon him was Austria, her liberty, her reinstatement, her future; this was the great thought that gave vitality to his leadership.

Never did Chancellor Dollfuss make capital out of promises, empty reassurances for the future, or superficial results. He preferred a small, real success to a greater one which might afterwards prove to be a delusion. He therefore made a point of rendering a public account of what had been promised, and what had been performed. Often when he had to speak before a gathering of people to whom he had previously explained his programme he would have the speech brought to him which he had delivered on that earlier occasion, so that he was able with his finger on the facts to show that his aims had been accomplished, and often even more. He was then justified in adding, as he did, that it was his "ambition never to disappoint anybody." (Vienna, December 11, 1933.) It was this as much as anything else which, especially during the first months of his Chancellorship, gained him the confidence of an ever-increasing section of the community. They recognized his open honesty when he said:

I am not one of those who comfort people with reflections about the future. I want them to pass judgement on the work that has been accomplished, and from that to derive the hope that in the months and years to come we shall continue to discharge our duty to the best of our knowledge and power. (Salzburg, May 6, 1933.)

For him leadership, like authority, was something of the spiritual order; indeed, in a sense, leadership more so than authority, since true leadership depends ultimately for its success upon the personality of the leader, whereas authority is based upon the objective order of nature. Here, Chancellor Dollfuss was averse to the use of force; else he would have had it at his disposal in greater measure than was actually the case. Many of his friends found it difficult to understand that he did not make greater use of it. But for him leadership and force were an evident contradiction to each other. In his opinion the best of man's powers grow spontaneously from an inner readiness to achieve the purpose in

view. Therefore it was never his wish to make war upon men; his aim was simply the victory of the ideas upon which he saw that the future of his Fatherland depended:

We do not want to make war upon men in Austria, whatever be their opinions; we are fighting false ideas, we are fighting false methods, we are fighting false political systems, and what we want to win is every single Austrian – worker, peasant, employee – whatever his calling may be. (Vienna, May 14, 1933.)

Nothing showed his true gifts as a leader more clearly than his constant readiness to have peace with everybody, even with the bitterest opponent, so long as he was prepared to take his part in the tireless endeavour towards that one national community which was to include the whole of the Austrian nation:

We have not caught any sort of leadership mania; we do not think that every problem is solved as soon as absolute power is at one's disposal. It is not the person that matters – not that we intend in any way to shirk our responsibility – but what matters is whether we are going to succeed, by loyal cooperation with the whole nation, in establishing peace abroad and harmony at home. (Mariazell, July 8, 1934.)

Chancellor Dollfuss was a leader who never tried to produce effects otherwise than by the power of truth. In none of his speeches will you find a word intended only to awaken a momentary impression, to give rise to groundless hopes, or even to soothe passion. He hated slogans, empty promises, the methods of the demagogue, as he hated insincerity and dishonesty. He, who in his political life acted on the principles that govern the peasant's home, knew that insincerity and dishonesty are disturbing factors in the life of any community. Therefore his advice was always: "Truthfulness and honesty must prevail in public life as well as in private life." (Graz, July 6, 1933.) These virtues he required especially of youth. The young made a hero of him, they swore loyalty to him, they promised to support him in his work of reconstruction and they looked up to him with reverence and affection. But he never made any allowances for them, he never compromised with them. He always spoke to them of the need

for self-discipline according to the high ideals of the Christian and German character:

If you, my young friends, talk of taking your part in public life, let me tell you one thing today: just as you can only be a good soldier if you have learned to obey, so you can only take an effective and useful part in public life if you have first put your own selves in order, if you have tested yourselves on the virtues which are in the very blood of German manhood, if you have honestly tried with the help of the means offered by our religion to become better men.... Youth must work upon itself. Truthfulness is the first and most fundamental of all the social virtues. (Vienna, May 29, 1933.)

And not only to the young, to all classes of society he spoke as emphatically of their duties as he did of their rights. To peasants he showed how their interests must be harmonized with those of industry and trade; but he also told the representatives of industry that they cannot exist without a thriving peasantry. If he was addressing the workers he would demonstrate to them the necessity of a sound enterprise in employers; but to employers he would point out that their fortunes in business are bound up indissolubly with those of their workers and employees, and that in economics it is man that counts.

The foundations of a common national life are truthfulness, honesty, loyalty. And it was the Chancellor's aim to form these in the souls of men. He demanded loyalty and he promised it. Of his own loyalty he gave proof by his death.

Combined with the clear, simple principles of natural philosophy which guided the whole of his policy, Chancellor Dollfuss possessed an infallible instinct for anything in the development of events which ran counter to them. "In a conflict like this you must have principles, otherwise you are lost," he said once (October 14, 1933) to a Press representative, referring to the fight on two fronts which had been forced upon him. Nevertheless – perhaps even on that account – he could also say with truth that in all decisions of urgency he relied upon instinct. He was thus able to subject any situation to an unprejudiced scrutiny and to adjust his line of

action to meet the new difficulties which were constantly arising. If he had tried to achieve his end by a preconceived method he would have come to grief within a few weeks. And in this matter the contrast between himself and Dr. Seipel is not so striking as it might seem. Because Dr. Seipel, too, acted on the principle of letting things come as they might. And in neither case did this exclude a high standard of statesmanship. Indeed it was a necessary condition for it, since only thus can every possibility be explored before taking the best course that offers. It is true that Dr. Dollfuss was to a great extent compelled to adopt this principle; but the decisions which he was forced to take were decisions of extraordinarily great importance. He would listen to the advice of his friends, discuss the matter in all its bearings. The decisions he took himself alone.

Even when difficulties accumulated he never faltered for an instant. He was not daunted by the difficulties which came from those who were trying by every means in their power to frustrate his work for Austria. Their incessant machinations against him, increasing as they did in violence as time went on, never succeeded in disturbing his calm and unruffled prudence, his serene confidence. Step by step, with unyielding tenacity he kept to his purpose. And if at any time someone to whom he had entrusted a particular task was inclined to despond, it was enough for him to have an hour with Dollfuss and he would return with renewed courage to his post. Even the difficulties within his own ranks, which naturally accompanied the transition from a state of disorder in public life to a new condition of affairs, could not disconcert him. In reminiscent vein he said to his friends of the Christian Social Party:

Although this political movement occasioned many a crisis during the first year, yet we must reflect that it is rare for so great a movement to arise as suddenly as this has done; we must not overlook this fact in remembering the details which now and then caused us some trouble. (Vienna, May 14, 1934.)

Whenever a friend, a colleague or one of his adherents complained to him about such difficulties, he would give the matter

his closest attention; if a decision was not possible at the moment he would say: "I can see what must be done; have a little patience until the matter is ripe." This was quite characteristic of him; he had a sense for the opportune moment and he could wait until the idea, already operative, had become strong enough to expel by its own vigour anything which ran counter to it. And he knew how to strengthen this idea: the idea of Austria.

Not least among the factors which gained for him the confidence of the nation was his recognition of the eternal law of all human activity. History shows but too plainly that all leaders who have disregarded this law have succeeded only in leading their people into error. Chancellor Dollfuss knew that he was always subject to a higher guidance, and that guidance on earth he saw in his Church:

We have been wise enough to attempt to reconstitute the German State in the Alpine country according to the teaching and the principles of the Holy Father. The Catholic Church...is the most experienced guide of all.

His own leadership owed its success to those simple principles in which, with the sure instinct of one steeped in a national Christian tradition, he saw the fundamental axioms of public life:

I confess that I learned my whole conception of public and economic life when I was a child in my parents' home, and the only general plan I have is one which originated during my hours of religious instruction at school. (Klosterneuberg, March 25, 1934.)

For this reason he rejected the idea of new symbols. The symbol of Austrian reconstruction was to be the highest symbol that has ever been given to man:

We intend to renew the spirit of our country in the sign in which Western Christendom was delivered from the power of Asia two hundred and fifty years ago, in the simple sign of the Christian cross. (Vienna, May 14, 1931.)

Since the early summer of 1933 Chancellor Dollfuss had known that the fulfilment of his mission would demand the sacri-

fice of his life. Already at the great rally in Linz on June 24, 1933, he spoke of the murderous threats which were daily being uttered against himself and his wife. His answer was simple:

A man who for thirty-seven months has been in daily danger of death at the front is not afraid to stand at his post today, in the consciousness that he is doing his duty to his country.

And in fact he knew no fear. After the first attack upon his life he knew that he must be prepared to make the last sacrifice. But he kept unswervingly upon his path, ready to give up his life for the great cause, which he had undertaken for his country. Many a time, when he was discussing with his colleagues problems which had not yet been solved, he would give his opinion and then say: "That is my view. If I am not alive, carry it out in this way." In this simple daily and hourly readiness to give up his life in the fulfilment of what he recognized as his duty consists the unique greatness of his heroism. He was characteristically opposed to any special precautions for his personal safety. His old comrades of the Kaiserschütz had repeatedly asked to be allowed to form his body-guard, without any payment, for they knew very well that nothing would have persuaded him to consent to any expenditure on his personal behalf. They asked again at the beginning of July. Once more in vain. He refused to surround himself with a guard. Ready for the sacrifice, he knew that he had no fear.





CHAPTER XIII  
A LONELY DEATH

IT IS ESTABLISHED THAT THE OBJECTIVE OF THE NAZI RAID upon the Chancery was to capture all the members of the Government, to force them to resign and to murder the Chancellor. The insurgents reckoned on the impression which the fall of the leader would make upon his colleagues in the Government. Those who had issued the order to murder the Chancellor were well aware that so long as Dollfuss lived no Government formed by the National Socialists could have succeeded. His followers would have risen as one man and, after perhaps a few days of fierce civil war, would have emerged doubly victorious. Hence the order to eliminate him at all costs. In this part of their plan they were successful. But in calculating the effect of his death upon the nation they had failed to appreciate what he meant to his people. They succeeded in murdering him only because in his heroic indifference to danger he had refused to take any special precautions for the protection of his person. But for the protection of the Fatherland he had not neglected to take measures. He had ensured an effective Government, and by mobilizing the Federal Army he had facilitated the speedy restoration of peace and order.

But, however he himself may have made light of the need for any special protection, such disregard for the personal safety of the Chancellor would have been an unpardonable dereliction of duty in those who were pledged at all costs to ensure it. Yet from the beginning the nation was convinced that there had been treachery; that the failure of the Public Security service to protect the most precious life in Austria was due to some criminal neglect. And subsequent evidence proved that the nation was right.

In addition there was the fact that hours passed before the news of the raid was conveyed to responsible quarters. In this connection, however, it should be remembered that hardly a day passed without the rumour of some plot or other which upon investigation proved to be unfounded; and the plot of that unhappy morning was so daring that the news of it called for a specially close verification. However, the moment had been chosen so carefully that the inevitable would have happened in any case, and the *coup* would have been possible even without the many circumstances which facilitated it. Since no augmented guard had been provided, the insurgents, disguised in false uniforms and making their way suddenly into the Chancery, may easily have been mistaken at first sight for a reinforcement. It was thus a simple matter for them to overpower the guards who were at that very moment being relieved and then without further opposition to take possession of the whole building.

The insurgents were already charging up the staircase to the Chancellor's office before he thought of making for a place of safety. As the Chancellor was passing through the corner-room between his office and the Ballhausplatz, on his way to the Congress Hall, one of the insurgents who had burst through from the passage into the corner-room fired at him twice point-blank. Not a word had been spoken. The Chancellor raised his hands to his head as if to protect himself and then sank to the ground. He must have felt immediately that he could not rise. "Help!" he cried twice, feebly. He lay on his back, mortally wounded. The insurgents paid no heed. Leaving him there, they thrust the last witness out of the room. Then the mutineers crowded in upon him. The Federal Army and the Police, so they told him, had risen against the Government and a new Government was being formed. His glazed eyes fell upon the uniforms of the State Executive. "Treachery," must have been his first thought; and it must have hurt him more than the pain of his wounds. But the insurgents did not succeed in their object. He steadfastly refused to declare his resignation. Wounded to death as he was, he would not leave the way open for the enemies of the Fatherland. They pressed him more urgently still, with threats; at all costs they

must have his resignation before he died. But it was of no use. The Chancellor fell back. He had fainted.

Succoured by two officers of the guard who had been taken prisoners, at length he recovered consciousness. Summoning all his remaining strength, he tried to get clear news about the situation. Hopeless as this seemed, he did not give up all for lost. How was it with the other ministers? Might he speak to Dr. Schuschnigg? His attendants could not answer his questions, could not grant his request. One of the insurgents came in, to whom he repeated his request to be allowed to speak to Dr. Schuschnigg. The man answered that Dr. Schuschnigg was not there and went out again. And so he remained in complete ignorance about the fate of the other ministers. He could only surmise that they had shared his own, and that the Government was out of action. His heart failed him at the thought that Austria was lost.

He felt his weakness increasing. The two wounds in his neck had been roughly bandaged, but they were still bleeding, unstaunched. Several times he had asked them to send for a priest and a doctor, or to take him to hospital. His request was refused. His murderers must have known what his religion meant to him, what it was that he wanted of the priest at the hour of death. Everything is hard for a man in that hour; but for him it was made harder, a thousand times harder. They refused him this one last consolation. In the hour of death he must suffer alone, with no priest to give him words of comfort, to give him the Viaticum. But even this, the bitterest wrong that his enemies did him, brought no word of complaint to his lips. He must have cast his mind back to the last time he had received the bread of life. It was nearly two weeks ago. At Mariazell.... A statue of the Madonna has been placed over the spot where he fell. A light burns continually before it.

His wounds were still bleeding. They had laid him upon a couch, half covered him with a wrap.... He was alone, with only his enemies around him, waiting for him to die. Once again they tried to induce him to declare for the Government which the Nazis desired, and with this end in view brought into him the only other minister they had captured. Once more his first en-

quiry was for the other ministers; he expressed the wish that Dr. Schuschnigg should succeed him. But no blood, he said, must be shed on his account. Again the insurgents demanded that he should say what he had to say. They kept telling him that the new leader had already formed a Government and had the whole power in his hands. In that case, thought the Chancellor, he must make peace. Was not peace what he had always desired? None told him as he died that he alone was wounded, that the other ministers were carrying on the Government; that apart from the raids on the Chancery and the Broadcasting House peace reigned in Vienna; that Austria was saved.

Again he was left alone with his two attendants. He was growing weaker. He wanted to say something to them. They bent lower to catch his words. He thanked them for their friendly service. Then he said: "Children, you are very good to me. Why are the others not the same? I have always wanted peace. We have never been the first to attack; we have always acted in self-defence. God forgive them!" His breathing became more feeble. Again he sent messages to his wife and children. About four o'clock he died.

Jointly with his people he had once made the solemn promise: "We are ready to defend our country with the last drop of our blood." He had kept his promise to the letter.



## CHRONOLOGY

*of the Life of Engelbert Dollfuss (1892–1934)*

1892. Oct. 4. Born at Texing, Lower Austria.
1914. Enlists for service at the front.
1918. Continues his University studies.
1927. Director of the provincial Chamber of Agriculture for Lower Austria.
1930. Jan. Takes part in the Conference of Agrarian Experts at Geneva.
- Oct. 1. President of the Austrian Federal Railways.
1931. March 18. Federal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.
- March. World Corn Conference in Rome.
1932. May 20. Federal Chancellor.
- July. Loan negotiations in Lausanne.
- Sept. Stresa Conference.
- Dec. Agreement with foreign creditors of *Creditanstalt*.
1933. March 4. Resignation of President of National Diet.
- March 31. Disbandment of Republican *Schutzbund*.
- May 3. Concordat concluded with Holy See.
- May 4. Prohibition of party uniforms.
- May 13. Dr. Frank, German Commissioner of Justice, in Vienna.
- May 14. Massed march of 40,000 of the *Heimwehr* in Vienna.
- May 26. Prohibition of the Communist Party.
- May 27. Visa tax of 1000 marks imposed by Germany.
- End of May. Formation of the Patriotic Front.
- June. First acts of Nazi terrorism.

## CHRONOLOGY

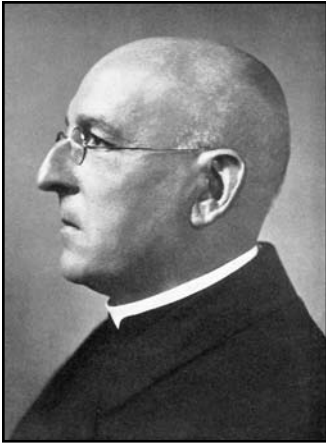
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1933. June 14. Address before the World Economic Conference in London.
- June 19. Nazi bomb outrage at Krems.
- June 20. Prohibition of National Socialist Party in Austria.
- June 30. Formation of Volunteer *Schutzcorps*.
- July. Beginning of wireless talks by Habicht.
- Sept. 11. Proclamation on the Trabrennplatz in Vienna.
- Sept. 27. Address before the League of Nations Assembly in Geneva.
- Oct. 3. Austrian national Loan.
- Oct. 3. Attempted assassination of Dr. Dollfuss in Parliament.
1934. Jan. 5. Intensified campaign of Nazi terrorism.
- Feb. 2. Massed march of 110,000 peasants in Vienna.
- Feb. 12. Socialist rising.  
Prohibition of Social Democratic Party.
- April. Preliminary discussions for the Pact between Italy, Hungary and Austria in Rome.
- May 1. Promulgation of the Constitution of 1934.  
Ratification of the Concordat.
- July 25. Nazi rising. Murder of Dr. Dollfuss.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

*of Leading Figures of the Period*

DR. IGNAZ SEIPEL (1876–1932)



BORN to lower middle class parents in Vienna, Ignaz Seipel was ordained a Catholic priest in 1899. Shortly thereafter, he became a Doctor of Theology, and began his teaching career in the universities of Salzburg and Vienna.

He was a very active man who threw himself not only into his priestly vocation, but also into social reform, political philosophy, literature, and art. In 1917, he became a confidant of the Emperor Charles who encouraged him to play a public role in post-war

Austria. He served as Minister of Social Administration in Charles's last cabinet (1918).

Seipel was elected to the Austrian Parliament in 1919 on behalf of the Christian Social Party, and soon after (1929) became its acknowledged leader. He was appointed Federal Chancellor of Austria in 1922, and his national and international political activity began the process of rebuilding what had been shattered to pieces by the First World War. Indeed his work was so remarkable that one foreign writer, who was in fact rather hostile to Seipel's views, wrote: "When we abroad think of Austria, our thoughts fly at once to Dr. Seipel." Shot and gravely wounded by a Socialist would-be assassin on June 1, 1924, he eventually stood down as Chancellor in November of 1924 in favour of Dr. Ramek, also a member of the Christian Social Party. Seipel served again as Chancellor from 1926 to 1929, and made some valiant efforts to maintain a stable parliamentary government during the years which followed and led up to Dollfuss's Chancellorship.

## DOLLFUSS: AN AUSTRIAN PATRIOT

During his lifetime Dr. Seipel was less committed to the robust and frankly revolutionary corporatist vision of Dollfuss, preferring a merely constitutional reform that would address the needs of the peasant and working classes. His somewhat “paternalistic” approach was no doubt inherited from, among other sources, that which characterized a section of the Social Catholic movement from its beginning. Nevertheless, before his death on June 28, 1932, he made a remarkable statement admitting the need for constructive change in Austria according to that indicated in Pius XI’s encyclical on the reconstruction of the social order: “There still remains a great task for me to carry out, to establish in a practical way in Austria the social ideas the Holy Father has formulated in his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*” (quoted in *The Corporative State*, by Joaquin Azpiazu, S.J., 1951). It was for Chancellor Dollfuss ultimately to implement, if only briefly, the vision which Dr. Seipel came to realize just before he died.

## PRINCE ERNST RÜDIGER VON STARHEMBERG (1899–1956)



PRINCE Starhemberg was the scion of a family that sprang from that of Ottokar I a thousand years before, and which was one of the twelve original families of the Holy Roman Empire. His family was best known, however, for the fact that his ancestor, also Prince Starhemberg, had with great personal courage led the defense of Vienna against the Turks in 1683. With the passing of the centuries, the family chalked up a great number of achievements in the political, military, and diplomatic fields.

Starhemberg took part in the First World War and got a taste for fighting his enemies and those of his country.

After the war, he quickly became involved in the *Heimwehr*, a paramilitary defense force dedicated to Austrian nationalism; it was linked to the Christian Social Party and was concerned with countering the powerful influence of the Socialist and Communist paramilitary formations



## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

in the country. Starhemberg's concern along the same line led him to take part in the 1923 Munich Putsch led by Hitler. Starhemberg was a serious Catholic, however; he soon became aware of the anti-Christian motivation behind much of National Socialism, and was thereafter its committed opponent.

In 1930, he became the "young, romantic and impulsive" – to use J. D. Gregory's phrase – leader of the *Heimwehr*, and eventually became not only Vice-Chancellor to Dollfuss but also one of his closest associates. Following the murder of Dollfuss, he joined the Schuschnigg Cabinet as Minister of Security, but he resigned in 1936 when the *Heimwehr* was dissolved by Schuschnigg, who believed it to be an enemy of his government.

Shortly before the Nazi invasion of Austria, Starhemberg fled to Latin America, and spent from 1942 to 1955 in Argentina. He published his memoirs, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, in 1942.

### KURT VON SCHUSCHNIGG (1897–1977)



SCHUSCHNIGG was born in Trento in Austro-Hungary, and went on to become a lawyer in Innsbruck. He joined the Christian Social Party, and was elected to the Parliament in 1927. In 1932, Dollfuss appointed him Minister of Justice, and a year later he became Minister of Education.

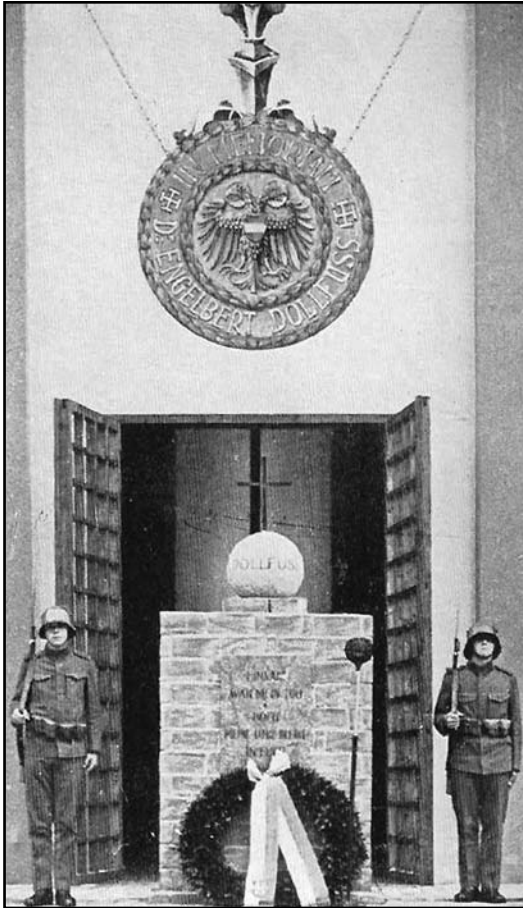
A mild-mannered and aristocratic man, Schuschnigg became the Federal Chancellor of Austria in 1934, following the murder of Dollfuss. Strongly committed to the idea of the Christian Corporate State, he was one of its most fervent advocates, but the post-Dollfuss political situation made his work in this field very difficult.

Visiting Hitler in February 1938, he apparently capitulated to a long list of demands made by the German leader. On his return to Vienna, Schuschnigg sought to regain the initiative by declaring a referendum for March 13, 1938, on the question of possible German-

## DOLLFUSS: AN AUSTRIAN PATRIOT

Austrian unification. Hitler forestalled this move by invading the country on March 11. Schuschnigg was arrested and spent the next seven years in German concentration camps.

Liberated by the Allies in 1945, he went to America where he was Professor of Political Science at the University of St. Louis from 1948 to 1967. He wrote a number of books, including *My Austria* (1938), *Austrian Requiem* (1946), and *The Brutal Takeover* (1971). He later returned to Austria, dying in Innsbruck in 1977.



Tomb of Dollfuss under guard.



# DOLLFUSS

## An Austrian Patriot

by Fr. Johannes Messner

FOREWORD BY DR. ALICE VON HILDEBRAND

INTRODUCTION BY DR. JOHN ZMIRAK

The brief Chancellorship of Engelbert Dollfuss in Austria, lasting from May 20, 1932, until his assassination by German Nazi agents on July 25, 1934, was one of the high-water marks of all European politics in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Fr. Messner's *Dollfuss* chronicles the work of the Chancellor, whose legacy is his effort to fashion Austrian public life around the Social Doctrine of the Church as expressed in *Quadragesimo Anno*.

In a time like our own, when, as Messner writes, there was "hardly any hope that it would ever again be possible to establish a State on Christian, or rather on Catholic, principles," Austria under Chancellor Dollfuss represented "a check...[on] the process of eliminating God and the natural moral law from public life." Today it remains, as it was then, a beacon which "leads the way to the truly Christian State."

"[Dollfuss was] the representative of all that remains of the Holy Roman Empire." —G. K. CHESTERTON



REV. FR. JOHANNES MESSNER (1891–1984). Ordained in 1914, he studied sociology, political economy, and law and received degrees in both latter subjects in 1924. From 1925 to 1933 he edited *Das Neue Reich*, a weekly for culture, politics, and political economy. He was a member of the Theology faculty at the University of Salzburg, Professor of Social Ethics at the University of Vienna, and advisor to Chancellor Dollfuss on all aspects of Corporatism. His numerous works include *The Social Question*, *The Corporative Order*, and *Social Ethics*.

DR. ALICE VON HILDEBRAND is the wife of philosopher Dietrich von Hildebrand. She is Professor Emerita of Philosophy at Hunter College, City University of New York. She has lectured extensively, and has authored, co-authored, or edited over ten books.

DR. JOHN ZMIRAK earned his Ph.D. in Literature at Louisiana State University. He has written extensively for Catholic and secular periodicals and is Senior Editor of *Faith & Family Magazine*. He is also the author of *Wilhelm Röpke: Swiss Localist, Global Economist*.



ISBN 0-9718286-6-0



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Biography/history