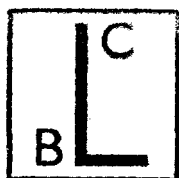


# AUSTRIAN REQUIEM

by

KURT VON SCHUSCHNIGG



**LEFT BOOK CLUB EDITION**  
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# AUSTRIAN REQUIEM

by

KURT VON SCHUSCHNIGG

Chancellor of Austria and Prisoner of Hitler

*Translated by Franz von Hildebrand*

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1947

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TO  
MY WIFE

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY RICHARD CLAY AND COMPANY, LTD.,  
BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

## PREFACE

AND NOW all is over.

Humanity holds its breath, the old world together with the new, perhaps for the first time in history. Humanity waits for the sunrise. For it was a long and bitter night, in which Lucifer once more tried his strength against God. It was a night which divided mankind into supermen and lower creatures, wilfully forgetting that man is God's creation and creation's destiny.

The damage wrought will be irreparable for many years to come. Some of it can never be repaired.

To-day it is easy enough to assert that all this was to be foreseen. Only those who actually foresaw it years ago and foretold the fate of Europe then may find credence among the ruins and on the corpse-strewn fields. Many were damned as traitors and agitators of those who warned and knew, already before 1933, what was in store for Europe. There were others who were optimists at first and later disillusioned, having relied on the emergency brakes; there were theorists whose theories could not hold reality in check, teachers whose pupils outgrew them.

Most of them paid heavily for their errors. Among those who saw the approach of the catastrophe were—alas—certainly not all Austrians, but Austria. What our small State had done, especially since 1932, what it had tried, what it had suffered was not always understood or approved of by the world. Nor was it always right. But whatever Austria did—right or wrong—can only be evaluated and understood against the background of the approaching cataclysm. That the country as a whole foresaw the catastrophe as early as 1933 was apparent to anyone who attended public discussions, such as, for instance, those of the Pan-Europa Union in Vienna. If, therefore, we make mention of this fact to-day, it is without presumption or arrogance, but with heartfelt suffering and horror, remembering the countless victims, the irreparable damage.

But it is not the purpose of this book to ask the why or the

wherefores. . . research v . . . a. e. to others better qualified for such . . . . . gations. W! / has been done cannot be undone. The war was, from the German point of view, from the very moment of its conception a highly hazardous enterprise, to say the least. There is no justification for any gamble with human lives; even less when the culture, the prestige, the welfare of an entire people are at stake, and through them the welfare of the whole civilized world. No, there is no justification, no excuse, no explanation; all the less as the experiences of 1914-18 showed unmistakably what could reasonably be expected.

Thus from the German point of view the war was senseless. Senseless for us all, at least in so far as we fail to learn from this bitter experience.

Perhaps this caesura of historical development which we have witnessed is to play an important rôle in the divine world plan. Perhaps this incision was necessary for the sake of progress and understanding. For if justice and reason, and not hatred and vengeance, establish a new order, the catastrophe itself may yet benefit humanity.

Most of this book was written between the summer of 1938 and the summer of 1945. During this time I was cut off from the world and knew little of world events—nor did I know what was to become of me. The book, therefore, cannot claim to be anything but a personal account and a human confession.

Parts of these writings were submitted, chapter by chapter, to the censorship of the Gestapo, as soon as they were written. This was necessary in order to avoid confiscation of everything I had written during my detention, since it was more than probable that they would find my papers sooner or later. I also wished to put my personal views on record, since neither the Gestapo nor the German Government showed any interest in finding out the truth about my views or my activities. In vain I waited for years for my trial before the People's Court—just as I waited in vain for the much-talked-of questioning which was to establish the crucial points of the accusation. The greater part of the manuscript, however, was kept secret; not without difficulty, as my scant belongings were closely examined every time I was moved from one camp to another.

Since a certain amount of time elapsed between the writing of the book and its publication, some passages may seem out-

dated. Others, again, may appear tense and over-strained. But there is no exaggeration in the book, and as far as factual accounts are concerned, I can vouch for its strict accuracy.

Later, during 1943, I was tempted more than once to destroy the entire work, or at least to revise what I had written so far. But finally most of it remained exactly as I had written it down during my detention. It may be—in fact, it is to be hoped—that some passages of this book will seem incredible to the reader. Yet my experiences are nothing new. Time and again men have endured the same fate and far worse: every time that new ideas and ideals have swept the earth like a hurricane and left humanity, shaken and trembling, in a sea of misery. How small, how unimportant is the fate of an individual compared with the agony of entire nations, heralding the beginning of a new era, a change for the better or for the worse. For such storms are the answer of the Creator to the sin against the spirit, to another attempted Tower of Babel, which, collapsing, buries an epoch and its generations under dust and debris.

While I was writing this book my thoughts were with those who have suffered far more and achieved far more than I—and above all with those who, to-day, are no longer alive.

*Capri, Pentecost, 1945.*

K. v. S.

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**BOOK ONE:**  
**DEATH-THROES OF AUSTRIA**

## I

### THE MEETING AT BERCHTESGADEN

THE 12th of February, 1938, the day of my interview with Adolf Hitler at his mountain retreat, Berghof, near Berchtesgaden, will for ever remain one of the darkest and most fateful days in the annals of Austria.

It was the beginning of the end, for exactly one month later the German army invaded Austria. Indeed, it was rather the beginning of the last act, since the meeting at Berchtesgaden was the outcome of a long period of friction between Austria and Germany, the last desperate attempt of a small State to stave off the end of its national existence. It is therefore desirable to give a short synopsis of the events that preceded my departure for Berchtesgaden.

The terrorist activity of the illegal Nazi underground movement in Austria, which constituted a serious domestic problem, reached its climax on July 25, 1934, when fifty Nazis, disguised in the uniforms of Austrian police, entered the Chancellery at the Ballhausplatz in Vienna and assassinated the Austrian Chancellor, Dr. Engelbert Dollfuss. Simultaneously, telephone cables were severed and another gang of Nazis occupied the radio station in Vienna. At a given signal fighting broke out all over the country. But the attempted revolution failed, and twenty-four hours later police and Army forces had the situation completely in hand.

The failure of this *coup d'état*, paradoxically, brought about a superficial improvement in the strained relations between the two countries. The documentary proof that everything undertaken in Austria by the Austrian Nazis (officially a spontaneous movement) had been organized, financed, and abetted by the central Party headquarters in Munich, and the blunders that these headquarters had committed in connection with the Dollfuss assassination—the Munich radio, for instance, broadcast the news of Dollfuss's death twenty-four hours *before* he was murdered—forced Hitler to order a radical

change in his policy towards Austria. The propaganda broadcasts from Munich ceased, the chief of the Austrian illegal Nazi Party was recalled to Germany, and the German Ambassador to Austria, Von Rieth, was replaced by Franz von Papen, whose special mission it was to "remove the regrettable misunderstandings that had arisen between the two countries." Standarte 89—a regiment of Austrian nationals in Germany which had been one of the prize exhibits of Nazi propaganda—was publicly labelled "a band of desperadoes who did nothing but compromise the Fuehrer and the aims of the Party". (Although Nazi headquarters could not deny its complicity in the July revolt in Austria, one of the most widely read German encyclopædias wrote later under the entry "Dollfuss", "... Austrian Chancellor assassinated by Communists, July 25, 1934".)

Within Austria the Nazi underground received strict orders from Munich to abstain from any acts of open violence. Officially they were left to their own resources, and had therefore to camouflage their activity. Bombs and tear gas remained in their hiding-places. However, a new technique was evolved—industrial sabotage, dissemination of alarming rumours, attempts to create panics, and man-to-man propaganda in the ranks of the Army and the administration. Still, immediately after the July revolt the tension was noticeably relaxed.

This temporary easing of the situation was, however, due not only to the truce-like condition within the country, but also to the international situation as a whole. The world was alarmed and Germany was not sufficiently armed; Italy, which had guaranteed the independence of Austria in the Roman protocols of March, 1934, had moved her divisions to the Austrian border to carry out this guarantee—if necessary by force of arms. The League of Nations equally guaranteed the sovereignty of Austria. Under these circumstances there was nothing that Hitler could do but order a tactical retreat.

That this retreat was temporary was only too obvious. Hitler's attitude towards Austria was well known. To every visitor who would listen, Hitler would hold forth on this subject, and declare that Austria had to be incorporated into the Greater Reich "sooner or later—one way or another".

As I stood at the grave of my predecessor, Chancellor Dollfuss, the situation was very clear to me. I knew that in order to save Austrian independence I had to embark on a course of appeasement. This meant that everything had to be avoided

which could give Germany a pretext for intervention and that everything had to be done to secure in some way Hitler's toleration of the *status quo*. It also meant finding a *modus vivendi* with the Nazis in Austria and with those in Germany. To attempt this by an agreement with the Austrian Nazi underground was absolutely pointless. No matter how honourable the intentions of the Austrian Nazi leaders might have been, no matter how great their sincerity, one word from the German headquarters and all agreements were null and void. The Nazi movement in Austria was more and more openly becoming a German movement, a mere branch of the central office in Munich, and had therefore lost any importance as a free agent. Thus, under whatever form the current difficulties might appear, there always remained one problem: Hitler.

Whatever concessions we had to make, to avoid friction with Germany, we could never, under any circumstances, make a compromise with Hitler's creed, if only for the reason that the National Socialist concept as a totalitarian system had no room for a compromise. But more than that, National Socialism was the very opposite of everything that is Austrian. Austria's entire history is characterized by her tendency to mediate, to join, to bring together. The characteristics of National Socialism, however, are to add fuel to the flame, to aggravate, to shatter.

Military intervention was, however, not the only menace to Austria's independence. Hitler could also bring economic pressure on Austria which would paralyse the country. To strike the right balance in these difficulties, to perform, as it were, this diplomatic tight-rope-walking feat, was only possible as long as the international power balance in Europe remained essentially the same as it was in 1934. Then Hitler was forced to a retreat after the failure of the Nazi revolt in Austria.

In the course of 1935 and 1936 this international power balance shifted. Italy began the Abyssinian war, and the resulting conflict with England led to the creation of the Berlin-Rome axis. In this new situation Austrian foreign policy could no longer be based on support from Italy against Germany. It seemed, therefore, desirable to legalize the existing relations with Germany by some sort of public agreement. This agreement was to be a temporary expedient until the re-establishment of a normal power balance in Europe. Our efforts in this direction resulted finally in an inter-State agree-

ment between Austria and Germany which was signed on July 11, 1936, and which consisted of three main points:

(1) The Government of the German Reich recognizes the full sovereignty of the federal State of Austria.

(2) Both Governments agree to regard the interior political structure of the other country—including the question of National Socialism in Austria—as the domestic affair of that country, and will not attempt to exert any influence on such matters either directly or indirectly.

(3) The Austrian Government will in general and in particular in its dealings with the German Reich follow a policy which is at all times in conformity with the fact that Austria considers itself a German State.

“This agreement does not in any way affect the previously concluded treaties known as the Roman protocols of 1934 and the codicils and amendments thereto of 1936, and does not affect Austria’s position regarding Italy or Hungary, which were signatories to these agreements.

“To insure the effectiveness of this present agreement, the German Government and the Austrian Government will take a number of practical measures in mutual agreement at the proper time.”

That was the text of the agreement. The details agreed upon by the two Governments were:

The establishment of a propaganda truce in Press and Radio. The appointment of a member of the “National Opposition”, a faction of decided pan-German leanings, into the Austrian Cabinet.

An amnesty for all National Socialist prisoners in Austria. In exchange, Germany was to lift the existing travel restrictions between Austria and the Reich.

“Furthermore, the German Government acknowledges explicitly that the Nazi [underground] movement in Austria is to be considered a domestic affair of Austria and should in case of illegal activity be dealt with according to the Austrian laws.”

Although this last concession was self-evident, we nevertheless insisted on having it put officially on record.

The evening of the day the agreement was signed brought already the first disappointment. It was understood that public announcement of the agreement was to be made simultane-

ously over the respective networks by a Cabinet member accompanied by some favourable official commentary. That night in Vienna I spoke at length as the Chief of Government about the agreement, and expressed Austria's hope and confidence in an improvement of Austro-German relations. In Berlin, Dr. Goebbels read perfunctorily through the paragraphs of the agreement without a single word of comment.

Yet for a while the agreement seemed to work more or less satisfactorily. Of course, Austria was constantly made to feel that it was the weaker partner of the two. A typical incident was the Austrian protest against the continued hero-worship in Germany of Otto Planetta, the murderer of Dollfuss. The Austrian Foreign Office made a diplomatic protest asking that a bulletin board in the University of Munich be removed. The bulletin board in question bore the legend "Otto Planetta Fraternity", and displayed the announcements of the student fraternity of the same name. Our Foreign Office pointed out that since the German student body had become an official institution under the Nazi system, it was not in conformity with the spirit of the July agreement that one of its branches should choose the name of the man who had assassinated the former head of the Government of Austria. The answer to this protest ran: "The bulletin board in question does not exist." Our reply: "It does exist, as can be seen on the enclosed photograph." Answer: "We shall look into the matter." And that was the last we ever heard from Berlin on the subject. But the bulletin board was never removed nor did the fraternity change its name.

With the growing strength of Germany during 1937, violations of the agreement became more frequent and more serious, although Austria did everything possible to avoid friction. To make a further friendly gesture, I appointed the Viennese lawyer Dr. Seyss-Inquart to the post of State Councillor. Seyss-Inquart was an avowed Nazi, but favoured—at that time, at least—the moderate wing of the movement. When, in the autumn of 1937, relations between Austria and Germany became more difficult, Seyss-Inquart declared that he could no longer take part in the meetings of the State Council. I was worried about this decision, as such a resignation of the only avowed Nazi from the Council would certainly have given rise to considerable friction with Berlin.

But the dilemma was avoided. State Secretary Bernatto reported to me later that everything was all right. He had

offered Seyss-Inquart the sum of 3,000 Austrian schillings, and the latter had agreed to continue in his post. Of course I do not know whether he used this money for personal purposes, but, in any case, a potential difficulty had been avoided.

Towards the end of 1937 the Nazi underground terror was again in full swing. Telephone booths exploded, tear-gas bombs were thrown, and mass demonstrations were arranged in order to induce the Austrian police to intervene. Once the police dispersed the crowds, Berlin protested that we did not keep our share of the bargain and allowed the persecution of National Socialism.

At this point it seemed to me necessary to get into personal contact with one of the leading men in Germany, as I hoped to strengthen the 1936 agreement through personal intervention. I therefore asked Reichsminister Hermann Goering to come to Austria on a hunting trip. At first Goering accepted the invitation, but soon we heard that the Nazi underground protested vigorously against such a meeting. Consequently Goering declined the invitation and wrote:

"The meeting would only be useful if some definite result could be achieved, at least a tariff and currency union between the two countries. But since such a step seems unlikely at the present moment, such a meeting would bring about only a further aggravation of the situation, and since we are both trying to avoid everything that could in any way be detrimental to our relations . . ."

Thus my plan for personal discussion of the situation with one of the leading personalities of the Reich had to be abandoned for the time being. Early in 1938, however, the German ambassador to Austria, Herr von Papen, approached me on the subject of a visit to Hitler's personal mountain retreat, Berghof, near Berchtesgaden. Von Papen thought that it would be most advantageous for Austro-German relations if the two heads of Government met for a personal discussion. I told him that I was willing on condition that I should be informed ahead of time of the subjects which were to be discussed, as this is usual diplomatic practice. I also insisted that the visit should be kept strictly secret and that a subsequent Press communiqué should be agreed upon by both parties. Herr von Papen returned after a few days with the following answer: "The suggested discussion will deal with such misunderstandings and

points of friction as have persisted after the agreement of 1936. This agreement should be reaffirmed. The visit would demonstrate the unchanged continuation of this agreement."

I was satisfied with this answer, and asked Herr von Papen expressly to confirm that the Press release after the meeting would inform the public that the meeting was a reaffirmation of the 1936 agreement. Herr von Papen assured me on this point and added: "It is agreed that, whatever the details of the discussion, the result of the meeting will in no case be to the disadvantage of the Austrian Government, nor will it entail any aggravation of Austro-German relations. The worst that can happen is that after the meeting we are exactly where we are to-day. The Fuehrer told me so himself."

The meeting was arranged for the 12th of February. On the evening of the 11th I took the train for Salzburg with the Austrian Under-Secretary, Dr. Schmidt.

## II

Everything had been done to keep our trip secret. Our sleeper was pushed on to a siding in Salzburg, and we stayed in it until our car arrived to take us to Berchtesgaden. A few plain-clothes men were on duty, but the local authorities were not informed of our presence. At about 9.30 a.m. our car came. We had been told that Hitler could not receive us before 11 a.m.

We drove through Salzburg, past the airfield, and then on the broad, straight highway through the cold winter morning towards the German border.

Herr von Papen awaited us there. The German Customs officials saluted smartly with raised hands and opened the turnpike to let our car pass into German territory. Herr von Papen seemed to be in the very best of humour. "The Fuehrer is expecting us at the appointed hour," he told us, and was sure I would not mind that a few German generals had arrived, quite accidentally, at Hitler's villa, Berghof. I asked him who they were; and he named Keitel, who had just been appointed to head the High Command of the Wehrmacht, Von Reichenau, in command of the motorized forces stationed in Dresden, and General of the Air Force Sperrle. I told him that I would not mind—especially since I had not much choice in the matter.

Shortly before reaching the village of Berchtesgaden our



road turned sharply to the left, and soon the car stopped. The last lap of our journey to the Berghof, up the icy mountain road, had to be made by reconnaissance car on caterpillars. We passed a number of neat farmhouses and a dreamy old village church. Half-way up the mountain-side we came upon the first S.S. barracks, some of them completed, others still under construction. Curious faces filled every window. As I heard later, most of these S.S. guards were Austrian Legionnaires. At the first of many heavy gates that barred the road a guard saluted and opened to let us pass. Four months later this same guard stood in my cell and reminded me of our first encounter. After a sharp turn our reconnaissance car stopped in front of the large terrace of the Berghof.

Hitler and his suite—the three generals I had been told of among them—advanced towards the steps to greet us. He was wearing the brown tunic of the Storm Troop uniform, with the swastika arm-band and long black trousers. The greeting was friendly and formal. After a short introduction of our mutual staffs, Hitler led me into his study on the second floor of his spacious country house. In the centre of the long and rather narrow hall stood several heavy tables and easy-chairs, where Hitler invited me to sit down.

The following conversation, which was somewhat unilateral, I have written down from memory; it covers only the essential—or at least the significant—passages.

*I:* This room with its wonderful view has doubtless been the scene of many a decisive conference, Herr Reichskanzler.

*Hitler:* Yes, in this room my thoughts ripen. But we did not get together to speak of the fine view or of the weather.

*I:* First of all, Herr Reichskanzler, I would like to thank you that you have given me the opportunity for this meeting. I would like to assure you that we take the treaty between our two countries, which we signed in July, 1936, very seriously, and that we are most anxious to remove all the remaining misunderstandings and difficulties. In any case, we have done everything to prove that we intend to follow a policy friendly towards Germany in accordance with our mutual agreement.

*Hitler:* So you call this a friendly policy, Herr Schuschnigg? On the contrary, you have done everything to avoid a friendly policy. For instance, you quite complacently remained a member of the League of Nations, in spite of

the fact that the Reich withdrew from the League. And you call that a friendly policy?

*I:* Nobody asked Austria to withdraw from the League of Nations. We could not assume that such a step was expected of us, for at the time of our agreement, in July, 1936, Germany had long since left the League without ever stipulating that Austria should do the same. We were rather of the opinion that our presence in the League could be useful to our common cause, and in this opinion we were strengthened by Italy, which had also left the League. Besides, Austria could never leave the League, if only for reasons of State finance.

*Hitler:* Anyway, it is self-evident that you had to leave the League. Besides, Austria has never done anything that would be of any help to Germany. The whole history of Austria is just one uninterrupted act of high treason. That was so in the past, and is no better to-day. This historical paradox must now reach its long-overdue end. And I can tell you here and now, Herr Schuschnigg, that I am absolutely determined to make an end of all this. The German Reich is one of the Great Powers, and nobody will raise his voice if it settles its border problems.

*I:* Herr Reichskanzler, I am fully aware of your attitude towards the Austrian question and towards the history of my country. And you will understand that my opinion in these questions differs basically from yours. For us Austrians our entire history is an essential and inseparable part of German history. Austria's contribution in this respect is considerable.

*Hitler:* Absolutely zero—I am telling you—absolutely zero. Every national idea was sabotaged by Austria throughout history; and indeed, all this sabotage was the chief activity of the Hapsburgs and the Catholic Church.

*I:* All the same, Herr Reichskanzler, many an Austrian contribution cannot possibly be separated from the general picture of German culture. Take, for instance, a man like Beethoven . . .

*Hitler:* Oh—Beethoven? Let me tell you that Beethoven came from the lower Rhineland.

*I:* Yet Austria was the country of his choice, as it was for so many others. Nobody would, for instance, refer to Metternich as a German from the Rhineland.

*Hitler:* That's as may be. I am telling you once more that

things cannot go on in this way. I have a historic mission ; and this mission I will fulfil because Providence has destined me to do so. I thoroughly believe in this mission ; it is my life. And I believe in God ; I am a religious man, although not in any denominational sense of the word. Consider the path I have chosen. Consider what I have achieved. To-day there are no parties, no classes, no dissensions in the German people. They all want the same thing. There is but one will. True, I had thought I could bring this about in another manner. I wanted to unite the nation in the two great Churches—the Catholic and a united Protestant Church—and solve my task with their help. But this appeared impracticable, because the Churches refused to co-operate. Therefore I decided that my task would be achieved without the Churches—and if necessary despite the Churches. Who is not with me will be crushed. Look around you in Germany to-day, Herr Schuschnigg, and you will find that there is but one will. I was predestined to accomplish this task ; I have chosen the most difficult road that any German ever took ; I have made the greatest achievement in the history of Germany, greater than any other German. And not by force, mind you. I am carried along by the love of my people. I can go about freely and without guard at any time in Germany. And that because I am borne by the love and trust of my people. I wish you could have seen my recent trip to Hamburg, or the one to Augsburg, Herr Schuschnigg. Wherever I go, I need the police only to keep the masses back, to save them from being trampled, to curb their boundless enthusiasm—but not for my protection.

*I:* Herr Reichskanzler, I am quite willing to believe that.

*Hitler:* And you know, I could call myself an Austrian with just as much reason—in fact, with far more reason—than you, Herr Schuschnigg. Why don't you try a plebiscite in Austria in which we two run against each other? You just try that.

*I:* Well, if that were possible. But you know yourself, Herr Reichskanzler, that this is impossible. My views differ radically from yours. There is nothing we can do but live together, side by side, the little State next to the big one. We have no other choice. And so I would ask you to enumerate your complaints. We will do everything to remove obstacles to a better understanding, as far as it is

possible. After all, we do not want anything else but to live in peace and fulfil our historic mission in Central Europe.

*Hitler:* That is what you say, Herr Schuschnigg. But I am telling you that I am going to solve the so-called Austrian problem one way or the other. Do you imagine that I don't know that you are fortifying your border against the Reich?

*I:* That is not true.

*Hitler:* Oh, no? You have made rather ridiculous efforts to mine the bridges and roads leading to the Reich.

*I:* If such a thing were done I should have heard about it.

*Hitler:* Listen. You don't really think that you can move a single stone in Austria without my hearing the most accurate details about it the very next day, do you?

*I:* The work you are referring to, Herr Reichskanzler, can only be some rudimentary defence work which we had to begin—partly as an answer to the road-blocks that Czechoslovakia erected. We have taken these measures on all our borders, and nobody can object if we prepare a defence against illegal intrusions on our territory.

*Hitler:* I have only to give an order, and in one single night all your ridiculous defence mechanisms are blown to bits. You don't seriously believe that you can stop me, or even delay me for half an hour, do you? Who knows? Perhaps you will wake up one morning in Vienna to find us there—just like a spring storm. And then you'll see something. I would very much like to save Austria from such a fate, because such an action would mean blood. After the army, my S.A. and the Austrian Legion would move in, and nobody can stop their just revenge—not even I. Do you want to make another Spain of Austria? I would like to avoid all that—if possible.

*I:* I shall investigate the matter and will have any defence work on the German border stopped. I am fully aware that you can invade Austria; but Herr Reichskanzler, whether we like it or not, that would mean bloodshed. We are not alone in this world, and such a step would probably mean war.

*Hitler:* It is easy enough to talk of war while we are sitting here in our comfortable easy-chairs. But war means endless misery for millions. Do you want to take this responsibility upon yourself, Herr Schuschnigg? Don't think for

one moment that anybody on earth is going to thwart my decisions. Italy? I see eye to eye with Mussolini, the closest ties of friendship bind me to Italy. And England? England will not move one finger for Austria. Not long ago an English diplomat sat in the very chair you are now sitting in. And outside this window hundreds and hundreds of Austrians marched by—men, women, and children—starved, in rags, desperate. Misery was written on their faces. And all of them had come here to see me, to implore me as their saviour to put an end to their misery. I showed these people to the Englishman, and he grew very silent and no longer contradicted me. No, you can't expect any help from England. And France? Well, three years ago we marched on the Rhineland with a handful of battalions; that was the time I risked everything. If France had stopped us then we would have had to retreat perhaps sixty kilometres or so, and even then we could have stopped them there. But now it is too late for France. The world must know that it is unbearable for a great Power like Germany to have every little State on her borders believe that it can provoke her. I have watched it long enough without interfering because I hoped that in the end reason would triumph. But it is simply an impossible state of affairs when people are thrown into jail in Austria merely because they sing a song that you don't like or because they salute each other with "Heil Hitler". The persecution of National Socialists in Austria must have an end, or else I shall put an end to it.

*I:* Nobody is persecuted in Austria who abides by the law. Our laws and our constitution, which recognize no party, were acknowledged by the Reich in the agreement of July, 1936. It was then stipulated that by-gones be by-gones and that there be no encouragement of any future Nazi underground movement. That was agreed. Besides, there is no persecution of National Socialists to-day in Austria, and if it had not been for the assassination of Dr. Dollfuss in July, 1934, we would not have a single Nazi in our prisons to-day.

*Hitler:* You are right, Herr Bundeskanzler. I admit that Dollfuss stands between us. But I assure you that I knew nothing of the plot; and, had I known of it, I would certainly have stopped it. But, believe me, it was a grave mis-

take that you brought Planetta to justice. You should have handled him in the way we handle such problems. Remember the case of the communist leader Thaelmann? Well, you see. But you only made a martyr out of Planetta.

*I:* At that time there was no other possibility.

*Hitler:* Listen. I know how it is in Austria better than you do. Not one day passes that I am not implored to intervene.

*I:* Perhaps you would think differently if you were actually in Austria, Herr Reichskanzler. You know Vienna.

*Hitler:* Yes; but that was a long time ago.

*I:* Since that time the Herr Reichskanzler has not been to Austria?

*Hitler:* Well, the Austrian Government has prohibited me from entering. Once, some years ago, I was in Vienna at night, and afterwards I secretly visited the grave of my parents. That is how I am treated by Austria. But now I give you once more, and for the last time, the opportunity to come to terms, Herr Schuschnigg. Either we find a solution now, or else events will take their course. And we shall see whether you will like these events. Next Sunday I go before the German nation, and in this speech before the Reichstag the German people must know what the situation is. Think it over, Herr Schuschnigg, think it over well. I can only wait until this afternoon. If I tell you that, you will do well to take my words literally. I don't believe in bluffing. All my past is proof of that. I have achieved everything that I set out to do, and have thus become perhaps the greatest German of all history. It is not my habit to talk much or to give warning of things to come, as does, for instance, Mussolini. He does things differently. And besides my name there are other great German names; if I were to close my eyes to-day the future of Germany would be none the less secure. We have a Hermann Goering, we have a Rudolf Hess, a Frick, an Epp, and countless others. I offer you, Herr Schuschnigg, the unique opportunity to have your name added to these great German names. That would be an honourable deed, and all difficulties could be avoided. I know that one has to take into account certain peculiarities of the Austrians, but that could be easily taken care of.

*I:* Herr Reichskanzler, you know my views on this question.

They are my personal views as well as those which duty towards my country dictates. Now what exactly are your wishes?

*Hitler:* That we can discuss this afternoon.

Thus our first interview came to an end after about two hours. Hitler rang a bell, and the huge, heavy doors were silently opened from the outside. We went down the stairs and along a corridor adorned with a large, impressive bust of Bismarck. In the dining-room I sat opposite Hitler. We were served by exceptionally tall and remarkably handsome young S.S. men in snow-white steward uniforms. The conversation during and after lunch was more or less inconsequential. Hitler told us of his preference for motors and motorization and recounted some anecdotes of army horses that proved inadequate in the service. Altogether he seemed in excellent spirits. A community on the Baltic coast had decided to give him a house for a present, but he—so he told us—had turned down the offer. He had too many obligations of this sort already, and his income did not permit him the upkeep of so many houses. He also told us that he had refused the customary salary when he took over the duties of President of the Reich, since that sum constituted a mere pittance in comparison with his expenditures. A number of public buildings were some of them near completion, and some still under construction. In Hamburg he was going to construct the largest bridge in the world, and a series of office buildings to dwarf the mightiest skyscrapers would be constructed shortly. "The Americans shall see when they come to Europe that Germany builds bigger and better houses than the United States."

We had our coffee in an adjoining room which was made entirely of glass and arranged as a winter garden. The room was extremely comfortable and was furnished in excellent taste. I noticed an exceptionally fine Madonna by Albrecht Duerer on one of the walls.

"My favourite picture, because it is so thoroughly German," Hitler remarked.

The generals, for whom this was quite obviously the first visit to Hitler's mountain retreat, spoke of their respective activities. General Sperrle told us of his experiences in the Spanish Civil War, where he had commanded the German Air Force legion "Kondor". At about two o'clock Hitler ex-

cused himself and left the room. We were asked to wait until the Fuehrer was ready to resume the discussions.

I informed Dr. Schmidt of my interview with Hitler, and he told me he had discovered that one of the leading Austrian Nazis, a Dr. Muhlmann from Vienna, had also been asked to the Berghof. Hitler was presumably discussing the Austrian problem with him and Herr von Papen while we waited. We had ample time for our own deliberations, as we sat fully two hours in a sort of ante-chamber. With us were the chief of the German Press, Dietrich, and the generals. The latter stressed that they had no idea why they had been ordered to come to Berghof. There was also a young man in the black S.S. uniform, the son of a well-known surgeon from Vienna. Cocktails were served, and for the first time since our arrival we were permitted to smoke.

Finally we—Dr. Schmidt and I—were admitted to a room, where we found the German Foreign Minister, Von Ribbentrop, and Herr von Papen. Ribbentrop showed us a type-written draft of about two pages, and remarked that it contained the limit of the concessions the Fuehrer was willing to make. I was relieved to have at last something definite before me, and prepared to peruse the document. The essential points were as follows:

1. The Austrian Government pledges itself to appoint immediately Dr. Seyss-Inquart to the post of Minister of Public Security, with full and unlimited control of the police forces in Austria.

2. For the administration of Austro-German economic relations and for all related fields, Dr Fischboeck is to be appointed Cabinet member.

3. All National Socialists who are at present serving a sentence or are being detained for future juridical action, including the participants in the revolt of July, 1934, and the assassins of Chancellor Dollfuss, have to be set free within three days.

4. All Nazi officials and officers who were relieved of their duties are to be reinstated in their former positions and rights.

5. One hundred officers of the German Army are to be immediately detailed for duty with the Austrian Army and vice versa.

6. Everyone is free to profess the National Socialist creed. National Socialists will be admitted to the Patriotic Front



organization, having equal rights with other groups in this organization. Within the framework of the Patriotic Front these National Socialist groups will be permitted to develop legal activities in accordance with Austrian laws and the constitution which, as a corporative system, do not permit the formation of political parties as such. Therefore, the National Socialist Party and its associated organizations shall remain illegal.

7. The German Reich Government reaffirms, in return, the agreements of July 11, 1936, and thereby renews its full recognition of Austria's sovereignty and independence, and specifically abstains from any intervention in Austria's interior political affairs.

Herr von Ribbentrop solicitously explained every single paragraph and took notice of my objections, but he asserted again that the draft had to be accepted as it stood. We voiced our protest, and Dr. Schmidt reminded Herr von Papen of the agreement that only subjects of mutual agreement were to be brought up at the meeting at the Berghof. Herr von Papen assured us that he was as much surprised as we were.

While the first paragraphs of the draft meant nothing else but the complete end of the independence of the Austrian Government—the very contrary of what we had come to Berchtesgaden to discuss—the real trap lay in paragraph 6. What was meant by profession of the Nazi creed? What was the difference between this open profession and the actual party? Where did the development of legal activities end, and where was the illegal party activity to begin?

Herr von Ribbentrop admitted that he did not know. It was the typical rubber clause, the trap in a carefully planned document which, once signed, was to be used as a club against the weaker partner. It was intended to cloak the treacherous blow with a thin remnant of so-called legality.

I asked whether we could count on the good will of Germany, whether the Reich Government had at least the intention to keep its side of the bargain. Both Ribbentrop and Papen answered in the affirmative and assured me that it was Hitler's only aim to solve the Austrian problem quietly and peacefully so that he could turn his full attention to other problems. Finally they agreed to two changes in the document, both of them utterly irrelevant. Dr. Fischboeck, instead of becoming a Cabinet member, was to get the title of Federal

Commissar, and the exchange of officers between the two armies was to be effected in two instalments of fifty officers each time. I stipulated further that two notorious Nazi leaders in Austria must be recalled to Germany—namely, the so-called Gauleiter Leopold and a certain Dr. Tavs, who had recently been taken into custody for conspiracy against the State. Also, Dr. Seyss-Inquart had for some time asked that these two people be removed. Ribbentrop agreed to these demands.

In further discussion it appeared that Hitler personally desired another change in our Cabinet. He wished General Zehner, the Austrian Secretary of War (who was assassinated in his apartment in Vienna exactly one month later on the day of the Anschluss), and Lieutenant Field-Marshal Jansa to be replaced by other officers. The first request I refused outright. To the second I remarked that Field-Marshal Jansa, having reached the age limit, was shortly to be pensioned, and had already been informed of this decision.

After waiting again for a considerable time, I was told that Hitler wished to see me. The Fuehrer was pacing excitedly up and down when I entered the study.

*Hitler:* Herr Schuschnigg, I have decided to make one last attempt. Here is the draft of the document. There is nothing to be discussed about it. I will not change one single iota. You will either sign it as it stands or else our meeting has been useless. In that case I shall decide during the night what will be done next.

*I:* I have been informed of the contents of the document and can do nothing under the circumstances but take cognizance of it. I am also willing to sign it, but I want to make it quite clear that my signature alone can be of no value whatsoever to you, Herr Reichskanzler. According to our constitution, Cabinet members are appointed by the head of the State, the President, just as it is only the President who can grant an amnesty. Therefore, my signature can mean only that I am ready to appeal to the President and to see that the agreement is carried out, if the President should decide to accept it.

*Hitler:* Yes, I understand that. . . .

*I:* Consequently I can in no way guarantee that the time limits stipulated in the document—as, for instance, the three days for the amnesty—will be observed.

*Hitler:* You have to guarantee that.

*I:* I could not possibly, Herr Reichskanzler.

At this answer Hitler seemed to lose his self-control. He ran to the doors, opened them, and shouted, "General Keitel!" Then, turning back to me, he said, "I shall have you called later."

I left the study and joined Dr. Schmidt and Herr von Papen in the ante-chamber. I told them of my talk with Hitler. Papen offered to mediate, and tried at once to be admitted to the Fuehrer's study. Dr. Schmidt told me he had been talking to General Keitel when Hitler's shout was heard. The General had interrupted his conversation and, in an instant, had changed his friendly attitude to one of outspoken enmity. Dr. Schmidt was of the opinion that this was the decisive moment of our visit to Berchtesgaden, and said he would not be surprised if we were arrested within the next five minutes.

About half an hour later I was again called to Hitler.

*Hitler:* I have decided to change my mind—for the first time in my entire life. But I warn you—this is your very last chance. I have given you three more days before the agreement goes into effect.

Dr. Schmidt and Herr von Papen were called into the study. The ensuing monologue contained nothing new and is not worth recording. Finally the draft, with another few inconsequential changes, was sent out to be typewritten. Gradually the Fuehrer regained his composure and the conversation was resumed more conventionally.

*Hitler:* Well, now that we have come to an agreement, the Austrian problem is solved. Believe me, Herr Bundeskanzler, it is for the best. Now we can abide by this agreement for the next five years. That is a long time, and in five years the world will look different, anyway.

*I:* Does the Herr Reichskanzler believe that the various crises in the world to-day can be solved in a peaceful manner?

*Hitler:* If my advice were followed, peace would be possible. But one does not listen to me. I would gladly spare the world another world war, but I don't know whether it can be avoided if no one believes me.

*I:* At the moment the state of the world looks rather promising, don't you think, Herr Reichskanzler? England seems

to be co-operative, and Italy, in contrast to the past, has become a military factor. The new education of this nation becomes more and more evident, even if the character of the masses has not been changed appreciably.

*Hitler:* Italy can be defended by some good aviators and some submarine specialists. Altogether, about two hundred thousand well-trained men are needed for this, and Italy has them. That is enough. In Germany we are in the middle of a vast military reorganization. Already to-day we are France's equal in every respect. I have just rejuvenated the leadership of the Wehrmacht. By next autumn all generals over sixty will be replaced by younger officers. In tanks, planes and motorized artillery we are the leading Power to-day. It would be completely irresponsible and unjustifiable merely from a historical point of view not to use a magnificent instrument like the German Wehrmacht. Our naval programme also is making good progress. Provided that we come to an understanding to-day, I am going to ask you and Admiral Horthy to come to the launching of a new battleship. It will be named *Tegethoff*, in memory of the old Austrian fleet. . . ." (It was later actually called *Prinz Eugen*.)

In the further course of conversation Hitler turned to Herr von Papen.

*Hitler:* In the decisive hour of 1933 you saved the Reich from chaos by making it possible that the controls were placed in my hands.

*Papen:* Indeed, my Fuehrer.

*Hitler:* I shall never forget it, Herr von Papen.

Finally we discussed the Press release. I asked that the communiqué make mention of the July treaty of 1936, and reminded Hitler that I was expressly told in Vienna that our discussions would be a continuation and reaffirmation of these agreements. I pointed out that the tension would be relaxed if the Press release were held in this tenor.

*Hitler:* Oh, no! First you have to fulfil the conditions of our agreement. This is what is going to the Press: "To-day the Fuehrer and Reichskanzler conferred with the Austrian Bundeskanzler at the Berghof." That's all. Next Sunday in my speech before the Reichstag I shall mention our meeting with some favourable commentary for Austria.

In the meantime the public was to remain uninformed. Towards evening the two copies of the agreement were signed. The originals, which later on were never mentioned again, bore the signatures : A. Hitler, Ribbentrop, Schuschnigg, Dr. Schmidt.

Hitler asked us to stay for supper, but we declined. We took our leave and once more entered the reconnaissance car, which bore us down the mountain. On the way to Salzburg Herr von Papen remarked :

"Well, now you have seen what the Fuehrer can be like at times. But the next time I am sure it will be different. You know the Fuehrer can be absolutely charming."

"The next time," I wondered. There would be no next time unless Hitler, for once, really meant what he had said. But since this was more than doubtful, there would be no more discussions about Austria. Of that I was quite sure. And I also knew that there was little room for any hope.

We drove quickly through the grey and foggy winter night towards Salzburg. There, as in Vienna, speculation was rife. When would we come back? How would we come back? Would we come back at all?

Anything was possible.

## II THE FOUR WEEKS' AGONY

FEBRUARY 12 TO MARCH 11, 1938-

AT 2 a.m. we boarded a special train in Salzburg for Vienna, where many difficult and thankless tasks awaited me. The most urgent requirement, and perhaps the most difficult, was to keep up an appearance of confident optimism. Any panic, any excitement, might provide the spark that would start the conflagration.

Upon my arrival in Vienna I conferred immediately with the President, Dr. Miklas. During the night I had prepared a memorandum on the interview so that the President could have a first-hand picture of the details and the tone of my conversations with Hitler. After the President had been informed, a few of our closest political advisers were taken into the secret. The President was willing to grant the amnesty to those Austrian Nazis who were still in prison, but he objected most vigorously to the appointment of Dr. Seyss-Inquart to the post of Minister of Security.

"I would give him any other post—but I refuse to give him the police and the army," repeated the President.

None of those present doubted for one moment what would happen if the entire executive power of Austria were placed in the hands of an avowed National Socialist.

Finally I summed up the situation and enumerated three possible courses—

1. The Chancellor resign and the President call on a new Chancellor to form a Cabinet, which would be under no obligation to the commitments of Berchtesgaden.
2. The Berchtesgaden agreement be carried out under a newly appointed Chancellor.
3. The agreement be carried out and the Chancellor remain at his post.

After considerable hesitation, the President finally decided

B (Austrian Requiem)

on the last course. I then informed a wider circle of officials of the events of the last days and the President's decision. I also sent memoranda to the diplomatic representatives of Hungary and Italy, with whom Austria had treaties.

Dr. Seyss-Inquart feigned utter surprise when he was informed of his appointment as Minister of Security. He assured us of his absolute loyalty towards Austria, and said that he would make it quite clear in Berlin that he had no intention of playing the part of a Trojan horse. He would, so he asserted, carry out his duties without taking the slightest notice of official or private influences from across the border.

The amnesty caused great concern in professional police circles, as a number of prisoners who were to benefit by it had formerly been members of the police force and now had to be reinstated in their former positions, according to the agreement. Nevertheless, the amnesty was carried out on March 14, and was made valid for all political prisoners, regardless of their party affiliations. On that same day I reorganized the Cabinet on a larger basis. All former and present political parties were represented. A former official of the Free Unions was appointed Secretary of Labour. Professor von Glaise-Horstenau, an exponent of the so-called "National" (i.e. pan-German) faction, who had been in the Cabinet since the 1936 agreement, was reappointed. I did not know that under the circumstances he considered his oath of office little more than a temporary formality. That, however, was not the worst gap in my knowledge of the situation.

Immediately after having been sworn in, the new Cabinet met in its first session, which passed without friction. The next step, in accordance with the Berchtesgaden agreement, was the installing of representatives of the Nazi underground within the framework of the "Patriotic Front", the only legal political organization in Austria at that time. The army also took the necessary steps for the impending exchange of officers with Germany, and the Secretary of War, General Wilhelm Zehner, prepared to act on an invitation of the Wehrmacht to come to Berlin.

On the evening of February 14 the annual State reception of the diplomatic corps took place in the halls of the former imperial castle. "You are looking very well, considering," remarked the French ambassador, Gabriel Puaux, a staunch supporter of Austrian independence. He proceeded to tell me a number of details about my interview with Hitler at Berchtes-

gaden. Although some of it did not correspond to what had actually happened, I was amazed that he knew anything at all about the interview.

In the course of the reception it appeared that he was not the only diplomat who possessed excellent and detailed information about the Berchtesgaden meeting. Where did they obtain it? It was rumoured that the British intelligence service received its information straight from the entourage of Hitler. Therefore, it was rather difficult for Dr. Schmidt and me to maintain our cheerful appearance and to spread, for the sake of public calm, our harmless version of the meeting. Nobody seemed to believe us, and this was shown in polite and knowing smiles.

Immediately after his appointment, Seyss-Inquart went to Berlin to call on Hitler, Goering, and Himmler. On his return he issued a routine release to the police forces which began: "To the German police in Austria." He reported to me that Hitler had appointed a new Gauleiter for Austria only twenty-four hours after our meeting. The new Gauleiter was Major Klausner, an Austrian Army officer who had just been released from prison in accordance with the general amnesty.

In the meantime, life in Vienna to all appearances was very gay. The "Nationals" had one celebration after another, and the streets were filled with parades. The loyal population was upset and offended. It did not understand why the police did nothing to curb the activities of the Nazis. It did not like the life-sized pictures of Hitler that appeared in all "National" shop windows. Whenever the police intervened, it was in favour of the "Nationals". However, this was necessary, as we were now at the point where the slightest disturbance might have set in motion the German divisions across the border.

Seyss-Inquart was all loyalty and understanding when I talked to him privately. His public speeches and actions were—to say the least—ambiguous. At any rate, not a single promise I had received was kept. At that time I did not know whether Seyss-Inquart and his men did not want to go along with me or whether, as I suspected, they simply could not or dared not. For example, the wearing of the swastika emblem was, according to the agreement, to remain illegal. Seyss-Inquart personally signed this order. Yet swastika emblems were obtrusively and demonstrably sold in all the busy thoroughfares. There was no reason under these circumstances why the anti-Nazi population, which was at that time in the



majority, should not produce its own emblems, which, in accordance with the law, had not been worn for a number of years. But it did not. The three arrows, the emblem of the Socialist Party, made no appearance. Of course it proved impossible, in the long run, to restrain only one part of the population. Seyss-Inquart merely shrugged his shoulders and did nothing to enforce his own directive, although one word to the police would have sufficed.

Sunday, February 20, everyone listened to Hitler's speech before the Reichstag. For the first time such a speech was relayed by the Austrian network. ". . . The German Reich is no longer willing to tolerate the suppression of ten million Germans across its borders. . . . I am glad to say, however, that the Austrian Chancellor has shown insight, and a satisfactory agreement has been reached with Austria."

That was, as far as I can remember, the expected and promised "friendly commentary". I felt that now it was imperative to throw full light on the Austrian point of view. The Bundestag—the Austrian Federal Diet—was called into session for the evening of February 24.

In the meantime I received from Mussolini an oral message to the effect that he thought Austria's tactics at Berchtesgaden quite right and very clever. He agreed with everything, and assured us of Italy's unchanged position in the Austrian question as well as of his personal friendship. Earlier, after his visit to Berlin in 1937, Mussolini had sent word to me that in all his political talks with Hitler the Austrian problem had not even been mentioned and that Italy's attitude in this question had been, was and would always remain constant. On February 24 the Duce sent the former Italian ambassador to Austria, Senator Francesco Salata, as special diplomatic observer to Vienna. This was a very friendly gesture, as I was on particularly good terms with Salata.

My speech before the Bundestag was climaxed by three emphatic points:

1. Austria welcomes the peace with Germany and is resolved to keep it under any circumstances.
2. The limits of our possibilities are clearly outlined in the inter-State agreement of July, 1936. Thus Austria will go so far and no farther (this latter sentence with particular reference to domestic policy).
3. Austria can live and will live. It will never voluntarily

give up its national existence. Our watchword remains "True German and red-white-red until we're dead."

It may be a point for discussion whether the deliberately careful and smooth but clear and pointed language was politically sound and called for, especially in view of the peculiarities of the other partner. Against these obvious and no doubt serious objections there was, however, another decisive and final consideration. Danger was imminent—danger from across the border, danger from within, danger on the economic front. The guessing game about Austria's intentions and final attitude must come to an end. The world must know what Austria really wanted. It knew well enough what Hitler wanted. But Austria's position was not altogether clear to everyone. Yet this was important, since Austria's independent existence was internationally guaranteed as an essential condition to European stability. Thus the fate of Austria directly affected the peace of Europe.

The 24th of February, 1938, was for me the crucial date. For Hitler either meant sincerely and literally what he had proposed in the agreement—in which case he could not object to either the content or the form of my speech (which, officially, he never did)—or he was merely waiting for an opportunity to solve the question by force. In that case it was better to end the undignified cat-and-mouse game as quickly as possible. Now was stated clearly and unequivocally what friend and foe had sometimes considered a discrepancy in Austria's attitude: Austria was German—its history, its culture, its character were German. But because of that allegiance to the true soul of Germany, Austria could not and would not accept National Socialism, nor would it be united with a Prussian-dominated Reich. Austria sought peace and brotherly friendship with the Reich, but never subordination or even co-ordination (*Gleichschaltung*). For an Austrian, political ideology and national heritage were as little identical as Adolf Hitler and the German people in their entirety. Austria at that time had chosen the authoritarian system, but it never desired absolute leadership or a totalitarian system.

All this had been made clear in my speech. The powerful demonstration which accompanied the session of the Diet within the halls of parliament, as well as in the streets of Vienna, had been broadcast to the entire world and also to Germany.

Now it remained to await the repercussions.

In Vienna some ten thousand people demonstrated their approval of the speech. In Graz, at the same time, the S.A. formation, not yet in uniform, stormed the public address system in the main square which relayed the broadcast from Vienna. Others flew the swastika flag from the town hall. The Press in Germany, however, remained silent. Public opinion was clearly divided—passionate approval within the ranks of loyal Austrians and with the mass of non-political or normally indifferent followers; momentary indecision in the camp of the opponents; fanatical disapproval and immediate mobilization of the illegal Nazi formation, led by the S.A. and the S.S.

The economic barometer registered a sharp reaction in the mass withdrawal of accounts from banks and savings banks and in the cancellation of orders from foreign firms. Thousands of telegrams and letters came in, and many alarm signals, especially from Styria. High ecclesiastical circles showed serious concern. There was much well-meant criticism of the Berchtesgaden agreement, much misunderstanding, much obvious and worthless advice. And there were literally mountains of approving and often touching letters of encouragement. There were also anonymous letters from Germany warning that Hitler's promises meant nothing, and letters from Hitler Youth members who asked for my autograph, and rejoiced that relations between their country and Austria were now as they always should have been and the clouds of conflict had given way to blue sky once more.

But the Cassandra warnings outnumbered the optimistic note. Arturo Toscanini cabled from New York to the management of the Salzburg music festivals that he was cancelling all existing contracts and would not conduct in Salzburg again "because of the political developments in Austria". The young Emperor Otto of Hapsburg sent a letter by messenger from Belgium imploring me by my old oath of allegiance as a former officer of the Austrian Army to appoint him to the post of Chancellor, if such a step would in any way save Austria. Only the German Ambassador, Herr von Papen, was not heard from, nor could he be found anywhere during this period. To make up for Von Papen's absence, a Herr Keppler made his appearance, on orders, so he said, from the German Foreign Ministry. He presented a number of new demands in addition to the Berchtesgaden agreement, among them the immediate exchange of double the number of army officers. But some-

where all patience ends. I told him in rather plain language that the Berchtesgaden agreement was but three weeks old and that I had no interest whatsoever in continuing the conversation.

Among the many letters I received there was also a document that deserved special notice. It bore the signatures of many Socialist functionaries from the Vienna factories, and stated that the workers would wholeheartedly support the policy of Austrian independence as expressed in the speech of February 24. The Austrian Government could count on the active help and co-operation of the workers of Vienna.

As things stood then, I felt that the moment for a clear decision had come. It seemed irresponsible to wait with fettered hands until, in the course of some weeks, we should be gagged as well. The gamble now was for stakes which demanded the ultimate and supreme effort.

Thus, in agreement with the President and all other leading political leaders, I decided to proclaim an immediate plebiscite. The question to be laid before the Austrian people had to be so formed as to allow an expression of opinion on my policy but at the same time had to be unobjectionable from a foreign point of view. It could not contain anything which had not been agreed upon at the Berchtesgaden meeting and thus bore Hitler's signature. After considering the text from a constitutional angle, we finally agreed on the following: "For a free and independent, German and Christian Austria."

There can be no question that I personally and exclusively bore the political and moral responsibility for this step. But we shall speak of this later.

It was in the last days of February, when the news from Graz and Styria took on a more serious character, that I first considered the possibility of a plebiscite. When, in the beginning of March, the first signs of passive resistance appeared in the schools and in the administration of that same city, I made the decision. Negotiations with the "National Opposition", as the Nazi faction was then called, became more and more futile, as every agreement, every bargain, was recanted by them within twenty-four hours, and since every concession on our part brought an avalanche of new and impossible demands. Seyss-Inquart merely looked on, arms akimbo. When finally our last offer, to replace the Governor of Styria by a National Socialist and to create vice-governorships in all provinces for the "Opposition", served to assuage the appetite of the Nazis for

barely one day, things had gone far enough. I decided to ask the Austrian people to express their free will and to profess their allegiance to their country. The result was unquestionable. It was not the representatives of Austria, but Adolf Hitler who must fear it. For this reason, and only for this reason, he prevented it.

What had happened in Austria up to that point was the terroristic activity of a minority which was backed and immunized by the German Fuehrer. First, to falsify this minority into a majority, and subsequently to make it into a real majority by pressure—that was, as the events have shown, the true tenor of Hitler's vociferous indignation, the premeditated aim of his politico-strategic concept.

To get a clearer picture of as many strata of the population as possible, I asked a number of Communist and Socialist delegates to the Chancellery and had a long, sincere talk with them. The Socialist speaker made it quite clear that his party's attitude on domestic issues differed sharply from my concepts, but that in the present situation the Government had no choice of following any other policy than that on which we had embarked. The Socialists, he declared, were ready to put all differences and demands aside, and were pledged to do their utmost to save Austria in this hour of danger. I was told to count on the implicit support of the Socialists. I knew, of course, that this in no way meant a pledge to my Government—as had been made clear during the conference—but a pledge of loyalty to the flag, to Austria's independent and free existence. And the pledge was honest and sincere. It was the promise of real patriots. There is no question but that a single order would have sufficed on the day of the Anschluss to call a general strike or to meet the invasion with armed resistance. Why I decided then, after carefully weighing the pros and cons, to avoid bloodshed and destruction appears in the following pages.

The rapid pace of events made it necessary to get once more into contact with the two States which were allied to Austria through the Roman protocols. The Hungarian Foreign Minister, Von Kanya, came to Vienna on a short private visit. I took the opportunity to give him a detailed account of the situation. He was, however, confident that Hitler was only bluffing.

At about the same time I called Colonel Liebitzky, our military attaché in Italy, back to Vienna, and dictated to him

the memorandum which I had taken down immediately after my visit to Berchtesgaden. I added to this an account of the domestic developments since then and pointed out that under the circumstances I was probably going to have recourse to a plebiscite. Colonel Liebitzky immediately returned to Rome by air, and was received by Mussolini the following morning. Twenty-four hours later this very loyal and dependable officer returned to Vienna with the following account of Mussolini's reaction :

"The Duce has expressed his satisfaction with the progress of our affairs. He is optimistic, and thanks you for the detailed information. Austria should persevere in its present policy; things will improve. An impending relaxation of relations between Rome and London would do much to ease the present pressure. One need not be alarmed by local revolts in the provinces such as in Graz [Mussolini had been directly informed about these revolts through the Italian consulate in Graz]. The chief thing, according to the Duce, is that the Government retain a firm control on developments in Vienna. Referring to the plebiscite, Mussolini exclaimed, '*C'e un errore!* [That's a mistake!]' For if the result of the plebiscite is in favour of the present Austrian policy, it will be branded as a fake; if the result is in favour of a Nazi Austria and the Anschluss, then the position of the present Austrian Government will become untenable. If the plebiscite returns are about half and half, then the situation remains more or less as it is at present."

Such was Mussolini's comment. I believed, however, that I could not change my decision about the plebiscite. For one thing, it was not exactly a plebiscite in the strict sense of the word, but rather a solemn declaration of the people that they preferred the present Austrian constitution, with which Mussolini was not so familiar. Secondly, I remembered that Mussolini was on principle against any sort of plebiscite in Austria, as he had told me in 1934. And finally, I had the impression that Mussolini did not know what the situation really was in Austria, despite his sources of information. Above all, it was too late now. I gave all these reasons to the Duce through Colonel Liebitzky. I never heard from Mussolini again.

Wednesday, March 9, I officially announced the plebiscite for Sunday, March 13, at a mass meeting at Innsbruck at which I was enthusiastically received. A few days before I had asked all members of the Cabinet to remain in Vienna, as important

developments were to be expected. The Secretary of War, General Zehner, complied immediately with this request and cancelled his visit to Berlin. It was interesting to note that Berlin had repeatedly insisted on Zehner's immediate departure and could not be induced to postpone his visit even for a few days. With Minister von Glaise-Horstenau I had difficulty. He declared that he was about to make a trip to Munich to deliver a lecture there, and that if I did not like his going he would resign from the Cabinet. At that moment the resignation of one of the "National Opposition" from the Cabinet seemed very inopportune. So, for reasons of diplomacy, I let it go at that.

On the evening of March 8, just before I left for the mass meeting at Innsbruck, I informed Seyss-Inquart of the impending plebiscite. I also asked him for his word of honour not to make this announcement public before I had done so officially the next day in my speech. Any premature publicity seemed to me dangerous. In the provincial capitals only the Governor and the representative of the Patriotic Front organization were informed of the plebiscite, in order to begin the necessary preparations.

On Thursday, March 10, the publicity campaign for the plebiscite was in full swing all over the country. Posters appeared on all bill-boards giving the particulars, and broadcasting vans circulated in all towns and cities. The proclamations were purposely kept on a calm note, as it was necessary to avoid any repercussions of election fever on the stock market or in business. Anything resembling a panic had to be prevented from the start. In the evening of that same day I had a lengthy talk with Seyss-Inquart. He and his men were not pleased with the surprise, and they were somewhat uncertain as to what their attitude should be in such a case. In other words, they had not yet received their orders from Munich or Berlin. Thus they came forward with a number of complaints on technical procedure, such as the casting of ballots, etc. I was able to render these complaints absolutely harmless, as I was willing to make any technical concession. Besides, I pointed out that the whole emergency which made a plebiscite necessary was due to the lack of discipline and reliability of the formerly illegal Nazi movement, and that the plebiscite contained not one word contrary to our constitution, which had only recently been reaffirmed by the Berchtesgaden agreements. I also told them that I expected every member of the "National Opposi-

tion" to vote "Yes" in the plebiscite, since it was in reality nothing but an affirmation of what had been agreed on at Berchtesgaden—the continuation of a "free and independent German and Christian Austria".

Seyss-Inquart was at a loss for any further objection. In fact, he solemnly declared that he thought that our difficulties would thus come to an end and that he would see that his men voted "Yes". That was more than I could have expected. I was fully satisfied.



### III

## THE ANSCHLUSS

ON FRIDAY, March 11, 1938, at 5.30 a.m., the telephone rang at my bedside. It was the Chief of Police, Dr. Skubl: "The German border at Salzburg was closed completely about an hour ago. All German Customs officials have been withdrawn. Railroad traffic has been stopped."

I left my house at 6.15 a.m. and told the chauffeur to drive me first to St. Stephen's. The venerable old cathedral was still veiled in the half-shadows of early dawn. From the main altar and from a number of hidden side altars the thin sound of little silver bells broke the silence of the high Gothic vault. Early Masses were being read at these altars, as they had always been. The priests in their purple vestments moved about the altars according to the ancient liturgical rhythms, specks of deep colour in the twilight of the cathedral—as they had always done. Restlessly I sat in the pew. I kept thinking of the early telephone message from police headquarters. I was not quite sure what it meant—there were several possibilities. I only knew that this would bring some change. In front of the image of our Lady of Perpetual Succour many candles were burning. I looked furtively around, and then made the sign of the cross on the wire mesh protecting the sanctuary—an old Viennese custom in time of stress, which I learned as a child from my mother, now a generation ago.

In the Chancellery at the Ballhausplatz everything was still quiet, the offices still empty, and there were no new dispatches. I rang police headquarters and asked them to take preparatory measures for a cordon around the inner town and the Government buildings, in case this should become necessary during the day. By now the Cabinet Ministers had been alerted and were arriving at their offices. Only Seyss-Inquart could not be found anywhere. The Foreign Minister came to me with a telephone message from our consul-general in Munich: the German divisions stationed in Munich had been mobilized. Presumable destination: Austria.

Meanwhile the city began to awaken outside my windows: people in the streets hurrying to their jobs and offices—the routine of life going on. Out there nobody knew as yet that this day was different from any other day in Austrian history. The broadcasting vans made their appearances and the well-known marching tune “*Oh, Du Mein Oesterreich*” (My Austria) preceded the announcement of the plebiscite on Sunday—now only two days away. “For a free and independent, German and Christian Austria.”

The minutes crept by. I went to the window and looked down to the square before the Chancellery. Across the park I saw the mighty structure of the Imperial Castle and on the other side the regular outlines of Vienna’s only sky-scraper—the past and the present.

If somebody were to put up a spy-glass on the terrace of the near-by sky-scraper he could see me sitting at my desk. This accounts for the bullet-proof shutters that Dr. Krisch, my faithful secretary, had put on the windows. I never liked them. For I felt that it was not enough to be unafraid, one must also avoid any semblance of fear. If you give the impression of fear it is just as bad as if you were really afraid.

Finally at nine-thirty Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenau arrived at the Chancellery.

*Seyss-Inquart:* I have just been to the airport to meet Minister Glaise-Horstenau. That is why I am late. Minister Glaise reports—what I knew already—that the Reich is in great excitement about the plebiscite next Sunday. Hitler is said to be beside himself. Everybody is furious.

*I:* I really don’t know what they are all so furious about. After all, we are only doing what it is our good right to do, and besides, we do not digress one iota from the Berchtesgaden agreement.

*Glaise-Horstenau:* No, no, you cannot say that. This plebiscite is really the limit. It was bound to annoy the Fuehrer. One should never have started it.

The conversation went back and forth. It was utterly pointless to argue with men who had neither will nor opinion of their own. Obviously Glaise-Horstenau brought sealed orders with him, and Seyss-Inquart shrugged his shoulders. I asked the former whether he were willing to mediate and calm all the excitement. He agreed, but doubted whether anything could

be done. After a short while Seyss-Inquart told me that he had orders from Hermann Goering to tell me the following: "The plebiscite has to be postponed within the hour. Instead, another plebiscite is to be announced. This is to be held in two weeks, in the same fashion and according to the statutes of the Saar plebiscite. Goering expects an answer by telephone. If he has not heard from Seyss-Inquart within one hour he will assume that Seyss is prevented from telephoning and will act accordingly."

I immediately called the President. The Foreign Office reported that the various foreign embassies had in the meantime become alarmed. Only one of them—the German—showed no signs of excitement. A telephone message from Graz informed us that Nazi broadcasting vans had announced in the streets that the plebiscite had been called off, that I had resigned, and that the Anschluss was at hand. I called the Chief of Police to ask him about the situation in Vienna.

*Dr. Skubl:* So far, everything is quiet.

*I:* Did you throw the cordon around the inner city?

*Skubl:* Yes, in as far as that is possible.

*I:* Can we rely on the police?

*Skubl:* Well—at the moment, yes. But I must point out that since the general amnesty—which restored many Nazi policemen to their jobs—complete reliability cannot be expected.

*I:* You mean to say that the Government can no longer count on its police forces.

*Skubl:* Well, as things are now, I don't think it can.

I did not bother to make such an inquiry at army headquarters. I knew that the leadership of the army was absolutely dependable, and that the army obeys unflinchingly. But I also knew of the dilemma when duty and inclination are opposed to each other, as was the case with many a soldier in the army. I knew what it meant for every single soldier, when the army is called out in a situation not of its own making, and for which it was not trained in the course of two generations; a situation it was never meant to face. Already in 1934—at the time of the attempted Nazi revolt—I was sure of one thing: Never again a war against Germany as in 1866, and never a civil war.

The militia of the Patriotic Front had been mobilized. It was a useful instrument to assist the police and the military in the maintenance of law and order. Lieutenant Field-Marshal

Huelgerth, Vice-Chancellor and Chief of the Militia, told me later that his men were willing and ready for anything—"except action against Germany".

Well, I had firmly resolved that it would never come to that. One cannot risk many lives to save a few—especially when, as in our case, the eventual outcome of such a contest was not even doubtful. But, above all, Hitler was not Germany—at least, from a historical point of view—and National Socialism was not the German people, even though they might say so a thousand times. It was perhaps a German fate—but certainly not the German future.

I accordingly sent for Minister Guido Zernatto, Secretary General of the Patriotic Front organization, and, next to Minister for Education Hans Pernter, my closest friend, and told him that the plebiscite was to be postponed. Reason: technical difficulties which demanded a postponement. That was for the Press. For us the reason was simply Hitler's ultimatum. Zernatto took the news without saying a word. But I could see that he had difficulty in controlling a twitching of his eyelids and of the corners of his mouth. It was a hard blow also for the others who were present: Hans Pernter, Richard Schmitz, Josef Reiter, Walter Adam, Baron von Hammerstein, and many more of the men who had gone with me through these hard years and who had served their country faithfully. That was true, too, for men like Department Chief Chavanne, Ambassador Hornbostel, Hofrat Dr. Seidl, Baron von Froehlichstal, Hofrat Weber, and many others.

In the room of the Chancellery where we stood there was a moment's silence. Outside the broadcasting vans were still announcing the plebiscite for Sunday, March 13, and after their announcements the strains of "*Oh, Du Mein Oesterreich*" reverberated from the house-fronts.

At 11.30 a.m. I received Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenaus. I told them to tell Hermann Goering that his demand concerning the postponement of the plebiscite had been granted. The two gentlemen went back to the telephone. After about fifteen minutes they came back. Seyss-Inquart had a notebook in his hand from which he read Goering's reply:

"The situation can only be saved if the Austrian Chancellor resigns immediately and if Dr. Seyss-Inquart is appointed Chancellor within two hours. If these conditions are not fulfilled, the German armies will move on Austria."

For a while there was silence.

I took the telephone and told the operator I had an urgent call for the Palazzo Venezia in Rome—Mussolini's office. While waiting for the call the three of us stepped to the window. What the two gentlemen were looking at I did not know. I stared for a moment into the void and then asked: "And what do you say personally?"

Seyss was so excited he could not speak. Tears were in his eyes. Glaise was also shaken. Finally he said: "I don't know whether one can continue under these circumstances as a gentleman." Seyss did not contradict him. I assured them that their opinion was absolutely right. Then I pointed out that two hours would not be enough under any circumstances. I asked to be received by the President to submit my resignation.

There indignation had reached its peak. It was understandable that powerless fury and boiling excitement would obstruct cold, clear thinking. Impossible possibilities, hopeless, senseless solutions were being suggested.

"Remember Belgium," one of the men in the President's office suggested. "Remember how that country was resurrected only because it resisted as long as it could."

"Appeal to the masses," said another. "Mobilize the army. Let us fight to the last man."

"Why don't you ask for help in London—in Paris or Rome?"

"What about the League of Nations? Will the world look on while an independent country is violated? To-day it is our turn. Who will be the next?"

These were the questions that greeted me. These people had not understood that law and order, treaties and agreements, had no longer any validity. That day meant not only the end of Austrian independence, it also meant the end of international morals. Yes, we had treaties with Hungary and Italy. But political treaties are valuable only as long as both partners have an interest in maintaining them.

Immediately after Seyss-Inquart left my room in the Chancellery I had picked up the phone again and cancelled my call to Mussolini. Could I really count on Italy's help in this hour? Could Italy—practically speaking—help us, and could we accept this help? I decided that to ask for help would be a waste of time. While we were still in conference with the President a message came from the Foreign Office: "The Italian Government declares that it could give no advice under these circumstances in case such advice were asked for."

I was not surprised.

“That’s what you get for your treaty with Italy,” someone remarked bitterly. In normal times this treaty had stood us in good stead, but it was not proof against brute force. It was no better and no worse than other similar treaties and guarantees—only we were the first to put them to the test and to suffer for their failures. To count on Paris or on London I considered a mistake. I was against such considerations as a matter of principle. Besides, Paris was experiencing that very day one of its periodical Cabinet crises; so there was not even a government in France.

There was only one thing to do. Think clearly, coolly, retain one’s self-control, and act with realism to save what could be saved of our country. Even in this last hour we had to avoid everything that could place us in the wrong.

The afternoon passed in endless and fruitless discussion. Although it was hardly the time for formalities, the aggressor be-thought himself that so far nothing but more or less private telephone conversations had taken place. Goering was well known for his flare-ups and political impromptus. So as to give the occasion at least a semblance of international decorum, the German Embassy in Vienna—at the urgent request of the Austrian Foreign Office—sent its military attaché to the President to deliver the ultimatum of his employers. The little, busy attaché, Lieutenant-General Muff, who had already for some time been actual chief of the intelligence and information centre which was still officially called “German Embassy”, acquitted himself of his task politely but with an ironic smile.

Meanwhile, the Chancellery looked like a disturbed beehive. Seyss-Inquart and Glaise-Horstenau held court in one corner, and around them began a busy coming and going of strange-looking men, with close-cropped hair, some of them completely shorn, and most of them with heavy sabre-scars across their faces.

In the President’s office I insisted on my immediate resignation, even though the President said bitterly: “I see that everyone deserts me now.” I tried to review our present situation: Was there still a possibility? Could the worst, at least, still be averted? If we fulfilled Goering’s demands now, could that bring the avalanche to a stop? Help from abroad could not be counted on. And, indeed, it seemed completely undesirable. Bloodshed and civil strife were just what I wanted to avoid. I would not call for help, and shoulder the responsibility for a war. Austria was a German State, and would be a German

State when the confusing nightmare of National Socialism was long past, a historical memory of blood and tears. The Third Reich was not a beginning—it was an end. It was not a goal, but an abyss at the end of the road. Not convalescence, but a euphoristic coma. But those Austrians who saw only the artificial light and failed to see the heavy shadows, they could not be helped. Perhaps future developments would enlighten them. But I could not. My task was finished. I had done my duty to the best of my knowledge, and I refused to be instrumental—directly or indirectly—in the preparations for Cain once more to slay his brother Abel.

The most I could do was to continue in office—as ex-Chancellor—until a new head of Government had been appointed.

I went back to my office and began to clear my desk. From the wall the death-mask of my predecessor, Dr. Dollfuss, glowed in the dusk. From the other wall the Empress Maria Theresia looked at me from the large oil painting. I locked my desk and left my office. A high official and faithful public servant, the bearer of an old German aristocratic name, watched me. His face, hitherto calm and collected, flushed to a deep red. His hands trembled, and with a sudden sob he cried: "I am ashamed to be a German. I have just heard a broadcast on the German radio reporting a bloody Communist revolt in Austria. The Government is said to be helpless, hundreds of casualties . . ."

Well, that was not surprising either. After all, we were well acquainted with that sort of propaganda ever since 1934. Thank God, there was absolute quiet in Austria as yet. But how long would it last? Foreign Minister Dr. Schmidt begged me to urge the President once more to appoint a new head of Government. Perhaps he was right. Outside the Chancellery I could see the first suspicious groups of loiterers. We had to act quickly if we were to prevent the rabble from ousting us bodily from the Chancellery.

The President asked me to name a general who could take over the Government. Although I did not think that much could be gained by nominating anybody except Seyss-Inquart to the post of Chancellor, I suggested the Inspector of the Army, General von Schilhawsky. After a few minutes the General arrived. I asked him in the name of the President whether he were willing to accept the nomination. The answer: No. The General claimed that he was too old for the

job, that he was a soldier and not a politician. I asked the President not to insist, since there was very little point in such a nomination anyway. We considered other personalities; General Zehner, the Secretary of War, would have been the obvious choice. But Hitler would have considered his nomination a provocation, as he had suggested already, in Berchtesgaden, that General Zehner should be removed from his Cabinet post. General Schilhawsky was told to arrange for a withdrawal of Austrian troops from the border regions, so as to avoid any possible clashes when the German army moved into Austria.

In the meantime, evening had come. The grey outlines merged in a dusky uniformity. Vienna's buildings lost their individuality, as did Vienna's population. At this hour danger lurks in every large city. Unrest spreads easily, and the unreasoning crowds are prone to rash impulses and precipitate action.

I looked around me. In the Chancellery I saw the offices of Austrian statesmen of the past: Schwarzenberg, Beust, and Andrassy, Kalnoky, Berchthold, and Aehrenthal. These men had occupied the office where now burned a perpetual lamp before a carved wood Madonna. It was the spot where four years ago Engelbert Dollfuss bled to death. And next door—my own office.

I walked a few steps through the large hall where more than a century ago the statesmen of Europe had held the great Congress of Vienna. Slowly, painfully, I said good-bye to these historic rooms, good-bye also to my country, my Austria.

Suddenly I noticed a number of young people in the hall again with that close-cropped haircut. One young man brushed past me without an apology. He turned round and looked me up and down with a purposely offensive, superior smile. Then he went on and slammed the door as if he were at home. I stared after him, and suddenly I realized: Invasion! Not at the borders as yet, but here, in the Chancellery: the Gestapo.

I tried to find Seyss-Inquart. On my way over to the President I heard the undefinable but unmistakable noise of mass demonstrations in the streets. I heard the tramp of marching feet, shouts, songs. I entered the President's office. President Miklas was adamant. He would not appoint a Nazi as Austrian Chancellor. On my insistence to appoint Seyss-Inquart he said again: "You all desert me now, all of you." But I saw no other



possibility than Seyss-Inquart. With the little hope I had left I clung to all the promises he had made me, I clung to his personal reputation as a practising Catholic and an honest man. I suggested to the President that I should speak immediately over the radio to the Austrian people. He agreed.

The broadcasting facilities in the Chancellery were still intact, and the necessary preparations were made at once. Secretaries, officials, and functionaries crowded into the room. I entered after the President and looked around me. Many friends were there, and also Seyss-Inquart.

The microphone was in the middle of the room—about five paces from where Dollfuss was shot to death. The announcer stepped forward. "Ladies and gentlemen, the Chancellor of Austria."

I spoke for about ten minutes. I told the Austrian people how this situation had developed and that we called all the world to witness that we had acted in strict accordance with our political commitments, our treaties, and to the best of our knowledge and ability. That we solemnly protested against the threatened violation of our country's sovereignty, which was as uncalled-for as it was unjustifiable. That Austria yielded to force because even in this hour we were determined to avoid bloodshed in a fratricidal war. That, in accordance with this determination, the order had been given not to oppose the German armies. I ended my speech with a few personal words of farewell.

After my speech we all went to the President's office. The rooms facing the street were no longer safe. Outside the Chancellery the mob was howling. The new rulers had taken their S.A. and S.S. formations out on the street. They were safe now. Nothing could happen to them—now that Goering had declared Austria the personal property of Hitler. Invasion? Annexation? No, not in the least. Now it was liberation and the return to the fold; the final liberation of a part of the Fatherland which had been suffering under the cruel yoke of treacherous separatists, who had ruined the country and prevented it from finding peace and happiness. That was the true meaning of the Anschluss—according to the German propagandists.

Outside the room where I had just made my broadcast two tall soldiers of the Guard were busy stopping half-grown boys from climbing the façade of the Chancellery. Seyss-Inquart and Glaise stepped out on the balcony to calm the mob. In

spite of that a particularly nimble youth managed to climb the house-front, and hoisted the red flag with the swastika. It unfurled, and looked like a wound in the venerable façade of the building.

Seyss-Inquart returned from the balcony and asked me to once more urge the President to appoint him Chancellor. Only that could silence and calm the crowds, he added; otherwise there would be serious danger. Although his Cabinet would be and had to be composed of National Socialists, he would promise a quiet and conservative policy. He never had anything in common with the extremist branch of the Nazi movement. In order to exclude the influence of such elements his speedy appointment was absolutely necessary.

Foreign Minister Dr. Guido Schmidt told me that Goering's agent, Herr Keppler, had arrived at the Chancellery and was very busy at the moment composing a list of names for the new Cabinet, together with Seyss-Inquart. They had offered him—Dr. Schmidt—the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which, of course, he had refused. Finally they agreed to give that post to Dr. Wolf, a former Press editor at the Foreign Office. Professor Oswald Menghin of Vienna University was to be Minister of Education. The nomination of these two Catholic members of the pro-German faction was to facilitate the President's decision on the formation of the new Cabinet. Also Dr. Skubl, chief of the Vienna police, was to remain in the new Cabinet with the rank of Under-Secretary of the Interior. Dr. Schmidt implored me to persuade the President to accept this list.

President Miklas, however, still had the gravest doubts. All my arguments were of no avail. He was determined not to hand the country over to Nazism. It was a hard battle he had to fight—the hardest perhaps that any man has to face: the conflict between conscience and practical considerations.

At this moment Seyss-Inquart came to the President with yet another telephone message from Goering: "Seyss-Inquart is to send a telegram to Berlin immediately asking for the assistance of German troops to re-establish law and order in Austria, which is gravely endangered by the street revolts of Red rabble."

Seyss-Inquart naïvely turned to me with a smile: "Well, that's one thing I need not do, because, thank God, everything is quiet here in Austria, so far." I asked him whether the provincial governors were still at their posts. Seyss-Inquart assured me that nothing had been changed. The President then in-

sisted that an announcement to that effect be expressly broadcast to the provincial capitals. I jotted down the text of this official message and called the broadcasting company (a Government institution). But in vain. The gentleman on the other end of the line declared that the broadcasting system could no longer take orders from me. Yet, officially, I was still the acting head of Government.

- Just then—although I did not know it—the Mayor of Vienna, Richard Schmitz, had been arrested by the Gestapo. After looking for some time for Seyss-Inquart, I finally found him in an office with the police chief, Skubl. They reported that everything was quiet in the city, although swastika flags were being raised on all public buildings. Next door Herr Keppler had his “office”. He was apparently the chief of staff of the entire enterprise. With what he seemed to consider extreme politeness he said to me: “Now you see, Herr Bundeskanzler. A week ago you still made a scene over a few minor requests I put to you. And look at yourself now! Well, anyway, is there anything we can do for you personally?” I told him I had no wishes.

It was now almost midnight. In the President’s office the list of Cabinet members was still under discussion. We could not get any news from outside; apparently we had been isolated. At long last the President yielded and signed the list. Austria had a National Socialist Government now, with Seyss-Inquart at the head.

The latter expressly thanked me for my good services and declared that he would take me home in his car. “Or would you like to go to one of the embassies? Perhaps to the Hungarian Embassy, which is just across the street? Thus you need not drive through the city.” I thanked him, but insisted on going to my apartment. I also asked him what had become of the Special Corps of the Patriotic Front. I had demanded that the members of this corps—an organization of the official militia—be given safe conduct. A few hours before, around eight-thirty, Minister Zernatto had phoned me that this corps had been mobilized for the protection of the main building of the Patriotic Front. Five minutes later the building was to have been stormed by Nazi S.A. and S.S. formations. For the last three hours I had not been able to get any information on this subject. Seyss-Inquart declared that every man of the corps was safe, and that all had returned to their homes in civilian clothes.

The President and I left the council chamber accompanied by a number of colleagues and the new Chancellor. Outside the room the sentries snapped to attention as smartly as on any other day. I walked over to shake hands with one of them. As I looked up into the stony face of the six-foot soldier I saw that his teeth were clenched and slow tears were rolling down his face.

We walked along the corridor and came to the grand staircase. There two files of civilians with swastika arm-bands lined the steps. For the first time I realized that the Government building had been occupied. We descended without taking notice of the arms raised in the Nazi salute. Downstairs the military guard presented arms for the last time. In a flawless line these soldiers seemed to be the wall that separated yesterday from the morrow. I said a few words of thanks and farewell. Then I got into the car together with Seyss-Inquart. As the car slowly rolled out of the building some Nazi youths jumped on the running-board—presumably for my protection. Outside the yelling crowd was still thick. In the street the taxis sounded their horns continuously; the trolleys were decorated with swastika flags. As we left the inner city the noise died down. Seyss-Inquart thanked me once more and promised to visit me the next day. My adjutant and the Government car would remain at my disposal as before.

I only knew that we had come to the closing of one chapter. The question remained whether this end meant a new beginning or whether the closing of the chapter was merely the beginning of the end. . . .

*Postscript*

March 11, 1945.

At the concentration camp of Flossenburg, Germany.

Seven years have passed since then, and with them the large German cities and many Austrian cities passed from proud townships to smoking heaps of rubble. The fighting generation has shed its blood on the field. Of those who exactly seven years ago to-day paraded through the streets of Vienna chanting in unison: "We thank our Fuehrer"—of those who either thoughtlessly or bona fide welcomed the Anschluss, most are no longer alive. And the survivors of these seven years are utterly destitute. I, too, have lost everything in these years, wandering from one prison to another, from one concentration camp to the next. I have lost everything except my memories. And as I look back it is but natural that I should ask myself

over and over again: Did I do everything that could have been done on that 11th of March, 1938? And, above all, was what I did right?

One thing is certain: No matter what course one had taken in those days, the result would materially have been the same. Another effort to hold off the catastrophe—or, on the other hand, a precipitation of it by armed resistance—would have in all likelihood increased the number of victims, and would have thus—at least temporarily—made the catastrophe even greater.

It remains a matter for speculation whether one could have taken any other course on March 11, 1938, when the Government building was virtually in the hands of the aggressor. For some reason the police did not carry out my orders to throw a cordon round the inner town. Nor did the command of the Guards Battalion take the necessary steps to guard the Chancellery. Had we had a quiet and safe headquarters, and not one where a foreign Government had already set up its offices before we were gone, it would perhaps have been possible for the President and myself to find at least a more dignified form for the end of this tragedy.

The Chancellery building also had come to the end of a long and important career. With the Anschluss it lost its importance and was already awaiting its demolition. It came not long afterwards. Before seven years had passed the first American bombs began to fall on it—a surprise only to those who could not or would not see.

I feel that I alone bear the responsibility. Had I by some means put off the actual Anschluss for only twenty-four hours, I could have saved many of the most valuable lives in Austria. But it would have been some individuals against an unpredictable number of nameless victims.

The heroic gesture would have been, politically speaking, the right thing to do. But from a merely human standpoint it was not. And I chose the latter. That I stayed in Austria after the Anschluss, without availing myself of the shelter of some foreign embassy, was merely a logical consequence of this attitude. I believe to-day that it was wrong—politically wrong, but humanly understandable. It is true that I could not imagine at the time the unimaginable that lay ahead of me. But, be that as it may—it was not personal courage that induced me to stay and face the fate which I knew would be a hard one; it was rather lack of courage. I would have wished, from the bottom

of my heart, to save my friends and colleagues from the brutality of the conqueror. Those who managed to escape have acted rightly and reasonably. The fact that I personally remained was not—and should not have been—in any way an example.

Again and again I wonder whether I did right. I pray to God that my reasoning be correct and not merely a means of subjective justification, a wishful answer to those questions which never cease to trouble me.

## IV ARREST

(IN PRISON IN VIENNA FROM MARCH 12, 1938,  
TO OCTOBER 29, 1939)

WHAT FOLLOWS now is, I am afraid, the least interesting part of my book.—These dried-up pages of my prison diary are factual accounts of my personal fate. I wrote them down because of the instinctive desire for self-justification; although I did not admit this to myself at the time. This justification was necessary, especially at those times during my internment when moral and nervous collapse came dangerously near. Those who later suffered a similar fate and who painfully underwent similar experiences will understand this.

In these pages I do not complain, nor do I accuse. They merely bear witness to the attempt of a man to remain a human being, to remain faithful to his words and ideas. They are the notes of a man who shortly before he faced his hard destiny exclaimed from the bottom of his heart: "Red-white-red until we're dead," and who knew the full meaning of his last words in his broadcast of March 11, 1938, when he took final leave of his world: "God protect Austria."

*March 12, 1938*

At home I found my father, my brother, and his wife. My fiancée, who was also there, told me that under the circumstances she would not return to her home. Her place was by my side, now in the face of danger more than ever. Danger? I had as yet not thought of danger. I was dead tired. My brother Artur and his wife, Marianne, left us about 1 a.m. Those who remained were my fiancée; my father, an old gentleman of seventy-three; two maids; my adjutant, Colonel Bartl; and myself.

We improvised a bed in my study, and I immediately fell asleep. About 5 a.m. my adjutant wakened me to ask whether I would not rather leave the house and find another domicile

somewhere in the city. The garden, he told me, was not yet surrounded. I refused and went back to sleep. Two hours later it appeared the garden as well as all exits were occupied by armed civilians. The soldiers of the Guards Battalion, normally stationed before the house, were themselves prisoners in a small garden house, while in front of the main entrance S.A. troops waited in files of six, obviously expecting to be let into the house. The crowd was very excited, and agitators did their best to keep it so. My telephone was still intact, so I rang police headquarters and asked Dr. Skubl whether I were still free. "Yes, indeed," was the reply, "you are completely free. I know that there is a crowd in front of your house, but the Chancellor has given orders that the S.A. troops be withdrawn. Trucks are already on their way." In the meantime the crowd had increased; even the first-floor windows which were not directly visible from the street were surrounded. In the afternoon I phoned again and asked for the promised trucks that were to take the troops away. I was told that no trucks had been available so far, but they would be sent immediately. Needless to say, the trucks never turned up—nor did the new Chancellor, Seyss-Inquart, who had promised to visit me the night before.

*March 13, 1938*

The radio broadcast news reports every five minutes:

"The Council of Ministers [which had just barely been sworn in] has formally proclaimed the Anschluss. . . . The President has resigned 'on request'. . . . The Fuehrer arrived in Linz on his way to Vienna . . ."

It was not always easy to follow or to listen to these developments. In the afternoon Baron Froehlichsthal—my former secretary—brought me a number of personal belongings which had remained in the office. He told me that Seyss-Inquart was still very friendly towards me and had promised again that everything possible would be done for me. Apart from that, Froehlichsthal reported, the situation had become extremely difficult. My departure from Austria was said to be under discussion, and I was told to keep myself in readiness. Seyss-Inquart had promised to order some cars for my departure and would also look after me financially. That I had nothing, or practically nothing, and at the moment had no means to procure any sort of income was no secret to anyone in Austria. According to law, Cabinet Ministers were not entitled to a pension, though in 1934 I had been promised a post on the Supreme



Court so that my family would not be in difficulties if I should resign from my political career. Now it would be extremely difficult to return to my old profession as a lawyer, since I had lost every contact with the profession during my six years in the Cabinet. Baron Froehlichsthal told me further that several foreign embassies had offered me the right of asylum, for which I thanked him, but refused. I did not yet know what had happened to my colleagues nor to friends of the militia of the Patriotic Front, and I felt that I could not possibly avail myself of the security of an embassy before they were in safety. Although Seyss-Inquart had promised me on the night of the 11th that these men would not be in any danger, I knew by now how such promises were kept, whether through lack of will or lack of opportunity.

In the garden I could still see the sentries of the Guards Battalion on duty. I had, however, no contact with them, and presumably they were being kept under close surveillance. My orderly, a Tyrolean Guard sergeant by the name of Gsaller, was scarcely allowed to leave the house.

*March 14, 1938*

I tried once more to get in contact with Seyss-Inquart to remind him of his promise to visit me. "Sorry, the Chancellor is busy now," was the answer I got; and the voice on the phone added: "It is not desirable that you keep any contact with the outside. But apart from this restriction, your personal wishes will be considered so far as it is possible." That afternoon Dr. Wimmer, a former secretary to the Cabinet, came on behalf of Seyss-Inquart. He was very correct and polite. I asked him whether he knew what was to become of me, but he shook his head in the negative. I also asked him to see whether it would be possible for my fiancée and me to be married, and pointed out that I had long had the intention of getting married as soon as I resigned from my post. My fiancée was in the house, and both she and my father were kept prisoners here with me for no good reason. Would he see whether an emergency wedding could be arranged at the near-by church? Dr. Wimmer promised to see what he could do. In the evening Colonel Bartl was ordered to leave the house, and I never saw him again.

*March 20, 1938*

By now it was pretty clear what was going to happen to me, since the tone of the radio and the morning papers showed it

clearly. The Guards Battalion had to take the oath of allegiance to Hitler, and was then recalled. Hitler's personal S.S. guards took their place in watching me. The old plain-clothes men were replaced by new ones, whom I had never seen.

Although I had already two maids in the house, I got an S.A. man to do the shopping. Of course I had to pay his salary myself, and luckily the man was honest and decent enough. During the day we were allowed to go into the little garden to get some exercise. This, however, was not altogether pleasant, as we were watched from the street and from the surrounding trees by young boys and other bystanders. On one occasion a shot was fired. We were told that it was a mistake. Besides, I was suspected of having some secret mechanism with which I maintained contact with the outside world, and again and again the house was meticulously searched from the basement to the attic. I tried to tell them that I had never foreseen my present situation, and therefore had never thought of installing such apparatus. But no one believed me.

*March 26, 1938*

To-day I had the first visit from the Gestapo. The house was surrounded, and I was called to the living-room. Four men in S.S. uniforms sat around the table. I noticed the new style of things—for instance, that these officials kept their caps on during the interview. The speaker was an Austrian who—as I was told later—had been in the police department of Salzburg until 1932. After offering my cigarettes around and telling me that I was also allowed to smoke, he began the hearing. He told me that my wishes concerning my marriage had been duly taken into consideration, and that the marriage would be performed in a few days by a prelate in this house; he pointed out that this was merely a private affair, and had been permitted as such.

The rest of the questions, much to my surprise, were centred on my possessions. How much money had I in cash? What was my bank account? In how many banks had I got money? My truthful answers were met with complete incredulity. The fact that I had no real estate seemed quite unbelievable to them. After discussing my possessions the Gestapo turned to my attitude towards the monarchy. Not a word on the problems of the hours, not a word about the things the newspapers and radio accused me of every single day, from which I concluded that perhaps the Gestapo knew that these stories had no foundation whatsoever. Finally they asked me—and that with

absolutely straight faces—whether I were a Freemason. After a few more questions such as: Do you know Baron Rothschild? and a mention of my relations with Cardinal Innitzer, the Archbishop of Vienna, who had supposedly spoken “in a very unfriendly way” about me, they began to search the house in a lackadaisical fashion.

*Easter, 1938*

We asked whether we would be permitted to go to early Mass in a side chapel of the near-by church, which could be reached through the garden without going on the street. “Permission refused.”

We inquired again how our application for marriage was progressing. We had been told “in a few days”, and now two full weeks had passed. At that time I was still surprised to hear the answer: “There is nothing on record about such an application. We know nothing,” although later I got used to that sort of answer. Kurt, my son from my first marriage, who was then almost twelve years old, was allowed to speak to me on the telephone for a few minutes. Since we no longer had a phone in our house, I was taken—under heavy guard—to the place where the plain-clothes men on duty were quartered. The Gestapo made a transcript of the conversation.

*May 1, 1938*

Outside there is one celebration after another. Everybody is happy. The millennium is here. In our little world in my house there is not much change, except that Hitler's personal S.S. guards have been recalled. S.A. and affiliate groups stand guard now, among them many Austrian Legionnaires, most of whom take particular pleasure in hammering out the goose-step with as much noise as possible. This happens especially at night. Another innovation is the peekaboo game that goes on outside the bedroom windows, or the drumming of heavy iron-cleated boots on the walls, when we sleep. My father is admirable. He never loses his equanimity, never complains, and tries to give a favourable explanation to every incident in order to give us courage.

Every noon we have to appear for inspection. The “inspectors” are not too bad except for one young S.S. officer whose behaviour is indescribably rude and objectionable. Even my kind father, who, as an old general of the former Austrian army, was profoundly shocked by the behaviour of this lout,

said with a strange expression that he thought his behaviour

We are also beginning to worry about money. In all my life I have never spent half so much for my household as in these days. Our electric bill, for instance, came to 350 marks (\$135), although we have hardly dared to burn two lamps simultaneously. Our guards, however, keep the house and the entire garden floodlit every night with all the floodlights they can muster—and it all goes on my meter.

May 13, 1938

Our marriage application is completely forgotten. Nobody knows what will happen to us. The only thing we managed to find out was that towards the end of the month a change would take place; so we begin to count the days. Last night we had constant alarms, while S.A. guards hammered on our window-sills without let-up for hours, and another guard kept his finger on the door-bell. All the time veritable paroxysms of vilest invectives and threats against our lives were being shouted outside. Needless to say, no one slept. Our guards are S.A. militia and Viennese policemen—half and half, though the latter are no help; on the contrary, they seem to enjoy these goings-on secretly. Next morning they shrug their shoulders and assure me that it will not happen again.

May 28, 1938

The disturbances during the night had not ceased for almost two weeks, so during the last days we ostentatiously went to bed in one room and then secretly crept out to sleep in another. Sometimes we moved back and forth—several times during one night; as long as the guards concentrated their noisy efforts on the rooms we had evacuated it was not too bad.

At 5 p.m. I was called into the living-room. The whole house teemed with S.A. police and Gestapo personnel. My father and my fiancée were told that they were free to go where they pleased, but the house had to be evacuated within the hour. And, turning to me, the Gestapo chief said: "You come with us." I had to raise my hands and was searched. "Take the most necessary things with you and plenty of underwear, bedclothes, et cetera." My father asked what would happen to me, but instead of an answer I was asked: "Have you any weapons in this house?" I replied in the negative. "I have an old army revolver upstairs," my father interjected. "Why

didn't you say so in the first place?" the Gestapo man asked me. "My son did not know I had it," replied my fiancée.

I said good-bye to him and to my fiancée.

In a curtained car, and with a considerable escort before us and behind us, I was driven through the city to the Hotel Metropole, the headquarters of the Gestapo in Vienna.

I was taken to a large room on the fifth floor with two heavily barred windows of opaque glass. In the room was a table, a bed, a chair, an old wardrobe, and a washstand. There was no door, and in its stead a small corridor connected the room with the rest of the house. It was a former drying-room of the hotel. My possessions were once more scrutinized; then the Gestapo man who had taken me there gave me my orders: "Dr. Schuschnigg may smoke—for the time being, at any rate. Later on this will come to an end anyway. He can order his food from the hotel kitchen provided he pays for it. A sentry stands in the room at all times. The light has to be on during the night. When a new sentry comes to take over—which is once every hour—firearms have to be ready for firing, safety-catches unlocked. Gun-holsters have to remain open. Dr. Schuschnigg may not go to or near the window. If he tries to do so he is to be shot at once. The sentry is also ordered to shoot whenever Dr. Schuschnigg refuses to obey orders. . . ."

The Gestapo man left. I was alone in the room—alone with the sentry. I was stunned. Just as on the day of the Anschluss, I tried to reconstruct every word that had been said, tried to fathom the meaning of each remark. "Dr. Schuschnigg may smoke—for the time being, at any rate." And they had said, "Plenty of bedclothes and underwear." Did that mean four weeks or perhaps two months? I concluded that it could not last too long, since everybody knew that the propaganda accusations against me were untrue. Soon they would give me some sort of trial. . . .

The change in my existence was not too bad, and I was glad that my father and fiancée were free. Life in my own house at Belvedere had been an intolerable strain.

I did not know at that time that I was not to leave this room for the next seventeen months—not until October 27, 1939. As I heard later, Reichskommissar Buerckel had told foreign journalists at a Press conference: "Dr. Schuschnigg had to be taken to the Hotel Metropole because we had to make an end of the scandalous concubinage which existed in his own house."

May 31, 15.

It is now two days since I came to my new prison. I have no books, no news—only the company of a fresh S.S. man every hour—and I am not allowed to speak to the sentries. I cannot sleep at nights, because the lights, the changing of the guards every hour, the inspection of my bed, my belongings, etc., which for some reason always takes place in the middle of the night, keep me awake.

At 6 a.m. the sentry shouts at me to get up. He closes the windows, which, thank God, may be opened during the night. Then my day's work begins. First I wash. Then I clean the room. I dust the table and wardrobe, sweep the floor and walls, the radiator and the window-frame, as well as the opaque glass panes, all with my only towel. For sweeping the floor I was finally given an old broom. After my room has been cleaned, I am ordered to go next door to the room where the sentries sleep. I take my towel and my broom and begin the same procedure in their room, only here there is more work to do. Usually the guards have just finished washing, and I have to empty their washbasins and slop-buckets. My towel is again used to wipe these utensils dry; then the floor and the walls. When I have finished, the guard in charge remarks: "You'll get used to it yet. Dismissed!" I return with my sentry to my own room barely four paces away. During these ceremonies the young men look at me with some surprise, and not infrequently with a broad grin—which I can understand very well.

Upon my return the order is given: "All possessions into the wardrobe"; the charwoman is coming. She appears every day to clean up all the rooms, since officially I only have to make my bed and put my washstand in order.

This afternoon I was visited by the same plain-clothes man who searched me at my house. He was not unfriendly. I asked him whether I could have some books. "Make an application." I also asked him what was going to become of me. "Nobody knows." What happened to my family? "They have all left."

Finally I asked him whether he could bring me an exact manual concerning my daily duties and a duster, since the use of my towel was unhygienic. The man looked at me with some surprise and then said: "Why, your duties cannot be so complicated as to warrant a manual; and besides, they are the same every day. As for the duster, why don't you file an application? . . ."

c (Austrian Requiem)

June 2, 1938

This afternoon the Gestapo agent who supervised my transfer from my house to the Hotel Metropole visited me. He asked me how I felt and whether I had any wishes. I told him that I would like to have some books and that I would like him to urge my application for my marriage. I began to tell him the reasons why I wanted to be married, when he interrupted me gruffly: "Your marriage has already taken place some time ago," and with that he pulled out a small parcel wrapped in tissue paper. "Your wife has sent some books, a letter, and some flowers. I shall look at the things and will have them sent to you." I eagerly opened the little parcel, which contained my wedding ring. I sat and stared at it for a while. Now I had my wish. I was married. That evening I received my wife's letter, saying that an emergency wedding had been performed by proxy; my brother led my wife to the altar; my father and a sacristan had been the witnesses. All this was due to the indefatigable efforts of my wife.

The flowers she sent me were lilies-of-the-valley, and I put the little bunch on my table next to the photographs of my family. There was a snapshot of Herma, my first wife, whose tragic death in a motor accident lay now almost three years back. Next to her was a picture of my mother, who had died shortly after Herma, and had thus been saved much grief. I also had a picture of my boy, for whom I longed desperately, and finally a picture of my wife. I sat there looking at my family when all of a sudden the sentry called good-humouredly: "Well, you should have hanged Innitzer instead of Planetta." Although I was strictly forbidden to speak, I could not help saying: "But Innitzer never killed anybody."

So much has been said and written about my wife and about our marriage that I feel a clarification is necessary. We met about one year after the tragic death of my first wife. It was the meeting of two lonely human beings, two people of thoroughly different backgrounds, two people who had gone through very different, though equally hard, experiences in their lives, but who had to all essential questions the same answers, the same opinions.

They had met and they had found each other. They wanted to belong to each other, to go through life side by side: a man and a woman in quest of a new, lasting happiness. How did this happen? With two people who were no longer romantic

youngsters, who had been taught a stern lesson in the school of life? There is no real answer to this question. Poets and novelists have tried to describe it; but every one of these attempts is merely a symbol, a reflection of the great wonders of the human soul. Such things cannot be described—they have to be lived.

With our meeting began the road that was to lead to our goal. From the very beginning we knew that it would not be an easy road; yet we did not hesitate.

The difficulties were many. First of all we had to forgo the priceless gift of privacy. It was bad enough that we were both sufficiently well known to give rise to interested speculation on the part of the curious, but the situation became even more difficult through the fact that there was no such thing as a private life for me. It was not long, in spite of all precautions, before sensation-hungry reporters and gossip columnists began to discuss our most personal problems in public. Rumours sprang up over-night; everybody had his own version, his own mixture of truth and fiction, his own spicy details to add to the stories that appeared in the papers. Soon the inevitable annoyances began: from the photographers to the well-meaning friend and adviser, from the political prophet to the self-appointed mentors on questions of conscience.

To go ahead, regardless of public opinion and gossip, would have been simplest; but, then, things in Austria were not so simple at that time. All we could do was stick to our original intention and not regard the ifs and buts, but avoid the limelight as much as possible. Our intention was marriage. Both of us are convinced Catholics, and we regarded ourselves as strictly bound by the laws of the Church governing marriage. My fiancée had been free for several years, and I had been a widower for about one year. And now we both fought for our happiness. According to Church and State, both our cases were simple and clear. We were both free to marry at any time, and there was no objection raised by any third party.

The first marriage of my fiancée had been—quite independently of our case—annulled in a regular canonic process by the unanimous verdict of the Ecclesiastical Court at Vienna, and in second instance at the Metropolitan Court in Salzburg. Thus, according to the existing law for Catholics in Austria, and according to the regulations of the Canonic Law, it was not even necessary to bring the case before the Rota at Rome.

This procedure was simple and clear enough, and left no



room for any sensationalism, political or private, but the world did not know it; and, as things were, it was impossible to inform the public of every detail. And that I could not ignore this in my position, I was constantly and vociferously reminded by all my friends. When we announced to the closest circle of intimates our intention of getting married, objections of all kinds were raised immediately. Although everything was in perfect order, they said, and although it was well known that I had been a widower for a year, and thus could not have had anything to do with the annulment proceedings of my future wife, the public would not understand this. As it was, the public was not interested in the couple of dozen cases that came up before the annulment and separation courts of the Church every year, but only those few cases connected with some outstanding names. It would immediately be rumoured that the Church had been influenced by political considerations in this particular instance and that an "exceptional" verdict had been pronounced to make things easier for me. Since I was not the private citizen Schuschnigg, but heavily burdened with public responsibility, I could not afford the least shadow of derogatory comment, no matter how unjustified it might be. A friend of mine, a layman and quite unconcerned with politics, said: "You have a choice—either you resign from your post as Chancellor or you sacrifice your personal happiness. It is a tragic choice—but there are no two ways about it."

Another friend advised: "You cannot resign from your position. No one will understand if you leave your post for personal reasons. You just cannot leave the job that has been entrusted to you, for under the present circumstances this would amount to desertion. Anything and everything that will happen to Austria afterwards will be blamed on your resignation. There is but one way—forgo your private life until circumstances permit your resignation without endangering the ideals we are fighting for." So I searched for a solution, searched for it desperately, and could not find it. And during all this time my fiancée stood by, courageous and undaunted. Without the slightest hesitation she left the decision of our fate to me, resigned to accept it, no matter what the outcome, even if we should have to part forever. She had given up everything for me, and she was willing to give me up if such were my decision. "You will have to decide; you must know what to do. I do not ever want to be an obstacle to the success of the cause we both believe in." This was her attitude.

My decision in the dilemma was this: We would put off our marriage plans until such time as my resignation could be accepted without endangering or weakening the cause. The first possible opportunity would be taken to fulfil the greatest wish of my heart—to spend my life at the side of the woman who meant everything to me. At that time, I thought that an immediate resignation was not possible. Perhaps it was a mistake; in any case, I am paying for it now.

It is true that I was told by everybody that a resignation would be tantamount to striking the flag; especially abroad my resignation would be thus interpreted.

On that everybody agreed—even those who were not my friends and did not share my views. As a result, I thought myself indispensable; not from presumptuousness, not from lust of power, or any other personal motive, but only because of the situation created by external circumstances and by the Austrian constitution. I was also fully aware that many of those who urged me to remain at my post did so only because they considered my presence the lesser evil.

It was a fact that I had, in spite of many obstacles and hindrances, undertaken the task of preserving Austria by means of domestic and foreign pacification, and of coming to a peaceful settlement with the German Reich on the basis of our constitution—that is, without a party system. That this task was doomed to failure and that I did not see it is an accusation to which I have no answer—no excuse. At that time I believed that my political line could lead to success, and feared that any deviation from this line—either increasing friction with Germany or excessive concessions—would have unpredictable consequences, as it might give Hitler the desired pretext for armed invasion. Many had made sacrifices, many had fought and bled for the political programme which we followed. My resignation for personal reasons would have been akin to treason in the minds of those who believed in my policy.

Thus I did not take the first opportunity to resign. Although I had handed in my resignation several times in the course of 1937—partly for personal reasons, partly because I was embittered about certain domestic events—I let myself be persuaded to remain. I intended to hold elections in the second half of 1938, and would resign then in any case. I know that there is no excuse for a politician if events prove that his calculations were wrong. My future wife, however, whose personal fate was at stake, stood by me, quietly waiting through

difficult times until one day brought an unexpected solution. Why am I writing all this? Because I feel that I owe it to my wife, whose integrity and political attitude have been slandered during that period and later. It has been said that she influenced Austrian politics, and some particularly imaginative writers asserted—as I am told both in German and in English papers—that she was a Nazi spy and an agent of Herr von Papen. It is hardly necessary to underline that such inventions are outright slander. My wife never had anything to do with politics, and especially not with the Nazis or Herr von Papen—that is to say, before March, 1938. Afterwards she had to deal with them like many an upright Austrian, not as a matter of choice, but of necessity. The storm of March, 1938, brought the solution of our personal problem, my resignation, but on the other hand it also brought the loss of freedom. Before the walls closed in on me, my wife declared that she would stand by me, and would only be separated from me by force.

I have told of our immediate application for marriage, and how I was taken into solitary confinement in order “to make an end of the scandalous concubinage”, as Herr Buerckel put it.

My greatest wish was fulfilled—our marriage had taken place; but I did not know it at the time. It did not appear necessary to my captors to inform me of it, not until later when I got the little parcel with my wedding ring. . . . And so we reached our goal.

Now we are waiting for each other once more.

*June 9, 1938*

Pentecost is past. I have meanwhile received some books; Galsworthy, Goethe, and several French authors. Yesterday I had an “easy” day, as the sentries were rather friendly. The whole world looks pleasanter when you find some human interest in your guards. They suffer, too; and their routine is not an easy one; day and night they have to wear the heavy steel helmet, which is torture in the heat of my room. Luckily they also think so, and open the window during the daytime in spite of strict orders to the contrary. Some of them even sit down and talk to me. I never start the conversation; and when I answer I only say what is expected of me. Some of the guards are nice boys, and for somebody who has had much contact with young people, and who has been in the army, it is easy to spot the good-natured fellows. Two of them were openly pleasant yesterday; to judge by their accent, one came from Carinthia,

the other from Swabia in Germany, and both of them had been in jail for political reasons. The Swabian told me that they had found out that I was not a bad egg, after all. First they had intended to make it hot for me; but now they had seen that I was all right, and many of them were on my side. "The Austrians have to learn a lot yet. They don't know what it means to work. But we shall teach them, whether they like it or not," he added. The Carinthian guard was of the opinion that I was merely a scapegoat, and "the others who are really responsible for everything are still free. But we shall get them in due course."

The Swabian asked me whether I knew what was in the papers, and I told him that I was not allowed to read the papers. "Well, the accusations against you are very serious. Soon you will be taken to Leipzig to stand trial before a tribunal." When I asked him what the accusations were, he said, "Well, first the breach of promise to the Fuehrer, then that you called the French into the country, and finally that you had armed the Communists. But you are not the only one. Here on the same floor with you is another prisoner against whom there are serious accusations. Of course, I am not supposed to tell you . . . but it is the Jew Rothschild. He will get it—and good."

(Note: Baron Louis Rothschild, who lived in retirement in Vienna and who had never taken any interest in politics, was imprisoned in the Metropole until May, 1939, when he was deported from Austria.)

My Swabian guard regretted that they—the S.S. guards—were not permitted to occupy themselves with Rothschild, who had Vienna police as guards. I was glad for him. My guard became more and more talkative: "I know that there are some of my comrades who treat you badly; but, then, there are a couple of stinkers in every outfit. Don't take it too seriously. The rest of us are not like that. You know I have stood guard over you already in your house at Belyedere. Where did you live before?" I told him I had lived there for many years, but he would not believe me. "That was such a modest simple home—surely you had a better one?"

(Note: In the course of my stay in the Hotel Metropole many guards repeated to me in almost the same words that they were on my side, and that the "couple of stinkers" were very

unpopular with their comrades. These confidences usually came from Austrians, Bavarians, Rhinelanders.)

That was yesterday. To-day it is different. At 1 a.m. the nice guards were relieved by the "stinkers". Whenever they are in charge the charwoman is told not to come. Why, I don't know. Thus the ceremony of cleaning the walls and radiators with my towel is repeated, since I never heard how my application for a duster was received. Anyway, I got no duster. I am being kept busy to-day; it started with making my bed; I have learned by now how the bed is to be made according to Nazi regulations. I think I am a good bed-maker at that. But the "stinker" to-day objected loudly, and demanded that the blanket be folded from left to right and that the sheet be tucked in four inches more. When I complied, he told me to make and unmake my bed seven times running, "so that you learn it". When I had performed this exercise he told me to make it again as I had had it in the beginning, because "that is according to regulations". After the bed incident I was ordered to clean the toilet. The toilet is in the little corridor between my room and the guards' room, and is used by all of us. Usually the charwoman cleans it, but to-day I was instructed to do so—again with my towel. Before I was set to work six members of the guard did their best to mess up the toilet.

Another ceremony was connected with the food that I ordered from the hotel kitchen. Normally my order is taken upstairs by a waiter and deposited outside the guards' door, whence the guard on duty brings it into my room, since neither the waiter nor the charwoman is supposed to know who I am. But whenever my particular S.S. men are on duty the guards have to pick up my tray in front of the door, bring it into the corridor, and set it down on the floor directly in front of the toilet. Then I am ordered to pick it up from there and carry it into my room. I would not mind that so much if the food were more plentiful. But the hotel is rather expensive, and I have to order *à la carte* and pay the extra percentage for room service. I simply cannot afford to eat more. For breakfast I order a roll and a cup of black coffee, for lunch a soup or home-fried potatoes. For dinner I have either a marinated herring or potatoes, sauerkraut, and a frankfurter. That is with a very few exceptions my regular fare, and as such is not bad and quite sufficient. My family cannot send me fruit, or indeed any foodstuffs.

To crown the day, my guard stood in my room and banged for one full hour on the table to annoy me. But he was no match for me. Four years of service during the World War and four years as the head of the Austrian Government had steeled my nerves. Although I am over forty now, my youthful torturer seemed to be far more affected by his antics than I.

Although I did not say a word to the next guard about the happenings of the day, every single sentry seems to know. Most of them are embarrassed. "Don't think all of us are like that. Don't judge the S.S. battalion by the behaviour of some of these young hoodlums. We know them, and we don't like them either. . . . Why don't you complain?"

No, I won't complain. I want to see where all this will lead.

*June 25, 1938*

Every now and then my room is officially inspected. The men who come don't say much. Usually they find the room most appropriate, and congratulate each other on my good health, etc. Some of them remark that I am lucky not to be in one of my "own" prisons—*i.e.*, a prison built during my time in the Government. My "stinker" usually makes his inspection at 3 a.m., when he calls all six guards into the room; posts them in a semi-circle around my bed, and then begins to jeer and jibe. I have the impression that some of them are embarrassed. The remarks are mostly about the room and my good health: "Now don't you think that his room is much too good for him? He is positively gaining weight. Now we shall have to stop that, won't we, boys? And he sleeps so much. From now on every new sentry has to call out loud when he takes over. Understand? And why not? Why should we be so considerate? For whom? This is where we are at home. You others are not even human."

*July 1, 1938*

At noon to-day I had visitors, much to my surprise: Secretary of State Kaltenbrunner and—my wife. She obtained permission to visit me once a week. Each visit is to last eight minutes and to take place on Fridays. I live from Friday to Friday. The guard stood next to us throughout the eight minutes for fear that he might miss a word of our conversation, but we did not talk much anyway. We just looked at each other.

This was really a wonderful day; not only the visit from my

wife, but I also received permission to write to her once a week and to receive a letter from her. I go to bed happy and grateful.

July 15, 1938

The heat is almost unbearable—here in my room it is 104° Fahrenheit. The hours crawl, while the guards take special delight in going through my wardrobe and my drawers. My friend the “stinker” even reads my old letters. A few nights ago he practised his aim on me with his gun; and, as his orders demand that the gun be carried with safety-catch unlocked, this is no joke. Once or twice before, the gun has gone off in the guards’ room by accident. I thought it better to end this game; and I sat up in bed and asked, “Is there anything you want me to do?”

That ended the aiming game, but he roared at me: “Get out of your bed. Where did you learn your manners? Look at this room: a veritable pigsty. Clean up at once.” While I was busy cleaning the room with my old broom and my towel, I decided not to speak to him again when he was aiming at me. And he did it often, also during the daytime. I just let him have his little joke. He does not risk much anyway, because he can always say that I attacked him—if anything should happen. . . . Besides, he might get tired and give up.

(Note: He did not get tired, but it became known among the guards that he used me as an imaginary target, so somebody made a complaint; and after three months he was recalled and sent on other duty.)

July 25, 1938

Four years ago to-day Dollfuss was assassinated and the first attempt of the Nazis to seize Austria by force failed. I awaited the anniversary of the day not without anxiety, and I soon found out that my worries were justified. I was ordered to listen to the speeches and ceremonies on the radio, which commemorated not Dollfuss but his assassins, after which I asked the guards: “Will you give me a minute now to commemorate my friends who died for their country on this fateful 25th of July 1934 . . .?” The guards said nothing. Although I am strictly forbidden to read any newspapers, the Gestapo sent me to-day the *Voelkischer Beobachter*—the party paper. The issue

contained a poem by Karl H. Strobl in which the death of my first wife was described as the "just punishment for the murderer".

But the poem was not the only thing dealing with my person, and I wondered how many people actually believed what they read in this paper.

I also received a letter to-day, although not the one my father wrote me. I was told that it had arrived, but that the Gestapo censor refused delivery. The letter I got was from a lady of whom I had never heard. It was registered, and stated that the lady's husband had been unjustly treated by the Imperial Ministry of War in 1917. None of the subsequent Governments had done anything to right this wrong. Neither had I, and therefore "may thistles grow on your early grave and may not even a dog mourn your death. Heil Hitler."

(Note: What this letter meant I never quite understood, but it was memorable insofar as it was the only letter that reached me in those times by normal, ordinary mail. I have kept the letter and the poem clipped from the *Voelkischer Beobachter*, as curiosa.)

August 30, 1938

A young S.S. officer came to my room to-day and introduced himself as the new officer in charge of the house. He was very curt but not disagreeable, and he told me that he had made a report to Berlin concerning the impossibility of physical exercise (a walk in the open air) due to the local circumstances of the house. Besides, he was going to make an application to get me a daily paper. Finally he asked me to state any complaints that I had to make, obviously prompted by rumours he had heard about the behaviour of the guards. After he promised me that no disciplinary action would be taken against any individual, I told him some of my complaints. I did this chiefly because I did not want to expose myself to the vengeance of any of my guards; and finally, I asked him whether he could tell me anything of the plans the Government had for me. He denied any knowledge, and said that everything depended entirely on the highest authorities in the Reich. "Besides, you know," he added, "that a statesman—or anyone who wants to be one—has to answer for everything that happens during his term of office."



September 3, 1938

Again inspection. This time they are openly friendly, and even offer me a cigarette. I am told that my case will definitely be settled in the shortest possible time; and a questionnaire is left with me in connection with my trial, which I am to fill in and return. Thank God, at last something that at least resembles some official procedure. The questions cover every conceivable item, except those which to me seem important. Not a question about the events of February and March, 1938. My visitor leaves me saying: "Well, I suppose you can stand it here another month. Then you will go to Germany with your family, and the worst will be over."

September 6, 1938

Good-bye, S.S. guards. Yesterday at noon the S.S. guards were relieved, and replaced by Viennese police. Since then the regulations remain the same, but the difference is felt immediately. For one thing, no more inspections in the middle of the night—at last I can really sleep. Besides, I don't have to clean the toilet or the walls, or do anything that is not actually ordered from higher up, which is a considerable boon. Of course, even in the S.S. guards there were some pretty decent fellows, and not all of them were like the "stinker". On the whole I can say that the older men were easier than the younger ones, and those who had been in jail before as political prisoners were far nicer and more humane than the others, although I would have well understood their resentment. Those who treated me badly were also disliked by their colleagues for bad comradeship, cheating, and selfishness.

Beginning to-day I also get the *Voelkischer Beobachter* every morning.

September 15, 1938

Yesterday I heard a speech by Gauleiter Buerckel, in answer to the demonstrations staged by Catholics around the cathedral in Vienna. He began with sharp invectives against the Cardinal and the clergy. According to the Gauleiter, a few hundred women and youths had sung Dollfuss and Schuschnigg songs during the demonstrations, Cardinal Innitzer had spoken in his Sermon of "Christ the King, our true Leader", and afterwards had blessed the demonstrators from his window. Gauleiter Buerckel said further that he had had word of these de-

monstrations while he was away in Saarbruecken. He was just about to consider an amnesty for the political prisoners, many Catholics among them, and the release of Schuschnigg had been discussed, but now that was out of the question. The people had to thank their Cardinal for this. Besides, the names of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg were sent into the world by the devil, and Innitzer also bears the guilt these men have taken upon themselves in murdering upright Germans. . . . Such was the gist of his speech. I spent a bad night. My last hope was dispelled.

*October 21, 1938*

To-day is Friday. And Friday is the day I can see my wife for eight minutes. To-day she was a shade sadder than usual. I noticed it as soon as she came through the door.

My father is dead. He died last night, quite suddenly and I hope without pain, but completely alone; the doctors diagnosed heart failure. In view of the circumstances, my wife is allowed to stay for fifteen minutes to-day. We ask whether I could take part in a quiet funeral sometime in the early morning; if that were impossible, whether I could see my father in the mortuary—perhaps during the night, when no one would be around. We are told that Berlin will be asked for instructions.

*October 23, 1938*

Our application concerning the funeral has been answered by Berlin with a short no. My brother, who came from Cologne to the funeral, is not allowed to talk to me, although there are certain questions to be discussed concerning my father's will and similar family matters. On the other hand, my wife is allowed to come twice for eight minutes, apart from her regular visiting days. We also got permission to insert a small obituary notice in one of the Vienna papers, but without mention of the time of the funeral.

Vera brought me a small snapshot of the coffin in which Father lay in state. It showed the general's insignia on top of the coffin and a red cushion with all his medals and decorations. . . . Memories of the World War, memories of the man who bore the name "that was sent into the world by the devil", as Gauleiter Buerckel says.

*October 25, 1938*

Berlin has ordered that I should receive a weekly visit from a doctor, and to-day the first of these visits occurred. The young doctor is a member of the S.S. and, to judge from his accent, from Berlin. He is friendly and co-operative. The only thing he can find is a nervous heart condition, while my headaches he declares "incidental and not caused by an abnormal condition". In future I won't even mention these things. The doctor prescribed some drops to soothe my nerves and said: "That you are nervous is quite natural, as a result of your father's death, but by now you should have got over the shock. And that you could not go to the funeral was really in your interest, because you are the most hated man in Vienna."

All this he said rather nicely, and certainly without any intention to offend me. Then he left. I thought about his words, and mused that Vienna must have changed considerably in these last months. Soon afterwards one of the policemen on duty whispered to me, "Don't you believe what the doctor said. That is not true. They only tell you that for certain reasons, and it is in the papers—but still it is not true. . . ."

Yes, it is true that the papers tell all sorts of stories, and it is through the papers that I learn many things about myself. And in such language! I never knew the German language was so rich in derogatory expressions before I started reading the Nazi newspapers.

*December 11, 1938*

Surprise visit from Reichsfuehrer Himmler in person, with many attendants, in gorgeous uniforms. Himmler was not unfriendly, but fully aware of his importance and dignity. I asked him whether he knew what would eventually happen to me.

"Once the question of your trial has been decided you will find out—sometime." I furthermore asked him to stop the attacks in the Press, as I was completely helpless here, and such attacks could not but harm my reputation. "Yes, I can understand that. I shall see to it that such attacks cease," was Himmler's reply. Then later he turned to me and said, "You have forgotten, Herr Schuschnigg, that you are a German." I replied that I had never changed my attitude as an Austrian in the entire course of my life, but my remarks were obviously not taken seriously.

After Himmler's visit my room was furnished with additional pieces, among them a small radio. It is still rather modest, but much better than before.

*Christmas, 1938*

I spent Christmas Eve listening to the radio, and I heard the midnight Mass from the cathedral. Mozart's Coronation Mass was sung. Never before in my life did I pray with more fervour and concentration: *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis . . . dona nobis pacem.*

On Christmas Day Vera was permitted to see me for ten minutes, while the policeman on duty stood next to her. She gave me a few excellent photographs. Now I sit here with the enlargement of my wife's picture in front of me. The lights are out except the lamp on my table, which shines on the picture. It is my Christmas tree.

*December 31, 1938*

The holidays have been very difficult. On Sundays and holidays the hotel kitchen is closed; and when three holidays come in succession I get extremely hungry. I saved a piece of bread, a small piece of cheese, and a chocolate bar. That was all I had during the Christmas holidays. To-night the same problem faces me, since the kitchen will be closed for two days. The policemen, however, are very friendly, and each of them brings me something from his own provisions. They also wish me a happy New Year. . . .

It is amazing to see how different people can be and how much their attitude depends on the one man in charge.

A bad year has come to an end. Will the new one be better? Ever since the police took over the job of guarding me my lot has been considerably easier, although I was told that all of them were members of the former Nazi underground. There are three groups among these policemen: one group does its duty correctly but impersonally, another group is openly friendly, while the third group is disagreeable. But the disagreeable ones are on duty only every three days, and it is interesting that they are just as in the case of my S.S. guards—very unpopular with the rest of the men. They are bad comrades, egotists, and even negligent of their duties. The worst of this group is a certain Peter, who is elderly, drinks heavily, and has bow legs. Although he has been recently promoted to the

rank of master sergeant, he is not above inscribing the walls of the little corridor outside my room with ditties like this :

*Wir werden keine Ruhe schaffen  
Vor nicht am Darm des letzten Pfaffen  
Auch noch der letzte Jude haengt.*

(We will not leave the world in peace  
Until the last of the Jewish beasts  
Is hanged with the guts of the last of the  
priests.)

On another occasion Peter, slightly intoxicated, walked right up to me and sang as loudly as he possibly could the "*Horst Wessel Lied*" (Nazi anthem). Unfortunately he cannot sing in tune, which made the whole procedure doubly disagreeable.

Peter and his cronies tried everything they could think of to "make it hot for me", and they were particularly annoyed that I had a radio set. They would come over and twist the dial slightly off station, or turn it on full force, or walk noisily up and down with their creaky boots until I finally turned it off. The noise of squeaking boots is enough to drive anyone crazy, but I manage to get some peace on such occasions by plugging my ears with ear-plugs that I had procured. The worst feature of Peter and his friends was that they spied on the other members of the guards and reported them to their superiors for "favouring the prisoner". A certain consolation lay in the fact that the rest of the guards hated Peter even more than I did; but apart from him I was treated well and had no reason for complaint. Besides, complaints would have certainly only aggravated my situation, which, after all, remained anything but pleasant.

March 11, 1939

Anniversary! One year ago to-day my present existence began. Every now and then I am told that soon my case will be decided. That happens with a certain regularity about every two months, when an official comes up from the third floor and asks me a few—rather ridiculous—questions; but nothing ever happens. It seems to me that the "commissions" who come to see me are more or less on a tour to inspect the rare specimens among the prisoners. The doctor has ordered that I be weighed every four weeks from now on; so far I have lost fifty-eight

pounds, but the doctor is not worried about that. "Condition excellent" is the report.

My wife continues to come every Friday for eight minutes. It is impossible to talk, so we just sit and look at each other. Recently things have taken a turn for the worse. Without any reason my radio has been taken away, and I am no longer allowed to write to my boy. "Correspondence with your son is undesirable."

*Easter, 1939*

Again three difficult days, as the hotel kitchen remains closed from Saturday to Tuesday. My wife is still strictly forbidden to bring me any food.

*May 25, 1939*

All of a sudden my room is filled with people: S.S. guards, Gestapo officials. The speaker is a Dr. Christiansen. It is another inquisition, and again the monarchist question is the chief topic.

"Did you have any contact with the British Government in 1934, concerning a restoration of the Hapsburg dynasty to the throne of Austria?"

"No, I had no contact whatsoever."

"Oh, yes, you had!"

Occasionally the inquisitor loses his temper.

"You had better think before you answer. Much depends on your answers for your future."

I cannot tell them more than the truth. If they want it to be true that I negotiated with the British about a restoration, why don't they put in on the record? But, then—why ask me?

Other questions are not broached. Dr. Christiansen suddenly asks me: "What do you think will happen to you?" I tell him that I have not the slightest idea, and that all I want is to live quietly with my wife and child. If that should not be possible, I would rather they did away with me. During further questioning Dr. Christiansen bellows at me to tell the truth.

I reply: "I know full well that it is the duty of a witness to tell the truth and nothing but the truth."

"But you are not a witness—you are the defendant."

"If I am to be the defendant, then I would like to know what I am accused of."

This remark goes unheeded. After five hours the protocol is

finally signed. I have the right to make an additional statement, which I am to hand to the officials within one week in triplicate. The inquisitors leave again.

I am rather pleased that something seems to be going ahead in my case, and I begin work on my additional statement on the typewriter which has now been at my disposal for some time. What I cannot understand is why they refused to believe me. If they looked at the Government archives, if they only skimmed through the records, they would see that my answers tallied in every detail. Besides, in 1934 I had other worries than to get in touch with the British Government concerning a Hapsburg restoration. And even if that had been the case, anyone who could read the newspapers in 1934 must have known that British or French support for such a plan was an impossibility. They must have heard at least of the Little Entente, which was then more powerful than ever before. As I have already said: If they want their own version to be the truth, why ask me? . . .

*June 25, 1939*

I have not heard from or seen anyone for one whole month.

*July 1, 1939*

Yesterday a sort of comedy took place which must appear a bit stupid to an outsider. I have a strong hair growth. Although my hair is already grey, it grows rapidly, and as the S.S. barber was not here for the last four months, I grew a considerable mane. For various reasons, and especially for reasons of hygiene, I decided to cut my hair myself. I had only my razor-blade and my nail-scissors, but I began courageously. One of the guards saw me and offered to help me. Unfortunately some of Peter's friends were on duty that day, and they decided to make a report. The officer in charge appeared and asked me how I managed to get my hair cut. I told him quite truthfully that I did it mostly myself, and that one of the guards helped me with the back of my head. The guard now got into trouble. A report was made that he had "favoured the prisoner", and the poor man came to me and complained bitterly. I managed to calm him down, and luckily nothing ever came of the report; on the contrary, I am told that I have a right to have a barber. From now on a barber will come every month.

*July 16, 1939*

A Gestapo official of the house came to me with a paper. "At last I have good news for you. The Fuehrer has decided that you can live together with your wife. You remain a prisoner, but things will be arranged in such a way that your wife will not be hampered in her freedom. Arrangements will be made by the end of September or, at the latest, at the beginning of October. . . ."

Until September or October—it seems to me an eternity. But I breathe more easily.

*August 16, 1939*

According to the papers, the clouds begin to gather in the political sky. Will this mean war?

My teeth are giving me considerable pain, yet I cannot summon enough courage to ask for a dentist. I did that about a year ago, and lived through five weeks of horrible torture. The dentist, the guard, two extra guards in the room, and an antediluvian drill which was worked by pedal, and no anæsthetics whatsoever; only the bill of 300 marks reminded me of ordinary dentists. I would rather wait until the end of September—beginning of October. . . .

It is terribly hot again. The thermometer in my room stands at 104° Fahrenheit. No bath, no chance to cool off.

*September 1, 1939*

WAR! Just twenty years ago to-day I returned from Italy as a prisoner of war. I was told then that everything that was Austrian, everything connected with the old Empire, was wrong and bad. I did not believe that, and I fought against it. A whole world had collapsed, and what remained of Austria seemed small and paltry. But it was Austria, it was home, and it was free.

For twenty years I have stood close to the flagpole from which the red-white-red flag of Austria flew. When the flagpole became weak and rotten from various storms I tried to hold it up with all my strength. When finally it collapsed, it buried many in its fall—and I was among them. And now again: WAR . . .

*October 1, 1939*

In the world outside the storm rages. Nothing happens in my small world, nothing is said about the change that was pro-



mised for the end of September or the beginning of October. A few days ago hammering and banging went on outside my door for hours. Of course, I was not to know anything, as usual; but later I saw that two huge iron grilles had been put up at the end of the little corridor leading to my room. Now my prison is complete—even to outward appearances.

*October 29, 1939*

Early in the morning the guard wakens me. I am told to pack my things.

Somebody says: "Well, now your troubles are over."

For a while I believe that this is the promised change, that now I shall be able to live together with my wife. I am taken down into a heavily curtained car. Our trip lasts five hours. Finally we stop. We are in Munich, outside the Wittelsbach Palace—the Gestapo prison. I am taken into a cell. Solitary confinement. How long? Nobody knows. I am searched. My things are taken away. The lock of the heavy door slams shut. God have mercy on me. .

**BOOK TWO:**  
**AUSTRIA, KEYSTONE OF EUROPE**

## V

### OUR GOOD NEIGHBOUR HUNGARY

IN THE silence of the cell my thoughts turn back constantly to the years which led up to the fall of Austria. In the pages that follow I have set down these reflections on the state of Europe during this era and on the factors which determined the political and diplomatic policies of my Government. First let us examine the countries with whose statesmen I had personal contact and on whose policies so much depended.

I have always believed that the best way of maintaining relations with other countries is by direct contact. Thus, immediately after my appointment to the post of head of Government I boarded my plane for a State visit to our neighbour Hungary. At that time our Government plane was a single-engine monoplane which seated four passengers rather uncomfortably. Later we had a modern twin-engined plane of Dutch origin at our disposal, which had been ordered by my predecessor, Dollfuss, but which was not delivered until long after his death.

This visit to Hungary—like all the subsequent ones—remains always among my pleasantest memories. We had many things in common with the Magyars: a long and glorious history, pleasant and painful memories of the great war in which we fought side by side, many ties of personal friendship.

On a beautiful day in early August, 1935, we reached Szegedin, after a flight of an hour and a half over the sun-drenched plains of the Puszta. The Hungarian Minister of Education, Bálint Homan, had invited me some months previously, when I was still Austrian Minister of Education, to witness the annual open-air performance of Madach's *Tragedy of Man* at Szegedin. Like every creative people, the Hungarians have their Faust tragedy. Madach, poet and seer of the Magyars, who knew his country's soul as he knew the zenith and the nadir of humanity as a whole, wrote in his *Tragedy of Man* a

powerful drama of profound symbolic meaning. The evening performance on the square in front of the Szegedin Cathedral in the light of hundreds of torches made a deep and unforgettable impression.

The next day I was, for the first time, received by the Hungarian Regent, Admiral von Horthy, at his summer residence of Gödöllő. The sharply cut profile of the last Commander of the Imperial and Royal Austro-Hungarian Navy was familiar to every Austrian. The regent, whose authority in Hungary was not questioned by anyone, was still very much the old soldier in every respect. Military aspects played an important rôle. Yet in his conversation he was of a winning amiability, listened with great attentiveness, and spoke with complete frankness. He talked German like a native of Vienna, since he had spent many decades in that city as adjutant of Emperor Franz Josef. "I consider Vienna my second home," said Admiral von Horthy to me, "and if the old Empire were to be re-established I would walk on my two feet, no matter how great the distance, to offer my services again.

"But that," he continued, "is no longer within the range of possibility. One cannot bring the dead to life again. What counts to-day are the people and the country. That they may prosper and live, that is the aim to which I have now dedicated my life and my work. This will explain my attitude in other questions. For poor Austria, that I love and know almost like my own fatherland, there is nothing left but to seek unification with the great German Reich."

In further conversation Horthy expressed his admiration and respect for German ability and efficiency. Also during my subsequent visits the Regent always came back to this topic. At this first meeting we discussed the various problems that faced Hungary, especially the question of Slovakia, which at that time stood in the centre of public interest in Hungary. Horthy had a habit of interspersing the conversation with anecdotes and memories of former times. One of these anecdotes I remember in particular: About the turn of the century, when the Viennese expressionist school was in full bloom, the Emperor, accompanied by his adjutant, Von Horthy, opened an exhibition in a Vienna gallery. In front of the pictures stood the painters, whom the Emperor greeted. After looking at a few pictures, the Emperor stopped before a large canvas, scrutinized it, and then turned to ask the artist what it was meant to be.

"A clearing in the woods, Your Majesty—a glade," he replied.

"Oh, but it is all navy blue, and I don't see any trees."

"That is how I see it, Your Majesty," returned the expressionist master.

"If that is the case, then perhaps you should not have chosen the profession of a painter," rejoined the Emperor.

Directly opposite the royal castle in Buda—the older part of Budapest—stands the palace of the Prime Minister, at that time Julius von Gömbös. From the terrace of his private apartments a magnificent panorama of the majestic capital of Hungary lies before the spectator. Budapest could with far more justification claim the title of the Danube metropolis than Vienna, in spite of Johann Strauss and his immortal waltz.

Gömbös—like almost every educated Hungarian of his generation—spoke German with great fluency, although not quite without the Magyar accent, as did Horthy and Von Kanya, who was then Foreign Minister. Gömbös had been graduated from the Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt, and had later taught in the War School as a captain. But even before the war he was a fervent partisan of the Royal Hungarian Honved (*i.e.*, the Hungarian national army as distinct from the joint Austro-Hungarian forces). Thus he was not a member of the Imperial and Royal Army. Far more than the Regent, Prime Minister Gömbös thought exclusively in military terms. Hungary had re-established general conscription and pre-military training of her youth, in spite of the peace treaties and the Little Entente, whose influence was then still very strong. The age-groups were called up, but in theory anyone who did not wish to serve in the army could appeal to a court of justice, since under the terms of the peace treaty conscription could not be official and lacked any legal basis. "But," as Gömbös said to me, "there is not a judge in all Hungary who would dare to pronounce a judgment against our policy, not a court that would permit itself to be thus abused." This statement was in all probability correct. There is something great and imposing about this fierce pride which manifests itself alike in good and bad times in Hungary. Two things have again and again united all Hungarians, no matter how divergent their opinions: their thousand-year-old constitution and the Holy Crown of St. Stephen, the historical symbol of the Empire. For Hungary will never perish—no matter what

mistakes she has made. I can well understand the pride of the Hungarians in their country.

All my conversations with Gömbös during my first as well as all subsequent visits to Hungary turned upon our mutual political worries. As far as our foreign policies were concerned, the Roman protocols defined the lines very clearly. Gömbös underlined on several occasions his sincere admiration of Hitler's Third Reich—although his attitude towards the German minorities in Hungary was reserved, to put it mildly. Hungarian relations with Czechoslovakia were strained at this time: with Yugoslavia even more so, and aggravated by the question of the Croat emigration. Towards Austria Gömbös and his successor displayed sympathetic friendship, and liked to recall our common past in the Imperial Army. Gömbös' first advice on domestic policy in Austria was to bring all supplies of weapons, private or public, under strict State control. He also counselled me not to burden myself, as head of the Government, with other portfolios.

Foremost in his mind was the question of a restoration of the old monarchy in Austria. I succeeded in explaining the situation and removing all doubts. I told him that we could under no circumstances embark on a policy of Utopias, and that whatever happened I would not take any steps without informing him in advance, especially on questions dealing with our relations with Czechoslovakia. As things stood, I thought that an active monarchist policy was nothing but romantic nonsense, although personally and privately I was a monarchist and have never tried to deny this.

That seemed to satisfy Gömbös, and he never again brought up this topic in later conversations. I was not always so successful in dispelling the fears of a monarchist restoration in Austria. There was, for instance, the Yugoslav minister to Vienna, Nastasjevitch, who through many years reported to his Government that the restoration in Austria was imminent, and that the Austrian Government favoured such a step with all means at its disposal. Also at the French Foreign Office this question held official attention for many years.

In the economic field our talks with Hungarians always treated of the same questions; wheat and wine exports from Hungary to Austria and Austrian lumber and industrial exports to Hungary. On all questions dealing with military matters a close and frictionless co-operation between our two countries was a foregone conclusion.

At various times we jointly met with our Italian partner. The most impressive of these meetings was the conference in Rome in 1936, when Mussolini and fascism expressed their gratitude to both Austria and Hungary for their attitude in the Abyssinian conflict. In spite of our rather difficult position, we had voted in Geneva against the imposition of sanctions on Italy.

As usual, our schedule in Rome included the inspection of several public institutions, to show the visitors the progress achieved by the Fascist administration: the new university, in its truly imperial magnificence, a sanatorium for tuberculosis patients, high on the sunny banks of the Tiber. At the university, the president, whom I had met some years before as Italian Minister of Justice, showed us the Auditorium Maximum. Suddenly Gömbös asked: "How many hospital beds could you put up here in case of necessity?"

On the terrace of the sanatorium our guide, the medical director, explained with pride: "Our new hygienic measures save forty thousand people for Italy, who previously died of T. B. alone."

"An entire division at war strength," remarked Gömbös approvingly.

A few months later Gömbös, the indefatigable warrior, died in Budapest. In the Hungarian House of Parliament we were assembled to pay our last respects. It was a dreary day when we walked behind his coffin: first the Regent, then the Hungarian Cabinet, and behind them the representatives of Germany and Italy, Bulgaria and Austria. On this occasion I not only made the acquaintance of the young, impulsive, and somewhat over-confident Italian Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, but I had also the opportunity of a long-desired interview with Hermann Goering. It was Gömbös who had advised me again and again to seek a personal exchange of views with Goering. Unfortunately, the time was very limited, and thus my talks with the "deputy of the Fuehrer" were equally limited.

In Austria we had just established conscription, and quite logically the question of our aviation and its development stood in the foreground of our conversations. I had taken over our military aviation with thirty-four planes in all when I became Chancellor, and of these the greater part were training models. Three years later we had more than a hundred modern fighters and first-class pilots.

In the course of a short talk that evening I told Goering that in accordance with our economic and financial agreements Italy supplied most of our military equipment, especially our aeroplanes.

"Ach, listen, Herr Bundeskanzler," Goering replied. "Neither of us need these Italians. We shall straighten out such matters between ourselves. We shall supply you with whatever you desire. For us the only way is to do things from State to State, without the interference of third parties."

This theory, which was extremely dangerous for a small State like Austria, was brought forward by the Third Reich again and again with great force and with equally heavy propaganda. Towards Italy Goering already professed the closest German friendship, a friendship cemented by common interest. There was only one obstacle in the way of complete understanding: Austria. One important dispute, it is true, had been settled in the meantime, much to Goering's personal relief and satisfaction. The Italian influence on the Austrian iron ore deposits in Styria, which for some time threatened to gain increasing control, had been excluded once and for all. The Alpine Montan Company, which ran the mines, the majority of whose shares was under German control, had now come under the direct influence of the Hermann Goering Works.

The first double row in the procession which took Gömbös' remains through the streets of the Hungarian capital presented a singularly revealing picture to the attentive observer. Two large figures in resplendent uniforms: Italy and Germany, who, out of the corners of their eyes, scrutinized each other from the spurs, past their daggers, up to the countless decorations. Two plain and inconspicuous civilians: Austria and Bulgaria, who seemed somewhat nervous about their commonplace appearance in this magnificent company.

In January, 1938, the partners of the Roman protocols met for the last time in Budapest. Gömbös' successor, Prime Minister von Dáranyi, whose conciliatory and friendly attitude was much appreciated by Austria, presided over the meeting. Hungary's Foreign Minister von Kanya also took part in the conference. Italy was represented by Count Ciano; and I was in the company of my collaborator, the later Foreign Minister of Austria, Dr. Schmidt. The conference stressed our common desire to maintain the Roman protocols in full and to keep the States united by these treaties in closest contact with the policy



of the Rome-Berlin axis. Furthermore, at Italy's urgent insistence, Austria and Hungary agreed to a *de jure* recognition of Franco Spain—a formality which was somewhat outdated by the *de facto* recognition which had long since taken place.

I did not know, however, in these days of January, 1938—and really could not know it—that the die of history had been already cast as far as Austria was concerned. The timing and the direction of events lay already in the hands of the Fuehrer, who by sheer force held all trumps of the time in his hand.

## VI

### MUSSOLINI: FAIR-WEATHER FRIEND

**I**MMEDIATELY AFTER my trip to Hungary I set out for Italy on my first official visit to Mussolini since I had taken over the Government in Austria.

It was in the first weeks of August, 1934, and as the Duce was inspecting the summer manœuvres of the Italian army in Tuscany, I was invited to come to Florence. I must confess that I had a certain feeling of tenseness. True, I had seen Mussolini before; but that was in Rome at an official reception in 1933, where we had not exchanged more than the usual expressions of diplomatic courtesy. This time I was to meet the real Mussolini, the *condottiere*, the people's tribune.

To me, as to many Austrians and Germans, Italy has always been the land of dreams. Not only because of the sun, nor because of the unique symphony of colours, sounds, and forms; not merely because of the art treasures or because of the glorious history, so closely connected with, and frequently influenced by, our German heritage—but because of the feeling that here, in a limited space, the highest achievements of human culture are concentrated in never-ending abundance. This was not my first visit to Italy. I had spent almost one year in Cassino and on the Gulf of Naples as a prisoner of war (during which time I was treated very kindly and humanely). Then, as a student, and later as Austrian Minister of Justice, I had spent some time in Rome on the occasion of the conclusion of the concordat between Austria and the Vatican. And—if that may be counted—I was born on the shores of Lake Garda, in the Italian part of the southern Tyrol, which then, politically, belonged to Austria.

Nevertheless my first official visit to Italy seemed like a journey into an unknown country. As my train pulled into the station of Florence, Mussolini, in white summer uniform, stood on the platform to greet me. The whole station was decked with the Austrian and Italian flags. On the platform a com-

pany of Grenadiers with flag and band rendered the usual honours. In spite of the formal reception, the whole greeting had something personal.~

The Tuscan landscape gave our first political meeting a unique background. Whether we met at the Villa Antinori in the western part of the city or on the hills of Fiesole overlooking Florence, or in one of the ancient *palazzi* in the centre of the city—whether we discussed the grave questions of immediate importance, or whether we talked about economic treaties, or whether I asked for just treatment of the German minorities in the southern Tyrol—in all our talks there was a note of serenity, a refraction of the spirit of Dante, or Giotto, or Michelangelo, or Brunelleschi, whose dome dominates this unique city.

In our talks Mussolini mentioned his anxiety about the Abyssinian conflict, which, although still remote at that time, seemed inevitable to the Duce. Mussolini always talked German with me. One could see that he liked it, and, apart from his somewhat hard accent, he spoke it slowly, but with great accuracy. At that time, as again during all my meetings with him, I was amazed at his intimate and detailed knowledge of every problem, and even of every individual, we discussed. Equally astounding was his accurate information, especially on matters pertaining to the Press, as well as his extensive knowledge of literature.

Austria could not have weathered the worst years of crisis without Italy's far-reaching economic support. We had, of course, something to offer in return; but without Mussolini's active interest and his personal supervision things might easily have bogged down in the maze of red tape which usually hampers such transactions.

After this first meeting in Florence I saw the Duce repeatedly in the course of the following years at Rome. There our conferences usually took up most of the day. I noticed on these occasions that Mussolini kept his desk in his often-described study free of all papers, files, and records. At most there was a map and a few books. The Italian Foreign Minister, Fulvio Suvich—and later Count Ciano—took part in our conversations. It was Mussolini's habit to plunge *in medias res* with a pointed, concise question. Every now and then he would bring the conversation back to the central question under discussion. Unlike Hitler, Mussolini was a very good and attentive listener. I must admit that while political confer-

ences are never a rest cure, discussions with Mussolini demanded intense concentration if they were to be successful. The public rarely appreciates the work that goes into a political conference. A Press communiqué informs them of the main points of agreement, and usually stresses the festive trimmings, such as banquets or receptions, which are apt to remind the reader rather of a Vienna Congress on a small scale. Mussolini realized full well the importance of symbolism—especially to the Italian people. The fasces—insignia of the old Roman lictors—was not chosen at random to become the party emblem. With this reminder of an old and glorious tradition he supported the crown and shield of his modern State. At every inter-State conference particular care was taken in such ceremonies as the laying of a wreath on the graves of the kings in the Pantheon, as well as a formal reception of the visiting statesman by the King and Queen. The Italian Court led a purposely simple life. King Victor Emmanuel III liked to point out that he was but the first servant of the people, and was pleased to hear himself called the "*re soldato*" (the soldier-king). But apart from his penchant for military matters his interests covered a wide range, a feature which made him a most agreeable partner in conversation.

The Italian Crown Prince Umberto I met some time later when he visited the Gross Glocknerstrasse, one of Austria's foremost scenic highways, about six thousand feet above sea level. As is the case with many high-born persons, legends and anecdotes, most of them in rather dubious taste, obscured his real character. I found him to be a particularly intelligent, modern, and highly responsible personality. His straightforward and natural manner, far from any outmoded ceremonial, made an excellent impression on me.

As far as I could judge from my brief visits, the ladies at the Italian Court were very remarkable. The Queen—who, by the way, spoke German fluently—appeared in public only in connection with charities. Principessa Maria, who was not yet married, certainly contributed much to the popularity of the house of Savoy by her natural charm. Crown Princess Marie José, a sister of the King of Belgium, looked like a fine old picture by Reynolds. And in Italy, perhaps more than elsewhere, appearance is important for a member of the royal family. Every monarchy must surround itself with a certain style, and even with ceremony. In countries where the population understands and loves such ceremony it can be right

and necessary, even in our times. Mussolini knew that, and his attitude towards the house of Savoy was not based on sentiment, but on cold calculation. The form of a State is never an end in itself and cannot be regarded abstractly, apart from its temporary background. Such monarchies as take the formula "by the grace of God" literally are outmoded to-day, and therefore out of place.

Official visits to Rome lasted as a rule three to four days. In keeping with tradition, one of these days was set aside for a visit to the Vatican. Both Pope Pius XI and the Secretary of State, Cardinal Pacelli (the present Pope Pius XII), spoke excellent German, which facilitated my audiences considerably. Pope Pius XI was the personification of paternal understanding and kindness. I never heard a word from him concerning political matters. With Cardinal Pacelli, on the other hand, I discussed the relations of State and Church, and found great understanding for the particular difficulties of Austria—more understanding than I found with the sometimes stormy but mostly over-cautious and timorous hierarchy and clergy at home. Questions pertaining to foreign policy or even to domestic affairs were rarely touched upon in these discussions. Cardinal Pacelli is among the most impressive personalities that I have ever met in my life: as man, as intellect, as priest—in short, as the prototype of a timeless but at the same time very modern prince of the Church.

My last visits to Mussolini took place in the autumn of 1936 and in the spring of 1937, when the Duce received me in Venice. Most memorable, however, perhaps was the meeting at his country estate, Rocca delle Caminate, which took place in the spring of 1936.

The Roman protocols, signed by Italy and Austria in 1934, called for an occasional consultation between the heads of Government of the two States. Thus I informed Mussolini at Rocca delle Caminate of our plan to re-establish the natural and old friendly relations with Germany. This plan, which later resulted in the inter-State agreement between Germany and Austria of July 11, 1936, met with the whole-hearted approval of the Duce. The concept of collective security as well as the political importance of the League of Nations were in his opinion things of the past. With France Italy's relations remained tense. The consequences of the Abyssinian policy had already made themselves felt. A complete reshuffle of

European politics seemed inevitable, and Mussolini welcomed our plan of bettering our relations with Germany. In one or two instances he gave his decided opinion and his warning against certain appointments I had suggested. As I had occasion to find out later, he was not mistaken.

Summing up, Mussolini remarked: "You can definitely count on the fact that Italy's interest in an absolute Austrian independence cannot and will not ever change. To demonstrate this outwardly I plan to fly to Vienna and Budapest—perhaps in the near future. For the time being it must, of course, be kept a secret. It would be my first official visit to a foreign country, and would therefore not fail to make an impression. For your proposed treaty with Germany this trip will be a help. Apart from that you will enjoy much greater security than before, when Italy in turn has a friendship treaty with Germany. Such an agreement depends, of course, on the elimination of the dispute about Austria. I also hope that Germany will establish balanced relations with the other Powers. A war between France and Germany is unthinkable. The French army, to-day, is the best in the world, and the Maginot Line impenetrable from one end to the other."

At the close of our conversations Mussolini asked me to drive with him to Ravenna. The Duce sat at the wheel, and sped at an average rate of eighty miles an hour over the excellently paved but somewhat tortuous road. Amid shouts and cheers of the population he led me into the world-famous, simple chapel where lie the remains of Dante Alighieri. We stood silently before the tomb for some time: an unforgettable moment in my life. . . .

In retrospect my various talks with Mussolini from 1934 to 1937 reflect the outlines of European politics. It is worth while to record them here as literally as my memory permits.

*Florence, August 1934*

*Mussolini:* Tell me frankly, Your Excellency, would you, politically speaking, have been in a position to accept military help from Italy against Hitler? That is, if, for instance, our divisions had actually entered Austria one month ago, instead of merely staging a display of power on the borders?

*I:* We were most grateful for the Italian assistance as it was offered to us then. Your Excellency has thereby maintained peace for Austria—perhaps for the whole world.

But actual military assistance within our borders would have been—quite frankly—out of the question. The presence of Italian troops on our soil would have rendered the position of the Austrian Government untenable. Quite apart from political repercussions, things would not have stopped at that. The Yugoslavs, the Czechs would have mobilized immediately, and would have entered Austria as well. A demonstration of Italian military might at our borders, however, will in case of necessity be of inestimable value for us.

*Mussolini*: What will you do if the Germans attempt once more to solve the Austrian question by use of force? What measures will you take in the field of domestic policy?

*I*: I think it quite possible that the events of last July may repeat themselves. I do not think that Germany will break openly, since that might have international consequences. But the Austrian Legion could, of course, with the unofficial help of the German army, attempt an invasion. In that case we can stem the tide with our own military resources—as we did in July. That, I think, is beyond any doubt. Internally we try to achieve a political consolidation by a decided but conciliatory attitude. I believe that the whole secret lies in the neutralization of the inflammatory propaganda from without and in an economic recuperation within our borders. To achieve this we need support, as we are too weak alone. The Powers which are interested in our existence as a nation, and which often enough have looked at us askance when we did nothing more than secure our internal position—these Powers cannot expect to conserve us in a vacuum. We must be able to breathe as we see fit and as we need in order to live. The Austrian Government cannot bow to interference in its internal policy. Berlin demands a plebiscite in Austria. Perhaps we will have a plebiscite. But never under pressure, and only at the time that we think proper.

*Mussolini* (noticeably impressed): You are thinking of a plebiscite?

*I*: Not at this time; only when the right time comes, when the country is internally at peace and when there is no question of outside pressure.

*Mussolini*: Yes, all this is absolutely *condicio sine qua non*. Otherwise there is no point in having a plebiscite at all. I

don't have to tell you how plebiscites are handled in Germany nowadays. That does not mean a thing. And of course you cannot hope that the Third Reich will ever leave Austria in peace. But the more the world sees that you keep to your original course without any compromise, the more you will get moral and effective support from others. On Italy's support you can count at all times and under any circumstances, and to-day Italy is one of the big Powers. Especially in the economic field we can help you. The preference treaties between our countries have worked very well. We can extend our mutual export. For instance, we buy your lumber, and you order your armament in Italy—especially aircraft. Italy is among the first Powers in aircraft production. All this can be arranged on the basis of mutual trust and amity. Send me your military attaché and I will give orders that he is to be shown everything. If the experts make difficulties about payment or clearing of international bottle-necks just let me know personally. That is how I had arranged things with Dollfuss. Italy on the one side and Austria and Hungary on the other can thus come closer and closer to each other. It is not necessary to alarm everybody by speaking about a tariff union. We can get the same results just by extending our preference treaties. Together we constitute, after all, a block of some sixty to seventy million people.—Tell me, Your Excellency, do you think that Austria can possibly make a compromise with National Socialism?

*I:* No. That is impossible. It is not so much a question of party politics, but a question of fundamental outlook on life, a discrepancy which cannot possibly be bridged. We are a German-speaking people; and we feel that we are a German nation. And, as such, we could never accept an anti-German combine. But we certainly refuse to become a colony, and therefore are, under any circumstances, violently opposed to an Anschluss.

*Mussolini:* Yes, I understand. What is called Germany to-day is in reality Prussia. And Prussia and Austria have never been able to come to terms. There is too much between these two countries, not least the fact that the Austrians—like the Italians—are Catholics. I think it is a mistake to underrate this difference. Tell me, what about the question of a monarchy in Austria? You have the reputation of being a monarchist. Well, I am a monarch-



ist, too. I think that the monarchy as a stabilizing factor is of the greatest value. Do you intend to restore the monarchy in Austria?

*I:* Personally I am a monarchist. But the whole question does not and cannot arise as long as a restoration jeopardizes the existence of the State through its external repercussions.

*Mussolini:* So you think that a monarchy in Austria would entail international repercussions that would endanger Austria's existence? Yes, I see what you mean; but of course that is a question you will have to judge for yourself. We would certainly not object to such a step. But I think you are right in your decision not to risk anything in this respect. By the way, in case of a restoration, which dynasty would you have in mind? Is there only Otto, or could one envisage another pretender apart from the Hapsburgs? [Mussolini obviously hinted at a possible candidacy of Prince Starhemberg, which was being occasionally discussed at that time.]

*I:* No, if we had a monarchy again there would be only one candidate for us, the legitimate pretender, Archduke Otto.

*Mussolini:* I fully agree with you. And what about Otto's mother, Empress Zita? I hear that she is very unpopular in Austria.

*I:* Yes, the propaganda against the Empress has been very effective—so that even to-day we still feel it.

*Mussolini:* Why is that? Because she is an Italian?

*I:* No, that is merely a cheap slogan without any real meaning. No decent person can possibly feel anything but respect and admiration for Empress Zita. The most common accusation against her is that she interferes too much in politics.

*Mussolini:* Women in politics are no good anyway. History has proved that. As to the Austrian question, it seems to me that everything depends on the international balance in Europe. More specifically, the question is closely connected with the existence and attitude of the Little Entente. Now, Rumania is no danger for Austria. The Yugoslavs are busy with their own Croat minority problems. There remains Czechoslovakia—and the Germans are threatening that country. I believe that German expansion will move in that direction. In that case we have

no reason to obstruct the Germans. Czechoslovakia is an unnatural State, with unnatural borders. The German-speaking sections of Moravia belong to Austria, and Slovakia belongs to Hungary. If a revision of borders should take place, surely you would voice your claims and ask for the incorporation of southern Moravia into Austria?

*I:* No, Your Excellency. Austria, as she is to-day, will not make any territorial claims. Besides, we should not be interested in a partial adjustment. We have lost a war, and we have had to accept the dictates of the victors concerning our borders. We did not choose them, nor will we ever consider the arrangement a just one. But as things are to-day Austria is a small State, and as such it can only fulfil a useful function if, by consolidating all its forces at home, it tries to serve the idea of a peaceful and democratic solution of all future international conflicts.

*Mussolini:* You are a pacifist. Do you really believe in eternal peace?

*I:* No, by no means! Although I would infinitely rather believe in such a peace. On the contrary, I believe that the unfortunate peace treaties of 1919 will lead sooner or later to a new conflict. But I also believe that Austria must never be the cause of such a conflict. Austria is not only a political entity with more or less accidental borders; Austria—and that is my firm conviction—is more than that: it represents an idea. And for that same reason I am doing everything possible to build up the national defence of our country: the immediate and speedy development of our army, the establishment of general conscription, the modernization of our armament, planes, artillery, tanks. All this seems to me of the greatest importance. So far we have six brigades. Our first step is to build the army up to seven modern divisions.

*Mussolini:* As you say, that is of paramount importance. Preparedness is all. That is also why we modernized our army and navy. We also support Hungary in this respect. You in Austria can count on every help from us. I am willing to return to you the light and medium artillery and ammunition which Italy received in 1918 from Austria as reparation. Your Ministry of War suggested this. As to tanks and aircraft, we are ready to show you our latest models and supply you with them under very advantageous conditions. All this causes no difficulty as long as we can

arrange these things on a friendly basis. I advise you earnestly not to let your armament programme be hampered by monetary considerations. Believe me, what counts is not a well-balanced budget, but military preparedness. That is how we hold it here in Italy. We still have a few years of breathing space. In two or three years we must be ready with our preparations. During that time, I believe, we can maintain peace. But in 1937, I think, things will begin happening.

Rome, 1934

*Mussolini:* It is with the greatest interest that I follow the development of your army. You are very wise to go ahead as fast as you can, and not to let yourself be hampered by budget considerations. It is not impossible that you will have to fend for yourself in the near future, and that you can count on only limited support from us. It will perhaps be necessary for us to engage ourselves for a while in East Africa.

*I:* Is it not possible to find a peaceful solution?

*Mussolini:* Italy cannot ignore the constant and continuous provocations on the part of Abyssinia.—I advise you to follow exactly the policy that you have followed so far, internally as well as in foreign politics. The slight deviations of Hungary in regard to Germany are of no consequence for us. We don't want any conflict with Germany—any more than you do. The Roman protocols are clear, unequivocal, and safe. You can count on Italy's unchanged attitude and friendship under any circumstances. On that score we are of one opinion with the other big Powers. And our relations with the other Powers become clearer every day. With Poland we are in friendly contact. Beck will soon come to Rome. The Poles are excellent soldiers and friendly with Hungary. With Yugoslavia I would like to establish closer ties. At the moment, however, there is tension, because Belgrade has demanded the extradition of Croat emigrants in connection with the assassination of Barthou and King Alexander in Marseille. They have made the same demand in Vienna and Budapest, as you know. We refused as a matter of principle. The question of the Slovene minorities in the Venezia Giulia is not so pressing. We must have peace on our borders.

Rome, 1935

I: I am very happy indeed, Your Excellency, that our Austro-Italian cultural treaty is about to go into effect. The opening of the Austrian Historical Institute here in Rome will stimulate the exchange of professors and students. In this connection I would like to draw your attention to the new publications of the director of that institute, Professor Dengel, on the subject of the Palazzo Venezia. [Note: The Palazzo Venezia was the seat of the old Austro-Hungarian embassy to the Vatican prior to 1919, and became later Mussolini's Foreign Office and personal headquarters.]

Mussolini: I am familiar with the work of Professor Dengel on the *Sala Mappa Mondo*. I also have excellent reports through Salata about the Italian Cultural Institute in Vienna. I see from your schedule here that you will call on the Pope to-morrow. You are quite right to cement your relations with the Holy See. That is very necessary. I do the same; and Austria, like Italy, will always be a Catholic State. Apart from that, I personally have the highest opinion of the present Pope.

I: Yes, Austria also has to represent its national and cultural interest at the Holy See. For instance, the old German endowment of the Anima Church, which is under Austrian direction.

Mussolini: I hope that our cultural agreements will do much to popularize the Austro-Italian political friendship, especially with you in Austria.

I: I don't doubt that the cultural treaty with Italy will certainly help a *rapprochement* of our two peoples. We shall introduce Italian as a secondary compulsory subject in our high schools, and you will teach German in yours. The cultural institutes in our respective capitals will be enlarged, the exchange of young people will be intensified, concert and lecture tours of prominent artists and scientists and the establishment of guest chairs at our universities will bring the two countries closer to one another. There remains but one question that is very dear to us Austrians: the Alto Adige, the former Southern Tyrol. I know that this whole question exceeds the scope of our present conversations. But if I bring it up now in connection with the cultural relations between our two coun-

tries, I do so to underline that for Austria the Alto Adige is to-day not a political but a cultural problem. It is, furthermore, quite obvious that the Austrian point of view on this question will always differ from the Italian point of view. But it is also the only question that stands between our two countries, which otherwise complement each other perfectly in every respect: two friends whom nature has formed for one another. We are reasonable enough to know that neither you nor we can do anything about the Alto Adige problem before the general situation in Europe has changed. To-day, therefore, Austria does not ask for any revision of its borders. But just because Austria to-day is not a powerful nation, yet of German culture and language, it feels the obligation to act as advocate for its cultural heritage: the ties of blood and language. Perhaps we are the only people who can take such a stand at present, because we cannot possibly be suspected of harbouring any mental reservations. It seems to me the very essence of Austria's vocation to-day to represent the cultural interest of German minorities, and to act at the same time as bridge and mediator.

*Mussolini:* I am quite willing to talk about these problems now. But I shall have to tell you one thing from the start: There would be no problem whatsoever if the Alto Adige were situated, let us say, in Tuscany, instead of on the border. Then you could have all the German schools that you want. But at her borders Italy cannot afford an irredentist movement. What complaints have you heard in particular?

*I:* I would ask you to receive a deputation of the people—say from Bolzano—and talk things over with them. According to my information, the prefect of this district, Signor Mastromattei, has not got the confidence of the German population. They think that the Duce does not know how things really are and that he would help if he knew. As far as I know, they have three main requests: (1) German schools, or at least proper instruction in the German language. If German private schools were allowed, or if at least punishment for private instruction in German were abolished, much would be gained. With this goes also a relaxation of language rules, such as the toleration of German inscriptions on tombstones and cessation of compulsory Italianization of family names.

(2) To stop as far as possible the total industrialization of the region around Bolzano, in order to safeguard the fruit-growers. Also financial help for the German agricultural co-operatives. (3) An amnesty for political prisoners in so far as they were penalized as Germans. I want to stress that, according to my information, such concessions on the part of Italy, which for many Southern Tyrolese are questions of life and death, would be met with a whole-hearted pledge of complete loyalty towards Italy. Besides, Italy's concession on that question would mean a boost for the Austrian Government, in view of the continuous propaganda from Munich.

*Mussolini*: I am eager to prove to you and to Austria the goodwill of Italy and my personal friendship, and I will see what can be done in the question of the Alto Adige. I shall also see to it that the public are informed of your requests in a communiqué. But the question as such is a very delicate one. Believe me, those boys who demonstrate in the streets of Bolzano—in their white half-stockings which have become an unofficial uniform for the Nazis, their provocative songs and salutes, their secret meetings—would be immediately arrested by you if they were in Austria, just as we have to arrest them here. They are exactly the same Nazis who are not only our, but also your, enemies. But to prove to you the effectiveness of Italo-Austrian friendship I am willing to grant an amnesty. One case, that of Baron S—, in which you took particular interest, has already been favourably disposed of. By the way, Baron S— had been interned in Frascati, and could move about freely within the territory under the local police jurisdiction. You must admit that were you in his position you would have to be glad that nothing worse happened to you. As to the industrialization of the Bolzano region, I cannot make any promises. In the school question I will do what can be done. And as to the persecution of the German language for private use, I assure you that I have not the slightest interest. The instances you speak of can only be excesses of over-zealous subordinates. I shall ask for a detailed report.

When I left Rome a few days later Mussolini came to the station to see me off. He referred once more to our conversations, and assured me: "You can count absolutely on my promises."

An official Italian communiqué appeared the next day stating that as a result of Austrian intervention the teaching of the German language and the instruction in German private schools would be facilitated in the Alto Adige. Mussolini also received a deputation of Southern Tyrolese as I had requested.

In the course of the year 1935 the Abyssinian conflict brought about the decisive change in European politics: Rome broke with London, Paris, and Geneva. At the same time a revision of Italy's relations with Germany took place. This was done with great caution, and did not attract much attention at first.

Austria and Hungary stood by Italy in accordance with their obligations. At the General Assembly of the League of Nations, imposing economic sanctions against Italy, only Austria, Hungary, and Albania voted against the fifty-two member States, among them the big Western Powers, who condemned Italy's actions. Italy thereupon left the League; whereas Austria and also Hungary retained their membership in this organization for obvious and compelling reasons.

Another sacrifice Austria had to bring to its obligations of the Roman protocols was the handing over of the Maria Theresia thaler dies. For years and years the Austrian Mint in Vienna had issued this world-famous silver coin bearing the portrait of Empress Maria Theresia. These coins were the most popular currency in Abyssinia, and Italy was eager to get control of this commodity so important for the development of the newly conquered country. Thus the Italian Government asked Austria for the dies from which these coins were minted. For us this was not an easy decision. First, we had standing orders for silver from England, which must be cancelled if we were to discontinue the production of the Maria Theresia thaler. Secondly, by giving the dies to Italy we deprived ourselves of a safe and steady income, as we had important orders for this currency.

But in spite of these considerations we complied with the Italian request, handed over the dies, and cancelled our contracts with the British silver firms. We did this as a matter of principle and because we calculated that Italy's assistance as a big Power in case of international complications would be of greater importance to us than ever. Hitler's unchangingly hostile attitude, which kept the German borders closed for any Austrian export, and the beginning of the *rapprochement* between Berlin and Rome left us no choice of action. For reasons

of immediate security we had to incur the inevitable disapproval of Britain. For the moment our calculations seemed to be correct.

Downing Street and the Quay d'Orsay showed a certain degree of understanding of Austria's difficult position. In Rome both Austria and Hungary were overwhelmed with protestations of friendship on the occasion of a State visit in 1935. "Never will Italy forget the services rendered to her under the most difficult circumstances. . . ." Such was the tenor of the official speeches in the Italian Parliament, as well as of Mussolini's toasts and the official editorials.

Late spring of 1936 brought a domestic crisis in Austria. Prince Starhemberg, the Vice-Chancellor, and at the same time head of the Heimwehr Militia, resigned from the Cabinet. This step had its inevitable repercussions on the powerful position his Heimwehr had held up to then. Mussolini, who followed the developments in Austria very attentively, sent me the following message: "If there are unbridgeable differences between the head of the Government and his lieutenant I can fully understand that the lieutenant has to yield. But in view of my personal friendship with Starhemberg I should be very glad if the latter were, politically speaking, treated decently —i.e., that he is not held to account."

This message surprised me, as nobody had ever thought of such a procedure. Although I frequently disagreed with Starhemberg on matters of policy or procedural questions, I always maintained the best of personal relations with him, in spite of the inevitable estrangement of the moment. Besides, the reason for this resignation was a matter of objective political consideration, which Mussolini knew full well.

The change in European politics made itself felt. The Great Power Triangle, London-Paris-Rome, which was the main guarantor for Austrian independence, began to disintegrate. The *rapprochement* between Rome and Berlin put before Austria a difficult but clear task: We had to keep the active interest of the Western Powers alive, secure the continued assistance of Italy, and maintain such relations with Germany as to make it at least difficult for Hitler to solve the "Austrian question" by force.

The first and foremost step was to assure ourselves of the support of our Italian friends, to the extent that their new friendship with Hitler Germany would not be cemented at the expense of Austria. The irreparable break between London



and Rome, and the consequent isolation of Italy, made it imperative for Mussolini to seek support in Berlin. This, however, was dangerous for Austria in view of the aggressive foreign policy of the Wilhelmstrasse and the well-known personal hostility of Hitler towards our country. We set about solving this threefold problem in the following manner:

(1) A treaty with Germany in which the *status quo* of our relations and our sovereignty and independence were formally acknowledged before the world (July 11, 1936).

(2) Maintenance of the treaties with Italy and Hungary (Roman protocols) and development of further friendly relations with Italy through cultural exchange.

(3) Maintenance of our good relations with England and France through the medium of the League of Nations—a task which we undertook with the full understanding and explicit approval of Italy.

In May, 1936, the Italian Foreign Minister, Fulvio Suvich, resigned; and Mussolini's son-in-law, Count Galeazzo Ciano, took his place. Ciano had just returned from a visit to Berlin; and he had the reputation—at least in Austria—of being a fervent advocate of an Italian-German friendship. Of Mussolini's proposed visit to Vienna and Budapest nothing further was said.

A few months later—in July, 1936—civil war broke out in Spain. First Italy and then Germany actively supported Franco and subsequently concluded the Anti-Comintern Pact, a further strengthening of the Berlin-Rome axis.

Italian intervention in Spain was in the beginning on a far greater scale—at least numerically—than Hitler's aid to Franco. Berlin regarded the war in Spain more or less as a trial ground for her new anti-aircraft guns, her planes and pilots; whereas Italy engaged herself with considerable contingents of infantry. For Austria the new constellation brought the announcement from Rome that, in view of their own needs, the restitution of our old artillery stock, agreed upon earlier, had to be discontinued. As a result, the Roman protocols were—for a time, at least—removed from the limelight of official publicity, both in Vienna and in Rome.

In May, 1937, I paid my next—and last—State visit to Mussolini. This time we met in Venice. Outwardly the reception was as friendly as ever. The enthusiastic cheers of the population were perhaps even louder than on previous visits. All

along the Grand Canal, Mussolini, standing erect in our motor-boat, explained the historical details of the palaces we passed. Hundreds of school children greeted us as we passed under the historical Rialto bridge, and the Duce personally saw me to the Grand Hotel. Our conversations took place in the same atmosphere of understanding and mutual friendship; yet I thought that on the whole everything had been toned down—ever so slightly. Both Mussolini and Ciano assured me of their unchanged attitude towards Austria, and stressed the fact that the increasingly friendly relations with Berlin had not the slightest influence on their old friendship with Austria. The Austrian Government must understand that Italy's intervention in Spain made considerable demands on the country, and the erroneous belief could arise that Italy considered the problems of Central Europe now only in second place. Even if outward appearances gave the impression that the relations with Vienna were of secondary importance, Austria could count under all circumstances on the unchanged attitude in Rome. According to Italian information no aggravation of the situation on the part of Germany could be expected for us. The Italo-German and Austro-German treaties supplemented each other and were conditioned by each other, and we were all agreed anyway that a reorganization in the Danube region could not possibly take place without German participation. Such was the trend of the conversations.

An incident which was much discussed in the Press was Mussolini's visit on board a German steamer which lay at anchor off the Ducal Palace. The steamer was chartered by the official German recreational organization *Kraft durch Freude* (Strength through Joy), and it was certainly no accident that Mussolini's visit on board this ship occurred during the Austrian State visit. The official announcement attributed particular importance to the fact that thus "the Duce had stepped for the first time on German soil". I watched the reception from a distance, while a motor-boat took me past the steamer to the Isola San Michele, where, in the presence of the Italian commanding admiral, I deposited a wreath on the grave of the sailors of the former Austro-Hungarian navy.

On the following morning I accompanied Mussolini to the airport, where, contrary to his usual custom, he left the city before his guests. Seated at the controls of his personal plane, he took off. It was the last I saw of him.

Later Ciano accompanied us to the station and remarked to

me in French: "It is most disagreeable to have the Germans as enemies; but, believe me, even as friends they are not quite easy."

Before our train had reached Vienna my chief of press showed me an editorial of the *Giornale d'Italia* signed by Virginio Gayda, the semi-official mouthpiece of the Foreign Office in Rome: "Actually the National Socialists in Austria will soon be called upon to take part in Austria's political life within the framework of the Patriotic Front organization. This will be the first step of their sharing responsibility in the government of Austria. The appointment of a National Socialist Minister is imminent. This new Cabinet member will, together with Chancellor Schuschnigg and the Secretary General for the Patriotic Front, Guido Zernatto, work out all pending problems between the two large national movements in Austria."

We immediately dispatched an official denial, stating that none of these questions had been touched upon in the recent talks with the head of the Italian Government. Rome papers carried our denial as well as the official Italian acknowledgment of its accuracy.

In the autumn of 1937 Mussolini made his famous visit to Berlin amidst all the fanfare and splendour the Third Reich could muster. Upon his return he sent me a message through diplomatic channels stating that "the subject of Austria has not even been mentioned in Berlin. There is no ground for anxiety and nothing has changed."

Soon afterwards I received a visit from Senator Salata, the Italian ambassador to Austria. He informed me that the Italian Government was in possession of a certain secret dispatch that Lord Vansittart had sent from Geneva to Anthony Eden in London. In this dispatch our Under-Secretary of State, Dr. Schmidt, was said to have made derogatory remarks about Italian policy in general, and about Mussolini in particular. In the interest of continued friendly relations the Italian Government requested Dr. Schmidt's resignation. What had actually happened—so far as I knew—was this: Dr. Schmidt had represented Austria at the plenary session of the League of Nations in the autumn of 1937. On his return he reported to me among other things that he had dined with Lord and Lady Vansittart. This in itself was nothing extraordinary; and, in view of the prominent position Lord Vansittart occupied at the Foreign Office in London, such a contact was more than welcome. Dr. Schmidt told me that the dinner had been on a social and

private basis and bore no official character whatsoever. The conversation at this dinner, quite naturally, turned upon the strained relations between England and Italy. Dr. Schmidt explained the Austrian point of view, our relations with Italy, etc. He also stated that of course it would be most desirable for us if relations between London and Rome soon took a turn for the better, so that Central European problems, instead of African ones, would once more stand in the foreground of international interest.

I informed Senator Salata of this report and told him that the Italian version must be based on a mistake, or on an outright falsification, since nobody except Lady Vansittart had been a witness to the conversation. Senator Salata promised to transmit my official denial, and asked me not to say anything about it to Dr. Schmidt.

One week later the Italian ambassador came once more, and said that he was in possession of irrefutable proof that his Government had been correctly informed about the incident. He showed me a photostatic copy of Lord Vansittart's letter to Foreign Secretary Eden, which contained the incriminating remarks of Dr. Schmidt. I once more denied it emphatically, and assured the ambassador that it must be a misunderstanding.

After another week Signor Amfuso, the Chief of Protocol of Ciano's Foreign Office, appeared in Vienna and made a formal complaint in the name of his Government. Signor Amfuso remarked that there could be no possible doubt about the authenticity of the Italian information, since the confidential agent who had provided the letter was a member of the immediate entourage of the British Foreign Minister. The Italian Government counted on my absolute discretion regarding this information. Also Dr. Schmidt was not to know about it. But he would suggest all the same that Dr. Schmidt be employed—if at all—in some other capacity than that of Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

I replied that I could not doubt for one moment the accuracy of my own information, in spite of the photostatic copy before me, and that I believed firmly that the whole incident must have its roots in a linguistic misunderstanding on the part of Lord Vansittart. Besides, I could do very little in this matter, since I was not to divulge the information and also could not talk to Dr. Schmidt about it. In order to form my own opinion on the matter, I would request that I be given the opportunity

of ascertaining the exact circumstances of the report in question.

A few weeks later I met Count Ciano in Budapest on the occasion of a conference between Italy, Hungary, and Austria, where the continued validity of the Roman protocols was solemnly affirmed (January, 1938). During this conference I brought up the incident of the secret report once more. Ciano admitted at once that the possibility could not be denied that Lord Vansittart had misunderstood Dr. Schmidt's remarks. The confidential report as such, however, was absolutely accurate. Italy had completely reliable information from London—as from elsewhere—and I would no doubt understand that my absolute discretion was requested, since it was, after all, an affair of several millions of gold lire. The Italian Government was vitally interested in maintaining this source of information, which gave a running account of the secret files in the Foreign Office in London.

I insisted that Dr. Schmidt be informed of the whole matter and be given a chance to explain. This was granted, and the Italian Government retracted its accusations against him.

Of course I do not know the exact truth of the matter, especially since I had no opportunity to investigate. But I do wish to say that we Austrians have occasion to remember Lord Vansittart as a true and understanding friend of our country and a specialist on Central European problems, with appreciation and gratitude.

Barely two months later the incident was no longer of any interest, as with the extinction of Austria a new era had begun.

On March 11, 1938—the last day of Austria's existence as a sovereign country—the Italian Government sent word to Vienna that it could not give any advice under the prevailing circumstances.

Actually the situation was such that Italy would have been completely isolated without backing from Berlin. The conflict over intervention in Spain was at its height. An amelioration of relations between Rome and London was not in sight. In France a new Cabinet was taking over. Italy could perhaps have made an attempt to mediate. Perhaps she should have risked such a step, in view of her treaties with Austria. But in all probability the final result would have been the same.

And under these circumstances Mussolini preferred to sign a blank cheque to the order of Adolf Hitler. . . .

*Postscript:*

In his excellent book *The Time for Decision*, Sumner Welles reports on a conversation with Count Ciano as follows:

"No country"—Count Ciano declared—"would want to have Germany as a neighbour. Italy now has her as a neighbour, and we must do the best we can to get on with her. You will wonder why Italy did nothing at the time of Dollfuss' assassination and nothing, later, when Hitler occupied Austria. I will tell you, for there is a great deal of misunderstanding on that score. There are many people to-day in Austria who are unhappy, who are tormented, many who wish that Hitler's kind of Anschluss had not taken place. . . . Before the occupation of Austria Dr. Schuschnigg came to Rome. He admitted to me frankly that if Germany occupied Austria the majority of Austrians would support the occupation; and, if Italy sent troops into Austria to prevent the occupation, the Austrians, as one man, would join the Germans to fight Italy. . . ."

Count Ciano was mistaken in his report of this alleged conversation. For one thing, I had not been in Rome for quite some time before the Anschluss. I met Ciano in Venice in 1937, and again in Budapest early in 1938. Needless to say, I was not quite so foolish as to discuss with Ciano the topics mentioned in the alleged conversation. To say such a thing would have been diametrically opposed to every interest and policy we stood and fought for. It is true that I did not think much of actual military assistance on the part of Italy; but, naturally, I never mentioned this to Ciano. What I tried to get from Italy was the moral and diplomatic support that would have avoided a forcible solution, and I have never discussed with Ciano the possibility of a German occupation of Austria. Both Mussolini and Ciano assured me to the last that they considered Austria's foreign situation thoroughly secure.

## VII

### AUSTRIA AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

IN SEPTEMBER 1934 I had an opportunity to take part in a plenary session of the League of Nations. It was the only opportunity I had, since very soon afterwards the political situation changed so completely that I had to turn down all subsequent invitations, notwithstanding their urgent nature. I cannot say that I considered this a particular sacrifice, since our situation at home was delicate and demanded care and caution.

Also in Geneva the atmosphere was what one calls tense—in the fullest sense of this over-worked expression. Every day brought new nervous strains, and glib oratory executed veritable somersaults in order to mask the ever-increasing uneasiness, the eternal “who against whom”, in a veil of high-sounding verbiage and elegant promises.

The resplendent façade of the great idea of the League still stood erect, but—like the magnificent palace which was to house it and which had just been completed—it was empty, vacant, without real life. It lacked the stairs by which humanity should have reached its lofty ideal. The city of Geneva itself, with its almost demonstratively impersonal character, contributed to the general impression of chilliness which I received. In spite of all the scenic beauty which surrounds the city, despite its unusually harmonious city plan, Geneva gave me the impression of a beautiful picture without a soul. This, of course, does not apply to the magnificent lake and the majestic mountains that surround it. Nor can one disregard the historical past of the city, the atmosphere of Jean Jacques Rousseau or Chateaubriand which still lives vividly among the streets and houses of Geneva. It is a city of contrasts, of unexpected sudden changes from sombre darkness to bright sunshine, from closed-in streets to wide perspectives over the lake. This contrast of physical distances repeats itself everywhere in Geneva, and not least in its history, where only half a century

separates Jean Calvin from François de Sales, only fifty short years between the superhuman and the human.

Far more than in any other city—perhaps chiefly because of its limited area—the visitor is struck by its outspoken cosmopolitan character. Next to an important Chinese colony with permanent book-stores, art exhibitions, etc., the banks of the lake, as far up as Lausanne, are populated by people of all the languages and nations of our globe. Many a great event, many a disaster, and many a financial catastrophe had, during the preparatory stage, its headquarters in this peacefully idyllic and strangely quiet landscape. Men of radically different beliefs and thoughts still live to-day side by side in this city of contrasts, just as the “Geneva Convention” and the Red Cross have their seats in neighbouring buildings.

Quite near to Geneva stands the Villa Prangins, the final domicile on European soil of the last Austrian emperor, the unhappy Charles I; a quiet house in the midst of the surf of international politics.

In the autumn of 1934 the concept of collective security with its pacts of mutual assistance was in full bloom. Germany was no longer a member, Japan still occupied its chair, but only as a mere formality. Italy was about to reverse its entire foreign policy; and Poland took to threats, supported and impressed by the German example. The Soviet representative, however, sat in the Council as well as in the General Assembly, where Litvinov was to pronounce his famous dictum of the “Indivisible Peace”.

With the entry of the Soviet Union into the League in September, 1934, the last opportunity had come for this body to make an important political decision. With it also appeared the contours of a new power balance in Europe. One of the small States, Switzerland, was the only member that raised its warning voice to the future. The old democracy was then represented by its Foreign Minister, Motta. Italy had not yet made up her mind with whom she was to cast her lot, and her representative, Ambassador Aloisi, sailing the Franco-British course according to his instructions, gave his new Soviet colleague a Fascist welcome to the League. The French delegation was headed by Louis Barthou, Minister for Foreign Affairs; while Sir John Simon represented the United Kingdom, assisted by Lord Vansittart and young Anthony Eden, whom many regarded already as the coming man in British foreign affairs. Beneš spoke for Czechoslovakia, Titulescu for Rumania,



Jeftic, then Foreign Minister and later Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, for his country.

Sweden's Foreign Minister, Sandler, presided over the Assembly. He was objective and understanding, a Socialist of the northern school and an excellent European.

The meeting as such was not more, and perhaps rather less interesting than any parliamentary meeting. There were no excesses from the speakers' platform, no disturbances from the public; everything remained within the modest and polite framework of parliamentarism. On the agenda of the meeting were the Gran Chaco conflict between Bolivia and Paraguay, and the Manchukuo conflict between China and Japan. Neither subject was of great interest to the superficial observer from Central Europe. But the Manchukuo question was in reality the first signal for great events in the Far East and Japan's final break with the League.

The nations were seated alphabetically according to the French appellation; thus, l'Autriche happened to sit next to l'Ethiopie.

The Austrian delegation had at that time a difficult two-fold programme. On the one hand, the great Western Powers had to be informed of the essential and actual facts about the tragic events of 1934, which had been exaggerated and distorted by tendentious reports abroad; on the other hand, the pernicious and dangerous rumours concerning a Hapsburg restoration in Austria had to be dispelled. It was high time to give before this world assembly a true and simple account of Austria's political aims and to call everyone to witness that Austria in the final analysis wanted nothing else but to serve the old ideals of humanity: Peace, Freedom, and Progress.

The criticism that the League was merely a quartet of the Great Powers with a British prompter and a mass of extras that made up the General Assembly was certainly not without some justification. The fact that the small nations were able to take their turn in the non-permanent seats on the Council and that the General Assembly needed unanimity to make a decision did not hamper the Great Powers in exerting their dominant influence. But, all the same, the League constituted, especially for the small nations, a useful instrument for the successful development of international affairs, and therefore was a decided advance for the conduct of world relations. Without the inevitable loss of time and political consequence that a State visit by the head of one Government to another

entailed, representatives of all nations could here exchange their views, and were thus often able to remove many a political obstacle in the way of their mutually friendly relations. Austria's participation in the League was very necessary in our own interest, because the Finance Committee of the League controlled our foreign loans. Also, we tried to rid ourselves of the annoying control of Austria's State finances through the League, and were successful in doing so in 1936—two years before Hungary succeeded in getting its controls lifted. Honesty, especially in financial matters, proved, in the long run, to be the best policy—although this point of view was not shared by Hitler in our Berchtesgaden interview, when he reproached Austria for having co-operated with the League. Between the headquarters of the national delegations in Geneva visits and interchange of ideas had become customary. Our headquarters were situated in the Hotel de la Paix, not far from the spot on the quay where the unfortunate Empress Elisabeth had been stabbed to death by an anarchist.

We were in constant touch with the representatives of our neighbouring States. In general Austria and Hungary worked in closest co-operation with the Italian delegation in Geneva. With England we usually discussed questions, as we did also with the delegates of the Little Entente. With them, as also with France, our foremost task was to dispel their almost hysterical, and to us outright surprising, fears of a Hapsburg restoration in Austria. Nobody in Austria believed at that time that this question could be raised for years. Monarchism and legitism were a question of legal theory, not of political practice. Although the psychological prerequisite of popular support was evident, every experiment in that direction was out of the question, for reasons of foreign policy. The pre-occupation with the Hapsburgs abroad was the result of irresponsible publicity and co-ordinated hostile propaganda.

The French Foreign Minister, Barthou, after a long and enthusiastic talk about Richard Wagner, on whom he had written several treatises, shook me by the hand in leaving and said half in earnest, half in joke: "*Ne restaurez pas les Habsbourgs!*" (Do not restore the Hapsburgs.) Not long afterwards he was assassinated together with King Alexander of Yugoslavia in Marseille.

It has become a practice, especially in the German-speaking countries, to condemn the League of Nations as a waste of time and energy. And in many respects events have somewhat

justified this condemnation. All the same, this attitude is erroneous—like most platitudes based on generalizations.

When outstanding Central Europeans of recognized importance, far beyond the limits of their own countries, like our former Chancellor Monsignor Seipel, or Hungary's Count Appony, more than once proclaimed the League of Nations as the beginning of a new era; when men like Briand and MacDonald, whose sincerity no one can doubt, saw in it the focal point of a new and successful beginning, it was because these men saw and approved the underlying idea of peaceful co-operation of nations through mediation and peaceful settlement. This idea was not new. Immanuel Kant had already expressed it. And before him this idea was the basic concept of the old Holy Roman Empire. It was to comprise the whole world—so far as it had been discovered—and to guarantee a peaceful existence to its inhabitants. What had been the metaphysical halo of the old imperial crown was to appear in the League under the sober forms of utilitarianism of the American school.

The League of Nations received its first fatal wound when the Senate of the United States of America failed to back President Wilson, the father of the idea of the League. Thus the League remained, from its very beginning, a torso. When Briand proposed his European alliance in 1930 it became apparent that the League lacked the necessary strength. The vital questions remained unanswered: Is Europe to be considered a geographic or a cultural unit? Where are the borders of either to be? Great Britain declared that she was certainly interested in Europe, but by no means exclusively so.

Then there was the Far Eastern question mark, the question of hegemony in Europe, and finally mutual disarmament. None of these questions was ever brought to solution. Why? Because of the division into victorious and defeated nations, and because of the constant mistrust and lack of confidence among the victorious and strong nations.

In spite of all this, the imperfect League of Nations succeeded in doing some work. A number of international differences were peacefully settled. Unfortunately these were only the minor differences, the lesser problems. The important questions the League was not able to solve, and because of this inability it finally collapsed.

Even now, in the midst of this terrible war, I believe in a rebirth of the League of Nations. I do not for a moment con-

sider such a plan a Utopia, whether it be that the future will bring a new Europe, with new national borders, and with it the possibility of a European confederation, or that a new attempt will be made at a new world-wide League.

The prerequisite for the latter would certainly be an authority which can be derived only from a well-armed executive. Furthermore, the new League would have to limit its efforts to such questions as can be solved. Insoluble problems would have to be avoided from the start. The establishment of some sort of political clearing-house in which inter-State differences would be settled, the adoption of an appropriate agenda, which does away with the fiction of equality between the great and the small Powers, and which frankly admits at the outset that in the end all important issues are decided by the Great Powers anyway—these are necessary requirements.

A new League of Nations is possible if the big and the small nations are united in political insight and mutual respect; when every one of them which talks of peace thinks not only of itself but also of its neighbours' interests; when—in other words—Jean Calvin meets François de Sales in the city of Geneva.

## VIII

### AUSTRIA AND THE WESTERN POWERS

IN FEBRUARY, 1935, I accepted an invitation to pay an official State visit both to Paris and to London. During these visits I was accompanied by one of my closest collaborators, Egon Baron Berger-Waldeneegg, who was at that time our Foreign Minister. In Paris the parliamentary Moderate Right, with Flandin as Prime Minister and Pierre Laval as Foreign Minister, was in power. In London the Labour Party Cabinet of MacDonald, champion of the idea of national concentration, was about to be replaced by a new Cabinet. Sir John Simon held the post of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with Anthony Eden as his right-hand man. Stanley Baldwin was Lord President of the Council, until he succeeded MacDonald as head of Government a few weeks later.

It is well to remember that the great changes in political orientation had not yet taken place at that time. The first shadows of the coming conflict in Abyssinia were barely visible on the dim horizon of international politics. London and Paris, therefore, were not yet estranged from Fascist Italy, and were still attempting to direct European politics through the League of Nations on Lake Geneva. Germany had left that body—but the remaining Powers did not hold this against her; rather they sincerely regretted her absence and, understandingly, blamed everything on the mistakes made at the time of the Versailles Treaty. The Treaty of St. Germain, by which the old Austro-Hungarian Empire was destroyed, was considered a particularly glaring blunder. Not that anybody then would have advocated a revision of these treaties or a correction of the mistakes. It all remained in the realm of theoretical consideration, and trust in an agreeable and peaceful evolution was firm. The aftermath of the economic crisis, the difficulties in their domestic issues, both in London and in Paris, made it appear unwise to embark on a policy of revising the political geography of Europe, or seriously to work out new solutions to these problems.

One of them, however—the plebiscite in the Saar Basin—had to be dealt with immediately. Neither the neutral commissar and delegate of the League of Nations, Knox, nor the Foreign Offices in London and Paris had illusions about the outcome of this plebiscite. But they all believed that one phase of the post-war era had come to a close with this concession, and that this partial adjustment would bridge all latent controversies dating from the World War period. Certainly, all interests of the Western Powers converged in one common aim: peace. It is interesting to note that the first major conflict to disturb this development originated not in Europe, but on African soil when Italy, in defiance of the world, set about erecting a new empire.

At the same time another influence made itself felt: the Comintern. Soviet Russia's participation in the League of Nations bore its first fruit, and controversies which up to then had had something of an academic character moved into the realm of passionate ideological strife. With it came a confusion of terms. Communism opposed fascism and nazism, and nazism opposed democracy and communism. While on the one hand fascism and nazism were considered diametrically opposed to communism, on the other hand, communism claimed the title of champion of democratic liberty; notwithstanding this, the Soviets had established in their communist paradise a totalitarian system which was a far cry from the Western conception of democracy. But the slogans were accepted, simply because slogans are easier to accept than truth. Besides, Moscow was far away—as was the modern Czar—whereas London and Paris were near and tangible; and thus the democracies of the West united to fight for the rights of Haile Selassie and his Ethiopian crown against the Rome-Berlin Axis. And at once the centre of gravity of the European power balance was changed. The Axis had not chosen its name at random. It was indeed an axis around which the new Europe began to form. Mussolini was the first to leave the ranks of the victorious Powers of the World War. As soon as he knew that Italy's booty was safe, he insisted on a revision of the peace treaties. He of course meant that the others should revise them. He intended to hold on to his gains, and would hear nothing of any revision in that direction. Two men thus set about to give Europe a new shape, and to wrest, according to their interests and ideals without the help of a third, "*Lebensraum* and rights for the young nations from the surfeited and

sar-tained empires" of the great democracies. In this programme democratic procedures had no place, at least not for some time to come.

In the midst of this whirlpool of political development stood Austria, the mutilated torso of an heir to the great economic and cultural idea of the old Empire. One thing seemed clear: Austria, independent Austria, could never form part of an anti-German alliance. The ties of blood, of history, and of national customs, as well as economic considerations, made this impossible. Peaceful relations with Germany were a necessity for Austria and her people. If we did not succeed in this it was not because of national but ideological reasons. A compromise with National Socialism was impossible, both for us and for them; thus the defeat of the weaker was an inevitable and almost foregone conclusion. *Ira de hermanos ira de diablos*—the fury of brothers is the fury of devils, says the Spanish proverb. Berlin therefore directed its efforts towards discrediting the multilateral treaty as a means of international security, and towards establishing the bilateral agreement as the basis of inter-State relations. In other words, it worked incessantly for the political isolation of Austria. France had been the champion of collective security ever since the conference of Locarno in 1925. Austria's most vital interest demanded that the Great Powers—especially France and Italy—continue this policy. Our goal seemed to be reached when Britain, France, and Italy affirmed their adherence to the multilateral treaty system at the conference of Stresa in April, 1935.

Apart from purely political considerations, Austria also had to establish and to maintain contact with the Western Powers for economic reasons. Politics and economics go hand in hand and cannot be separated from one another. We had to take into consideration that the National Socialist programme of German autarchy would have its repercussions on Austria's entire economic life. If Germany were truly self-sufficient we had to find another market for our exports. To avoid such a dangerous—and even fatal—development, we had to take certain domestic measures at home. Abroad it was our task to develop new markets for Austria, especially in France and Britain, in order to complement our economic relations with Italy. This necessitated, however, certain psychological preparations both in Paris and in London, especially in view of the events of February, 1934.

Austria had broken with what was known as Austro-

Marxism. It had furthermore departed from the concept of parliamentary democracy, and was generally suspected of following the precepts of "Austro-fascism"—sometimes, and according to the personal taste of the critics, also called "clerico-fascism". It is true that we were an authoritarian State. But according to our German neighbours we had made a cardinal and fatal mistake in our choice. We should have followed their example and established a totalitarian system. But we did not. To save Austria's existence as an independent State, to avoid her becoming a totalitarian province of a totalitarian State, we endeavoured to keep alive the ties which connected us with the Western democracies. The February revolt had exposed Austria to much criticism and more hostile propaganda in these countries. Hence our visit to Paris and London.

### *Paris*

The train that took us to Paris passed the French border near Basle. At all stations throughout Alsace, and increasingly as we approached the French capital, strong police detachments betrayed a certain degree of political tension. About fifteen minutes before reaching Paris a representative of the French Foreign Office informed us that it would be wiser to leave the train shortly before it reached the capital and not, as was planned, at the Gare de l'Est. The leftist papers, he told us, had announced that great mass demonstrations opposing our visit would be staged outside the station. The leading personalities of the French Government, Messrs. Flandin, Laval, etc., were awaiting us, therefore, at a station in the suburbs.

We were received with great cordiality, and immediately taken to the Hotel Crillon, on the Place de la Concorde, where we were to stay during our visit in Paris. We were asked to leave the house as little as possible on our own to avoid any unpleasantness on the part of the demonstrators. Of course, we complied with this request, since it was in our interest to cause as few difficulties to our hosts as possible. Yet I think that our own legation in Paris, in their over-cautiousness, made the situation look a bit worse than it was. In any case, we never saw anything in the way of demonstrations nor any other sign of hostility. But we missed the gala performance at the Opéra, which, as a safety measure, had been cancelled abruptly. The French police also did their utmost to guard us, and seemed to have mobilized several divisions for this purpose.

At the hotel we could not help thinking of the years immedi-



ately after the war and of President Wilson, who had had his headquarters in the very same rooms that we now occupied. Surrounded by motorized agents of the Sûreté we made our official calls at the Quay d'Orsay, at the Prime Minister's, and at the Elysée, the mansion of the President of France. All these visits, however, were preceded by the impressive ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier under the Arc de Triomphe, where we deposited our wreath. The only sight-seeing which we managed to do outside our official programme was a short visit to the Dome des Invalides. It was thus very little we saw of the treasures of the French capital. But even a fleeting glance at our surroundings, a walk through the offices of the French Government, a drive up the avenues, or past the famous monuments and landmarks of the city, the general impression we received of the boulevards, with their news-stands and their glaring neon signs—all that helped us to find the contact with a foreign atmosphere which is of inestimable value for a politician.

The peculiarities of French politics can be understood only if one knows the atmosphere in which they grow: a constant coming and going on the political platforms, parliamentarism and the criticism it arouses, both of them most daring, both of them falling into extremes, a fast and almost uninterrupted sequence of crises of public opinion; and yet—a healthy and sound conservatism throughout the country—even deep into the rank and file of the left. What vitality, what truly national patriotism! There are many wonderful countries in the world with a glorious historical tradition; but there is only one France.

Our conversations with the French statesmen were rather of a general character, as we had no specific topic to discuss. Economic arrangements and the expansion of commercial traffic between our two countries played an important part in these talks. It was agreed that cultural institutes should be established in the two capitals—a French institute in Vienna, an Austrian in Paris. We also discussed ways and means by which exchange of young people could be effected on a large scale. Artistic exchanges, concert and lecture tours, theatrical performances in French in Vienna and in German in Paris were proposed. In every field Austria was able to represent German culture at its best, without trying to enter into any sort of competition with the Third Reich. The Vienna Philharmonic went to France almost every year; Paris had a very active Mozart community; and the ensemble of the Vienna

Burgtheatre went to Paris for a number of guest performances in the years that followed our talks.

Politically our line was clearly defined. Our relations with Italy found full understanding from both the Prime Minister and Pierre Laval. Laval had returned from an official visit to Rome barely a month before. The events of July, 1934, in Austria had made a deep and lasting impression on France. The question of the February revolt constituted no problem with the men who were then at the helm in France. Our task became far more difficult when we had to explain why Austria could not line up with any anti-German alliance even on the decisive issues, even in view of the constant friction between Germany and Austria. As a result, Austria's relations with the countries of the Little Entente, France's closest allies, were necessarily somewhat limited. A Danube confederation without German participation was for Austria an impossibility. Flandin appeared to be chiefly interested in economic questions. He was very sceptical concerning all efforts to revive business by any sort of State expenditure such as public works or unproductive investments. Many of his interesting criticisms were obviously directed against Great Britain.

A short reception at President Lebrun's ended our official schedule. During our stay we repeatedly had occasion to talk informally with outstanding members of Government circles, politicians, and above all leading journalists. I remember vividly my meetings with Sarraut, Herriot, and one of the leading political journalists, Wladimir d'Ormesson. It is interesting how leading French personalities have always shown the greatest interest and understanding for the master works of German art and culture. Barthou wrote important studies on Richard Wagner; while Herriot, then President of the Chamber of Deputies and mayor of Lyon, wrote an outstanding work on Beethoven. There is really no reason why Frenchmen and Germans should not understand each other. If such an understanding could be translated into political terms, the peace of Europe, the future of the younger generation, and that of the entire world would be safeguarded. But what went through the entire French political literature since the war, what was apparent in every editorial in the French Press, was the one great worry which seemed to be foremost in every politician's mind during our talks: *la sécurité*.

France wanted peace passionately. In the Government offices, in cafés, on the streets, all Frenchmen were united in

their horror of war and its memories. And Frenchmen in 1935 did not feel secure. They felt threatened.

By whom? That again was a question to which every Frenchman, whether he belonged to the extreme right or the extreme left, had but one answer: Germany.

But has not France the best army, the best armament in the world?

Germany catches up on these things, and Germany has a population of 70,000,000.

And the treaties? France has protected herself with treaties all around?

Yes, but do we know whether Germany will keep the treaties? We cannot trust them, certainly not since Hitler came to power. Did you not read what he says in *Mein Kampf*?

But France is not alone; has she not powerful allies?

Yes, but who knows: in the moment of crisis everything is possible.

But there is England?

England? Yes. But England has too often and too rapidly changed over to its policy of splendid isolation. England advises, mediates, demonstrates; but she does not like to act, and if she acts, then only with hesitation. Besides, her empire commands much of her attention.

And the United States?

Oh, America is far away, and its Congress is very changeable. Do you remember what happened to Wilson?

Then there is still Italy.

Our new friendship with Italy is as brittle as Venetian glass. Only a short time ago we had very tense relations with that country. Now our friendship is like a southern rose in full bloom. But how long will that last?

And Russia?

Well, yes; the Soviets are a power, but we don't know how things will develop in the Far East, and how much Russia will be engaged in such developments. Besides, Russia's friendship is so far a cold and somewhat chary affair. And later it might turn out to be an even more doubtful advantage. Nonetheless Russia is indispensable for France, if only because of Poland.

France's relations with Poland were at that time (February, 1935) very cool. Pierre Laval did not think much of Poland's Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck. When the Colonel had been military attaché at the Polish Embassy in Paris, the French Government had made a number of grave accusations against

him. Now Poland had, under his guidance as Foreign Minister, concluded a friendship and non-aggression pact with Germany (January, 1934). Germany agreed to withdraw any demands for territorial revision for ten years. Goering came to Warsaw on a hunting trip, as he had gone on "hunting trips" to Yugoslavia and to Hungary, which in no way lessened France's distrust. Goebbels had stopped his anti-Polish propaganda. The German Press published not a single word about the Polish Corridor or the Free City of Danzig. And Hitler himself had given his approval to the new friendship in a speech before the monument of Poland's great Marshal Pilsudski.

As soon as Poland had been reassured by the non-aggression pact which it had concluded with Soviet Russia in 1932, it had embarked on a "Big Power policy". Without hesitation it made common cause with those Powers who saw the exclusive aim of their policy in a revision of the peace treaties of 1919-20. It joined, therefore, with Germany in a common front against all plans of an Eastern pact, such as Barthou and Laval advocated. Warsaw accepted the German principle of the bilateral agreement, and would have nothing to do with the multilateral propositions of the Western democracies.

One of the motives in this decision—and certainly not the least—was the hope that, by following the German recipe, Poland would be able to persevere in her claims to Lithuania, now that both her eastern and western borders were safeguarded by bilateral agreements. Another motive was the French idea of a four-Power pact which was to consist of a Great Power agreement between Paris, London, Rome, and Berlin. This met with furious opposition in Poland. Warsaw did not want to have a European directory, a new Holy Alliance. It considered itself a big Power in its own right, and wanted to act accordingly. Polish opposition went so far that it threatened serious measures at the League of Nations. Finally, Poland resented the control of the League of Nations in questions of national minorities, and asserted that it would not stand for interference by foreign Powers in its affairs. At the same time—January, 1935—an important book was published in Warsaw. It was *Poland and the European Political System* by Professor Studnicki of Wilno. In this book the author arrives, in the name of Poland, at the same conclusions as Hitler: extensive revision of the peace treaties; dissolution of the Little Entente and the Balkan Federation; absolute fulfilment of all Hungarian claims, especially her territorial claims in Czecho-

slovakia and Rumania (Transylvania); incorporation of Austria and the Sudeten region of Czechoslovakia into greater Germany; establishment of a Central European bloc around Germany and Poland, constituting together more than 200,000,000 inhabitants, under Berlin's leadership. France, the author declared, was nothing but "a conglomeration of human wickedness, corruption, and Freemasonry" and fit only for a secondary rôle in Europe.

Although the book was not officially backed by the Polish Government, its author had for many years been one of the closest advisers of the Ministries of Commerce and Foreign Affairs, and held the post of professor of political economy at the Institute of Political Science in Wilno.

If, moreover, one takes into account the irreconcilable differences between Poland and Czechoslovakia, and the constant quarrels between Warsaw and Kaunas (Lithuania), one cannot but admit that Paris, and especially Laval, had reason for a reserved attitude towards Poland. For decades France had been the champion of Polish independence, and one must not forget that sentimental reasons frequently play an important part in political decisions.

Laval saw three potential danger zones for the future: (1) the East, (2) Central Europe, with Austria as its focal point, (3) the Balkans and the Adriatic.

Barthou's plan of an Eastern pact, on the model of the Locarno pacts for the west of Europe, had failed because of German and Polish opposition. Berlin was against any regional pact system as it was against any treaty of mutual assistance. It refused to agree to a definition of the term "aggressor" as it avoided a clear-cut definition of the term "interference in domestic affairs". On the other hand, it offered bilateral treaties, and Warsaw accepted one. It was then that Pierre Laval decided to establish direct contact with the Soviet Union. Germany's thesis of the bilateral pact found adherents also among States which were opposed to Germany. Thus the agreement between Czechoslovakia and Russia was concluded, as was the treaty between France and Russia. These two agreements were in strict accordance with the statutes of the League of Nations, and represented the concept which Barthou and Laval called "collective security", and which Litvinov had dubbed "the indivisible peace". These treaties, which called for mutual assistance in case of violation of the territory of one or the other State by an aggressor, were to be a

nucleus of a system of treaties to which any third State could become a partner. It was expressly stated that the participation of Germany in these treaties, with the same rights and obligations, would be desirable.

On May 2, 1935, Laval and Vladimir Potemkin signed the Franco-Russian Treaty, and in May Laval went to Moscow to discuss the terms of the agreement with Stalin, Molotov, and Litvinov. According to the official communiqué issued in Moscow after the conference, it had been agreed to consider once more a new and extensive regional Eastern pact, in which the participants would pledge themselves to "non-aggression, mutual consultation, and non-assistance to the aggressor".

No less important to Pierre Laval was the pacification of the south-eastern regions of Europe and the consolidation of Central Europe. Austria was considered "*la pierre angulaire de la paix européenne*" (the keystone of European peace), especially since 1933—and quite rightly so. As Henry de Jouvenel said—referring obliquely to Poland and Yugoslavia—"an Anschluss in Austria might prove to be contagious".

For six months nothing untoward had happened in Austria. But how long would this calm last? There could be no doubt about Hitler's intentions—and Hitler was the only danger for Austria from inside as well as from without. When Dollfuss had sounded the Great Powers on the chances of a possible appeal to the League of Nations, in view of a terror offensive directed against Austria from Munich in February, 1934, the various answers proved very interesting: Rome discouraged an appeal to the League of Nations, London was theoretically in favour, but doubted the effectiveness of such a step. This was probably because England wanted to begin direct diplomatic talks with Berlin at that time. France finally openly and unconditionally supported the Austrian point of view. Wladimir d'Ormesson wrote in the *Temps*:

"A National Socialist regime in Austria means necessarily the incorporation of Austria into Germany, the so-called Anschluss. Such an Anschluss would, however, from the very start, prove a disaster, since it would upset the entire European order. It would be preferable to embark clearly and openly on a large-scale revision of the peace treaties because such a step has certain foreseeable limits, whereas the Anschluss is merely a beginning and its consequences cannot be foreseen."

This French point of view coincided in every detail with our own views. It was an expression of the anxiety that a new war could not be avoided unless the present *status quo* was carefully maintained in Europe. France backed the existence of the Little Entente States with her prestige as a Great Power, and knew very well that a conflagration in the East would spread immediately to the West. And, in spite of the Maginot Line, the armaments, and the army, France feared a war as perhaps never before in her history. Italy had no particular interest in the question, apart from the maintenance and safety of her border on the Brenner. And England—although she did not admit it—would have been disposed to grant far-reaching concessions at the expense of the *status quo* in Europe, if she could have been sure that she would succeed in bringing Germany back into the League of Nations by way of direct mediation, in order to persuade the latter to acknowledge the principle of collective order and security, and thus guarantee the peace.

For us Austrians it was, in spite of our identical views with France on these questions, impossible to rely exclusively on French support. For one thing, we had our treaties with Italy, which was nearer to us, and therefore of greater economic value to us, than France; then, France stood solidly behind the States of the Little Entente and the Balkan Federation, which followed an outspokenly anti-Austrian and anti-German course. Last and not least, we had to realize that Austria could not in the long run exist on the differences between France and Germany. No government could have maintained itself on that basis in Austria. It was one of those situations where political imponderabilia play a decisive part: sentimental, historical, and ideological “ifs” and “buts” which are difficult to express in so many words. Austria was opposed to National Socialism and the Third Reich of Adolf Hitler. But Austria was not, and never could be, anti-German. Therefore, Austria could not safeguard its existence by a unilateral treaty or one-sided pact, but only by an international guarantee, an understanding by all the Great Powers in Europe to maintain peace. The equation held good also the other way round: in case of war, Austria would be the first to lose its life.

As I have said before, Pierre Laval showed great understanding of our policy, chiefly because it moved parallel with his own. His paramount aim was to secure France against any unforeseen aggression, hence his pact with the Soviet Union. In Central and Eastern Europe he sought to pour water on the

powder-kegs in order to prevent an untimely explosion. His first step in this direction was his mediation between Yugoslavia and Italy. At the same time he laid the corner-stone of the friendship between France and Italy. Finally he attempted to safeguard all Europe against a new war by attempting a final and permanent agreement between Paris and Berlin.

All these steps he took within the framework of the League of Nations. Laval had just returned from his highly satisfactory trip to Rome, where his conversations with Mussolini promised to result in harmonious and successful collaboration. When we came to Paris, our talks with Laval were ostensibly under the influence of his recent visit. In Rome a new collective-security plan for Central Europe had been talked about. This new pact was to bear the signatures of Italy, Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia; while France, Great Britain, Poland, and Rumania were free to sign the pact if they wished to do so. Furthermore, France and Italy had agreed—so we were told—to guarantee Austria's independence, in case it should be threatened. This agreement, which was signed on January 7, 1935, was under discussion at a London conference during the first days of February. Ways and means were discussed by which Germany could be given direct and effective participation in the projected collective pact. At the time of our discussion in Paris the German attitude was not yet known. But the tone of the German Press was not friendly; and it was to be expected that Berlin would ask for very precise answers to such questions as: Who is to decide whether Austria's independence is threatened? Only Italy and France? How do Italy and France feel about domestic changes in Austria, about a restoration of the Hapsburg dynasty, about a plebiscite, etc.?

Relations between France and Italy on the one side and Yugoslavia on the other had somewhat improved after the grave tension during the weeks following the assassination of King Alexander in Marseille. Yet all was not well, even now. Goering's visit—another of his political hunting trips—and the eagerness of the Belgrade Government to please the Germans were not well received in Paris.

This friendly attitude towards Berlin did not, however, prevent the Yugoslavs from persecuting the German minorities in their country with exceptional ferocity. Berlin diligently ignored these proceedings, just as she ignored similar occurrences in Poland and in Hungary. Towards Italy, Yugoslavia persisted in its hostile attitude for a number of reasons, among



them the possibility of a Hapsburg restoration in Austria. Since Italy was considered Austria's benevolent protector, and quite obviously sought to gain a stake in the Danube region, Yugoslavia remained reserved. The *rapprochement* between France and Italy had ameliorated this tension somewhat, and indirectly also eased the situation for Austria. But the bogeyman of a monarchy in Austria still hovered over international relations like a black cloud.

Laval asked us outright whether we could give a formal pledge that we would not restore the Hapsburg throne. Our answer was: No. As a matter of principle we considered it an essential part of our sovereign rights to choose the form of government we pleased. We could therefore not yield to any demands from outside.

Again and again we had declared that the question of a monarchy in Austria was not a political but a historical question for Austria, and that we had enough common sense and responsibility not to try any experiments in that direction. We pointed out that Berlin and Belgrade were not only fighting against an actual restoration of the Hapsburgs, which they knew quite well was, for the time being, out of the question, but opposed even the memory of the Hapsburgs as dangerous to the peace in Europe. The latter we could not accept, all the more so as we considered it a clear case of outside interference with domestic issues.

I had explained all this in Geneva to Benes of Czechoslovakia and Jefic of Yugoslavia, and now asked Laval to help me in my task of clearing up the misunderstandings and of establishing the truth about Austrian aims. The French statesmen understood and approved our point of view and promised to explain things to their friends. Austria's international position did not undergo any changes. Now as before the declarations of the Great Powers of February and November, 1934, outlined our position; and our special ties with Italy consolidated this position. All depended now on which road Laval would take: the one to Rome or the one to Berlin.

The way to Rome seemed to be the most promising. France and Italy had once more discovered their common Latin origin. Especially in military circles this found a resounding echo, when Marshal Pétain wrote in his message to the French war veterans:

“From the Rhine to the Brenner there have been only two centuries of peace for the Latin world—and these they owed

to the swords of the Roman legions. To-day a Latin bloc—representing more than 100 million people—can again become the safest guarantee for peace. Thus the closest collaboration between France and Italy is not only the sacred heritage of our two million dead comrades, but more than ever a necessity for the future of Europe, of the Latin peoples and the culture they produced.”

A few days later the same paper, the *Trait d'Union*, official publication of the French war veterans, published the Italian answer of Marshal Badoglio:

“France and Italy look back on common war memories and comradeship which unite them inseparably and have lasted for many centuries. In modern times, when countries fought for their independence and freedom, the various wars saw Italians and Frenchmen battling and bleeding side by side for a common cause, for a common ideal. So it was on the Crimea, at Solferino, and Magenta, so it was at Reims and at the Piave. On these common battlefields Frenchmen and Italians have, in the hour of extreme trial, recognized the magnificent valour of their soldiers, and laid the foundation for a deep mutual esteem. These memories of comradeship in arms are deeply anchored in the hearts of the present, and of coming generations in both countries, never to be forgotten.”

Yes, that is what the world and the men in it looked like in 1935.

Laval's way to Berlin, which he took with undaunted optimism, was still rather nebulous and dark. But the first step had been taken. Nobody knew at that time that Hitler's answer to the projected Central European pact was already prepared, and lay in the files of the Wilhelmstrasse: Berlin announced only a fortnight later, on March 16, 1935, that it considered the clauses of the Versailles Treaty dealing with military restrictions null and void, and that general conscription was being re-established in Germany.

That—and Italy's impending campaign in Abyssinia—changed all concepts radically. With these events a new chapter began in European politics.

Nobody could have accused the Quay d'Orsay or Downing Street of lack of foresight. In this atmosphere of consternation

and tenseness, but not without a certain amount of confidence, we set out to make our visit to London.

It was a Sunday towards the end of February. Our departure from Paris—like our arrival—was accompanied by an incident which I will mention for the sake of completeness.

Patriotic clubs, veterans' posts, and Catholic politicians had decided to honour their Austrian guests by a pontifical Mass at Notre Dame. The Austrian Minister informed us of this event, but remarked at the same time that the French Government, still wary of Socialist demonstrators, would prefer if we did not attend this ceremony. Of course we complied with this request.

So Baron Berger-Waldenegg and I went instead to call on Cardinal Verdier, who received us very graciously and said Mass for us in his private chapel. The Austrian Press attaché at the legation in Paris, Dr. Wasserbaeck, went to Notre Dame in our stead. On his return he told us that the entire cathedral was filled to the last seat, with deputations with flags and standards. On his arrival he was solemnly received, and the organist played the Austrian national anthem as he walked up the aisle. To his complete astonishment, he saw not only high-ranking Catholic generals, as General Castelnau, members of Parliament, and senators, but also a Cabinet member representing the French Government.

The situation was rather embarrassing. We had obviously been expected, and our failure to arrive must have looked very strange, to say the least. I made my apologies to the committee which had arranged the ceremony and told them that we had been told that the Government did not want us to attend. The Government in turn denied any knowledge of this suggestion. The committee was just as astonished as we had been, but suspected some sort of intrigue. It insisted on a parliamentary investigation of the incident, but actually the matter was never quite cleared up.

Later in the day we boarded our train without further incident—and this time quite officially at the main station—and continued on our journey via Boulogne-sur-Mer and the Channel to London.

### *London*

Only a few hours' travel separate Paris from London. Yet a whole world lies between these two places; both of them vast cities with vast populations; yet the rhythm of their lives is radically different. Both of them have the same traffic con-

gestion; in both cities men and women bustle through the streets; in both cities one feels that one is at the centre of a great nation.

But the air is different, the world looks different when seen from London. It is almost as if every Londoner were constantly aware of the fact that there is a sea between him and the rest of the world. What struck us most—outside of the extraordinary phenomenon of the London fog—was the calm and self-control of the Englishman, the complete absence of any hysteria.

As soon as we had arrived on English soil, the rumour spread that we had come to seek a loan, although nothing was further from our intentions. Since our Lausanne loan of 1932, Austria had raised its capital from Government bonds, which were issued three times, in 1933, 1935, and 1937. The total income from these bonds was about 600,000,000 schillings. Our entire foreign debt reached the 2,000,000,000 mark, but was yearly diminished since 1934 by our annuity payments and various advantageous differences in exchange. We had not come to England to ask for a loan—not this time—nor would we at any other time in the future, when we could have had it quite easily. Under the political circumstances of that time, I was more than anxious to avoid anything that could even faintly look like a new political tie or obligation, either as such, or disguised as a financial transaction. I did not believe in financial help from abroad except when chaos and famine threatened our country, as in 1922 and again in 1932.

Although a number of financial questions had to be discussed in London, in view of the close connections between our banks (*Kreditanstalt*) and British creditors, the chief aim of our visit was purely political. Some of the Socialists who had fled from Austria after the February events of 1934 were conducting an anti-Austrian propaganda campaign in British Labour circles. Even some Conservatives were beginning to lend an ear to the stories circulated by these propagandists, and the British Government itself was affected by them. One of the main weapons of this propaganda was the fiction that the Austrian Government was anti-Semitic, and discriminated against Jews in the distribution of positions in the Civil Service, in the Press, in the State hospitals, etc. Not that this made a very deep impression on the British Government, but considerable forces were at work to boycott Austria. This was a serious threat to one of Austria's main sources of income, the tourist trade. Ger-

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man tourists were only allowed to come to Austria if they posted a thousand-mark bail with their Government, which virtually stopped the tourist trade with the Third Reich. Switzerland competed against Austrian resorts; and we had to do everything possible to keep our tourist trade with France, and especially England, alive. Thus I set out to explain the Austrian point of view to the British Foreign Minister, to leading members of the Labour Party, to outstanding journalists, and to other personalities, in order to combat the effects of anti-Austrian propaganda. I believe that I was successful in this. Personal contact, once more, proved to be well worth the time and trouble. I was struck by the very gentlemanly attitude of the Opposition Press, which, respecting the laws of hospitality, did not publish one unfavourable comment during our entire visit.

Altogether there was not an unpleasant note to jar our harmonious conversations, and the security measures taken by the London police were so discreet that we barely noticed them ourselves. What this means only those can appreciate who spend most of their time under protective police surveillance.

Apart from our visits to Downing Street and to the Foreign Office, I remember particularly a visit to Westminster Abbey, with its stony museum of Great Britain's history. Our guide was Sir Austen Chamberlain, the brother of Neville Chamberlain. Sir Austen was a man of long political experience, and he took us to a meeting in the House of Commons, where he availed himself of his privilege as member to keep his top hat on during the proceedings. When we entered the House of Commons an M.P. was asking the Minister representing the Government what could be done to prevent fatal accidents in the Swiss Alps, where many English tourists lost their lives every year. "I am afraid there is no answer to your question," replied the Minister, "since it seems quite impossible to me to post a policeman at every crevasse in the Swiss mountains."

The Austrian interests had been for many years very ably represented in London by our Minister Plenipotentiary, Baron Georg von Frankenstein. It was in his legation that I met the Duke and Duchess of York, the present King and Queen of England. Since that time King George V has died, King Edward VIII ascended the throne only to abdicate, and King George VI has been crowned and has made his solemn entry into Buckingham Palace. Since that time Downing Street has seen three different Prime Ministers, and the Foreign

Secretary has changed four times. All this in the four years that lie between my visit to London and the present, when I write these pages, a prisoner (autumn, 1938). Many bitter experiences separate me from my memories of London, but the words of one English statesman whom I met there are still fresh in my mind:

“Constitution? We have no written constitution. We have our traditions. The Crown has the last word and the decisive one, but for the last two hundred years the Crown has not spoken because it saw no need for it. Yet everyone knows that the Crown has the final decision. . . . God save the King.”

Politically speaking, the atmosphere of London is very different indeed from that of Paris, in spite of all the official connections between the two. Where anxiety and nervousness dominate the political life of France, complete calm and dogged perseverance reign in London.

From the very beginning of the post-war period England successfully opposed the demands made by Foch and Clemenceau concerning the Rhineland. In return she gave, together with the United States, a guarantee promise to France. When the Congress of the United States failed to back up President Wilson's European policy, England was no longer tied to its guarantee to France—at least not formally.

Lloyd George pleaded undauntedly for moderation, both in the question of Germany's reparations, and in the even more delicate problem of her disarmament. When France in 1923 proceeded to occupy the Ruhr Basin, England stood almost openly on the side of her enemies of yesterday. And when, in the following year, MacDonald became Prime Minister, France considered it a foregone conclusion that England would openly embark on a pro-German policy. Later came the Hoover plan with its moratorium for Germany's payments; later still, in 1931, the disarmament conference, under the presidency of Henderson, the Empire conference in 1932, and finally, in July, 1933, the Four-Power Pact of Rome, signed by Mussolini and MacDonald, while France and Germany signed through their ambassadors.

Yet, with all this, England was equally free from Franco-phobia as she was from Germanophilia. London needed the peace just as much as Paris, only the English contented themselves with what they believed possible; whereas the French were after an ideal solution. Great Britain does not stand with

both feet on the European continent. Her interests lie just as much in all other continents of the world. England stands and falls on the seas; her policy must needs be one that favours world trade, and therefore England needs peace; hence her interest in the maintenance of the *status quo*, her basically defensive attitude, her conservative search for the middle road, and her classical theory of the European balance of power.

All this—and much more—has to be borne in mind during any conversation with an English politician, no matter what his party or his political background.

The two days in London gave us an opportunity for many interesting talks. I will start with the less important ones: with the members of the diplomatic corps. Thus the *Quadrumvir* and Italian Ambassador, Dino Grandi, called on us at the Ritz. In spite of his Fascist background, Grandi was not only respected but even popular in London. His German colleague, Ambassador von Ribbentrop, we did not see—but we heard several anecdotes about him during our stay. It is noteworthy that none of them was malicious. Altogether, London spoke about Germany without unfriendliness; only sometimes with slight astonishment. For Austria there was not only politeness, but warm sympathy and friendliness wherever we went. This was partly due to Austria's good name, and partly to the excellent and successful work of our ambassador, Baron von Frankenstein.

We had conversations with Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald and Stanley Baldwin, with Henderson and Lord Londonderry, with Sir Montagu Norman, the Governor of the Bank of England, and Lord Rothschild; with leading men, as Neville and Sir Austen Chamberlain, with outstanding journalists, and other prominent personalities.

I must say that I found my conversations with Englishmen most agreeable. They never exaggerate, never lose their tempers, and remain objectively reserved within the strict limits of their competence. As soon as I brought up a question, for instance, of foreign policy, which demanded a detailed answer, I was referred to Sir John Simon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It also became apparent that the English Government, always anxious to retain Parliamentary backing, takes account of public opinion to a degree unknown to our Continental democracies. This is all the more remarkable as the Government has very few means by which it can influence public opinion. But English politics are based on the well-trained,

disciplined insight of its people, and have therefore little sympathy for aggressiveness and solutions by force.

It was thus not always easy to explain in the Foreign Office the attitude of the Austrian Government during the February revolt of 1934. We were told quite plainly that there was full understanding for the situation in which Austria found itself, due to German pressure from outside and Nazi extremists inside the borders; that it was necessary to quench the spark before the whole country was in flames. But how could it have come to that point? Was it not possible to broaden the Government with the help of the trade unions before things came to a point where only force could prevent chaos? That was the question which the Labour Party asked every time Austrian problems were discussed.

Austrian independence? Certainly. England was all for it, since any change in the *status quo* in the Danube basin might bring catastrophe. But His Majesty's Government could not and would not give any further guarantee for Austria, apart from the declaration of the Great Powers—including Great Britain—concerning Austria's independence and sovereignty. Great Britain was not in a position to take on new European obligations, or obligations with respect to France, which could not be judged at present in all their possible consequences.

To this I replied that we did not seek any guarantees from England. We merely wanted to know whether Great Britain would stand by its previous policy concerning Central Europe. In other words, we had to know whether England would give Hitler a free hand in the Danube basin or not; whether England considered the treaties of 1919 and 1923, in which we took it upon ourselves to safeguard Austria's independent and sovereign existence, as binding or not. If so, then London was in line with Paris and Rome. Under these circumstances, however, National Socialism in Austria was no longer a purely domestic issue, and the Anschluss no longer a question of national politics. These problems were then on the same level as the problem of war or peace.

Sir John Simon assured me that England's attitude concerning Austria's independence had not changed and would never change. In fact this independence seemed absolutely indispensable, and the Foreign Office would do everything to spread this point of view. It was in Great Britain's vital interest to keep quiet, order, security, and normal developments in the regions at the heart of the Continent. Both the spirit and letter



of the treaties were considered absolutely binding, and Great Britain could not countenance any unilateral revisions. Sir John then asked me whether we could not underline our point of view and strengthen our domestic policy by a free plebiscite on the question of the Anschluss. Not at once, but at some moment which we considered propitious.

I replied that I had spoken publicly of such a possibility and that on principle we had nothing against it. But, for one thing, we must avoid the appearance that Vienna had to yield to Berlin, where such a plebiscite had been demanded again and again, and secondly we could not risk the proclamation of a plebiscite being regarded as a failure of the Austrian Government to live up to its obligation of keeping Austria an independent State. Italy and France would certainly regard such a step as an infraction of the peace treaties.

Sir John then said that in spite of the understanding and friendship which existed in England for Austria, public opinion found it regrettable that Austria had abandoned democratic forms. I assured Sir John that I understood this only too well. But we were not against democracy as such, nor against the participation and responsibility of the people in government; we merely sought new, modern ways—ways that were in conformity with our needs and our times. We retained the principle of free elections not through political parties, but through corporate bodies. Granted that this system had its drawbacks, one must not forget that it was merely considered a temporary expedient. One could not ask Austria to produce an ideal form of government within forty-eight hours. It would be unjust to condemn Austria without knowing the cause and effect. This could not be done from a distance, and even exact knowledge of the latest developments would not enable one to understand the situation perfectly. What happened in Austria only the Austrians could understand fully, from their own—sometimes difficult—experiences. We were a country which had been terribly mutilated by the peace treaties; we were furthermore obliged to maintain this mutilated country as a free and independent State, and we were firmly resolved to do this, not only because there was nothing else we could do—as was proved by the abortive project of a tariff union with Germany, which, being interpreted as a preparatory step towards Anschluss, was prevented. But in this case we had, first of all, to have a free hand in securing a positive attitude towards our State among our own population. If our efforts were to be successful in

maintaining an independent State, then the centrifugal forces—including the system of parties—had to be eliminated from political influence. One could not, on the one hand, force us to work for an independent State, and on the other watch complacently while our own population at home, wittingly or unwittingly, did everything to undermine this independence.

Sir John Simon expressed his full understanding and agreement.

Yet from the Press conferences, and our special meeting with the delegates from the Labour Party, it appeared that it was not quite easy to persuade the English that the world, and the people beyond the Channel, are not the same as in England. This attitude may account for the lack of elasticity and occasional lack of stamina in England's European policy. Not that the Government does not understand this difference. It apparently does. But Great Britain is not the Government; it is rather public opinion; and it cannot be so easily moulded here as we Continentals might think. That may also be the reason why the British Government sometimes makes an about-face in the last moment, simply because it is not the master, but the servant of the country. England is not the Continent. It is part of Europe, but, more than that, it is the nerve-centre of the Empire. England will be the decisive influence in Europe—as long as Europe stays in contact with the rest of the world. That can be good or bad—for most people it will be good.

This became clear to me during my stay in London. And in a way it was my most important experience. . . .

## IX

### OLD TIES—NEW DIFFERENCES

IN JANUARY, 1936, I accepted an invitation of the German Industrial Society of Prague to deliver a speech on political economy in their city. The discussions of our trade treaties with Czechoslovakia went on from year to year without coming to a definite conclusion, and the endless economic entanglements which had to be dealt with ever since the peace treaties of 1918 established the new borders between the two States had not yet been cleared up. Tens of thousands of Austrians had their permanent residence and their incomes on Czech soil; while an equal number of Czech subjects followed their trades in Vienna and Austria. Tailors, cobblers, and domestic servants in Vienna were invariably Czech citizens. In the ante-chambers of the ministries, in the corridors of the theatres one heard old people in grey beards and the traditional little black caps speak the unmistakable Czech-German dialect; the same dialect that reminded us of old times, and which has been immortalized in the character of Frosch in Johann Strauss's opera *Die Fledermaus*. But they were not the only representatives of Czechoslovakia. Vienna abounded with artists, writers, and intellectuals of all descriptions from across the neighbouring borders of Bohemia and Moravia. Extensive Czech cultural institutions, national schools, and clubs of all descriptions were the uncontested heritage of the Czechs in Vienna. If one counted the Viennese from the Sudetenland, who in 1918 became Austrian subjects by option, then Vienna was by far the largest of all Sudeten population centres.

The Sudeten Germans, a hardy stock, raised in the atmosphere of constant border quarrels, brave, industrious, and highly gifted, played an important rôle both in the old and the new Austria, and above all in the capital, Vienna. A considerable part of the higher Civil Service was recruited from their ranks; the leading circles of the political parties, especially on the extreme right and extreme left, consisted in large, if not

greater, part of Sudeten Germans. The same was true in the high and highest circles of the Catholic hierarchy, as well as of the most anti-Catholic groups. There were a number of them in the leadership of the Christian Socialist (Centre) Party, while the National Socialist movement in Austria was almost completely under the inspiration and direction of Sudeten Germans.

Finally, there was a third connection with Czechoslovakia, which had its influence in Austria: the German Jews of Moravian origin, who were plentifully represented in commerce and industry, in journalism and the arts. A Viennese born in Brno or Iglau was either a Nazi or a Jew, and in both cases very noticeably so. This is not surprising, since Moravia had always been Vienna's strongest hinterland. It was quite natural that this part of the Viennese population—whether they spoke German or Czech—maintained the closest ties with their relatives across the borders in Czechoslovakia.

This constant interchange between the two countries was somewhat hampered by the carefully guarded international border and the difference in currency. Yet it was not possible to guard the border so well that smuggling could have been prevented from thriving, on either side. The Governments, on either side, were well aware of this. In fact, they even subsidized this abuse, and eventually participated in the enterprise as silent partners by assisting the smugglers to bring weapons and ammunition, both military and political, and occasionally even people, across the border.

Nothing was more natural, nothing more desirable, than to establish at long last friendly, and above all personal relations between Vienna and Prague for an amicable exchange of views. With none of her other neighbours had Austria so many and varied natural connections; yet with none of them were they more confused and disorderly. Our diplomatic envoy to Prague, Marek, very ably discharged his duties in a position which demanded much circumspection and more tact.

Since the ratio of import and export between the two countries stood at about three to one to our disadvantage, our commerce balance was passive. In tourist trade we did a bit better than our Czech neighbours, since the Austrian resorts had had more visitors for some years than the world-famous watering-places in Bohemia. There was little justification for either Vienna or Prague to strive for economic self-sufficiency. There were hundreds of proposals on how to improve our trade and business relations with Czechoslovakia to our mutual advan-

tage. Thus I did not have any trouble in choosing a theme for my lecture in Prague. Our eminent economic expert, Professor Schueller, could have lectured instead of me just as well, or even better. But the whole lecture programme was a camouflage for other, far more important aims. It is well known that relations between Prague and Vienna had never been very friendly before the war, and even less so after 1918. There was always something to cause tension between the two countries, mostly matters of foreign policy, but sometimes domestic questions. Thus it was important to camouflage my trip to Prague to avoid the appearance of a political demonstration, all the more so as we had to consider the interests and feelings of our close friend, Hungary. At that time there was no sign of tension between Prague and Berlin, apart from latent controversies which were present all the time. In fact, it looked just then as if the Czech Government were working towards a peaceful solution of the Sudeten question. Dr. Milan Hodza—who had, a few months before, taken over the functions of Prime Minister—had just drawn up his plans in connection with this problem. Hodza, a former university professor and a native of Slovakia, was a most agreeable and competent man. He had formerly been the adviser of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and representative from Slovakia in the Hungarian Parliament. He knew both Vienna and Budapest and was thoroughly familiar with Austrian and Hungarian problems, and he did his utmost to cope with them.

Hodza obviously felt that he needed an atmosphere free from all chauvinistic tendencies before he put his policy into practice. Apparently he had chosen the right means towards his end. I had this impression at the reception, after my lecture, where not only German business men and members of the diplomatic corps, but also representatives of the German parties, including the Henlein partisans, were present. It was clear that the Sudeten party had not yet received any orders from Berlin, nor did it at that time (January, 1936) expect to take a fundamentally hostile attitude towards the Czech State. Also, beginning with 1936, there was a decided tendency in the Czech Government to achieve a peaceful settlement of the differences with the German minorities in the country.

My conversation with Prime Minister Hodza turned on three major subjects:

- (1) The question of a trade agreement, which by now had become urgent.

(2) The problem of the Austrian Socialist *émigrés*, who—since February, 1934—directed their anti-Austrian propaganda campaign from the Czech city of Brno.

(3) The protection of Austrian commercial interests and of Austrian citizens on Czech soil.

We reached a satisfactory solution on all three counts. When Dr. Hodza visited Vienna a few months later we succeeded in adopting a new, considerably improved trade agreement, which was very advantageous to our exports. The headquarters of the Socialist emigration with all its propaganda machinery moved from Brno to the more distant Paris. Finally, through a revision of a considerable number of pending cases, jobs and real estate were returned to many Austrians residing in Czechoslovakia. A delicate problem in this connection was the term "war industry", which the military authorities in Czechoslovakia applied extensively to a number of plants. Such industries could not be owned or run by non-citizens, nor could foreigners be employed by them. However, this question also was finally settled.

After my conversations with Dr. Hodza I had a lengthy interview with President Eduard Benes. The possibility of political agreements or treaties was not even discussed. On the contrary, I took the opportunity to underline our obligations arising from the Roman protocols and to stress our solidarity with Rome and Budapest. I further made it clear that Austria could not take part in any political group or alliance which was openly or potentially directed against Germany.

President Benes and the leading men in Prague understood and approved of our attitude. The Czech Government, therefore, did not even attempt, then or later, to sound out the Austrian Government for a possible change of attitude.

From my talks with Benes and Hodza I received a very clear and well-founded impression:

As far as domestic and economic issues were concerned, Prague showed confident optimism. Above all, there was the conviction that an equitable settlement with the Sudeten Germans could be found. In the field of foreign policy, however, a more or less admitted anxiety began to make itself felt. Their faith in the League of Nations was no longer unshakable, their trust in the effectiveness of their pact with Russia was even more doubtful. Even within the ranks of the Little Entente a breakdown of solidarity was not out of the question. Prague

followed with growing concern the developments in Yugoslavia, where the Government of Dr. Stojadinovich showed decided leanings towards Berlin. Goering's hunting trips to that country were not without political repercussions which were felt in Prague—and, for that matter, also by us in Vienna.

According to my impression, Dr. Hodza made his plans in close conformity with English policy. At the same time, the leading men in Czechoslovakia desired the resumption of friendly relations with Italy, now that the Abyssinian conflict had come to an end. Benes and Hodza also attached great importance to peaceful and frictionless relations with their neighbour Germany, and were fully aware that such relations presupposed a domestic settlement with the Sudeten Germans. But then Prague was determined to follow a course of political realism. These men would have liked to avail themselves of the good services of Vienna to lessen the tension between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. In return, they offered to mediate occasionally between Vienna and Belgrade. But even with our help the obstacle on the road between Prague and Budapest proved insurmountable. This obstacle was Slovakia, and, even if the Hungarians had relinquished their claim on the entire territory of that country, they would never have waived their demands on the old Danube city which in German was called Pressburg; in Czech, Bratislava; and in Hungarian, Poszony.

Now that events have taken their course and have thoroughly changed the map of Central Europe, it is considerably easier to give good advice as to the most effective policy than it was then.

Prague and Vienna were sisters; yet ideologically they were very dissimilar neighbours. Prague's dynamic force in politics was conditioned by the age-old hatred of the Austrian Empire. Yet Prague was the heart of a State comprising many nationalities, a smaller, weaker, but in many respects faithful, image of the old Austrian Empire. Only the symbol had changed. The incarnation of this new State was no longer Franz Josef, but the Liberator-President, G. T. Masaryk. Leading men like Hodza knew the risks of their course. They realized fully that nationality problems threatened the strength of their State. Occasionally they found the right solution for local problems, but in the time of stress the last decision was always wrenched from their hands. It lay with the anonymous, irresponsible, and uncontrolled public opinion, with the moods of the masses, and not least with the echo of public opinion from all the countries of Europe.

Politically speaking, Vienna had very little in common with her neighbour on the Moldau. For Austria had different problems, different ideologies, different opinions. It had never considered the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain as just institutions, but it believed in its mission as an independent State. This belief meant a long and hopeless struggle, supported only by the indomitable confidence that eventually a peaceful and free settlement of controversies could be arrived at. What Vienna and Prague had in common was that they both under-estimated the irresistible tendency towards political unification. That is why both of them succumbed to the spirit of our century—expressed in Hitler's ruthless policy of domination at any cost.

Prague, like few other cities in the world, is a place of contrast. Sky-scrapers, modern concrete structures, and neon signs are proof of the newness of the metropolis. On the other hand, the old towers and gates, the Renaissance palaces, St. Vitus' Cathedral, and the castle of the Hradschin speak of the glorious tradition of the old German city. It is interesting that in 1848, not a hundred years ago, the census showed 66,000 Germans and only 33,000 Czechs residing in Prague. Yet Prague is Czech to-day and nothing but Czech, just as Cracow is Polish; Budapest, Hungarian; and Metz, French. It would be idle to deny this. It is not the architect but the occupant who determines the character of a city. But it would be equally foolish to deny the German past of Prague. The great Czech composer Smetana expressed the rhythm of his country in his incomparable tone poem *The Moldau*. He spoke eloquently of this river's Slav character but he did not forget that the Moldau—symbol of Czechoslovakia—had its source and its mouth on German soil.

The old Austro-Hungarian Empire foundered on the shoals of its nationality problems, which it failed to solve in time. The first State to emerge triumphantly from this shipwreck was Czechoslovakia, which in turn found itself faced with exactly the same problems. What Masaryk and Benes denounced as the capital crime of old Austria, what the Empire failed to do in time, Czechoslovakia failed to do just as much, although it should have profited from the bitter experiences of the Empire, and although it had ample time to bring about reforms. Czechoslovakia had far more opportunity to reorganize herself along the lines of national autonomy than had the old Austria.



That she failed in this task was not because Masaryk or Benes failed to see the necessity for reform; it was because public opinion in their country, fed for decades on a chauvinist diet, did not permit such reforms. Austria had stumbled over the same obstacles.

One can maintain that the time for a State comprising many nationalities is past. But in that case one cannot form a State like Czechoslovakia and merely call it a national State. The change of name alone does not solve the problem.

I have every reason to believe that Milan Hodza sincerely worked for a peaceful solution of these problems. I also believe that he could no longer have succeeded, since the past and the present proved to be stronger than his intentions. Czechoslovakia was the first and foremost voice that called for the destruction of "the dungeon of nations", the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. The crime of the latter consisted in having various peoples united within its borders. It was further alleged that these peoples were in fetters, because their natural right to freedom was subordinated to historical claims, based on early conquests. This was all very well, but there is no historical claim—in any country—that was not once struck with the sword. And when Masaryk drew the borders of his new State, he leaned entirely on "historical claims". The same problems that had confronted the old monarchy appeared again, and Masaryk wrote on this subject:

"When we consider the relationship between our German minorities and ourselves, as it was under Austria, and as the pan-Germanists would still have it to-day, we arrive at the capital question: Is it better that three million Germans, a fraction of the entire German people, live in a non-German State, or is it better that ten million Czechs and Slovaks live in a German State?" (*World Revolution*, X, 120.)

But Masaryk was not alone in clamouring for the destruction of Austria:

"It will suffice to say that from my earliest childhood I had come to the conclusion which in later life has never left me—namely, that the security of my people presupposed the destruction of Austria."

It could have been Masaryk who wrote that. But it was not. It is a quotation from *Mein Kampf* by A. Hitler.

And yet another voice is raised, rather in the style of Hitler, but long before him:

"Austria must be torn to shreds, cut into pieces, ground to dust; its ashes must be thrown to the four winds. . . . On the day that Austria ceases to exist as a separate nation, Germany is triumphant."

This quotation is from the pen of Ferdinand Lassalle!

The victorious Powers of 1918 helped to realize the wishes of all three. Austria-Hungary was doomed to disappear, because of the "irredentists", the dissatisfied peoples within her boundaries.

Whether it was right or wrong—whether it was a step towards progress—the following statistics show:

Within the boundaries of the Austro-Hungarian Empire there lived, before 1918, approximately 27,400,000 "irredentist" people, if one considers as such all small peoples and minorities who did not belong to an autonomous State, or who lived separated from their national State.

After 1918 and the dissolution of the old Empire the number of "irredentists" within the same territory stood at 27,600,000—an increase of 200,000.

1914.	1919.
Poles . . . . . 4,968,000	Germans (without Austria) . . . . . 8,000,000
Czechs . . . . . 6,775,000	Hungarians in Yugoslavia . . . . . 500,000
Ruthenians . . . . . 3,992,000	" in Rumania . . . . . 1,500,000
Slovaks . . . . . 2,000,000	" in Czechoslovakia . . . . . 700,000
Croats . . . . . 2,800,000	Ruthenians in Poland . . . . . 4,900,000
Serbs . . . . . 1,639,000	" in Czechoslovakia . . . . . 549,000
Slovenes . . . . . 1,253,000	" in Rumania . . . . . 530,000
Rumanians . . . . . 3,224,000	White Russians in Poland . . . . . 1,600,000
Italians . . . . . 768,000	Slovenes in Italy . . . . . 500,000
	Rumanians in Yugoslavia . . . . . 229,000
	Dissatisfied Slovaks . . . . . 2,000,000
	" Croats . . . . . 2,800,000
	Bulgarians in Yugoslavia . . . . . 800,000
	" in Rumania . . . . . 290,000
	Turks in Bulgaria . . . . . 578,000
	" in Rumania . . . . . 170,000
	Minorities of various other peoples, e.g. Lithuanians, etc. . . . . 2,000,000
<b>Total</b> . . . . . <u>27,419,000</u>	<b>Total</b> . . . . . <u>27,646,000</u>

These statistics show that the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire did nothing to solve the problem, which remained insoluble *a priori*. On the contrary, "the dungeon of nations" had more inmates than ever.

## X

### ECONOMIC AND DOMESTIC ISSUES

THE INDEPENDENCE and freedom of a small State are relative quantities. They are relative to economics and politics. The small State can never be completely self-sufficient; thus the ideal of self-sufficiency—so popular in large States of the very early twentieth century—has no place in a small State. There are two ways open on the road to independence and freedom: free and unhampered access to the whole world, with free exchange of produce, import and export undertakings according to domestic needs; or else the closest economic and political co-operation with a larger State, which reduces the necessity of being hampered by having to consider most other States. The first method has the disadvantage that the small State is immediately affected by every slump and boom in the world market, with all its disagreeable consequences, such as an unsteady labour market, uneven production, danger of unemployment, and State expenses for unproductive projects. But it has the advantage that access to the whole world is free, that during a boom, or even under normal conditions, the small State can achieve full production—provided that the exchange of currency constitutes no essential difficulties.

Such was the situation in which Austria found itself after 1932. It is a matter of record that prior to 1932 most of Austria's foreign trade, and especially the invisible export, tourist trade, was absorbed by Germany. The political differences resulted at first in economic restrictions. Although these restrictions were rescinded after the July Treaty with Germany in 1936, economic relations could not be fully resumed because the currency exchange was unfavourable. Thus Austria was forced to look for new markets. This task was extremely difficult, since world trade recovered only very slowly from the great crisis of the late twenties. Yet we achieved a considerable rise in production in almost all fields. To guarantee the necessary minimum prices for agriculture, dairy products were subsidized

and placed under State control. In other industries production was kept within certain limits, as for instance in the sugar-beet industry, the hog-raising, and, towards the end, also in the wine industry. The very difficult situation in the lumber industry, especially in the western part of Austria, could not be much ameliorated, as Germany was virtually the exclusive buyer of Austrian lumber.

Had Italy not come to the aid of Austria, in the time of greatest stress (1933-34), as a generous buyer of Austrian goods, the independence of our little country could not have been upheld for economic reasons. But even the best commercial treaty is a temporary device, and cannot in the long run be regarded as a durable political support. In consequence, Austria did everything humanly possible to strengthen its economic situation, and achieved a considerable amount of progress in the course of 1937. Even this progress, however, was not sufficient to banish the scourge of unemployment altogether.

Every intelligent person could see that our independence could be maintained only if we succeeded in overcoming our economic problems completely. We found ourselves, therefore, on the horns of a dilemma: either we had to sacrifice our strict currency standards, which kept our schilling steady but did not get it into circulation fast enough, thereby lowering the living standard, which was not too high anyway; or else we had to try to find new markets and increase our exports by close co-operation with world trade. This presupposed a steady and solid currency at home, which would enable us to buy raw materials abroad. The inflationary policy which was inaugurated round about 1936 by many European States, as for instance Switzerland, France, Czechoslovakia, and Italy, put Austria in a difficult situation. Austria did not follow suit. This was on the earnest advice of the President of the National Bank, who was in favour of keeping our schilling at its relatively high level, although this made the rate of exchange unfavourable for other countries, thus jeopardizing our ability to compete abroad, especially in one of our most important industries: the tourist trade. The reason for this important decision lay in the fact that the schilling had only recently (in 1931) undergone a certain inflation and that the danger of a rise in prices demanded the utmost caution. At the same time we attempted to reduce prices on essential items, but on the whole did not succeed in this attempt. When Dr. Hjalmar

Schacht, President of the German Reichsbank, came to Vienna in 1937, he advised me to relinquish the deflationary policy of our National Bank or to loosen up control of the rate of exchange. "You will fare no better than Dr. Bruening," he said to me—and I admit frankly that later on I often had occasion to think of that warning. Political and financial experts often seemed to hold opposite views on Austria. Nobody can deny that Dr. Victor Kienboeck is an internationally recognized financial expert. Austria owed much to his excellent work during its hardest years, especially during the period of financial and economic stabilization under Chancellor Seipel. Yet the exemplary and meticulous management of budget and currency could not by itself solve all the problems of our State, as it looked too much into the future, without taking into account the most urgent requirements of the present.

To all this had to be added the political side of this difficult and—in the last analysis—decisive problem. A *rapprochement* to the German economic principle and its method of currency manipulation would have meant an economic break with the rest of the world. As long as Austria was independent, such a break could only be disastrous; and to renounce our independence was out of the question.

The Rome protocols and all subsequent agreements governed by them contained the stipulation that "contracting parties do not intend the instrument to be directed against other nations, do not contemplate the formation of a bloc, and would not discourage any third party from joining".

In view of the political equilibrium of the time, it was only natural that our neighbour Italy, a Great Power, influenced the fate of little Austria. Apart from economic dependence, a small State is always to some extent restricted in its sovereignty by a Great Power; unless it is in a position to protect itself through binding and really effective international treaties, as Switzerland and, more recently, Belgium were able to do.

Furthermore, German Austria had to take into consideration another natural and weighty factor: a thousand cultural ties connecting her with the whole German people in defiance of political boundaries. All this changed during the time of political tension; a change which was not only the most painful aspect of the family conflict, but also the most dangerous one. The political tension was such that the most harmless lecture could degenerate into a political demonstration; and the same

held true for art and science. When the traditionally friendly relations between the State operas of Vienna and Berlin suddenly ceased and, one after another, our irreplaceable artists left Vienna to settle in Berlin, the famed Vienna opera seemed doomed. The situation improved somewhat after the treaty of July 11, 1936, without, however, returning to normal.

A favourite slogan of National Socialist propaganda was the accusation that the "hostile" Austrian Government had persecuted everything German, and hermetically closed the Austrian-German frontier; consequently, Austria had economically withered, and her artistic and scientific assets were purposely de-Germanized, alienated, and irreparably damaged.

These vicious arguments were used not only by the German Press and Radio, but also by such a seemingly serious exponent of the regime as Hermann Goering. For example, the leadership of the Third Reich viewed with particular envy the increasing success of the music festivals at Salzburg. They tried every means of sabotaging them. But the whole machinery of their anti-Semitic campaign could not divert international interest from the theatrical triumphs of Max Reinhardt, or the opera performances directed by Toscanini; and it is questionable whether Richard Strauss and Hans Pfitzner acted on their own initiative when they cancelled their contracts, which they had been eager to seek.

In the summer of 1934 the management of the Salzburg festivals was informed of a telephone conversation between Goering and Clemens Kraus, then director of the Viennese opera, and other prominent artists. In this conversation Goering offered unconditionally just double the salary that the Vienna opera paid its artists, together with a guarantee of the parts these artists desired. Apart from this manoeuvre, the Austrian Nazis planted various infernal machines in the Salzburg hotels and theatres during the summer season; while the opera performances in Vienna were sabotaged with stink bombs. Another means of disrupting our cultural life consisted in cancelling exit permits for German artists, sometimes only a few hours before their scheduled departure for a guest performance in Austria. Thus Austrian theatres could never be sure that those artists whom they had billed would actually appear.

All this sabotage went under the heading of "preservation of true German culture". The world was to see that Austria

had to accept the National Socialist version of German culture. But Austria continued in the spirit of Mozart and Salzburg; although eventually the wounds inflicted on our small German State became dangerous. We had no intention whatsoever of denying our Germanic character. On the contrary; by letting Austria remain an open door for the world, with free access to the immortal treasures of that spirit which, moulded into the form of the German language, was at the same time servant and master of humanity, we only tried to promote peaceful co-operation of all, and, at the same time, served German interests. We could only demand, warn, plead, conclude treaties such as that of the 11th of July, 1936; and we could observe them conscientiously. But under no circumstances were we in a position to force an issue, even though passivity might lead straight to catastrophe—for us and others.

The basic and most dangerous wound from which the new Austria suffered was, however, the peace treaty of 1919. It demanded that Austria should remain an independent State, but bereft her of the means to maintain her independence. We had accepted the treaty under protest, and we could only make the best of it, to avoid an even worse fate for our country. The first step in this direction was the application for relief credits from the victorious Powers, to save Austria from famine during the post-war years. Later we asked the League of Nations for a loan in order to establish a new and steady currency at home. Without this loan, which the Austrian Socialists afterwards called the beginning of the end, economic and social chaos could not have been averted. Even the parties favouring the Anschluss with Germany supported Monsignor Seipel in his efforts to obtain the loan. The reason was very simple: There was no other solution of Austria's economic problems.

A third loan from abroad—the so-called Lausanne loan of 1932—was also essential to the maintenance of Austria as an independent State. How our independence could best be maintained was a question of bitter controversy within Austria, which finally led to the first tragedy of February, 1934.

The Austrian dilemma was now quite obvious. On the one hand, we had accepted the peace treaty only under protest, and considered it an injustice which we could and would not recognize as a lawful treaty. On the other hand, we had solicited several loans from abroad, which bound us to the League of Nations and which created obligations we were determined to satisfy—if only for stringent economic reasons. Austria had

earned a good reputation in the world for its prompt payments; though this unfortunately caused domestic difficulties, since payments of foreign debts are always unpopular. Anti-Austrian propaganda abroad was not slow to make the most of this unpopularity; yet economic issues had to be our first consideration, and Austria's good reputation in financial matters was one of the main props of the small State.

The peace treaty, with its explicit prohibition of the Anschluss, was a powerful weapon in the hands of those Austrians who saw their political goal in just such an Anschluss, and was used to great effect against any Government which tried to maintain Austrian independence. One must also realize that at the crucial moment the world does not judge inter-State treaties according to international law, but according to power politics. Once the European balance of power had shifted, once the League of Nations had lost its original importance and prestige, the destiny of Austria was decided, although this was not immediately apparent. It was this international change, and not the mistakes of Austria or of the Austrian Government, which decided our fate. It is not my intention to deny those mistakes for which I am responsible. In politics as elsewhere final success is the touchstone of a statesman. If he succeeds, then history does not ask why and how. If he fails, then any attempt to justify himself is *a priori* senseless. He merely has to pay the cost. But it does make a real difference whether the intentions were good, whether decency or opportunism sat at the helm.

It is no use denying that the Austrian ship of State showed more than one flaw in its construction. Most of them were reparable and were, indeed, constantly being repaired. But between the patchwork and makeshift our ship was totally unable to sail at full speed. The constitution of 1919 contained many flaws and faulty, unsatisfactory interpretations, and application of its good elements engendered further defects. The Socialist rule which began in 1918 was essentially a Viennese affair. It was supported by the workers of Vienna, and stood in sharp contrast to the rest of the country, where the Catholic Christian Socialists were predominant. Vienna had about one-third, the remaining country two-thirds of Austria's population, and this political contrast resulted in a sometimes exaggerated federalism. Economic differences also aggravated the situation. The economic interests of the city of Vienna were very different from those of the western pro-



vinces, which, because of geographical reasons and transportation facilities, found their natural economic centre in Munich. To bridge these contrasts an extremely complicated constitution was drawn up, which resulted in an extremely complicated administration. This constitution was not the outcome of an organic development, as for instance in Switzerland, but was born of political considerations and necessities. An exaggerated parliamentarism did not ease the task of the Austrian Government. Socialists and Christian Socialists formed the two big parties in the country and commanded about an even number of votes. The balance was held by the so-called "national groups", which had only one interest: the Anschluss. The two big parties strove for control of the Government and fought against extra-parliamentary influences. These lobbyists were to be found on both sides—right and left—and both groups were under the cross-fire of an increasingly radical propaganda. Both sides had private armies: the leftist Schutzbund and the rightist Heimwehr. Both sides quite openly demanded the destruction of the opposition and dictatorship of their own side. Because of its parliamentary obligations and handicaps the Government was not in a position to control private armies, or to issue a general decree making the carrying of arms illegal. Later on—when parliamentary forms had been abolished—considerations of foreign policy hampered the Government in these decisions. There remained only one way: to legalize and to de-radicalize these armies, and to fit them somehow into the framework of the State. Thus the Heimwehr underwent a process of "democratization" by dropping its extreme wings and by participating in the Government. The Socialist Schutzbund appeared officially as armed troops of the Socialist Party.

Austria had always been the home of outspoken radicalism. Opponents, political or otherwise, threatened each other constantly with destruction and annihilation, though nobody took these threats seriously. Thus it happened that revolutions were frequently talked of, but rarely took place. The reason for this may be found in the naturally easy-going character of the Austrian, and—in the old Austria—in the wise practice of the Government of keeping its reins slack, even with the risk that now and then a horse might actually run away. It is also an Austrian characteristic to grumble at and to find fault with whatever Government happens to be in power, and to approve of it once it has been overthrown.

This political attitude did not cause serious trouble as long as Austria was a large State. In the new Austria the old radical tendencies of the people became more serious. There was no longer a power respected by all the people. There was no authority which could bridge the differences. Austria had no longer a personality like Vienna's beloved Mayor Lueger, no monarch like Emperor Franz Josef—not even an undisputed fatherland. Every political movement lived on ultra-radical tendencies: Socialism became radical in order to prevent the rise of a Communist Party in Austria; liberalism was radical in order to foil the alleged plans for a clerical State; nationalism, which was radically opposed to anything German that existed beyond the borders of a highly centralized great Germany, became even more radical to “prevent the internationalization of a German people”; Catholicism finally appeared under radical forms in order to combat the rise of anti-clerical administrations.

Thus the efforts of all factions were exhausted in a negative direction. Not all of them wanted democracy, though all of them used the slogan of democracy to attain their goals. And those who sincerely wanted a real democracy forgot that one cannot teach or learn democratic ways over-night.

The Socialist rule of the first years after the war had been followed by a radically anti-Marxist coalition of Christian Socialists and Nationalists. This regime lasted for fifteen years.

In 1929 the tension in Austria came dangerously near the breaking point, and Chancellor Schober undertook to consolidate the Government's authority by a thorough reform of the constitution. His efforts were not crowned with success, and the result was a compromise.

When Engelbert Dollfuss became Chancellor in 1932, another difficulty was added to the domestic strife in Austria. It was the inner-German conflict, the division of all German-speaking peoples into two hostile camps: National Socialists and non-National Socialists. Until Hitler's rise to power in January, 1933, this strife went on in Austria without any interference from across the borders. Afterwards it developed quickly into a conflict between two States, with war-like consequences.

Engelbert Dollfuss came from the Catholic section of the so-called “national” groups, which favoured a union with Germany. When Germany became a Nazi State his former attitude underwent a radical change.

To make it clear from the very beginning that Austria was

on the defensive, and could not challenge her German neighbour, every extreme criticism of the Hitler regime and its leaders, and of National Socialism as a whole, was prohibited. But Austria did not yield to German demands. When Hitler insisted on parliamentary elections in Austria, we refused point-blank.

In view of the very complicated and confused domestic situation, new elections should have provided a suitable method to clear the atmosphere, all the more so as the Socialists favoured such elections. It was the beginning of the crisis at home, and our very existence was at stake. The Austrian Government could not afford to hold elections, as the result would have been the very contrary of the policy to which we were bound by the peace treaties, and our independence would have been lost. Such elections would not have been managed by our Government from Vienna, but by Hitler from Berlin and Munich.

It had been our consistent aim to avoid civil war, and to keep the private armies from jumping at each other's throats. This aim was an illusion, as the events of 1934 showed only too clearly.

The fatal wound of Austria, however, came not from any political mistake, but from the failure to fuse the people of Austria into a nationally conscious whole which would rally around the flag in time of crisis.

It remains an open question whether the bloody events of February, 1934, and the resultant break with Socialism could have been avoided. It is clear that these events were a decisive calamity for Austria. Nineteen-thirty-four was a year of catastrophe and brought the first signs of the world-wide horrors which were yet to come.

This was due to a number of events: first, the consolidation of National Socialist power in Germany, with its clearly aggressive tendencies, its new political method by which it undermined trust and confidence in inter-State agreements; secondly, the social upheavals which followed the depression and which influenced events in Germany decisively. These in turn brought, thirdly, a general atmosphere of tension and mistrust, national intolerance, and further political radicalization; fear and horror of another war degenerated to a fatalism which prepared the ground for it.

The belief in democracy was shaken, and anti-democratic tendencies gained popularity.

In our country these influences were doubly strong. Because of the lack of national unity both Government and people were ill prepared against the murderous onslaught of National Socialism.

The conflict with the Socialists had its roots in the years immediately following the World War. As is the case with most inveterate enmities, actual differences of opinion no longer constituted the barrier between the two factions. The difficulty was that the people, the individuals of either camp, no longer found a way of understanding each other, either in Parliament or in everyday life, simply because the general atmosphere was poisoned. It would be very unjust to blame one of the parties exclusively for this unfortunate development.

The Government considered that it had an absolute right to eliminate all domestic political differences as much as possible, and to press for a unified front, in view of the ever-increasing National Socialist threat. The Socialists considered it their right to refuse to give up any of their former privileges and influential positions, since they were numerically the strongest party in the country. The strengths of the Austrian parties at that time were roughly as follows: Of all the votes, excluding the National Socialists, the Socialists had about one-third, the Christian Socialists another third, while the remaining third belonged to the fluctuating mass of voters, which generally was anti-Marxist, and definitely anti-parliamentary. In view of the critical situation the Government leaned on this last third, which could be counted on to vote for Austria, even though it lacked any direct party affiliation.

The old enmity between the Government and the Socialist Party not only remained but increased under the influence of the tense situation. Both Government and Socialist leaders knew that the decisive hour for Austria was approaching; both felt that the danger could be met only by uniting forces. But it was too late; the chasm of mutual distrust could no longer be bridged.

To widen the Government front, the sharply anti-parliamentary Heimwehr movement was represented in the Cabinet, which in itself increased the tension.

But at that time Austria was *de facto* no longer free to make its own decisions, even in domestic affairs.

Germany had begun its economic blockade. We had only one friend—our strong neighbour, Fascist Italy, which tried to help us economically. Mussolini was at that time still on ex-

cellent terms with France and England, and an "axis" was still a geometric term without any political connotation. Paris and London remained friendly towards Austria—but they were far away, and we had to find a buyer for our lumber, our cattle, and our industrial products. Anyone only vaguely familiar with the situation in Austria knew that we could not carry on without Italy's help. It was equally self-evident that we would have forfeited Italy's friendship by a change in the existing political framework within Austria. We had not much choice in the matter, and prepared to wage a fight on two fronts—against the left and against the right. We all knew that such a policy was extremely dangerous.

At that moment Hitler ordered his first terror wave in Austria. Public disturbances of all kinds, explosion of home-made bombs, dynamiting of public telephone booths, sabotage on our railways formed the background against which the Austrian Government set out to save what could be saved of Austria. The chasm of mistrust between Government and Socialists deepened. Austria was *de facto* in a state of war, and in response to the Nazi terror the Government proclaimed martial law.

We had no intention in 1933–34 of dissolving the Socialist Party, of crushing their trade unions, or of changing the existing political position of the party. We did, however, plan a thorough disarmament of its private army, the *Schutzbund*. One of the reasons for this was the fear that the radical wings of the left and the right might, for the sake of temporary convenience, join forces against the Government—as had happened repeatedly in Germany before Hitler's rise to power.

With the first action of the Government—the police raid on the Socialist *Schutzbund* in Linz on February 12, 1934—the spark was set to the powder-keg which had been full to the brim for many years. A terrible tragedy began.

While the *Schutzbund* called on illegal battalions to revolt openly, our implacable enemy, Germany, watched from across the border, certain of an easy triumph on the ruins of our domestic dispute.

Everything was at stake now.

The Austrian Government could either crush the revolt as quickly as possible, or capitulate. Capitulation, however, meant not only the end of the Austrian regime—it meant the end of Austria.

We decided to crush the revolt. Both sides put up a hard fight, both sides suffered grievous losses.

The large mass of workers had not heeded the order for a general strike, and remained neutral. The leaders of the Socialist Party and the unions did not want the revolt any more than did the Government. But neither could stop it at this point—not because the people could not have come to an understanding, but because their leaders could no longer come to terms. Whatever possibility we envisaged, there was only one thing to do: to make an end of the revolt, to localize the conflagration at all costs, and if necessary by the hardest means; and, furthermore, to guard against a similar occurrence in the future.

In the end there was no conqueror and no conquered. But there was one seriously wounded victim—Austria.

There was no conqueror, because the wounds received could never be completely healed.

There was no conquered, because the loss of political influence was merely temporary. It was a sacrifice in order to prevent a greater tragedy, a sea of blood and tears. That this catastrophe could not be avoided, and took place four years later, was beyond human control. One should not speak of crime and punishment, but rather of fate and destiny in the lives of peoples.

To-day Austrians can only go to visit the graves of their friends—no matter on which side of the barricades they fought in February, 1934. It will remain a bitter memory, but also a warning from which we can learn. Many a people's future has been built upon the errors of the past.

The picture of internal strife in Austria has led many to believe that Austria in 1938 fell not so much a victim of German aggression, but of domestic struggles. That this view is erroneous has been shown by what happened to other countries which did not have to contend with similar difficulties, and yet fell a prey to Nazi expansion. One example is the Weimar Republic in Germany, which fell in 1933; another is Czechoslovakia, which was crushed by Hitler in 1939, in spite of its parliamentarism and its democratic institutions.

Like them, Austria was a victim of foreign aggression.

## XI

### POLITICAL POST-MORTEM

**ALL LIFE** means change—constant, never-ending change. In politics this change is even more rapid, and those in command, those burdened with political responsibility, cannot afford to cling to prejudices, to unchangeable views, or to long-established, immutable methods. An unforeseen event, the sudden birth of an idea, a change in the weather, a flood, even an uncontrolled rumour can bring catastrophe overnight. To foresee all these contingencies, to be prepared against any eventuality, is not always possible. Errors occur, therefore; but in politics as elsewhere it is better to err than to stand by with eyes closed and let events take their course.

The statesman needs elasticity in his thinking, his planning, and his actions. Both sides of a question have to be carefully weighed and studied. But this elasticity must never degenerate to the point where the principles of a policy are sacrificed, where the goal is changed because of the difficulties of the road. Elasticity in politics can be good or bad; it can be intelligent or stupid; but it must never be guided by opportunism alone; it must never sacrifice its basic principles. And the worst policy is always a policy without principles.

In Austria the maintenance of a free and independent State was both the aim and duty of the leaders in politics. They knew that there was only one threat to this free and independent State: National Socialist Germany.

Austria in consequence had to play the game of tug-of-war with very unequal forces at the ends of the rope. To win this game—to maintain the free and independent State—was possible only if Austria could count on the active and efficient help of other Powers—or if she managed to get guarantees from Germany. Active assistance from the other European Powers became problematic and doubtful from the moment when Italian imperialism disrupted the united front of the Great Powers. In the new international situation it could not

reasonably be expected that French, English, or Italian soldiers would, in case of necessity, go to war for the independence of Austria. And it was not certain—to say the least—whether diplomatic protest from the Foreign Offices of these Powers would be sufficient protection against an invader.

In view of these facts Austria could necessarily follow only one policy: she must maintain the *status quo* and gain time until the international situation in Europe returned to “normal”. If this were impossible, if the “normal” situation could not be re-established, then Europe would sooner or later be engulfed by war, with Austria as the first casualty; and it became our primary and vital aim to maintain the *status quo* in Central Europe and avoid any exclusive alliance with one or the other side. This inevitably resulted in a course of constant tacking and veering. To avoid the appearance of weakness or lack of decision, we had to ensure quiet and order at home. The reins had to be tight if domestic differences were not to be projected on to the international plane, and thus serve as a pretext for foreign intervention.

With all this it was plain to see that the German wolf, with his avowed intentions, sat across the brook from the Austrian lamb. And—as in the fable—the wolf would try his best to persuade the world that the lamb, with malice aforethought, was making his water muddy—a situation the wolf could not countenance. And the tired world would not bother to investigate whether the lamb was in a position to make the water muddy or not. The world wanted peace and quiet, and would help only if the lamb were the victim of an unprovoked attack. And the wolf said that the lamb was provocative.

Austria, therefore, had every reason to ensure that the question of right and wrong was, in the case of an attack, beyond any doubt or discussion. We could not do anything—and had to avoid everything—that could possibly give Hitler even the appearance of a pretext to intervene by force. For one thing was sure: if Hitler were to take Austria it would not merely mean a change in Government or political system—it would mean the end, the destruction, the ruin of our country.

And now to the “ifs” . . . the political post-mortem.

“If” clauses in the past tense are usually followed by what the Latin grammar calls *in Irrealis*. They are of little practical value; and, besides, it is not very difficult to say afterwards what should have been done then. Yet some of the “if” clauses are of historical interest and should be recorded here.



"If Austria had restored a monarchy in time—*i.e.*, between 1934 and 1938—the whole catastrophe could have been avoided." This thesis, restricted to a fairly limited circle of critics, maintains that the pretender to the throne, Archduke Otto, was the only person who could have stemmed the tide. Therefore he should have been recalled by the Austrian Government. These same critics also say that the beginning of the end of Austria lay in our efforts to find a *modus vivendi* with Germany by means of treaties (agreement of July, 1936). The Government should have known that a treaty with the Third Reich was not worth the paper it was written on, and that by signing it the Government had delivered itself to the hangman.

I cannot believe that Archduke Otto shared this opinion, which apparently originated among his following. In any case, I can only deal with the thesis as such, and not with the Archduke's views—especially since I had the honour to meet the Archduke on several occasions prior to 1938, and to explain to him the impracticability of a restoration under the prevailing circumstances.

Any attempt to restore the Hapsburg monarchy in Austria would have immediately—and no matter at what time—brought about the military occupation of Austria by Hitler, and none of the other Powers would have stopped him under such circumstances. Some of these other Powers might not have objected to a monarchy in Austria, provided that Austria had come to terms with Germany on this question. But that was impossible. And before history and the world Austria would have been responsible for her own destruction. But it was not only Hitler who opposed a restoration. For some of our neighbours the return of the Hapsburgs would have meant war. How did I know this? I was officially informed of it in the above words by Belgrade and Hermann Goering, and in slightly less brusque language by Prague and Bucharest before 1936. And that was quite enough. Nobody can tell me seriously that France and Great Britain would have gone to war to defend a domestic issue like the Austrian monarchy. That would have been too much to ask. Furthermore, it would have been quite impossible to bring about a restoration without a plebiscite, and at a time when the very existence of the State was at stake we could not jeopardize it further by the question of the form of government. It is true that the monarchist movement in Austria was gaining considerable ground, and that, in my opinion, was very desirable from the point of view of strengthen-

ing the concept of Austrian independence. Yet neither my friends nor I could risk an experiment in this direction. The shadow of the unfortunate Emperor Maximilian of Mexico was a warning example. I would and could never have taken such a risk for the simple reason that I was a monarchist myself.

"If Austria had rejected any pact with Hitler she could have been saved." This thesis, expressed in Dr. Martin Fuchs's book *Showdown in Vienna*, is of much greater weight than the preceding criticism.

Before going into this question, however, I would like to make a few remarks about Austria's last Foreign Minister, Dr. Guido Schmidt. It has been said that Dr. Schmidt had inspired the treaties with Germany of July, 1936, and of February, 1938, and had disloyally influenced my position. That is not true. Dr. Schmidt was appointed to the post of Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the spring of 1936 at my request, without the previous knowledge of any foreign Power. He was a career diplomat whom I had known for many years, and I had since 1932 been in close personal contact with him. I do not believe, nor have I ever heard, that Dr. Schmidt had been known to either German or Italian political authorities prior to his appointment. His only position abroad had been that of attaché at the Austrian Legation in Paris.

I think it is important to state these facts because Dr. Schmidt's behaviour after the Anschluss was objectively unclear and personally difficult to understand. It is not up to me to judge his conduct, as future investigators of his case might shed new and so far unknown light on his motives. But I am equally far from trying to excuse behaviour which, unfortunately, has no plausible explanation. One cannot accept a position as director-general of the Hermann Goering Works when one's friends and colleagues are—at best—in prisons and concentration camps. Such action cannot be explained and seems altogether unjustifiable.

Yet I cannot remain silent when silence could be interpreted as an attempt to shirk the responsibility which I have to bear myself.

The discussions with Hitler were completely in line with my publicly announced policy, and I have to bear the exclusive responsibility for them. That I should have known in advance that Hitler would deceive us and would not abide by his word

is quite true. But every Government from London to Moscow had the same experience with their treaties with Hitler—and some of these treaties were concluded *after* Austria's annexation had become a warning to the world.

At the grave of my predecessor, Engelbert Dollfuss, whom I esteemed and admired very deeply, I was persuaded that Austria could not survive a second attack by Hitler or a repetition of the attempted civil war of July, 1934. I was also sure that everything depended on getting Germany to end her economic war on Austria, lest we suffocate. This was only possible by way of direct agreement, in which Austria could not deviate one iota from her principles, and had to keep German nazism away from her borders, both as an idea and as a method. The task thus consisted in getting Hitler to acknowledge Austria's sovereignty and independence, and in obtaining his promise not to intervene in Austrian domestic affairs.

Such an agreement was all the more desirable as it became apparent that the other Powers were bent on avoiding trouble with Hitler, and Italy was no longer as interested in Central Europe as she had been before. I therefore did everything in my power to conclude the agreement with Germany of July 11, 1936, every word of which had been carefully and meticulously weighed.

Of course I knew that Hitler did not consider himself bound by any treaty. But the mere appearance, the 10 per cent. chance, was better for us than nothing. Besides, it looked then as if Hitler would prefer a peaceful solution of the Austrian problem, which meant a breathing spell for Austria—politically as well as economically. When it became apparent that Hitler was only waiting for a chance to break his agreement openly—from the second half of 1937 onward—we had every interest in binding him to a new treaty, even at the cost of some concessions. And so it came to the Berchtesgaden agreement. It is true that Berchtesgaden was not so much an agreement as a simple case of political blackmail, and had I known that in advance I would never have gone there. The final result would have been the same; but it would have spared me the most difficult decision I had to make during my entire political career: Should I go to Berchtesgaden or not? Could I ignore Hitler's invitation without exposing my Government to the international reproach that it had missed an opportunity for peaceful settlement? Could I ignore the invitation without playing into Hitler's hand?

Well, I accepted the invitation and went to Berchtesgaden. I must therefore bear the responsibility for it.

"If the Austrian Government had only taken energetic measures against the Nazis in Austria"—another "if" clause that deserves an analysis.

The adherents of this thesis usually forget two things! (1) that it is a doubtful proposition for the weaker of two partners to use strong measures in matters which expose him to instant reprisals—in this case economic reprisals; (2) that Austria was an authoritarian State but not a dictatorship.

It was not the actual members of the National Socialist Party in Austria who, always a weak minority, constituted the serious problem. It was the mass of those who looked favourably on National Socialism because it propagated their own desire: the Anschluss. That we had so many friends of the Anschluss in Austria cannot be surprising to those who realize that the Anschluss ideology had for fourteen years been the most popular theme—and fourteen years are long enough to bring up a generation.

Germany spent millions to stimulate the Anschluss idea, and the Deutsche Klub in Vienna served as headquarters and clearing-house in these operations. These men, although not members of the party, bear far more responsibility than do their puppets, the so-called "underground" Nazis.

The strength of the Nazi underground has frequently been exaggerated. Where it became dangerous was within the police force. I was told later, when I had already been for some time in prison, that the Vienna police had 700 underground Nazis in its ranks. Since the entire police force comprised roughly 7,000 men, these 700 Nazi policemen represented exactly the 10 per cent I had estimated.

Concerning the much-talked-of treason in the high offices of the Government staff, I must say that there were, unfortunately, many cases of it—far more than we thought at the time. Perhaps we shall know one day how many thousands the German Secret Service spent in obtaining Austria's secrets. One of the intelligence cells was actually in the Chancellery; yet we were never able to discover it. Nazi leaders boasted that they had the most detailed information right from the circle of my closest collaborators. Actually, we noticed a number of indiscretions, partly from the Council of Ministers, which forced me to be more careful than ever. In spite of painstaking in-

vestigations we were not able to find any definite clues. The solution of the riddle was much simpler: on the day after the Anschluss one of the plain-clothes men who had been my constant companion, a certain Zisterer, was taken over by the Gestapo, and immediately promoted to a high position. That, of course, explained much. For years this man had had free access to my offices and to my house, and it is quite possible that he helped to conceal microphones in my desk—a device boasted about after the Anschluss.

I must mention here a few names of the men who served their country with true patriotism in the exemplary performance of their duties. There were many of them, especially the Chief of Presidium, Herr von Chavanne, my two secretaries, Baron Froelichsthal and Dr. Krisch, and my immortal military adjutant, Lieutenant-Colonel Georg Bartl, who was faithful unto death. All these men were unconcerned with active politics. To all of them I owe an inestimable debt of gratitude and friendship. All of them were true Austrians.

“If a united front of Austrians had been formed and if the Government had included Socialist elements on a broad basis . . .”

Certainly! There is no doubt that it would have been much better if in the hour of need we could have eliminated the old controversy between the right and the left. Why we did not succeed in building a united front, why we did not have time for elections, although we saw the necessity for a united front, has been explained elsewhere in these pages. Here I merely want to say that a development of sixteen years—from 1918 to 1934—could not be effaced or forgotten in the short time from 1934 to 1938. Various efforts were made in that direction with the definite aim of creating a united front of all Austrians. The political development of the two last years of Austria proves this. That these efforts were not quite inefficient is furthermore shown by the fact that Nazi Germany fought for years against us under the motto: “Against a popular front in Austria,” and that Mayor Schmitz and I were afterwards chiefly accused of having “conspired” to create such a united front.

Theoretic post-mortem considerations are idle; but one thing can be stated with certainty: no matter what government—rightist or leftist—directed the fate of Austria, it could not have avoided Hitler’s armed invasion. A general strike, for

instance, at the time of the invasion would not only have failed to stop Hitler, but would have furnished him with an excuse to intervene "in the chaotic conditions in Austria". It would have been just the sort of pretext that Hitler had waited for through several years. In order to deprive Hitler of this cheap camouflage we had embarked on a domestic policy which, as far as could be foreseen, offered as little pretext for German intervention as possible. Besides, we all knew that in March, 1938, a word from our Government would have sufficed to call an efficient general strike. It should not be forgotten that a considerable part of the working masses, which formerly had been organized in the Socialist Party, had then been incorporated within the various organizations of the Government. In fact, there were certain Government organizations which consisted entirely of former leftists. I do not for one moment believe that they joined our side for the love of our Government, but they joined—and that was what counted—for love of their country, Austria.

Finally, history has shown that there simply was no domestic policy or device that could have stopped Hitler from executing his plans; there was none in 1933 in Germany, none in 1938 in Austria, none in 1939 in Czechoslovakia.

And now for the final and decisive "if":

"If Austria had resisted the armed invasion in 1938 . . ."

Our military resistance could have postponed the occupation of Vienna and of central Austria for some twenty-four—perhaps even forty-eight—hours. But at what price? Two days later, on the 13th of March, the masses in Vienna would have shouted their gratitude to the Fuehrer just as though we had not resisted. It would perhaps have been easier and less complex to write a political history of Austria to-day, but the work of reconstruction would have been even more difficult. There would be far more ruins in Austria and far greater hatred would blind the eyes that should be looking towards the future. It would have made it far more difficult to begin anew.

The only interesting "if" clause might perhaps be: What would have happened if Austria had given in before Hitler had to resort to armed invasion? The answer to this question depends largely on another question: When did Hitler decide to solve the Austrian question by force? According to his own admission it was in January, 1938. In reality, however, it was

much earlier—probably in the summer of 1937. And none of the other Powers would have seriously opposed his aims.

One thing, however, is unfortunately true. Whoever took part in anti-Austrian propaganda, whether right or left, whatever his particular motives, worked wittingly or unwittingly hand in hand with Adolf Hitler.

**BOOK THREE:  
HITLER'S PRISONER**



## XII

### SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

(OCTOBER 29, 1939—DECEMBER 8, 1941)

October 30, 1939

So it was just another mirage—all the more painful when you waken to reality. Of course, I should not take my own unimportant fate so seriously at a time like this. But, then, I am only human, and there is no point in fooling myself or others about it.

Outside the war rages on. Strangely enough, it gives me some relief. To know that some sort of decision is approaching must be a relief to one who has only the vaguest idea of what is happening in the world, and to whom such half-knowledge is particularly torturing. Not to be able to speak one word in times like these, when heart and mind are seething with cares and questions; to wake up to new iron bars, to listen only to the sound of new and heavier doors slamming shut; to hear the call "Land in sight" over and over again, and then to see one's last hope dwindle away in an indistinct and nebulous distance—all this I cannot hope to describe.

And yet I must go on. I must live.

Outside the banners wave. The *Voelkischer Beobachter* is jubilant about the victories in Poland. I, too, would like to rejoice. Damn it! I have a right to rejoice. I was a soldier, too; I once had a country, a country allied with the victors of to-day. But I cannot rejoice; not over these victories, not together with these victors; not even when I think of the countless young people who follow new ideals, fight for them, bleed for them and die.

For me there is nothing to do but wait until nature makes a kindly end of it. Perhaps it was wrong not to force this solution earlier. Surely it was sheer presumption to believe in a promise, to think of some legal procedure which would bring justice.

Winter is beginning again. The sad, moist vapours of an

early fog slowly move by, outside my barred window. How foolish to long for the sun! how utterly foolish that I cannot quench the tiny spark of hope that still, in spite of all, lives in my heart! Such hope is unreasonable after all that has happened to me. Such hope makes the future a torture. It tells me that a solution is imminent. Yet Tantalus of antiquity also saw the object of his longing before him and never reached it. But his times were, after all, more humane, and the tortures thought up by poets were always human.

I know my fate. My existence as a human being has come to an end, and to continue as anything else is not particularly tempting. Even an animal needs certain basic living conditions, and has one advantage: it cannot stand as much as the species known as *homo sapiens*.

I believe in God. I believe in the true God who has created heaven and earth. I am not so presumptuous as to fashion my God after my changing whims, after my crying needs. I want to die a faithful son of my Church . . . *et portae inferi non praevalent*. . . For there is one thing I know. God is just. God is merciful. And I hope that my fugitive thoughts will find grace before His eternal judgment. And when my thoughts are dispersed under the weight of hopelessness and despair, I hope that my actions will find mercy and forgiveness before the throne of God. I believe in one God. There are no other gods. My constant prayer is for mercy for my friends, for protection for my beloved, and for the salvation of my soul. Amen.

October 31, 1939

I had a letter from home. It was melancholy, depressed. I can understand it. As yet they don't know that I have changed my habitat, and my wife believes me to be still in Vienna.

An old Chinese proverb says: "There are many things which are real and not invented, but there are no inventions that could not become reality." This proverb was born from the experience of many thousand years.

I am told that my new "residence" must be kept strictly secret. Any hint of my new existence in the Press or on the radio—in Germany or abroad—would immediately cause my present state to deteriorate.

Nevertheless, I am allowed to write a letter home. All pre-

cautions are taken, and the letter will be sent by devious postal routes. But I may tell my wife that I have been moved from Vienna to Munich.

• Now that I cannot live together with my wife, I prefer my present existence to the months in Vienna. In many respects Munich is much better. I am used to solitary confinement. I am not homesick. I only long for my family, and I worry lest this long time which is lost to me and my family may ruin our lives in the future.

My cell is very small indeed, but spotlessly clean. My razor, nail-scissors, nail-file, suspenders, etc., were taken away from me on arrival. At 7 p.m. the lights go out, but I don't mind that. I shall get used to the new rhythm. And during the day I am actually allowed to go outside for half an hour—out into a real garden. If things stay this way I shall be very grateful.

*All Saints' Day, November 1, 1939*

I have not written anything about the trip from Vienna to Munich, so I shall do it now:

On Friday, October 27, a Gestapo official in Vienna came to my room and told me that "various circumstances have made it impossible to arrange things so that you can live together with your wife. This is, however, only a delay. In three weeks at the latest it will be done. You can count on that."

On Saturday, October 28, the same official came again, and asked me whether I had another suit of clothes, a coat, and the necessary underwear. He told me that I was to shave the next morning and dress as well as I could. Perhaps a visit?

Sunday morning—the 29th—my police guard inspected my attire and declared himself satisfied. At 8 a.m. two rather dilapidated suitcases were brought in. Everything had to be packed within fifteen minutes. At eight-fifteen sharp the Gestapo officials arrived. "Well, now the worst is over, Herr Schuschnigg; now you have all this behind you. Do you think you can stand a trip of about five or six hours?"

I answered that I thought I could. We left my room and descended the five floors. I was not used to such exercise, and my knees were shaking terribly when we arrived at the cars. I was told to get into the larger car, and two officials got in with me. The windows were heavily curtained. Three other officials drove ahead in the other car.

After we had left Vienna the curtains were pushed a little aside. It was strange to see people again who could walk about as they pleased. They even laughed. The day was cloudy and cold as we drove through the countryside which I know so well. The official next to me asked: "Are you not glad to be out of that place?"

"Yes, I am; but I shall have to see what lies ahead of me," I replied. I must admit that I did have some hope.

After we had passed St. Poelten, the official asked me again: "Do you know where we are headed for?"

"Presumably for Dachau," I answered.

"You are a hopeless pessimist! We are going to Munich."

"Will arrangements be made for my wife, as I was told in July?" I asked.

"Yes, yes; you are going to live in Germany proper."

"But will my wife and child be allowed to live with me?"

"Listen. That is not so easily done. It takes more than just a couple of weeks to make such arrangements. I am sure that something of the sort is going to be done, but we must first find an adequate locality."

Well, now I knew. There was no point in hoping any longer. Still, that hour when I had hoped once more had been beautiful. Our car sped on. We passed Amstetten, the river Enns, Asten. I looked in vain for the place where Herma, my first wife, had had her fatal motor accident. As was customary in Austria, I had had a little marker set up with a picture of Our Lady, and underneath: "Herma von Schuschnigg July 13th, 1935." This marker had been removed, as I could see now. We drove through Linz, Lambach, Voecklabruck, Salzburg, where we found the first snow. The weather had cleared, and from the magnificent highway I looked at the mountains resplendently white against the blue sky. I cannot describe how I enjoyed seeing these mountains again, the woods, the houses—life, real life!

In Munich we drove through streets that are well known to me. After a short wait I was taken into the prison of the Wittelsbacher Palais, the main Gestapo prison in Munich. As I was being searched, I flushed with indignation. I was surprised, as I had been searched often enough before. But perhaps it was just a nervous reaction. I was told my stay in this prison would be short—only a few weeks. I can walk in the garden for thirty minutes each day. They told me that I shall like it all right. Well, I shall have to get used to my new surroundings.

I was told to-day that my wife will come to visit me next Friday, and that the doctor will also visit me. The Gestapo official promises to get a better chair, a radio set, and lights until 10 p.m., which would be wonderful. I know this official from Vienna. He was on the Gestapo staff there until about a year ago, and he was always correct and friendly. He told me again, "In eight weeks at the latest your new home will be ready and then you can move out of here." I don't dare to believe it any more. Oh, God, if it were only true!

*All Souls' Day, November 2, 1939*

To-day I got my toiletries back, and my personal possessions, and I got permission to have my light on until 10 p.m. Every day now I take a shower—all alone, without any guard. That and the daily walk in the garden do much to bring me back to normal. On the radio I sometimes get beautiful Beethoven concerts. The food is good and sufficient, and I eat more in two days than I ate during a whole week in Vienna. My little cell is ever so much better than the room in Vienna, and, above all, there is no guard. It does not matter how small the cell, so long as I can be in it alone.

*Wednesday, November 15, 1939*

In Austria they celebrate St. Leopold's Day to-day. Or at least they used to when there was an Austria. It was a tradition for years to celebrate the day of Austria's patron saint, the powerful Duke Leopold, in exactly the same manner. It started with Beethoven's C Major Mass at the Chapel of the Imperial Castle in Vienna. In the afternoon all Vienna went to Klosterneuburg on the Danube, about six miles outside the city. There, in the mighty cathedral, St. Leopold lies buried. After visiting the grave one went to eat and drink in the restaurant of the monastery. To-day, on the day of St. Leopold, 1939, I am in my prison cell and have nothing but my memories of St. Leopold's Day—and of Austria.

*Friday, November 17, 1939*

Friday has become the day of human consciousness for me. For almost a year and a half now Friday has meant a visit from my wife. On these days, for eight and sometimes twelve minutes, I can see the woman who, like me, and with me—and, alas, through me—bears a heavy burden. Since our mar-

riage our life together has been limited to these few minutes of tense joy in the presence of a guard, and to a letter once a week. In between visits there are six days, 144 hours of loneliness, worry, and hopelessness. It is a bit like the cable cars going up our mountains in Austria. Every time the car goes past one of the supports a trembling goes through cars and passengers that can be felt in one's stomach. Then again the car glides smoothly on to the next support. It is on Fridays that I pass my supports—afterwards my thoughts idle until the next Friday.

*November 20, 1939*

In time of war a totalitarian State organization—such as we find in Germany and Italy—constitutes an enormous advantage. It gives those Powers a head start, which is neither easily nor quickly made up for by the democracies. This head start is gained simply because mobilization and offensive action are, already in peace-time, at the very core of all the thinking, planning, and organizing of the totalitarian States. This makes it very difficult also for such unequal partners to arrive at any satisfactory preventive measures at the conference table, before the outbreak of hostilities. One partner is armed with a fountain pen, the other with a machine-gun; and if a treaty is signed, in spite of such inequality, it is because the one with the fountain pen is nervous, and prefers to have any sort of document signed than complete failure of his mission. So he signs despite the obvious fact that the partner with the machine-gun has not the slightest intention of keeping to the terms laid down in the document. For the latter knows his own superiority, and invariably introduces some clause which—to his totalitarian thinking—will exonerate him “morally”, when the time comes for breaking the agreement.

This is the genesis of many of our modern non-aggression and friendship pacts.

Once a document is signed both partners prepare their political orchestra for the “intermezzo”, in which the theme “breach of promise” is played with all possible variations. Both sides find convincing arguments for their point of view, and both sides use their string and wood-wind sections freely. The brass and percussion instruments are kept in reserve—for a while. And that is the genesis of war.

To-day the concert is over. We are at the shooting stage. Bombs, fire, destruction. And why? To make mankind happier? Whether that is possible only the future will show.

*November 22, 1939*

The newly sealed friendship between Germany and Italy goes through all sorts of contortions. Will Italy really join the Germans in this war? Most neutral observers say no. I think that the Italians are much too clever, much too realistic—in spite of their frequent and noisy demonstrations of solidarity—to get their fingers burned. As a bystander Italy can only profit from this war, and this attitude would be in keeping with her oldest traditions.

Another question is whether Mussolini is still free to do what he pleases. If he is not, then his gamble is very risky. Only a short while ago the views of the two dictators diverged considerably on many points. Now this seems to have changed—at least outwardly—since the Austrian question no longer stands between Berlin and Rome. For the time being the Axis is trumps, and prophets both in Italy and Germany endow it with “eternal” life. This calls to mind a quotation from Goethe which, although written without any political intention, seems to fit the present situation very well:

'Gainst many a blow the Axis stands fast.  
It never moves—yet breaks at last.

*November 23, 1939*

Two years of world events have sufficed to let the grass grow thoroughly over the Austrian question. The problem Austria is finished—from every point of view; finished also for years to come—anyway, for the foreseeable future.

Those who had understood Austria realized the catastrophe its disappearance meant for the world in 1919. In spite of many shortcomings and mistakes, it was more than just a large State. It was a piece of Europe, a piece of man's historic belief in the Occident. Perhaps its life was a dream. . . .

The domestic difficulties, the quarrel over languages, the difficulties with the irredentists—all that and many other things were far from perfect, and cried for reform; but not for death.

Only when parliamentary debates, uncensored editorials, and printer's ink were replaced by gunpowder, rifles, and bombs—only then had Austria met her end. And everyone was told that it was good so—nay, even much better than before. Was it better? If one were to balance the books within the territory of the old monarchy before 1919, and in the successor States within that same territory after 1919, the question of progress would seem more than doubtful. Take

only the loss of life, resulting directly or indirectly from domestic differences, in old Austria and in all the States that succeeded her in 1919. Did more people lose their lives in the fifty years preceding the World War, or in the twenty-five years after it? I would like to see statistics from Vienna, Prague, Cracow, Budapest, Czernowitz, Zagreb, and many other towns. All these places have their monuments celebrating their national liberty. But all of them have countless graves, too. And the future will decide which language is more durable, more important: that of the monuments or that of the graves. . . .

After the old Austria had been interred, the new Austria became a "must" in Europe. The little independent State could not be held merely by treaties and guarantees. The population had to understand that the old idea of Austria, the spiritual scale of values represented in the old Empire, was not dead; that the new Austria had a mission like the old one. Austria was still the keystone of Europe.

As long as I breathe I shall see Austria that way. My heart and soul belonged to it once. Its end has been also my end.

Perhaps Austria will rise again in spite of everything?

Yes . . . perhaps. . . . It would be wonderful.

But only if Austria means a way and will to Europe.

*November 29, 1939*

To-day it is one month since I was moved to this Gestapo prison in Munich. When I think back I must admit that I have been lucky. The days between May and September, 1938, were terrible. I do not think that I shall ever get over them. And afterwards there were terrible moments. But it is no good dwelling on these things. I shall try to forget them—these and some items that I have read in the *Voelkischer Beobachter*. If only I knew that there would be an end to this existence. If I could only estimate approximately how long I have to stay in this particular cell. On the other hand, I cannot be grateful enough for the quiet I enjoy here. The guards, too, and all outward circumstances are ever so much better than in Vienna. Every morning at seven-fifteen I am allowed to go outside for a few minutes. That and my daily half-hour in the garden, in the evening, are an invaluable recreation. Slowly my body gets used to exercise, although I still tire very quickly.

The books and the radio are my staff of life. I am reading a book by Lernet-Holenia entitled *Die Standarte*. It is about the



years of defeat in 1918 and the old Austrian army. I feel sometimes as if I were present at a requiem, or some sort of celebration for the dead. Austria—Vienna—oh, it is no use! No matter how often I tell myself that it is not so, I cannot get away from it! I am homesick—sick, terribly sick at heart for my country. Not so much perhaps for the people, or even the landscape, but for the idea of Austria, the idea of home, of my country, which is dead and gone. When I am tempted to argue with fate, it is chiefly because I must live at a time when I had to lose twice that country which means so much to me.

I am so grateful to have a radio, and the little popular standard set is surprisingly good. It is one of those small sets that have been issued by the Government and which are just strong enough to receive the local broadcasting stations. All other, more powerful sets were confiscated and replaced by these so-called *Volksempfänger*, lest German ears be contaminated by foreign propaganda.

My set is on all day. There is unspeakable solace in music. It makes possible a spiritual colloquy which no one can stop, forbid, or control. As long as one has the strength to receive and appreciate the incomparable music of Beethoven, or Mozart, or Schubert, one's humanity is still alive.

*December 1, 1939*

A new month is beginning—the twenty-first of my captivity. Psychologically each first of the month is a difficult day. Uncontrollably the old thoughts and questions present themselves again: How long is it since I lost my freedom? How long will it last? These thoughts go on to the point of torture.

I heard Beethoven's Seventh on the radio to-night. It was wonderfully stirring and awakened new hope. Perhaps this December will bring a change.

*December 3, 1939*

It is Sunday—the first Sunday in Advent. In church they sing to-day: *Rorate coeli desuper et nubes pluant justum*. The Church begins a new year to-day and prays: "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds pour forth justice."

What a boon for humanity not to be able to know the future! I don't think I would have had the strength to live had I known a year ago what was in store for me.

Last year Sunday was a punishment for me. It was the dreary beginning of a dreary week, and I had nothing to eat because the kitchen at the Hotel Metropole was closed on Sundays and holidays. Now it is different. I like Sundays. For one thing, the usual Friday visits now take place on Monday—just one day after Sunday. And then I have particularly fine music on Sundays—two hours of symphony concert in the mornings. To-day I heard Handel, Mozart, and Haydn.

*December 14, 1939*

To-day is my forty-second birthday. I believe sometimes that I must have missed thirty years of my life, because I feel more like seventy-two. I had the most beautiful present I can imagine: a letter from my wife. This message of love, faith, and understanding gives me new strength. And—thank God—thoughts cannot be censored. There is one realm where the almighty police is powerless.

*December 16, 1939*

My wife reminds me in her birthday letter that the “two months—at the most!” will soon be over. She says that she believes what she was told by the authorities. Poor soul! I cannot share her optimism. Allegedly some house is being built somewhere, and when it is ready we are to move in. But I know by now how such things are handled. During winter construction is not possible because of frost in the ground. In spring there is a shortage of materials because of important public building programmes, and because the building season begins. During the summer there are vacations, and, besides, one has other more important plans. In autumn one promises something for the winter. During winter construction is not possible because of the frost . . . and so on.

*December 19, 1939*

Yesterday—somewhat ahead of time—I had my “Merry Christmas”. It was a telegram from Berlin: “Due to various circumstances change-over to new quarters cannot be considered for the time being . . .” It should not have been a disappointment. After all, I knew this would happen. Yet—it was like a lash of the whip. As long as there is breath in man, hope never vanishes completely. There is a constant up and down of hope and disappointment. The latter somehow always

comes for Christmas or similar occasions. There is but one consolation: God Almighty in His eternal wisdom knows why He sends these trials. If it is meant to be punishment, then I have to bear it meekly, if it is a test, then I must try to stand it. All men are His tools. For there is but *one* God. Sooner or later everyone will find out that there is but one God. Sooner or later—but sometime surely.

I was advised to write to Himmler personally and ask for his intervention. It might be worth the attempt, and it is decent of my guards here to suggest it. They do their duty, but they are decidedly human—and that helps me to bear with them.

*December 21, 1939*

To-day the chief of the Munich police came for inspection. I told him that I had but one wish: to be together with my wife, since it has been promised to us. He very politely promised to inform the competent authorities. . . .

*December 22, 1939*

To-day is the weekly medical inspection. I must say that the doctor is exceptionally friendly and kind. What a difference between him and most of his colleagues who inspected me in Vienna!

*December 28, 1939*

Thank goodness, the holidays are over. Yesterday I was very glad to be moved from my cell into the day-room of the guards. A room is a room and not a cell, and, besides, there is a real desk here, and a comfortable chair. But the real surprise came when I was told that my wife can now visit me here for three hours without a guard. It is not quite definite whether this applies to every day or just to one visit a week. But no matter, I am deliriously happy. I had never expected that we could have more than this. It may not seem much to other people, but for me it is paradise; joy and sorrow are relative, especially joy.

*December 29, 1939*

Alas, the good news has been modified already. Permission for the visit was granted only for to-day; as to future visits nothing is definite. Once more my joy was premature; I reproach myself for believing the good news so easily. But we had our three hours together. It was the first time that we met as

man and wife—without a guard or a policeman standing by our side. The good-bye was harder than ever.

The authorities impressed on us that Vera was strictly forbidden to take anything written out of my room, and that we may not discuss politics. Well, they need not worry. There is nothing in my room that would be of interest to anybody in the wide world, and as far as politics are concerned, my present attitude is so passive, my interest in such questions so minute, that it borders on apathy, which is probably also forbidden. Besides, I am not so stupid as to aggravate our situation.

*December 31, 1939*

The year is ending, thank God. It has ended well enough for me, and what the new year will bring is still a big question mark. It will probably bring a new promise, then a disappointment, then another promise, and so on—the usual method of one step ahead and three back. Why do I, then, wish for the new year?

*March 23, 1941*

I have not kept a diary for over a year. But to-day is an important day, and I shall write again. God has given us a child: Maria Dolores Elisabeth. We are both very happy. My wife can stay in the Red Cross hospital for two weeks. Then she will go back to the boarding-house where she lives now, while we wait for a decision on our future.

For the sake of continuity I shall report the few happenings in an otherwise uneventful year of waiting. From January 1st, 1940, on, my wife got permission to visit me twice a week for three hours. We were told that in early spring a definite arrangement would be completed, so that we could live together. Nothing ever happened. At Easter, 1940, I was questioned by letter, as witness in the trial against Councillor Schier and Minister Ludwig, the former chief of the Austrian Press Department, who were accused of alleged corruption. Furthermore, I had to answer questions as a witness in a trial against officials of the Austrian militia, who were indicted for alleged fraud. I was given lengthy questionnaires to fill in.

Subsequently several of my answers appeared in the papers—torn from their context, distorted, and forged; in one word, suitable for propaganda purposes. But nevertheless the court in Vienna acquitted on all major counts. Schier was found guilty on a minor charge, probably in order to save face. The

Nazi Press, which had reported the most lurid details and "revelations" throughout the trial, looked pretty silly.

In June, 1940, I had a visit by the chief of the Munich Gestapo. He told me that plans for my evacuation had unfortunately been delayed, but according to news from Berlin everything was now ready, and Vera and I could move into our new surroundings in the immediate future. At Christmas 1940 my wife was still living in her boarding-house in Munich, and I was still in the same room in the Gestapo prison. Nothing worth noting happened until the birth of our child to-day.

*April 1, 1941*

The chief of the prison tells me to-day he has been informed that we shall be moved to permanent lodgings before the beginning of summer. To-day is the 1st of April!

*September 12, 1941*

The inquisition swung into action once more to-day. "Whom did you inform of the conversations and events of February 12, 1938, in Berchtesgaden?" This was the question I had to answer on paper, allegedly in connection with documents found in the Paris archives.

*October 4, 1941*

A little prison intrigue, which has been going on for some time, came to a head to-day.

More than a year ago a new chief took over the prison. Immediately the food got noticeably worse. I suffered least, because I was entitled to "extra rations" on doctor's orders. But I felt the difference between the old and the new diet very much, and I can imagine what it must have been for the other prisoners. I did not say anything, because I had decided as a matter of principle not to complain. The "Chief", an S.S. *Obersturmfuehrer* from the Rhineland, and his wife enjoyed a hearty breakfast every day—and in public, so to speak. The tray that was brought into his quarters was well stocked with eggs and the other things that go with a good breakfast, in spite of the shortages that the third year of war imposed on everybody. There was considerable tension between the Chief from northern Germany and the rest of the prison personnel, who hailed, almost without exception, from the south. The tension was even greater between the wife of the Chief and the prison cook. The latter urged me to file a complaint that

I was not getting my due. There was a strange custom in the Munich prison, really an abuse; the prison chief was in charge of the food doled out to the prisoners, and according to his decision this could be much or little. Our former chief had not given us any cause for complaint, but the new chief—or rather his wife—chose to make the most of the situation. They were S.S. people, and in view of the temptation and the official tolerance of this abuse, one could not expect anything else.

The comradeship between the S.S. men, however, was not as solid as it looked. The guards took me into their confidence, and explained to me that the Chief was making about two thousand marks every month on what he “saved”—by doling out reduced rations. In the end the cook made an official complaint, and the Chief and his wife were removed from office.

*November 9, 1941*

We got another chief to-day—the third since my arrival in this prison. And this time it looks as if it were the last chief that I am to see here. My wife was told to go to Berlin to prepare our new lodgings.

*December 8, 1941*

Yesterday an official of the Gestapo Central in Berlin informed me that my train was leaving in the evening. Like all other Gestapo officials I have ever come across, he was called Mueller. In the evening I was taken to the train, and my two Gestapo companions and I journeyed to Berlin in a reserved compartment, second class, on the night express. We arrived next morning and drove from Berlin by car via Oranienburg to the concentration camp of Sachsenhausen.

### XIII

#### AMONG THE LIVING DEAD

July 1, 1942

SACHSENHAUSEN IS a vast unit, a whole city of shacks and barracks set in a flat, sandy landscape, with a few copses of Scotch fir here and there. It is a strange country, sober and austere, and, in spite of its many water-courses, dry as a desert. It is the country of which the German poet Theodore Fontane sings, in which Frederick the Great built his country seats, which to its inhabitants—apparently kindly, decent folk—appears beautiful because it is their home, but which to all others who have the misfortune to come here is a punishment in itself.

Behind the hopelessness of the notorious walls reigns grey, nameless misery. The lives of anonymous numbers, up to sixty thousand and over, for an undetermined space of time have no meaning but the words concentration camp.

All of them, every single one, has a number, and the sum of all these numbers is but an unreal, impersonal, and immutable zero. A host, composed of men and women from all countries, from all classes and professions: good-for-nothings and political leaders; civilians and soldiers; grandfathers and children; diseased and healthy; stoics and frenzied, fighting their own shadows; living and dead. . . . Concentration camp is nothing but a word for human despair, condemned to absolute silence. There is not a nation in Europe that has not had for many years an ambassador of misery at the Court of Lucifer, in Sachsenhausen. At the end of the camp unit, barred both from the camp and from the outside world, lies the "Special Prisoners' Colony". A machine-gun tower, complete with floodlights, several rows of high concrete walls, each equipped with a border of high-tension barbed wire, and a company of special guards "protect" our "safety".

Four large blockhouse structures, separated from each other by high walls, and each with about one thousand feet of sand-

covered space, are within the enclosure. Immediately in front of our particular structure, and again separated by a wall from us and the rest of the camp, is a long pigsty emanating a suffocating stench, and next to it the crematorium, almost constantly emitting thick clouds of smoke and steam.

Between the barracks emaciated forms, with ashen faces and flickering eyes, drag themselves to and fro in absolute silence. It is strictly forbidden to talk or to look. The guard on our machine-gun tower, who looks almost directly into our windows, can be clearly heard night and day as he stamps his feet, whistles, or sings. In honour of our arrival he sang an obscene parody on the *Te Deum* and then the Viennese song, "Vienna, City of My Dreams". Vienna, yes, that is a thing of the past and we shall probably never see it again.

This is Sachsenhausen, where, after three years and nine months of waiting, we now take up residence for an undetermined period of further waiting.

July 2, 1942

Late this evening a special announcement on the radio informed us of the fall of Sevastopol. Along the entire eastern front an offensive is beginning. In North Africa the fighting moves closer to Alexandria.

Special announcements on the radio are—as is everything else nowadays—accompanied by a particular ceremony. If the announcement is really important, these ceremonies are as elaborate as on the occasion of a Hitler speech. Everything can be mechanized, especially the mind. But not the emotions.

The success of German arms is stupendous. It would be silly to deny this. Their military machine seems to work perfectly, and it is evident that the German soldiers are among the toughest and best in the world.

This morning several trucks laden with young uniformed S.S. men came roaring past the camp. The S.S. men all craned their necks to get at least a fleeting glimpse of the misery behind these walls. As they passed I distinctly heard them shout "Schuschnigg". The noise of the trucks swallowed the abusive terms which I did not hear, but which doubtless accompanied my name. Poor devils! They are being carted to the battlefields. But it is amusing to think that it is not so easy



to "eliminate" people as long as they are alive. After all, the strictest orders went out to the effect that my name was not to be mentioned in the concentration camp. I am officially called Dr. Auster, and listed as such in the books. Nobody is supposed to know that I am here. And yet—howling S.S. men rush by our camp in a truck and shout "Schuschnigg". German propagandists did everything to make the name "popular", and now this whole "Auster" comedy is not enough to cloak my identity.

The incident is not important, but it upsets me all the same. In the fifth year of this most unnatural life I ask for only one thing: to be left alone. Quiet.

Anyway, I continue to dig in my garden, and am as happy as a child when something grows in this sandy soil.

July 3, 1942

The first cornflower is blooming! It is like a feast day to see a flower grow and bloom, even here.

Along the outside wall the camp commander, Lorritz, has decided to make a garden. Doves of emaciated, hungry prisoners work there rain or shine, while the guards roar and bellow at them. Trucks bring top-soil. Poor people—or perhaps poor commander.

July 11, 1942

My son Kurt came to-day. He is now sixteen years old. The authorities formally gave their consent that he might spend one week of this summer vacation with me—in the concentration camp. Our existence here would be quite tolerable, if the undercurrent of constant hope and fear could be ignored. It is simply not possible to feel at home in a concentration camp with high-tension wire, fences, and machine-gun towers. Try as we may, our "happiness" is forced and unnatural. It is not enough when I say *Mea culpa*. It clears my head and helps me to bear my lot; but it does not soothe.

July 18, 1942

We heard a long speech by Hitler to-day.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

July 22, 1942

I read to-day in the *Voelkischer Beobachter* an editorial commemorating the fiftieth birthday of Artur Seyss-Inquart. That in itself is not remarkable, but it struck me that they warmed up all the lies and atrocity stories of Austria before its "liberation" by the Anschluss. Dr. Jury signed the editorial. I know that he knows that what he wrote to-day is lies. He is an Austrian, he was a Government official before the Anschluss—he knows. Yet he repeats these lies. I can understand that German propaganda had to lie in 1938, in order to camouflage the open act of aggression. But to-day, four years later, when all the cards are on the table, it is no longer necessary to lie . . . or is it?

July 23, 1942

To-day, for the first time in fifty-three months, we received the sum of four hundred and fifty marks from the Central Security Office, and we were informed that this sum would be paid to us monthly from now on. This is a surprise, especially the amount. Half of it will go to Munich, where my son Kurt is at a private school. Since he may not go to school in Austria, I tried to send him somewhere where the Nazi influence is felt as little as possible. I found this school in Munich, which is rather expensive, but where he is in good hands, and that is a great comfort to me.

So far we have had to pay for everything connected with our captivity. Sixty marks a month go to the warehouse in Vienna where my furniture was taken in 1938. The journey from Munich to Sachsenhausen was also expensive, and on the whole I have found that it is just as costly to live in a concentration camp as outside. I have been a prisoner now for four years. Now things will be easier. But if one looks closely, these four hundred and fifty marks from the Nazis are in a way the thirty silver pieces of old. Only they can breed "supermen", but not a Judas Iscariot.

July 25, 1942

To-day in Vienna the Nazis celebrate the anniversary of the glorious failure of the Putsch in July, 1934. The *Voelkischer Beobachter* writes about the Nazis who murdered Chancellor Dollfuss: "They died as the vanguard of the glorious Wehr-

macht." Alas, as things turned out, this is true. Thousands and thousands were sacrificed to the madness of one man.

Vera is in Berlin, where she underwent an operation. She is to come back to-night. May God grant that her operation will bring the relief we hope for. She suffers terribly, and for her everything is just twice as bad. One cannot stand up to a life like ours if one is in bad health; and Vera is here by her own free will, as a matter of choice.

August 21, 1942

Vera is wonderful. I owe her an immense debt of gratitude. Her straightforwardness, her attitude towards the times and the people, her absolute self-sacrifice are admirable. I can learn a great deal from her. She carries her burden with many other women who worry about husbands and children. The fate of a woman can be harder than anything that a man has to face.

Hitler's propaganda knows very well why the German woman is again and again praised, appealed to, and depended on. If Austria should ever rise again, then it will be thanks to the Austrian women, although whether we shall live to see this is very doubtful.

September 6, 1942

Vera and Sissy are back from Vienna. Yesterday the guard brought me all the letters which Vera had sent since August from Vienna. He apologizes and says it was a regrettable mistake.

September 10, 1942

The *Voelkischer Beobachter* is running a serial novel by Robert Hohlbaum called *The Last Fight*. In this book the heroic struggle of the Nazis in Austria prior to the Anschluss is glorified. The author is a former Austrian Civil Servant, a State librarian, and hails—of course—from Iglau in Czechoslovakia. The book is not very interesting, and in places very naive; there is only one sentence in it which deserves notice: "Hitler is God." In spite of the obvious propaganda, I enjoyed reading the book all the same, with the joy one feels if one sees a caricature, even malicious and grossly distorted, of a loved one.

I saw in the papers to-day that Dr. Robert Hohlbaum has been appointed chief librarian of the libraries in Weimar.

Heil Hitler!

o (Austrian Requiem)

*September 22, 1942*

It looks now as if the Russians are going to hold Stalingrad longer than the Fuehrer had expected. How long shall we still be kept in ignorance of the truth? I am afraid for a long time yet.

*September 29, 1942*

To-day we are having a grand spring cleaning, and all of a sudden we have gardeners; and all this because another Herr Mueller from the Gestapo is coming to inspect us. For us it was good enough—but for inspection, that is different.

*September 30, 1942*

As it turned out, our preparations were not for Herr Mueller from the Gestapo, but for Herr Himmler of the same firm. We did not see him, but, on the whole, camp inspection by Himmler carries some advantages. He seems to be very strict with his own men, and has a reputation for stopping at least the worst cases of corruption and of abuse of authority. But only on a small scale. For the biggest case of corruption is the institution, and the methods of the concentration camp, with all the trimmings, and not least the S.S. troops—Himmler's own personal invention.

*October 4, 1942*

"*Multi enim sunt vocati, pauci vero electi*" (Matt. 20. 16). I enjoy myself when I can spend a quiet day here.

*October 24, 1942*

Perhaps I am unjust. A life like this takes an enormous amount of patience. It consumes a passionate temperament and reduces all other energies. Many things I should take in my stride now after four years; but there are some things one cannot get used to, especially when one is past the prime of life. And all this is much harder on a woman. No—I must be quiet and content.

*November 1, 1942*

About a week ago the British offensive started in North Africa.

November 8, 1942

According to the radio, the Americans and the British have landed in Morocco and Algiers—or, as the original newspaper account has it: “An impudent Anglo-Saxon assault.” Hitler speaks on the radio—one of his weakest speeches, full of the usual abuse.

November 15, 1942

“Marshal Rommel’s army detaches itself successfully from the enemy in the region of Cyrenaica.” That is the text of the communiqué. The *Voelkischer Beobachter* rages. Apparently all is not as it should be. Five days ago the Germans and Italians occupied the south of France, which so far had escaped occupation; but Toulon remains free, and so does the French fleet which is anchored there.

November 17, 1942

German and Italian units are being landed at Tunis.

November 27, 1942

Hitler orders the occupation of Toulon. The officers of the French fleet scuttle their ships in that harbour. Hitler writes an “open letter” to Pétain. It is another case of modern interpretation of treaties, and a new experience for the French in Hitler’s inimitable style. One might call it Napoleonic, but it is awful German grammar.

On the eastern front the Russians seem to have launched a counter-offensive on the 22nd. From what we can hear it must be a large-scale operation.

November 30, 1942

No encouragement for the Nazis on any of the fronts, and on the eastern front the German army seems to retreat. This we concluded from the stereotyped communiqués: “An attack of the enemy was repelled. The enemy suffered relatively high casualties.”

On the seas the German submarines sink about 120,000 British registered tons every three days—at least, according to the German statistics. The enemy is made fun of because “they have not the courage to admit the full extent of their losses”. Ha-ha.

Here in Germany they don't even admit part of their losses. For years now the ratio of aircraft losses is quoted here as one German plane lost to four British. On the eastern front the ratio is even 1:12.

*December 2, 1942*

Mussolini spoke to-day before the Cabinet. The excerpts that we get in the German papers give the impression of an effective and powerful speech. He seems slightly on the defensive in parts, but rather frank in others. He said, for instance: "Let us not forget that Rome won the war after the defeat of Cannae. . . ."

In any case, Mussolini says more than we ever hear in this country, and, what is more, he says it better. He does not wallow in abuse, like his northern colleague. But why Italy ever joined in the war is no clearer now than it was before the speech—rather less so.

Years ago, and for a period of sixty-eight years, this day, the 2nd of December, was dedicated to the memory of the coronation of Franz Josef.

*December 6, 1942*

To-day we had a surprise. Four food parcels arrived from the American Red Cross for us. The address read: "Prisoner of War, Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg, Vienna I, Hotel Metropole." And what wonderful things: coffee, chocolate, corned beef, Chesterfields—a wealth of delights that we had almost forgotten! But not only the things in the packages; it was also good to hear myself called by my real name. But, above all, it is an immense joy and consolation to know that someone outside in the world thinks of us.

The sender was Francis Hofer, New York, N.Y. I don't know him. I wish I could thank him and tell him how deeply we appreciate his kindness. And this is not the first time that he has thought of us. Some years ago we received two other packages, and earlier still—quite at the beginning—we several times received money from him. These remittances were usually accompanied by several hours of "inquisition".

I wonder whether he knows how much he has helped us materially and morally. I would give a lot to let him know, but, alas, we shall probably never have an opportunity.

*Christmas, 1942*

"We are sitting round a little Christmas tree . . . "and peace to men of good will".

"Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not . . . for it is written: Vengeance belongeth unto me. I will recompense, saith the Lord. . . . Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12. 14 *et seq.*).

*January 1, 1943*

Where to? How long? The last year? No, I rather think two more.

"And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth" (Rev. 6. 8).

*January 15, 1943*

Goebbels' speeches get more violent and passionate every day. The chief subjects of all his excitement are the events of the eastern front and President Roosevelt.

In Russia things do not seem to progress according to plan; in fact, we have the impression here that everything has gone wrong. And, if one can judge from the fury with which Roosevelt is being abused here, it seems that they are really afraid of the American statesman. Things in Africa have come more or less to a temporary standstill.

Thank God that we are in possession of a radio that will give us the "enemy broadcasts" as well. As it is, we don't get half enough, and often when we manage to hear a foreign station it is blurred by statics or jamming devices. Yet we do get a glimpse now and then of what is really going on in the world. London seems to be the best station. Their news-casts are excellent, comprehensive and convincing, and their other broadcasts are also very good. While the London propagandists are agile and quick like fencers, their German colleagues fight clumsily with cudgels and sledge-hammers. Of course, we have to be careful with our radio and we risk a lot. Yet it is better to risk something than to be cut off completely from world events, and to be reduced to the diet of lies that the German radio serves us daily.

January 18, 1943

The excitement has now reached the camp. Everywhere new air-raid shelters are dug and other protective measures are being taken. The British raids are a serious threat.

January 25, 1943

Tripoli is British! The situation is very serious on the Russian front, although the army communiqués try their best to make it look normal. Anyone who has learned to read between the lines of such official announcements knows that things are growing rapidly worse.

January 30, 1943

To-day is Jubilee Day. Ten years ago Hitler came to power. Great celebrations; but Hitler did not address the German people, as usual. Instead, we had Goering in the morning and Goebbels in the afternoon—both speeches interrupted by daylight raids of the British.

February 2, 1943

The battle of Stalingrad is over. The German troops were encircled and finally gave up. According to the newspapers here, the entire Sixth Army has been wiped out and everyone, including Field-Marshal Paulus, is dead. Three days of national mourning are ordered. The propagandists turn the defeat into a success. "A heroic feat—such as the world has never seen before. . . . A sacrifice like that of the Nibelungen . . . but not in vain, because the planned German resistance on the banks of the Volga has saved the eastern front for us. . . ."

February 3, 1943

In the meantime, all Tripolitania has become English. The Italians have now lost all their colonies.

The *Voelkischer Beobachter* prints a manly word of consolation every day. If it is not Hitler's own it is at least a quotation from Von Clausewitz, or Ludendorff, or the German philosopher Fichte.

February 12, 1943

Five years ago to-day I stood before Hitler at Berchtesgaden.

The rest is silence. . . .

Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.

(*Hamlet*)



*February 13, 1943*

Rostov and Voroshilovgrad have been won by the Russians.

*February 18, 1943*

The Germans have cleared out of Kharkov. In Tunisia the Americans seem to be withdrawing locally to consolidate their forces. Here this is made into a great victory of German arms.

To-night at 8 p.m. Goebbels spoke in the Sportspalast in Berlin. He used the tactics of Mussolini, by asking rhetorical questions in public, and, hearing the inevitable applause, called it afterwards a "plebiscite". "Do you want us to wage war even more radically—even more totally? More fiercely than we can imagine it to-day???" And the answer: "Yes—hooray, Heil Hitler. . . ." A plebiscite indeed. Mankind wishes for nothing better than destruction and war. What a farce!

*June 13, 1943*

For the last four months I have written nothing. There are times when one has not got the strength to write—not even a diary. Energy and will to live are paralyzed, or else used up completely in the absorbing and utterly senseless struggle with everyday life. Such periods are terribly depressing.

To-day is Pentecost. Much has happened since I made my last entry in this diary. I shall therefore briefly note down the most important events since March, 1943.

*March, 1943*

German counter-offensive in Russia. Kharkov and the Donets line have been won. Here at home total war is the slogan of the time.

*April, 1943*

Fierce air raids on Germany, some of them on Berlin. Fighting continues in Africa.

*April 20, 1943*

Hitler's birthday. Goebbels spoke, and afterwards we heard the Ninth Symphony by Beethoven. The combination as such made any commentary superfluous. Hitler himself has not spoken in public for several months, except once for fifteen minutes on German Memorial Day.

May, 1943

Tunis and Bizerte have fallen to the English and Americans. For one week we had air-raid alarms at exactly midnight, but no actual raids.

June 5, 1943

Goebbels and Production Minister Speer spoke in the Sportpalast in Berlin. The former restrained himself to great objectivity, the latter regaled us in the usual, typical Prussian style.

June 12, 1943

Lampedusa and Pantelleria in the hands of the Allies.

June 13, 1943

Air raid at midnight. According to papers here, German U-boat activity has been curtailed during May and June. They sink now between 400,000 and 600,000 tons a month. That is considerably less than the tonnage considered a necessary monthly minimum by the Admiralty in the *last war*, 1914-18. The Propaganda Ministry prepares the people for revenge on England with mysterious threats. Secret weapons of unheard-of efficiency will be used in retaliation for the terror attacks on German cities.

June 20, 1943

The air-raid alarms sound night and day. The *Voelkischer Beobachter* rages about the "terror attacks" on the Rhineland. The devastation must be terrible, the suffering immense. Next to the report on the destruction in the Rhineland there is an editorial signed by Theo Seibert and entitled "The German Method":

"... it is true that the art of peaceful co-operation is not one of Germany's strong points; but the great days that we live through now are a present from the Fuehrer, who has freed Germany from insufferable limitations. . . . Had the Fuehrer waited for the so-called right moment, had he waited for the peaceful settlement of questions like the militarization of the Rhineland, the Saar, reparations, etc., then Herr Schuschnigg would still be in Vienna terrorizing the National Socialists."

That indeed would be worst of all. I can see the people in the Rhineland thank the Fuehrer on their knees that he arranged things so that they are homeless and wandering among the ruins of their houses—rather than have the horrible knowledge that Herr Schuschnigg terrorizes their party comrades in Vienna.

*July, 1943*

Hard fighting has broken out in the centre of the Russian front. The U-boat sinkings have been further reduced, so that now their monthly takings stand at less than 200,000 tons. The Foreign Ministry in Berlin produces "White Books" by the dozen. There is a collection of documents to "prove" that Roosevelt started the war and another which "proves" Britain's responsibility for the air war. All this is a "stop-thief" manoeuvre lest somebody here remember that it was Hitler who was armed to the teeth in 1939, and not Great Britain.

*July 10, 1943*

The battle for Sicily has begun!

*July 24, 1943*

All southern and western Sicily, including the cities of Palermo, Marsala, and Trapani, are in the hands of the Allies.

In the east a great offensive of the Russians.

In the north night and day attacks on Hamburg.

*July 25, 1943*

Mussolini has abdicated!!! We hear this news from the B.B.C. in London. It is as if history could not forgo its irony, since Mussolini's downfall comes exactly nine years—to the day—after Dollfuss's assassination.

Dollfuss paid for Hitler's hatred with his life. Mussolini pays for his friendship with considerably less. And everything would have been different if Mussolini had not changed his course in 1937. Had he adhered to the pact of Stresa, had he co-operated with the Western Powers to maintain the *status quo* in Central Europe and in the Mediterranean, then there would still be an Austria to-day, no world war, and no Italy on the brink of collapse.

July 27, 1943

Fascism in Italy is apparently finished. Its main exponents are partly eliminated, partly arrested, partly banished.

July 31, 1943

The *Voelkischer Beobachter* tells us that Hitler has given Mussolini "a unique edition of unparalleled splendour of the complete words of Nietzsche" for his sixtieth birthday. I find the choice of the gift and the circumstances under which Mussolini receives it no less unique or unparalleled than the edition.

August 17, 1943

The Battle of Sicily is over and won. The B.B.C. gives a short communiqué: "Allied troops entered Messina and completed the conquest of Sicily in thirty-eight days." Berlin version: "One of the greatest military achievements in history has just been carried out by the German troops in Sicily. With incomparable skill the German armies managed to detach themselves from the enemy, whose clumsy, hesitating, and altogether inadequate strategy could only be dealt with through the wise foresight of our military leaders."

August 20, 1943

In the east German defensive action continues. There are no new developments in the south. The Allied air offensive continues with undiminished strength.

August 23, 1943

Terrific air attack on Berlin last night. The Germans are finding out what their "total war" means. Ludendorff theorized along exactly the same lines. He invented total war, and for ten years Berlin bullied mankind—only they never thought that their invention would be applied to them.

August 24, 1943

It seems that the Allies are preparing a propaganda campaign. Here at least it has been announced with the usual abuse and "indignation". Apparently they take such a threat seriously and are afraid of it. Perhaps it is because someone in the Berlin Propaganda Ministry remembered what Moltke wrote more than half a century ago: "By propaganda the

enemy must be paralyzed and then destroyed." Not a pretty phrase. In English it sounds perhaps even worse than in German; but the new Germany has had spectacular luck in whatever she has undertaken so far. And success hides the ugly stilts on which she moves.

*August 25, 1943*

Heinrich Himmler has been appointed Minister of the Interior and Plenipotentiary for the Administration of the Reich. It seems that the "home front" is beginning to take shape.

*August 27, 1943*

The Germans have lost Kharkov once more. Also Orel and Taganrog. The gains of the spring offensive have thus been lost again. In the south the British and Americans are standing off the Italian mainland. Here the air attacks increase—if not in frequency, certainly in volume. Hamburg seems to be completely destroyed; and on August 24 Berlin had its first taste of the full fury of these new raids.

In Bulgaria, King Boris has died suddenly "after a brief but grave illness". He had been to Berchtesgaden shortly before to visit Hitler. It looks suspicious. Martial law has been proclaimed by the Germans in occupied Denmark; relations with Sweden are rather tense.

*September 1, 1943*

Midnight. The raid on Berlin has lasted for two hours without interruption. For those who have managed to keep a clear mind since 1939, these bombs appear as the writing on the wall.

*September 3, 1943*

On the 1st of September, 1939, Hitler marched into Poland. On the 3rd England declared war. Thus for Berlin the war began on the 3rd. Consequently, we celebrate the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the war to-day with much noise and festivity. At least, on paper—or, rather, in the papers. Another terrific midnight raid on Berlin provided the fireworks for their celebration. On the radio we hear that the Allies have landed on the Italian mainland.

September 9, 1943

Yesterday Italy capitulated. It is the first message of peace. Or is it?

In the evening we heard the first broadcast by the "New Fascist Government", which flooded the air with appeals to the Italian population. Their broadcasts were relayed by the German network. "Italians: The traitor Badoglio has been deposed. The New Fascist Government is in complete control of the situation in all Italy in the name of Mussolini. There is no reason for panic. Militarily, everything is in excellent order."

September 10, 1943

Rome has been occupied by the Germans. The Vatican is under the protection of the Wehrmacht and presumably of the S.S. Hitler spoke to-night from his headquarters, and sounded rather subdued. That need not, however, be an indication of his mood. Whenever he speaks into a microphone, without an audience of thousands of frenzied admirers, his speeches always fall flat. The whole speech lasted only twenty minutes, and, against all expectations, he did not wallow in abuse. As an introduction he asserted that he was not surprised that everything had happened according to schedule. Then he dwelt on Badoglio's treachery with some warmth and launched into a panegyric of Mussolini: the old friend, the greatest Italian since Roman times, etc. However, he found it necessary to point out that nothing of the sort could happen to Germany. He, his generals and admirals would never be exposed to that sort of danger. He concluded by saying that all the necessary steps had been taken, and that now Germany was no longer hampered by Italy, and could go the whole hog. The punishment for Italy must be terrible, he assured us. No one can ever beat us: "*Deutschland ueber Alles*". He never mentioned Russia, and, as far as the air war is concerned, he contented himself with a hint of new things to come, new weapons that would not only stop Britain's offensive, but would pay her back with interest.

September 12, 1943

There are times when it is particularly hard to be in the dark. We study the map of Italy again and again, just as we did almost thirty years ago as schoolboys during the first year of the

First World War. Again and again my thoughts return to Rome, immortal, eternal, incomparable city.

In 410 it was plundered by Alarich the Goth, in 455 by his kinsman Geiserich. Then, between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, it saw the German armies more than once before its gates. In 1527 Rome was devastated in the famous *sacco di Roma* under Charles V. From 1799 until 1814 it was under Napoleonic rule; in 1943 under Hitler's swastika!

I don't think that any country ever went into a war with less reason than Italy in 1940. The aims were Corsica, Nice, Tunisia, and Djibuti, or, at least, those were the official goals. For Tunisia and Djibuti Italy had not sufficient strength, and Corsica and Nice would only be unhappy under Italian rule. And, what is more, a few years ago the Italian people were not even aware that Nice and Corsica were essential ingredients to their happiness.

*September 13, 1943*

Mussolini has been liberated from his arrest in the Italian mountains. An Austrian Nazi led the expedition. The news alarms us somewhat because we don't quite understand how such a thing can happen. In general, the news from Italy is not encouraging, and it is beginning to look as if the capitulation were merely a gesture. The misery that has weighed down the people for four years has not ended. The longer this state lasts the worse it will be.

*September 23, 1943*

The German army detaches itself according to plan from the enemy. This sentence is now a constant feature in the communiqués concerning the situation in the east, as well as in the south. Mussolini spoke on the radio; his gratitude to the German people, his hatred of the house of Savoy—his speech contained nothing else.

There is no doubt the political figure that he once was, the historical man who ruled Italy, has lost his glamour, his influence, his country. I wonder whether Italy will have its usual luck, and will manage to be among the victors before this war is over. I wish it would, because without a strong, alive Italy there can be no Europe.

*October 20, 1943*

We spent a strange and alarming night. First there was the constant wail of the air-raid sirens. The attack was not one of the strongest, but very near. Detonation after detonation, light effects, and a rain, or rather hail, of debris.

In the "Special House" next to ours we heard screams for help and sounds of great excitement. A baby was being born. In the midst of all this destruction a new life was beginning. The event had been expected for days. Officially everything was in readiness, but when the time came there was no midwife, no doctor, and no vehicle to take the unfortunate mother to a hospital. Yet every second Sunday we are supposed to contribute to the section of the Nazi "Winter Help" for the care of mothers and children.

The hours crept on towards dawn. Suddenly a rifle report, followed by half a dozen more shots. The floodlights of the watch-towers moved along the walls and houses. We could hear someone groaning near the barbed-wire fence. So could the guards. A few more shots, a scream, and silence.

One of our comrades need no longer suffer. Somewhere in this camp a number of five numerals has been scratched from the books. It was nothing extraordinary, nothing abnormal. Shortly afterwards we heard the report from the changing guards: "Nothing to report."

And that was the worst. There is never anything to report.

*October 27, 1943*

The Germans have cleared out of Dnepropetrovsk. The Russians advance on Krivoy Rog. Bitter fighting at the Dnieper bend. Nothing new from Italy.

*October 28, 1943*

"The most unfortunate situation into which a State can fall is that when neither peace can be accepted nor war can be continued. . . . But into such a situation the State can only fall if it has followed a clumsy and mistaken policy, and if it over-rated its own forces." (Macchiavelli, Disc. II, 24.)

*November 9, 1943*

It is twenty years now since Hitler first started his career with the unsuccessful Putsch in Munich. To commemorate the occasion, Hitler spoke last night at the "historic" brewery in



Munich: "... I will not capitulate ... I will never lose my nerve ... I will ... I am ... I ... I ... I ..."

As usual it was mostly "I's", and he rolled his "r's" ferociously, in order to make up for the lack of good news, which was of course conspicuously absent from his speech.

I believe him, though, when he says that he will not capitulate. I also believe that he is a madman.

*November 19, 1943*

To-day is the feast of Saint Elizabeth.

Last night we had one of the heaviest air raids yet.

*November 22, 1943*

Terrific air attack on Berlin at 8 p.m.

*November 23, 1943*

Another heavy air raid on Berlin at 8 p.m.

*November 25, 1943*

It is night. The burning capital of Germany throws an eerie light on the cloudy, foggy landscape.

"... Two or three years after the victory everything will be rebuilt—much better and much finer than ever before ... let them destroy the houses to their hearts' content; it will save us the trouble of tearing them down. ... " Thus Hitler in his brewery speech three weeks ago.

*December 2, 1943*

The conferences of Cairo and Teheran state: "The war is lost for Hitler."

Goebbels and Ribbentrop declare on the radio: "No power on earth can wrench from us the certain final victory."

In London the discussions about the future face of Europe seem to increase in frequency and importance. Germany is to be rendered powerless in any case. Some factions are for the dismemberment of Germany; others—perhaps the realists—oppose this plan. Here only one word counts: hatred and hatred and more hatred. Eternal hatred and revenge—that is the slogan given by Goebbels.

The destruction, the devastation? As Hitler said in a speech in 1938 at Nuremberg, speaking of Albrecht Duerer: "Certainly

It is a shame to lose his works. And it is a shame to see the works of the old Gothic masters destroyed. But, after all, what do they amount to, so long as we have an Organization Todt" (a Nazi organization charged with the fortification of Germany, Siegfried Line, etc.) "and a man like Speer" (production minister) "and the Reich Labour Service? Not the cathedrals and the stadiums are the documents of our modern revolutionary culture for the people."

Meanwhile, the mothers stand by the wayside all over the world calling their sons—those who have died already and those who are still to die before this is over.

#### *Christmas, 1943*

On the 24th, in the early morning, we had one of the heaviest air raids on Berlin. The cacophony was continued in the evening in a "Christmas speech" by Goebbels; the essence was: hatred, hatred, more hatred forever. In accordance with their usual good taste, they should have played Beethoven's "Ode to Joy"—but for once they did not. We shall probably hear it on Hitler's birthday—or perhaps for New Year's Eve.

The editorial of the Christmas edition of the *Voelkischer Beobachter* reads in part:

"... Christmas, this thoroughly German feast, has fought for two thousand years against any dogmatic limitation, because it lies deeply anchored in the character of the German people, and its very essence is deeper and more solid than the foreign varnish with which it has been smeared."

#### *January 1, 1944*

To start the new year, I listened first to Goebbels' New Year's speech, and then read Schiller's drama *Die Raueber*, which struck me as appropriate. There I read:

"... Woe on me, fool, that I thought to embellish the world by atrocities, and to uphold the law by lawlessness. I called it Revenge and Right. I presumed, O Destiny, to smooth out the jagged edge of thy sword, to make amends for thy partiality; vainglorious attempt: here I stand at the brink of a terrible life, and perceive with weeping and gnashing of teeth that two men like me would destroy the entire structure of the moral world. . . ."

January 2, 1944

I thumbed through a collection of my old speeches to-day:

"The ruins which are made in Austria will be the barricades which point to the next war." (Speech in August, 1934, at Berg Isel, near Innsbruck.)

"Quite rightly has it been said in all great centres of the world that Austria is the guarantee for peace in Europe." (Speech at Salzburg, January 20, 1935.)

"Wherever the forces of European unity and co-operation are at work, little Austria will be among them; because it knows that it is not only geographically, but also in all other, more important, respects, indivisibly connected with the concept of Europe, and that its destiny is without a doubt the destiny of Europe. . . ." (Speech at the Pan-Europa Congress, May, 1935.)

January 15, 1944

Ciano has been executed, together with Marshal de Bono and a number of other well-known Fascists. Others, like Alfieri, Grandi, etc., have been condemned to death *in absentia et contumacia*. Hardly one of the former leaders remains in office.

The why and the wherefore will presumably remain a riddle for some time to come; especially why just those men who were known as Germanophiles, and who seemed to have been responsible for Mussolini's catastrophic policy, had to meet their end now. And why did Mussolini not know of their "treachery" before? The crime of which they are accused is that they accepted a resolution of the "Grand Council" which was directed against Mussolini. But was not that the very function of the "Grand Council"? Was it not an institution where one could voice a differing opinion?

There are many question-marks connected with it. But I do not believe that Mussolini signed the death sentences himself. There must have been someone else who directed the affair. The things that have just happened in Verona bear a striking resemblance to the events in Germany on June 30, 1934. The adoption of such methods in Italy means only one thing: fascism is dead—thanks to the Germans—and replaced by nazism. Thank God, Italy is immortal; and also the eternal German spirit, the good and decent side, will survive all this humiliation and criminality; and let us hope that in coming years it will be proof against the evil spirits of to-day.

*January 21, 1944*

The Allies have landed at Nettuno, fifty kilometres south of Rome. The winter battle in the east shows only local results so far.

*January 30, 1944*

Eleven years of Hitler! The Fuehrer grows for twenty minutes into a microphone to celebrate the day. No audience, no applause; a poor speech. He said nothing about the situation on the fronts. He only repeated his conviction that Germany will win in the end.

The heavy air attacks on Berlin continue.

*February 15-21, 1944*

The air attacks get heavier and heavier. But the Germans claim that London is being bombed by way of repayment.

Altogether everyone here expects developments with increasing excitement, for it seems that both sides are holding back their trump cards. Maybe the spring will bring the decision, or, if not, then at least a decisive turn. So far a decided advantage cannot yet be seen. In Russia the German lines hold fast—although far behind where they stood last year. In Italy the Allies seem to stand still. The thought of Italy as a battlefield, and the fate of Rome, is enough to bring one close to despair. In the air the Germans seem to catch up slowly. Japan is too far away for us to judge the situation with any degree of accuracy. The propaganda war is in full swing. German, Russian, and American reports are equally coarse and clumsy, and inspire equally little confidence. The English reports are considerably better.

*March 25, 1944*

The *Voelkischer Beobachter* reports that Hitler has given a new Government to Hungary and that German troops have occupied the country. Everybody is happy now.

The air attacks on Berlin continue with undiminished fury.

*Easter, 1944*

My son Kurt came for a few days. After much searching, he found the Bishop of Berlin, Count Preysing, in a hospital in Hermsdorf, where he has lived since his house in Berlin was

bombed. I had written to the Bishop asking him to give permission for us to receive Holy Communion, and he allowed Kurt to bring me the Sacred Host in a small golden container. Every room of our exile became a chapel for a few short moments, and I received my Easter Communion. The last time I had taken Holy Communion was almost four years ago, in the Gestapo prison in Munich in 1940, where I had the permission of Cardinal Faulhaber, thanks to the kindness of Father Alois Mager, O.S.B.

*May 22, 1944*

The world holds its breath in expectation of the great summer battle. A sort of high tension is connected with everything that the word invasion means: fear, hope, expectation. It has been so for years now, but it seems that the time for it is approaching! Both sides in this war agree that with the invasion the outcome of the war will be decided. How far it is still off we don't know. Hitler, of course, hopes that it may be still very far off.

There are two things without which man cannot live with dignity and honour: heart and conscience. Hitler has never known this—and the Hitlerites have forgotten it.

In the meantime, the old record of the bolshevist bogey-man is being played over and over again in Berlin. Where would we be if Adolf Hitler had not taken up the fight against bolshevism? Where would Europe be then? That is the eternally repeated slogan. The question should run: Where would Russia be without Hitler? Without the war there would be no world alliance against Germany to-day, and without Hitler's attack on Russia there would be no Communist leadership in eastern Europe to-day.

*June 4, 1944*

The Allies have occupied Rome. According to the D.N.B.—the German News Agency—this is a great advantage: "The incomparably superior German strategy has forced General Alexander to occupy Rome. For, in spite of the unquestionable cultural importance of Rome, the city was a great obstacle to German strategy. . . ."

*June 6, 1944*

*Invasion!*

The Allies have landed in Normandy.

*June 11, 1944*

The world trembles in a paroxysm of hatred. Millions of people are daily swallowed up by an inferno which a few so-called "supermen" have created.

But, as Saint John said: "He that loveth not abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. And ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

*June 16, 1944*

The Germans are beginning to bomb London and the south of England with new explosives of the highest calibre. This occasions great rejoicing here in a people which was well prepared by the propaganda machine for such rejoicing. As I understand it, many here, especially S.S. men and the like, expect the turning point of the war and its near end because of these new bombs.

I don't believe in the bombs for a minute. But the end of the war cannot be far off.

*Sunday, July 9, 1944*

Eastern front: Street fighting in Vilna.

Western front: The British take Caen by storm.

Southern front: Fighting south of Livorno, Arezzo, Ancona.

Air front: Heavy daylight raids twice a week on central and eastern Germany and Austria.

*Sunday, July 16, 1944*

East: Vilna and Grodno taken by the Russians. The front is now forty miles from the old border of East Prussia.

West: Nothing new. Looks like a new edition of 1917.

South: Arezzo occupied by the British. Livorno about to fall.

Air: Daylight raids also on Munich. "Exactly what we want," as Goebbels said in an article in *Das Reich*.

*Sunday, July 23, 1944*

East: Fighting in Pleskau and near Lwow.

West: Nothing new.

South: Livorno, Ancona, Citta di Castello in Allied hands.

Air: Daily heavy raids from bases in England and Italy.

Targets: central, southern, and south-western Germany.

Germany: On July 20 an attempt was made on Hitler's life. Officially we are told: "A criminal revolt of a handful of ambitious and stupid officers belonging to an isolated group in the General Staff." Robert Ley said in his speech to the workers: "The miraculous escape of our Fuehrer is not only a battle won, but it signifies that the war is won." Goebbels also harps on the miracle aspect of the attempt on Hitler's life, and the name of God and Divine Providence are most shockingly taken in vain.

*Sunday, July 30, 1944*

East: The Russians have taken Lwow, Przemysl, Brest-Litovsk, Narva. Fighting before Warsaw.

West: Americans make a breach through German lines at Coutances.

South: Fighting near Florence.

Air: Night and day raids in uninterrupted sequence.

Germany: Goebbels' speech: Total Mobilization! Again?

*Sunday, August 6, 1944*

East: No material changes.

West: The Americans before Brest and St. Nazaire at the Loire and before Laval. Break-through in Brittany. Apparently a complete success.

South: Florence taken. The Allies at the southern bank of the Arno.

Air: Repeated daylight attacks.

Finland: President and Government resigned. Mannerheim is the new head of Government.

Turkey: Relations with Germany have been severed.

*Sunday, August 13, 1944*

East: Situation unchanged.

West: Great pincer movements in Normandy. Americans take Nantes on the Loire.

Germany: Field-Marshal General von Witzleben, General Hoepfner, and six other generals and officers have been condemned to death by hanging by a people's tribunal in connection with the attempt on Hitler's life last July.

Here we have what might be called a presentiment, that the decisive blow on the fronts is both imminent and probably already under way.

*Sunday, August 20, 1944*

West: Germans retreat to the Seine. Americans in the region of Paris. New landings in the south of France. Coast between Cannes and Toulon in Allied hands. The French rise in Paris.

Has the *Goetterdaemmerung* begun? It has been dark for long now, but the "gods" won't take any notice. Memories of Frederick the Great, who also suffered heavy setbacks, are the current slogan.

*Sunday, August 27, 1944*

West: Paris is free again! Also Marseille, Toulouse, Bordeaux, and many other cities are once more French. Germans retreat. Americans reach Swiss and Italian borders.

East: Rumania sues for peace. Bulgaria seems to follow suit.

*Sunday, September 3, 1944*

Five years of war.

West: Amiens, Verdun, Maubeuge in Allied hands. Allies move into Belgium. Americans before Metz and Nancy.

South: Allied offensive on the Adriatic coast.

East: Russians take Ploesti, Bucharest, and Constanza. Move westward along Danube.

Finland lays down arms.

Slovakia rises.

*Sunday, September 10, 1944*

West: Brussels, Antwerp, and Ostend liberated. Allied front stretches from Antwerp across Liège to Nancy and Belfort. Fierce German resistance at the Moselle and Meuse. Obviously the last stand before the war moves into Germany proper.

South: Allies seem to bog down before Rimini.

East: Russians in Brasov and Turnu-Severin. Red Army moves in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

Rumania and Bulgaria declare war on Germany.

Germany: Nazi Price Administrator Dr. Goerdeler and Ambassador Ulrich von Hassel and others condemned to death by hanging in connection with attempt on Hitler's life on July 20, 1944.

Vera and the baby are in Vienna, but plan to return as soon as possible, as the situation there does not seem too stable.



*Sunday, September 17, 1944*

West: Allied parachutists go down over southern Holland. Nancy, Epinal, and Maastricht liberated. Fighting between Aachen and Trier on German soil.

South: Not much change.

East: Russians take Sofia. Attack on Warsaw begun. Offensive in Latvia.

Air: Intensified air attacks night and day. Inner town in Vienna hit. Chancellory on the Ballhausplatz damaged.

Germany: According to D.N.B., Breitscheid and Thaelmann killed during air raid on Buchenwald concentration camp.

Breitscheid, a former Socialist leader, a man of about seventy years of age, had been our neighbour in Sachsenhausen for almost two years. I met in him a courageous and extremely kind man who had rendered his country many valuable services.

(Note: I heard later that Breitscheid was actually killed during an air raid on an industrial plant which lay next door to the Buchenwald camp. Thaelmann, a former German Communist leader who was never in Buchenwald, was shot on Hitler's and Himmler's orders. The air raid was then used to cover his murder.)

*Sunday, September 24, 1944*

West: Fighting on the Rhine in Holland. Fierce German resistance along the entire front. Brest and Boulogne in Allied hands.

East: Russians take Reval in Estonia. Offensive on the Baltic. In the Balkans the Red Army takes Temesvar and Arad. Move on Hungary expected.

South: Rimini liberated. It seems that things do not go so fast as one might wish.

Air: Activity mainly in the west, in Hungary, and the Balkans.

General impression: The end is not so near after all.

*Sunday, October 1, 1944*

West: British parachute landings near Arnhem failed; heavy losses. On the remaining front situation stationary.

East: Nothing new. Stationary.

South: Nothing new.

Germany: Gauleiter Buerckel of Austria has died.

*Sunday, October 8, 1944*

West: Hard fighting, but no results as yet.

East: Continued offensive action in Lithuania, Hungary, and Yugoslavia.

Air: Towards end of the week increasing Allied air activity. Night and daylight raids.

*Sunday, October 15, 1944*

West: Trench warfare, especially before Aachen.

East: Russians take Riga, move on Memel. Oradea in Rumania and Szeged in Hungary fall.

Balkans: Athens and Corfu liberated.

South: Nothing new.

It is rumoured that Hungary will sue for an armistice. That brings to a close the policy of the last decade, and Hitler is minus another ally. Perhaps some Hungarians remember some of the talks I had with them years ago?

Field-Marshal Rommel has died.

*Sunday, October 22, 1944*

In the course of the week Debreczin and Belgrade were taken. Local assaults on the western front and a Russian offensive at the border of East Prussia. Nothing new in the south.

Hungary has a new Government. The ultra-nationalist party, called after its emblem the "Arrow Cross Party", is in power. Szalassy is the new Regent, and Himmler unofficially and benevolently—so far—looks after things in general. Himmler also proclaimed the formation of a Volks-Sturm (people's home guard) in Poland—or, as we usually call it, Gesta-Poland.

*Sunday, October 29, 1944*

"All things are Thy will, O Lord, and there is none that can resist Thy will." That is the prayer with which to-day's Mass begins.

No new reports have reached us from the various fronts. The hope that we would see a decision within the near future loses itself in the foggy atmosphere of All Souls' Day.

Goebbels' propaganda machine has almost run dry. Apart from historical references to Frederick the Great and his bad luck and ultimate victory, the current slogan is "The Fuehrer knows what he is doing!"

For greater security, Himmler continues to arrest, eliminate, and execute.

*November 12, 1944*

The anniversary of Hitler's first Putsch in Munich on November 9, 1923, which was usually an occasion for great festivities, has passed this time without much fanfare. Himmler read a message from the Fuehrer stating that Hitler is so busy at his headquarters that he cannot leave his post even for a short time. Field-Marshal Keitel, however, can be spared, it would appear, as he was present among the celebrants in Munich. That alone is food for thought and speculation. Hitler's message was nothing startling. The blame for everything lies with Rumania, Italy, Hungary, with the old dynasties, feudal systems, parliamentary corruption, and the Almighty Himself—in short, with everyone except Adolf Hitler. The speech was the usual mixture: one-third abuse, one-third historical account, with plenty of self-praise, and one-third incantations, appeals, and “unshakable belief in our cause”.

The man is just like his speeches: agile and consequent, most egocentric and energetic—and hard to the point of platitude. Years ago the nationalist German would have said: the typical Jew. To-day, alas, too many people abroad think of Hitler as the typical German.

Meanwhile, the battle for Budapest continues. The Americans fight in the Lorraine and the last of the German battleships, *Tirpitz*, has been put out of commission.

*November 19, 1944*

One of the valves in our radio set has gone. This is truly a calamity, because we have no hope of ever replacing it. With our “popular set” we can get only the German stations, and it is very difficult to follow the true course of events if one has to subtract, divide, and diminish every report one hears. Necessarily, one becomes a political iconoclast.

*December 23, 1944*

We have had no news to speak of all these weeks. Our radio went, secretly, on a veritable odyssey, and was finally repaired in Berlin. Quite apart from the difficulty of finding radio parts, there was the greater difficulty of finding someone who would be willing to repair this “illegal” set, and the danger of being found

out. Well, the radio is back now, and for us it is the best Christmas present we can imagine. As far as we can judge, not much has happened in the meantime. The Russians are still fighting for Budapest; there are no material changes on the southern front, and the Allies are stalling before Germany's redoubtable "West Wall".

#### *Christmas, 1944*

On Christmas Eve we had a speech by Goebbels and—*Lohengrin!* Fighting on the western front. On Christmas Day the radio announced fighting in Tyrol, Bohemia, and at the West Wall.

Hitler's Christmas present to the German people is the new offensive in the west!

#### *January 15, 1945*

We were not sorry to see the old year pass away. Will the new one bring the end of this war?

The last weeks have been depressing. The German counter-offensives in the west and east—whether they are the last desperate attempt to stem the tide or not—meant delay. And delay is depressing. Now the German offensive has come to a stop once more, and we begin to hope again. A new and furious chapter has begun with the Russian winter offensive east of Germany.

#### *January 21, 1945*

The Russians are at the border of Silesia! All fast trains to and from Berlin have been cancelled; postal service has been stopped; no more letters or packages can be handled. Gas and electricity for home use have been stopped.

It looks as if we really were coming to an end. We hope.

#### *January 28, 1945*

The Russians are before Koenigsberg, Poznan, and Breslau. The industrial regions of Upper Silesia are a battlefield.

The refugees streaming back from the eastern front create a serious problem. In two days it will be the twelfth anniversary of Hitler's rule. What was it they used to chant? "We thank our Fuehrer . . ."

February 3, 1945

*Hannibal ante portas!*

This last week was one of constant alarm. The Russians are at Kuestrin and at Frankfurt-an-der-Oder. It looks as if there were no longer any German organized resistance.

Now and then there is talk of evacuation here. That was two days ago. To-day things are quiet once more. The barometer of our excitement rises and falls with alarming rapidity. It seems, however, at the moment that the immediate danger of the hour is passed. Anyway, the Russians have reached the Oder River within three weeks, and have occupied the industrial regions of Upper Silesia, most of East Prussia, and are now before Danzig and Stettin. Russian leadership seems to be excellent; the Red Army is in great form. Where will the next blow fall? It is not so much a question of where as of when.

Hitler spoke on January 30 for about twenty minutes and without any fanfare: "Fight to the last with and against everything. Who does not believe in this will die a shameful death." He called on God more frequently than usual.

February 5, 1945

We are told to pack our most necessary things. Suit-cases will be sent later. Everything else remains here. All my books, our pictures, our clothes, china, furniture—everything we own has to remain. We have to be ready within thirty minutes. We wait.

February 6, 1945

We waited all night, and we are still waiting. It is very strange: I find it difficult to say good-bye to this concentration camp. I hate to leave my books. Besides, we do not know what will happen to us next.

At 8 p.m. Vera, the child, and I were pushed into a dark police van. Is this the end?

We were taken to Berlin. Debris and ruins made our progress slow and difficult. Finally we reached the Gestapo Headquarters and were locked into a large cell. There was no light, no water, and everywhere we found the traces of last night's air raids, which hit the building with several bombs.

*February 7, 1945*

We are sitting in a bus together with other prisoners, some of them in handcuffs. It is strictly forbidden to speak. It is also forbidden to follow our progress on a map. The sign-posts, however, we can look at, and so we notice that we are taken first towards Leipzig and then southward to Nuremberg. Our destination is secret.

After twelve hours in the bus we finally arrived in a small concentration camp, where Vera and the child were locked into one cell, I into another. We are told that we can have a room the next morning and can live together.

*February 8, 1945*

The night was horrible. Thousands of worries and cares assailed me—also because we had been told that our belongings would be scrutinized in the morning by S.S. guards. What will happen if they find my manuscripts and the revolver!

I was lucky—almost miraculously lucky. All the bags were carefully inspected except ours, perhaps because they contained baby clothes and my wife's things.

The man next to me in the bus looked very familiar to me. I wonder whether it could have been Dr. Hjalmar Schacht.

This morning Vera, the child, and I were once more moved to a room in the main building. We don't know where we are exactly, only that we are in northern Bavaria about 2,500 feet above sea level. In front of our building is a strangely empty courtyard. We are told that we can walk in it for thirty minutes each day, for "recreation". That is all.

## XIV LIBERATION

*February 9, 1945*

**WE ARE IN Flossenburg.** We glean this information from a pencilled inscription inside a wardrobe in our room. Outside, fog hangs in patches on the cold, unfriendly hills. Beyond the camp walls high, gloomy fir trees bend their branches under the load of melting snow. It is almost as if these dark, silent trees separated us not only from the world outside but also from the sun, from light.

Immediately outside our heavily barred window a large police dog stretches himself. About 300 feet from us a slow, tired procession of forms, in blue and white stripes, barely resembling human beings, apathetically push carts before them. The guards march up and down supervising their work. On each cart there is a human body. We counted them: about 120. On their return journey prisoners pushed the same carts, this time loaded with wood. The macabre procession goes on for hours; corpses one way—wood another—living and dead material. In the great stillness this scene is like the scream of humanity—frozen to ice.

In front of our windows there is what appears to be a roomy shack. We ask whether we might live over there, because of our child. . . . No. Impossible. The building over there is the camp brothel.

One of the guards brings a doll in a nice little dress for our child. She thanks him, but asks whether we could not go back to Sachsenhausen: "It was nicer there. . . ."

*February 12, 1945*

It all began seven years ago to-day, with the interview at Berchtesgaden . . . seven years.

April 1, 1945

To-day is Easter. We have been here almost two months. Some suitcases with clothes, underwear, and shoes were sent to us from Sachsenhausen, and even a couple of comfortable chairs. But most of our things remain there, and I doubt very much whether we shall ever lay eyes on them again.

We made our little room here as comfortable as we possibly could. In general this new existence is not too bad; at least nobody bothers us here. But the endless misery, the unspeakable suffering around us, make every day a Calvary. We are, of course, strictly separated from other prisoners. We are not supposed to see or be seen—let alone to speak with others. But, no matter how hard the Gestapo tries to apply its system of invisibility, we see things, all the same. After all; it is impossible to kill all those who are listed for disappearance, and those who still live cannot be made invisible.

The camp commander called on us. He recommended that we should send our child away . . . “because the camp is, after all, not the right place for a little child. Besides, next to you is the crematorium, and when the wind blows you cannot escape the constant smell of corpses.” He did not have to tell us that. We had found out.

To send Sissy away was not so easy. Finally we remembered the address of some good friends in the Tyrol, who might be willing to take Sissy into their house at Kitzbuehl. The Chief promised to take the necessary steps at the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (Chief Office of Security). After many weeks we received the answer that the Tyrol, or any other part of Austria, would be out of the question for our child.

Himmler's security service still works exactly according to the same methods: complete arbitrariness in all decisions; no explanations given; the greatest secrecy. Among Himmler's men anonymity is essential. No Gestapo man will tell his real name, and he also takes away the names of his victims. None of them will ever put anything in writing—and even orally they have a tendency to cloak their answers in ambiguous terms. The professional mistrust of the policeman becomes a farce with the Gestapo. Nobody trusts anybody. Everyone is afraid of his neighbour. Stupefying drill kills the last vestige of individual appearance—and great individuality was never a mark of the potential Gestapo man. All of them have been recruited from the ranks of the S.S., where they were indoctrinated with blind



obedience, and every one of them feels that he stands with one foot in prison. The slightest error or mistake can cost him his liberty—perhaps his life. On the other hand, he is handsomely rewarded if he executes a crime that was ordered. It is a system that stinks—and it stinks worse the higher up one gets.

Our guards are fairly decent, especially the older men among them. Some of them are even helpful. We had the same experience in Sachsenhausen from about the end of 1942 onward. There were some men whom I would like to help if I possibly could. They seemed to suffer just as much as guards as I did as a prisoner. Among them I remember particularly two men, one called Weissenborn and the other Schiefelbein.

Of course, even with the more decent fellows one cannot feel at ease, when one wonders how many "orders" they have already executed, and how often they will execute them again in blind obedience. Yet I think that their masters cannot count on them any longer—not on all of them, anyway.

As I said, we are not supposed to know that there are other prisoners with us in this camp. But we cannot help noticing them, and on closer scrutiny they constitute a strangely colourful mosaic. Danes, Frenchmen, Englishmen—all of them in the strictest solitary confinement, and many of them waiting for the executioner.

Among them were Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, General Halder, General Thomas, Admiral Canaris (hanged soon afterwards), and other members of the German General Staff. The brothel of our camp, opposite our windows, was suddenly evacuated. The building now houses Prince Albrecht of Bavaria and his many children. The reason for his arrest was merely that he was the son of Crown Prince Rupprecht. He was our neighbour at Sachsenhausen in that blockhouse structure which had seen a number of prominent occupants: First came the former Prussian Minister and Socialist leader Breitscheid and his wife. Breitscheid, a venerable, kindly old gentleman, later met a tragic end at Buchenwald. After him came Prince Louis de Bourbon-Parme and his wife, Princess Maria of Savoy, a daughter of the King of Italy, with two charming children. Finally Lieutenant-Colonel Churchill, on whom we saw for the first time in this war a British Air Force uniform. In one of the four "Special Barracks" the French statesmen Paul Reynaud and Daladier were kept for a while, but we never had a chance of getting in contact with them, beyond a friendly nod

of the head when they were marched past us. Afterwards their lodgings were occupied by the well-known German industrialist Fritz Thyssen.

*April 2, 1945*

We had a strange encounter. It came about this way: A few doors from our quarters, in the same building, there was a prisoner who was carefully kept away from any of the other prisoners. Nobody was to know his name or where he came from. When he was taken out into the yard for exercise a portable wooden screen was carried out and set up in front of him so that nobody might recognize him. Now, there was a guard with whom we were on good terms, and who had apparently established similar relations with the mysterious prisoner. This guard told us that the stranger would like to speak to us—urgently. Would we be willing to establish contact with him? Of course we were; but how? It was, after all, a somewhat risky enterprise. Our guard suggested finally that he would bring the stranger to our room the next time he was on duty during the night. That was all right, but there was a second guard who could not be trusted. Although he would not be on patrol duty that night, he would sit up next to our room, and he would hear every word through the thin boards. But we found a way out. We still had in our possession a bag of real coffee—a highly coveted commodity. On the night in question we brewed a cup of this coffee and invited the guard, a fairly nice, elderly man from Berlin, to have some. My wife managed to dose his cup with a harmless but efficient sleeping draught. As we could hear through the walls shortly afterwards, the powder was working admirably. Then the other guard brought the stranger into our room.

It was Prince Philip of Hesse, formerly a high official of the district of Cassel. He did not know why he was in a concentration camp, but presumed that it was because his father-in-law was the King of Italy. In any case, he had been called to Berlin on September 8, 1943, from the Fuehrer's headquarters, under some pretext or other. Immediately after his arrival in Berlin he had been arrested and sent to Flossenburg, where he had been ever since, living under an assumed name.

Having been completely isolated for more than eighteen months, he asked us whether we had any news of his wife, Princess Mafalda, and their children, whether we should be able to get in contact with someone who knew her, or whether

it would be possible to get a message out into the world. We had to tell him that we had no means whatsoever. Only much, much later he found out that Princess Mafalda had been dead for many months at the time he asked us about her. She died a prisoner in Buchenwald, like our friend Breitscheid. The authorities did not think it necessary to inform her husband of her death, and thus he still lived under the illusion that wife and children were safe. We talked for some time. There were many things, many questions where we were of different opinions, but no matter what his errors of the past, I found him a decent, straightforward man. And whoever has been condemned to this hell here has done penance enough for any mistake of the past, and those who managed to come out of here alive come back to earth new, purified beings.

*April 3, 1945*

Somewhere in this camp there are British and Canadian air-men and parachutists. Day in, day out, they have been awaiting their death for two full years! One of them—I have never seen him—had an anthology of lyric poetry. A few days ago I had this book in my hands, and found on the margin of the pages and in the blank pages of the covers a number of poems written in pencil. They were sonnets, perfect both in form and content: the farewell of a young man to life, of which he had known so little. Farewell to the sun, to his father and mother—to love. And through all the sonnets sprang a flaming love for his country, England. At the end of the book there was a pencilled note in prose: "I know what will happen to me. When they come for me I shall tap on the walls to let you know. . . ."

To-day we were told that he had tapped on his walls.

*April 4, 1945*

Every few days the door of our room is closed with particular care in the evenings. The guards refuse to give any explanation—even the most talkative among them. We sit and listen. The silence is only broken every now and then by a piercing yell. Sometimes it is a woman's scream. Each scream has but one meaning: the next . . .

We know what is going on, and we try nervously to make as much noise in our room as possible. We don't want the child to ask any questions—or perhaps we don't want ourselves to ask the inevitable question. . . .

H (Austrian Requiem)

One of our guards had his arm in a sling the other day. He was of a talkative nature, and revealed that he had refused to aim where he was told.

We are very close to the Czech border. The first big fir trees of the Bohemian forest are visible behind the iron bars of our window. The site for the camp was dynamited out of the live rock. The prisoners—among them many Russians of particularly miserable appearance—usually toil in the quarry or carry lumber. Surprisingly many young men are among them, also some Germans who have now spent eleven and twelve years in concentration camps. Immediately behind the big wall the crematorium belches forth its smoke; next to it is the camp hospital. The quarantine building bears a large inscription at the moment: spotted typhus.

The yard in which we are allowed to walk for half an hour every day has a gallows in the corner. The sawdust underneath it is being changed more frequently of late.

A week ago Sissy celebrated her fourth birthday here.

We wonder what is happening in the world. Our mail is sent to a post-box in Berlin and forwarded from there. For all practical purposes we are without any news whatsoever. Letters take from six to eight weeks, and sometimes even longer. And our children—the sons of our first marriages—are in the army. To judge from the local paper here, the *Weidener Nachrichten*, and from the radio reports, the end of the war must be very near. The British and Americans have crossed the Rhine, and are closing in on Muenster, Cassel, Eisenach, and Wuerzburg. The Russians are south of Wiener-Neustadt and are preparing to attack Vienna. For two days they have been in Danzig. And the destruction of the cities goes on. And all that because . . . yes, because of what?

*April 5, 1945*

The excitement here mounts steadily. The Americans are near Nuremberg. In a few days they may be here. . . .

*April 7, 1945*

We received orders to move out. We can take only the most essential things. The rest will follow. Our hope—disappointed. And the Americans so near. . . .

April 8, 1945

At 4 p.m. we were pushed into a "Black Maria", together with four other prisoners. The rest remain at camp. (As we heard later, many of our fellow-prisoners were hanged immediately after our departure.)

The strangest thing, however, is that we may talk together. In the dark we introduce each other: Dr. Schacht, General Halder, General Thomas, Colonel von Bonin. . . .

In every sense of the word we hailed from different camps. But at the moment we were happy to find somebody to talk to. The generals discussed the military situation, although during the last months they had not seen any communiqués. Almost all of them had been in solitary confinement for years, and did not know what would happen to them next. In their opinion the military situation was untenable, and the war could not last more than a month or two.

The trip was uncomfortable. We stopped several times, and at one of these stops three strange figures joined our little group. One was a German general in full uniform with the *Pour le Mérite* order on a red silk ribbon round his neck. His scarlet coat lining shone like a brilliant light in the semi-darkness of the van. The second man was an elegantly dressed Englishman with a monocle and remarkable composure. The third was a somewhat melancholy-looking young Russian.

All three seemed to be inseparable friends. In the van they told us their names: General von Falkenhausen, Mr. Best of the British Secret Service, and twenty-two-year-old Lieutenant Wassili K—, a nephew of the Russian Foreign Commissar Molotov. Our destination was unknown to us, as usual. Late in the evening we arrived at Dachau.

April 10, 1945

So this is Dachau! What an ominous name! especially for an Austrian. When we still had our country, before March, 1938, and even earlier, since the fateful 30th of January, 1933, when Hitler came to power, the names of Dachau and Hitler had become almost identical.

Dachau—one of many camps—has become the symbol not only of the methods, but also of the philosophy of the regime which has brought endless misery on Germany and the world. And, unfortunately, it is not only the symbol of the regime, but also of the people under this regime.

Without Dachau, no victory of the swastika. That was the explanation the Nazis gave us, those who believed in the swastika and those who merely repeated slogans. And they are right. But we say: Without the memory of Dachau there cannot be political, social, or cultural reconstruction, without these memories Austria will not be able to rise again, without this warning Germany will not awaken from her stupor. We hope that we shall be right.

For many hours we waited before the closed gates of the camp. After midnight the gates were opened. At first glance one could have imagined oneself in a well-kept country estate. Neat, solid-looking buildings, gravel paths bordered with flowers. . . . But this is only the administrative part of the camp. Around us the landscape is dreary. That is an inevitable part of the concentration camps, and all of them are situated in particularly dreary surroundings. As we move on, we see the watch-towers, the walls, the high-tension fences, the pompous inscriptions telling us that work makes a man free and that cleanliness is next to godliness . . . well, it is nothing new. In the eighth year of imprisonment one is no longer impressed.

*April 12, 1945*

I must say that nowhere did we fare so well as here, and nowhere was the treatment so relatively decent. Our small group is lodged in one wing of the main building. We are special prisoners. Contrary to all earlier experiences, we are even allowed to see each other and to talk together. On the other hand, it is strictly forbidden to communicate with any prisoners outside our little group, just as in other camps. During the day we may walk in a little walled-in courtyard. There are benches in the yard, a few sad-looking patches of grass, a lettuce-bed, and in one corner the first timid narcissi.

In the middle of the courtyard an air-raid shelter has been dug. We spend much time in there on the orders of the sometimes friendly, sometimes particularly fiendish, guards, for the air-raid sirens sound almost continuously, day and night. During an unguarded minute I managed to speak to one of the prisoners from outside. He comes to our courtyard to tend the flowers. He knows his way around because he has been here for many years. He asked me whether I have noticed anything? Where? "There, on the walls, those hooks. If those walls could

talk. . . . Up to about one year ago none of our comrades who entered this court left it alive. Those hooks, you know. . . .”

There is something uncanny about those camp courtyards where we are supposed to find recreation. One could easily become superstitious if one had no faith.

Our new friend the gardener was formerly a clown with the Krone Circus. In the course of time he became indispensable in Dachau because he spoke twelve languages—almost as many as are spoken to-day in the camp. Again and again he manages to bring a piece of chocolate for Sissy, or a cigarette for us. He brings us news and messages from other prisoners, from friends and compatriots. He is a good and intelligent man. If only we had a chance to make some return for his kindness.

The S.S. *Obersturmfuehrer* who is in direct command of our section here is an Austrian, a former “underground” Nazi in the Vienna police force.

April 14, 1945

The *esprit de corps* of our little group is exemplary. All of them are good comrades, all of them ready to help and to share their meagre possessions with the rest. And there is no difference between the German general and the young Russian, the German Minister of State and the British Secret Service man.

Our group has some newcomers: Fritz Thyssen, who keeps much to himself—perhaps because of his age, or of his sickly disposition, or perhaps because of nervous depression? Then there are M. and Mme. Léon Blum. Our little group becomes more colourful every day, and yet it keeps, almost without exception, its harmonious character. Nobody asks much about the past, nobody is much concerned with the present; but everybody is worried about the future. Not so much the personal future, but about all the things that are close to our hearts. We know that all will have been in vain unless people and peoples find each other again without resentment, without thoughts of triumph or revenge.

My wife and I spent many happy hours with our German fellow-prisoners and with M. and Mme. Blum. Oh, yes, there were also happy hours in our existence—or perhaps I should say rich, valuable hours. This may sound paradoxical, yet more than once we felt richer—as if we had received a gift—after a talk with our friends. These memories we shall always cherish, in spite of all the suffering.

April 15, 1945

Yesterday we sat on the benches in the yard in the last rays of the setting sun: General von Falkenhausen, Dr. Schacht, Mr. Best, and I. There was a momentary lull in the air raids, and suddenly, without any introduction, Dr. Schacht began to recite from Homer's *Iliad*. Twenty, thirty verses in fluent Greek. Falkenhausen took up where he left off and continued for a while. When they came to an end, I began, timidly, "*Arma virumque cano . . .*" and both of them interrupted me and showed that they were just as much at home in Vergil as in Homer. Finally, we quoted Goethe and then—for no good reason—the German humorist, Wilhelm Busch, until we stopped and found ourselves once more facing reality—Dachau and Adolf Hitler.

Dr. Schacht and General von Falkenhausen really possess a stupendous memory. Woe to the present leaders of Germany if ever they can use it again, and lucky for the German people.

Dr. Schacht is no longer so pessimistic concerning our personal fate. Earlier, in Flossenburg, and also some time later, he had been pretty sure that the end had come for most of us. His dejection and pessimism concerning Germany's future, however, are just as black as ever. I can understand his grief. The work of generations in which he believed, in which he took part—his own life's work—is being destroyed. It is not the economic and financial ruin that makes him so hopeless. As he said to me: "The economic catastrophe could be mastered; but what cannot be mastered, what cannot be repaired, is Germany's moral and spiritual heritage, which Hitler has squandered; Germany's future is dark because megalomaniac fools and mountebanks have gambled away the capital of her good name, her trustworthiness. I don't believe that Germany can regain the status of the State for many, many years to come. The best thing for Germany to-day would be British dominion status."

"When you came to visit me in Vienna as president of the Reichsbank in 1936, did you then believe in Adolf Hitler's programme?" I asked.

"I believed in the necessity of making Germany strong outwardly and of consolidating her inwardly. I believed that unemployment, which had become a social and political danger in Germany, had to be overcome. I have never over-estimated Hitler, but I did think for some time that he said what he



thought, and, above all, that he would stick to his decisions. . . . In the meantime I have found out that Hitler never speaks the truth, that he always thinks differently from what he says or writes, that he constantly changes opinion, and that he is absolutely deaf to arguments of reason and logic."

"Do you think, Dr. Schacht, that the others are more responsible or reasonable? Goering, for instance, and Ribbentrop?"

"I can only laugh at your question."

"Did you think the war was inevitable?"

"No, of course not! On the contrary! The war could have and should have been avoided if we had had responsible men at the helm. Simply because it was evident from the beginning that Germany could not hold out if the war lasted for more than a year. I expressed this opinion to Hitler and to the military, but without much success."

"If that was your opinion, why did you not draw these conclusions earlier and leave Hitler and Germany?"

"That is very simple. I had reason to believe that I could win Hitler over to my ideas. I tried everything to interest Hitler in the question of the colonies. I believed that the return of our former colonies would have been extremely advantageous for our economy, and I also believed that it was not an impossibility to get them. Furthermore, I thought that the plan with the colonies would be a safety-valve to relieve the pressure behind Hitler's war plans. Hitler could have had his success which he needed without having to resort to war. For, had we succeeded in getting the colonies back, it would have been easy to divert the adventurous strength and impetus of National Socialism to Africa for many years to come, and we could have had peace in Europe."

"That is exactly what we thought in Austria at the beginning of 1938, when we hoped to avert catastrophe by gaining time."

"Yes; but then it was too late. The die had been cast. At that time I had no illusions, and with thunder and lightning I handed Hitler my resignation as Cabinet Minister. It was never accepted. In 1936, however, I had every reason to believe that Hitler was interested in my plans. He authorized me to go to Paris and London to discuss the return of the German colonies. After long and difficult conversations I succeeded—at least in so far as that Paris declared they would agree to it in principle, and that London did not consider it an

impossibility. But when I returned to Germany and informed Hitler of the result of my trip, he declared that he was no longer interested in colonies. Revision in Europe! That was what he wanted now. Léon Blum, with whom I conferred about the colonies in Paris, can tell you all about it."

Later M. Blum confirmed every detail of Schacht's story about his trip to Paris and his demand for the restitution of the colonies.

In my estimation Dr. Schacht is one of the most intelligent Germans I have known. How far he bears a share of the war guilt, by creating the necessary prerequisites for the later developments, is another question. In any case his guilt is only indirect. I have often asked myself where the line runs between direct and indirect guilt. When we Austrians look back on the history of the last years of our country we can well ask: Do the great Western Powers not share this indirect guilt, for allowing Hitler to re-arm in 1935, for letting him militarize the Rhineland in 1936, for standing by complacently when he invaded Austria in 1938, for playing his game in Munich, and for not opposing him in Czechoslovakia in 1939?

April 16, 1945

The German generals here are most outspoken in their hatred of Hitler and his Nazis. And that is not surprising, since they had occasion to study at first hand both cause and effect of the catastrophe. Here they are, deprived of their illusions, helpless and powerless witnesses of the doom of their country, and probably they owe it to some clerical error that they are still alive.

They are not talkative, and when they speak it is with bottomless hatred and contempt for the strategy and the methods of the Fuehrer's headquarters, and the rabble that staffs it.

Why did the army not stop Hitler, let us say in 1938, when there was still time?

General Thomas, the former chief of the Office of War Economy, told us of the various efforts made in this direction, of the indignation of the generals over the effrontery of the S.S., and the influence of military *dilettanti*. He told us how it almost came to an open rebellion in the first days of February, 1938, because of the ignominious way in which General von Fritsch was treated. "That was in connection with the Austrian affair," he continued, "which we discussed in Berchtesgaden. According to our information, we had to count on considerable diffi-

culties and resistance within Austria. In fact, we had a chance to delay things so that Hitler would not have sufficient time to put his aggressive plans into execution. But the attempt miscarried because some of the leading military were not willing to co-operate, and because we could not count on the help of the younger officers.

"Later we again tried to eliminate Hitler from his all-powerful position. The last efforts in this direction were made in the autumn of 1938, but then the famous Munich conference spoiled everything. Hitler had once more been incredibly successful in the eyes of the world, and the psychological possibility of an elimination of the 'beloved Fuhrer' in Germany was gone forever. From then on things went fast. The war broke out, which could never be won if it lasted for more than a year. . . ."

General Halder, Chief of Staff until 1942, confirmed the fact that Hitler really thought himself a military genius, and that there were a number of generals who abetted this grotesque notion.

"At the beginning of the Polish campaign," he told us, "Hitler's direct influence on military matters remained within reasonable limits. But immediately after Poland fell, Hitler called all the generals together and treated them like little schoolboys. He told them that they must not think for a moment that the successes of the campaign were due to their efforts. On the contrary, the generals had contributed nothing but difficulties and objections. The stupendous successes in Poland were due only to his genius and to the efforts of the party.

"Later, in the campaign in the west, Hitler's personal military interference increased. Already the British were able to gain considerable advantages through his blunders. The General Staff had worked out a plan by which the German army would make a flanking movement and cut through to Dunkirk with a strong Panzer column. Presumably this would have cut the British Expeditionary Force off much sooner, and it would probably have made evacuation impossible. But at the last moment Hitler had issued counter-orders because he wanted to have his triumphal entry into Paris.

"From this moment on Hitler made all decisions personally. Advice and objections from the General Staff were ignored. General Keitel—who in army circles was nicknamed 'Lakaitel' [a pun on the German word for 'lackey']—obsequiously exe-

cutted all orders from Hitler without question. The General Staff was not only not consulted, but was informed of Hitler's plans only at the last moment. Unfavourable news or developments were ignored on the Fuehrer's explicit order, and the public never heard of them."

General Halder thought that the insane attack on Russia was largely due to the influence of Ribbentrop, of whom—as also of Goering—he has the lowest possible opinion.

General Halder expressed the unanimous opinion of all the generals in our group about Hitler's military dilettantism: "Hundreds of thousands have lost their freedom because of his notions. But that is not the worst: Hitler has ruined the honour of the German army, because he abused the good faith of individual combatants and the blind obedience of innumerable soldiers, and because he corrupted the army up to the highest ranks. Closed envelopes with extraordinary remunerations, some of them containing sums up to half a million reichsmarks in cash, were handed to leading men, and logical, matter-of-fact objections to any of his plans were not countered with suspensions from the service, but with immediate arrests, and sometimes death sentences. It happened to me one day. The Gestapo came, put me in handcuffs, and took me away. I never found out why. And yet that was not enough; my wife was also arrested. . . ."

"Yes, that was our so-called Friederician State," said General von Falkenhausen bitterly. Falkenhausen had been the military governor of Belgium, where he had done everything to curb the tyranny of the S.S. and the Gestapo, until, one fine day, he found himself their victim and prisoner.

The most characteristic case, however, is that of young Colonel von Bonin. He is quiet, never complains, never expresses an opinion; he only tells in a few dry words what has happened to him. Bonin was on the General Staff and in charge of the operational section of the High Command of the German Army. In this capacity he was required by his superior, the Chief of Staff, General Guderian, to sign a certain operational order. He executed the order—and was promptly arrested because Hitler did not agree with the order. His case was not heard by a court-martial or by a group of military experts. He was faced by an ignoramus of an S.S. *Sturmbannfuhrer* and promptly committed to Dachau.

His case shows very clearly what the "Friederician Germany" of to-day is like.

These anti-Nazi generals in our little group are in my opinion as decent and honest and responsible men as one could wish to meet. Certainly there are many things that separate us: tradition, historic conception, opinions. Their way of thinking is also somewhat mechanical. For instance, they were in favour of acquiring Austria, because the Inn Valley made a better defence line than their former border. Not a thought as to how this would affect the people in Austria, or what political repercussions that might have.

But can one hold these men responsible for the mistakes of generations before them, generations which inculcated this way of thinking into them? It is their tragic fate—and that of the German people as a whole—that they saw their mistake only when it was too late. And for that they are paying now. Whoever has experienced the solitary confinement cells of the Gestapo has paid in full for all his mistakes in this world.

*April 17, 1945*

M. Blum and I were discussing old times to-day, and we remembered that we had met once before. It was ten years ago, when I went to Paris on an official State visit, and neither of us had thought then that we would get to know each other in 1945, in the concentration camp of Dachau! M. Blum speaks very little of what he has gone through during these last years. It is a good deal. He looks ill, which is not surprising. A talk with him, an exchange of ideas, always gives me new strength, new hope. That is because he seems to be prepared for anything, and at the same time he is above all personal considerations. Léon Blum is a convinced socialist, a man of great knowledge and high intellect. He has the sensitivity and the elegant, fluent eloquence which are the characteristics of his country, which he loves above all.

Of course, we often differ in our opinions, but Léon Blum has the gift of listening and of explaining and elucidating an opinion so that the other understands—even if he does not share his views. I must say that I am obliged to the Gestapo for having arranged this acquaintance with Léon Blum, in whom I have met a great European and—even more important to me—a fine and noble character. Perhaps that is the same thing.

Mr. Best gave me to-day a copy of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* as a memento, which was most welcome for two reasons: For one thing, it is the first book which I have owned since I

lost my entire library, and, although only one, it is a beginning. Secondly, it will be useful to enlarge the modest knowledge of English which I have acquired during my years of confinement. Mr. Best told me that he had recognized me at once from Press pictures he had seen of me years ago. I was able to return this compliment—if compliment it was—as I had also recognized in him the “ruthless instigator of the murderous attempt on the Fuehrer’s life”. I had seen his picture in the papers after the famous attempt on Hitler’s life in the *Buergerbraeukeller* in November, 1939. I was at that time myself in Munich—in the Gestapo prison.

Best told me what had really happened, in his dry, matter-of-fact way. It sounded like the scenario of some Hollywood film—only without the happy ending.

Best and another Secret Service man, Stevenson, who, by the way, is also an inmate of Dachau, but strictly separated from Best, were lured into an ambush by the S.S., who overpowered the two men on Dutch territory, in flagrant violation of international law. Of the attempt on Hitler’s life they had not the slightest idea, and were not in any way connected with it. The would-be assassin in Munich, the tool of Best and Stevenson, according to the Gestapo, was a man by the name of Elsler, whom I had seen myself in the Munich Gestapo prison. Elsler was never brought before a court, but lived for years in the concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, where Best saw and talked with him. Elsler was treated very well at Sachsenhausen and had been promised the sum of 40,000 reichsmarks at the end of the war—presumably for his willingness to play the part of an assassin. Some time later Best showed me an original order addressed to the commanding officer of Dachau, which was dated April 1, 1945, and read as follows:

“The Reichsfuehrer and Reichsminister Heinrich Himmler orders on highest authority that the well-known prisoner Elsler is to be eliminated immediately by a squad of thoroughly reliable men. Furthermore, a Press notice is to be issued that Elsler lost his life during a terror attack of the enemy on the concentration camp of Dachau. . . .”

The strangest things happen in the Third Reich, and the survivors of this war will learn of them only much, much later. Perhaps they will begin to see then . . . only, then it may be too late. And presumably we won’t be here to bear witness.

*April 18, 1945*

Our rations dwindle. We get nothing but soup. Very rarely we get a rather bad cigarette and a few dried peppermint leaves for our pipes. It is supposed to be healthier than real tobacco.

The Americans advance along the Danube and the river Lech. Occasionally we hear the artillery. The air attacks on Munich and its surroundings increase daily. All of us are virtually sick with excitement. It can't be long now. It can't be long. If only they don't evacuate the camp at the last moment. . . .

In spite of regulations, we manage to get in touch with some of the other prisoners in the neighbouring barracks. Among them are Pastor Niemoeller, a French Catholic bishop, the former Prime Minister of Hungary, Kallay, several other Hungarian and Polish officials, the son of the Hungarian Regent von Horthy, the son of Marshal Badoglio, the Italian Partisan General Garibaldi, Monsignor Josef Neuhaeusler from Munich, and many others.

*April 20, 1945*

The majority of special prisoners have unfortunately been evacuated. It is rumoured that they were taken to Tyrol. The wildest rumours circulate.

We miss them, especially the German generals. We had just managed to get a good military map, and every night after the official communiqués on the radio—the papers do not print them any longer—we had a highly instructive and interesting "General Staff" meeting.

Nobody can tell us what is going to be done with those of us who remain in Dachau. It is said that we, too, will be evacuated. Another rumour says that the International Red Cross is going to take over the entire camp. That, of course, would be ideal, but I have learned my lesson about rejoicing too soon and I refuse to believe it.

*April 22, 1945*

We are waiting.

*April 25, 1945*

We are still waiting.

April 26, 1945

The Americans are closing in on Munich. We are still waiting.

April 27, 1945

Evacuation! We cram into overloaded buses. Many women and children are with us. The official expression for them is *Sippenhaeflinge* (kin-prisoners). They are the unfortunate families of men who were condemned to death and executed after the attempt on Hitler's life on July 20, 1944. Also the families of so-called "Seidlitz people"—those who fought and succumbed at Stalingrad—are among them. Many children and babies of these families were, however, taken away from their mothers and are now God knows where.

Our departure was dramatic. We were told that we had to walk through the camp to the buses which stood ready at the gates. We all grabbed a suitcase or a bundle containing the most necessary things. Mothers took their children by the hand, and our sad little group began to walk towards the buses. When we arrived at the large square at the central camp, we halted involuntarily: a sea of emaciated figures, in blue-and-white-striped prison garb, moved slowly in complete silence along the camp walls towards the exits. Here and there we could hear the rise and fall of hushed talk. It sounded like the last murmur of a storm or perhaps its first warning roll. Shoulder to shoulder, 35,000 shadows of human beings moved on. They are to march southwards—away from the front. There is no transport for them.

A narrow aisle was being kept open by the guards, through which we were to go. Suddenly, as we passed, a worn-out hand stretched out from the mass. Here someone called, there a familiar face smiled tiredly. At first only a few, then more and more, hundreds, thousands. . . . Hands were raised in salute—some of them in the Hitler salute by force of habit, others with the closed fist. They are our friends—human beings—men and women—Austrians. . . .

It was perhaps the most impressive moment of all these years.

April 28, 1945

We stopped one day at the concentration camp of Reichenau near Innsbruck. It was better not to look round too much.



The houses, the mountains, the people in the fields were too familiar. It was difficult to keep one's self-control.

The day was filled with joy—the joy of meeting old friends again. At last I could shake the hand of Richard Schmitz, the former mayor of Vienna, who looked old and worn after seven years of hard and painful experiences. Tyrolean resistance fighters were being marched through our section of the camp. Many of them wore German Army uniforms, others had police uniforms, and among them were many women. So the women fought, too.

I had the honour of meeting the Bishop of Clermont-Ferrand, truly a hero and a martyr of our faith; and I was glad to bend my knee and to kiss the ring which he wore once more. Soon he will say Mass for us—the first Mass in many years. I also had a chance to thank Monsignor Neuhaeusler, who, in spite of the strictest regulations, did everything he could for us in Dachau and during the evacuation.

Finally, I had the particular joy of shaking hands with Pastor Niemoeller, who had done so much—not only for his fellow-prisoners, but for all Germans—by his courageous and upright attitude; more than they realize to-day. We had admired him for many years.

In meeting these men and old friends I cannot avoid thinking of those hundreds and hundreds of other people who suffered a similar fate during all these years; many of them—like ourselves—have escaped the death sentence at the last minute as by some miracle. But more, far more, are no longer among the living. Our personal experiences become small and unimportant measured with the endless misery around us. Let us pray that the suffering was not in vain, and that some day it will help our country. If only our countrymen remember it.

*April 29, 1945*

Last night we continued our journey in the buses. We drove through Innsbruck, up the mountain road to the Brenner, in what seemed an endless convoy. It was dark, and we saw very little. We noticed the change of temperature, though, as we left the spring landscape of the valleys and reached the wintry heights of the mountains.

Early in the morning we turned off the main highway. A sign told us: Puster Tal. Late in the afternoon we stopped at a crossroads at Niederndorf. One road leads to the village of Alt-Prags, the other to the Pragser-Wildsee, one of the finest

mountain lakes in this part of the southern Tyrol. Politically speaking, we were on Italian soil. The rain poured down in sheets.

Slowly the first peasants approached. They kept a certain distance, as the rather unfriendly S.S. guards did not encourage them to come nearer. But secretly they waved to us. Here and there a light of recognition went over their faces. Soon they knew what was going on.

A rumour spread that a Gestapo order had been found, according to which we were to be shot at the end of our adventurous bus trip. Well, the trip seemed to be over. It was noticeable that besides our regular S.S. guards we were accompanied by a detachment of Gestapo men.

Yet I did not feel worried, and I could not get excited. I could not feel anything any more.

*May 1, 1945*

After much delay and journeying back and forth we finally arrived, thanks to the efficient help of Tyrolean officials, at the Hotel Prager-Wildsee, high in the mountains of southern Tyrol, south of the political border of the Brenner. Frau Heiss is the owner of the hotel, and she receives us with great friendliness. Frau Heiss is well known to countless tourists who have met her as owner and manager of the Elephant in Brixen.

The old familiar dialect, which I had not heard and had missed for so very long, sounds like music in my ears. Outside, the towering cliffs of the Dolomites raise proud heads to the sky, as they have done since the dawn of history, and the crystal-clear lake is surrounded by dark mountain forests. The sky is full of stars—for the first time, it seems to me. It is good to see these things unchanged, untouched by the years, and, what is more, unchangeable.

Our hotel is 5,000 feet above sea level, and there is still snow on the ground. The S.S. seem to feel that they are thoroughly out of place, and they show marked signs of uneasiness. The Gestapo officials, who have accompanied us ever since Dachau, showed me a list of the people who are to be done away with, on Himmler's special orders. My wife's name and my own are on the list, neatly printed in black and white. I knew of the list at Dachau, and I suppose we are shown the document now to subdue our spirits, which had begun to rise at the sight of the new and decidedly pleasant surroundings.

Our fellow-prisoners, the German generals, showed an exem-

plary *esprit de corps*. They got in touch with the local German Army command in Bolzano, and succeeded in getting the commanding general to exchange our S.S. and Gestapo guards for army personnel. A Captain von Alvensleben, a very agreeable and humane officer, assumed command of our little group. His men also behaved very well towards us, and gave no cause for any sort of complaint.

Our little League of Nations, consisting of prisoners from more than twenty different countries, had constituted itself already some days ago, and our friend Mr. Best of the British Secret Service had been unanimously elected chairman. Everything in connection with the "League" went smoothly and without friction, including our "permanent council", which, apart from some reservations from the Polish, Greek, and Yugoslav prisoners, had no difficulty in dealing with all the immediate problems. This afternoon we were called into the hotel lobby for an extraordinary "General Assembly" meeting. And there the incredible happened.

Our German commander, Captain von Alvensleben, appeared personally before the "General Assembly" and declared that he and his men were merely there for our protection. . . . After him, a representative of the Tyrolean local government climbed on our improvised platform and declared:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I beg of you in the name of the Tyrolean district government to consider yourselves our guests. . . ."

We are dumbfounded. We look at each other somewhat diffidently, somewhat afraid that this is merely a dream. Soon we shall wake again to reality. But the impossible has happened. The dream is a reality—we are almost free! And we are home! They have spoken to us like human beings! Oh, God, dear God, it is true.

When we had recovered, many of us went out of the hotel, over the crisp, hard-frozen snow to a near-by chapel in the forest for quiet prayer.

May 4, 1945

At two o'clock this afternoon, alarm! The Americans!

An American detachment takes over the hotel.

We are free!

I cannot write about it. I cannot begin to express our feelings. Who can describe Freedom?

The American troops make a deep impression on us. Apart

from their equipment and their supplies, which to us seem utterly unbelievable, the perfect discipline in the ranks and the relation of officers to men is exemplary. They do what they can for us; they are helpful, sympathetic, understanding, unobtrusive—in short, they are human.

So that is America. This is the unsoldierly, utterly mechanized and decadent nation of which we read in the Nazi papers. Well, it is easy to understand now why they have won the war. There is only one flaw: the Press reporters. What can we tell them? Plans? Why, we don't know; we have not yet thought about plans. Of course, we want to go home as soon as possible. In the meanwhile perhaps we shall go to Meran for some time, until travel is restored and communications established.

*May 6, 1945*

Well, our "plans", which the pressmen were so curious about, cannot be executed straight away. An extremely friendly American major-general explains that we shall have to go to Naples for the time being. There everything will be cleared up. We must understand that, although the war was over in this particular part of the country, it was still a war zone, and that guerrilla fighting might break out anywhere and at any time. Also we should not forget that we had enemies and political adversaries.

We understand very well and prepare for our trip to the south.

*May 10, 1945*

Our trip to Naples was an experience. First we went in a long motor convoy through the wonderful valley of Cortina d'Ampezzo into the glorious spring of the north Italian plains. We drove past the wounds and ruins which a doubly senseless war had inflicted on this martyred country. In Verona we were loaded into transport planes and flown straight to Naples. Everywhere we meet the same politeness, hospitality, and help. I possessed only a heavy woollen suit of the kind one used to wear in Salzburg. It is not very appropriate for southern Italy. The American authorities immediately presented me with an American summer uniform and promised that I should get summer clothing through the Red Cross and UNRRA later. Then we continued on to Capri, which, for the time being, is journey's end.

*End of May, 1945*

Capri is a magic island, an oasis of peace. There is not the slightest trace of the war that has ruined a whole world. Our American hosts supply us with everything that we could possibly need for our comfort and which facilitates our first steps back to life. There is but one thing we lack: complete freedom.

Telegrams and letters come to us from all over the world. Only from Austria we hear nothing. We would give our last penny to know how things are at home; which of our friends are still alive; who has not survived these terrible years. We try everything—the Red Cross, the Vatican—but it is all in vain. Austria remains silent—even more silent now than it had been in Flossenburg or in Sachsenhausen. Every now and then we meet an American or British officer who tells us that he has been in Austria only a few days before. At such times an overpowering longing for home grips us.

Our little group of prisoners has shrunk considerably. The English, Russians, Poles, Italians, and French have left a long time ago. Some went home, some got positions co-operating with the armed forces. The German generals and a number of once prominent politicians have been separated from us. Most of the remaining prisoners wait from day to day for their permission to return home, although some of them have no home.

We are also as it were homeless, since we have become officially "displaced persons in custody of the American authorities". We shall have to wait for our release.

We have had one farewell party after another—and no matter in which language we say good-bye, it is a leave-taking of friends. With only one exception. Strangely enough, we had with us for the last weeks a Nazi adorned with the "golden emblem of the party". Unfortunately he was an Austrian.

## EPILOGUE

AND so I have come to the end of my diary. And I should say that many things remain untold. Unimportant, useless, and unused, we stand by the wayside and watch with bated breath as destiny rushes past, rapidly turning the pages in the open book of world history.

A new era is beginning. Once more it is the powerful of this world who dictate the headlines, The less powerful will be allowed to contribute a paragraph or two in the text. The defeated will listen and read. Among them—once more—is Austria.

The news from Central Europe is grave, and whole nations are in dire need. And all because—before 1918—they were not Austrian enough. For Austria then, as to-day, means the co-operation of nations within a framework of super-national federalism.

The news from Austria—such as there is—is no better. And that is because too many Austrians after 1918 thought only of the Anschluss and the power of the party they happened to back, and too little of their country and its people.

What will the future bring? Will humanity come nearer to the realization of its eternal dream of world peace? The answer is the same as in 1918: Why not? But it cannot be done without “the keystone to European peace”—Austria. This should be a lesson and a warning to Europe and America. No one can be obliged to believe, but everyone is obliged to be of good will.

And good will presupposes optimism.

That is why Austria laughs amid tears.

Will Austria have another chance for its historic mission? Certainly. But only when the others also show enough courage and strength to revise their way of thinking from the very beginning. The old recipe has proved a failure, both in foreign as in domestic policy. If Europe is going to be once more the sum of spheres of interests, then the tragedy will be played over again with the same actors in the same rôles. Then the spectre of nationalism will creep in by the back door and will present

itself on the stage; first in the guise of songs and gymnastics; a little later with the sayings of professors and poets; and finally in its true shape: in uniforms, with guns, planes, tanks. . . .

And two fronts will be formed again. National imperialism will once more, in the guise of some pseudo ideology, seek and find its revolutionary enemy. Then—perhaps in twenty-five years, perhaps sooner—there will be another world war raging in Europe. Only this time Austria and Vienna will disappear from the earth forever.

If humanity succeeds, however, in establishing super-national law and order, beside and over the sovereignty of States, on our continent, as some wise Americans and great Europeans have told us only recently, then Austria and Vienna stand at the beginning of a new and happy chapter in their age-old vocation.

Meanwhile, misery reigns in Austria, and much of the country is in ruins. Prolonged absence from home—whether voluntary or involuntary—makes one's view hazy and inevitably distorts one's judgment. Banishment and emigration are a hard lot. Although there may be differing opinions on this point, one thing is certain: Hatred and resentment are powerful agents in setting political forces free; but they are incapable of producing constructive forces, unable to bring forth the necessary sacrifices for the great and thankless job of reconstruction.

It certainly is not an urgent task to-day to play the game of what would have happened if the so-called Austro-Marxists had co-operated with the so-called Austro-fascists, and what has been lost because they failed to do so. The question to-day is whether they will be able to drop the party designation in the future and just be plain "Austro", and nothing else. Nothing is gained by retrospective slander, especially since we have seen Hitler as a past master in this art.

This simple insight is apparently not so easy to come by. Certainly, the centres of Austrians abroad in Prague, Paris, London, and New York did not seem to be guided by it in general. It took the concentration camps of Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen to bring the so-called Austro-fascists and Austro-Marxists together. The former were in the great majority; if we may believe Messrs. Himmler, Goering, Schirach, and Buerckel, who had classified them under the name of "clerico-communists"!

My own allegedly Austro-fascist conscience was somewhat soothed by the fact that the Gestapo had charged me chiefly

with pursuing a "Popular Front" policy, and of "aiding and abetting communism". That somehow restored my balance.

To-day all that is my concern only in so far as it is any Austrian's concern. But I do not think that one should wait until Austro-Marxism proves that it never stood for anything but purely democratic principles, and that it did not really want the dictatorship of the proletariat; or until Austro-fascism has shown that it put up with this slanderous name only because it was the only real opponent of the Anschluss and of nazism. I believe that now is the time for Austrians to emulate the example set in other countries where, regardless of party politics and differing opinions, the whole people is united on those questions which deal with the existence of their nation.

That is what I would like to see in my country before I die!

The "Anschluss" of all Austrians to Austria.



## APPENDIX

**T**RANSSCRIPTS of telephone conversations between Berlin and various capitals, March 11 and 13, 1938, as found by the Allied authorities in the Reichkanzlei in Berlin.

1. *Goering to Seyss-Inquart, March 11, 1938, 2.45 p.m.*

*Goering:* Hello, Herr Doktor. Is my brother-in-law with you?  
*Seyss:* No, he isn't.

*G.:* How are things with you? Have you handed in your resignation, or have you anything else to tell me?

*S.:* Well, the Chancellor has called off the plebiscite for Sunday, and has put us in a somewhat difficult position. Together with the postponement of the plebiscite, extensive security measures have been taken, for instance, an eight p.m. curfew.

*G.:* The measures of Chancellor Schuschnigg are in no way satisfactory. Officially, I cannot comment on this, at the moment anyway, because I am not entitled to do so alone. But I shall let you know about that within a few minutes. I see the calling off of the plebiscite merely as a postponement, but not as a change of the present situation, which was brought about by Schuschnigg's attitude and his breach of the Berchtesgaden agreement.

[Here Goering went into conference with Hitler, after which he called Seyss-Inquart again at 3.05 p.m.]

*G.:* Berlin cannot agree in any way to the decisions taken by Chancellor Schuschnigg. Because of the breach of the Berchtesgaden agreement, Schuschnigg has forfeited the confidence of our men here. Consequently, we have no confidence in his future actions either. We demand that the national ministers in Austria hand in immediately their resignations to the Chancellor, and that they demand in return that he resign as well. If we do not hear from you within one hour at the latest we shall assume that you are no longer in a position to telephone. That would mean that you have handed in your resignation.

Furthermore, I ask you to send the Fuehrer then the

telegram which we discussed. It is understood that as soon as Schuschnigg resigns, you will be immediately charged by the Austrian President to form a new Cabinet.

2. *Seyss-Inquart to Goering, March 11, 1938, 3-55 p.m.*

*Seyss:* Chancellor Schuschnigg has gone to see the President to hand in the resignation of the entire Cabinet.

*Goering:* Does that mean that you will be charged with the formation of the new Government?

*S.:* I shall be able to tell you that at five-thirty at the latest.

*G.:* I declare categorically that this, apart from Schuschnigg's resignation, constitutes one of our immutable demands.

3. *German Embassy in Vienna to Goering, March 11, 1938, 5 p.m.*

*Globocnik:* I have to report the following: Seyss-Inquart has been in conference with the Chancellor until four-thirty p.m. The latter declares that it will be technically impossible to dissolve the Cabinet until five-thirty p.m.

*Goering:* By seven-thirty the new Cabinet must be formed and the various measures carried out. Is Seyss-Inquart there?

*Glo.:* No, he isn't here; he is in conference; that is why he sent me to the telephone.

*G.:* All right. What is his message? Repeat exactly.

*Glo.:* He told me to tell you that he is in no position to . . .

*G.:* Oh; why does he ask you to phone, then?

*Glo.:* He tells me to tell you that he has his doubts whether the party formations which are now in the Reich should be called into Austria at this point.

*G.:* We are not talking about that. I want to know what's happening. Has he told you that he is Chancellor now?

*Glo.:* Yes, sir.

*G.:* Is he properly in charge now?

*Glo.:* Yes, sir.

*G.:* Yes, sir, yes, sir . . . Speak up, man! When will he have formed the new Cabinet?

*Glo.:* The Cabinet . . . Oh, perhaps by nine-fifteen p.m.

*G.:* The Cabinet must be formed by seven-thirty p.m.

*Glo.:* Seven-thirty p.m. Yes, sir.

*G.:* Keppler will be there for this purpose.

[German Secretary of State Keppler was considered Goering's right-hand man.]

*Glo.:* Furthermore, I have to report: The S.A. and S.S. formations have already been called up as auxiliary police.

*G.:* The S.A. and S.S. formations have already been called up as auxiliary police? Hm—one must also demand that the party be immediately permitted to function legally.

*Glo.:* Yes, sir. It will be done.

*G.:* It will be done. With all its formations—S.S., S.A., and Hitler Youth.

*Glo.:* Yes, Herr Generalfeldmarschall. There is only one thing we ask for—namely, that the formations which have emigrated to the Reich will not be called in for the time being.

*G.:* No, they will come only in a couple of days.

*Glo.:* Well—he means only after the plebiscite.

*G.:* No, no. What's this about a plebiscite anyway?

*Glo.:* Well, he means that the programme which will then be at hand will be executed by Hitler.

*G.:* Just a moment . . . about that plebiscite . . . there are a number of special things, aren't there? Well, in any case the Schuschnigg plebiscite the day after to-morrow must be cancelled.

*Glo.:* Oh, yes. That has been cancelled. There is no longer any question about that.

*G.:* All right. And the Cabinet must be unequivocally a National Socialist Cabinet.

*Glo.:* Yes, sir. There is no question about that either. And at seven-thirty . . .

*G.:* At seven-thirty you will report to me that it has been formed. Keppler has a list of names which must be included.

*Glo.:* Yes, sir. Only, pardon me, sir, there is just one thing which Seyss-Inquart would ask: that the formations in exile should not come now to Austria, but later.

*G.:* Ah, well . . . we can discuss . . . well, anyway . . . it will take a couple of days anyway.

*Glo.:* That is what he asked.

*G.:* All right.

*Glo.:* Is that all right, then?

*G.:* Yes. They will not come immediately. We will discuss this with him later.

*Glo.:* Thank you, Herr Generalfeldmarschall.

*G.:* Listen—there is no mistake about the party being legally established?

*Glo.:* Oh, no, that's absolutely clear. No question about that.

*G.:* With all its formations?

*Glo.:* With all its formations here in Austria.

*G.:* In uniform?

*Glo.:* In uniform.

*G.:* All right, then.

*Glo.:* The S.A. and S.S. have been on duty for half an hour now. There is no trouble concerning this.

*G.:* And concerning the plebiscite, we will send somebody especially down, who will tell you what sort of a plebiscite this will be.

*Glo.:* Ah, well, there is no hurry, then.

*G.:* No, there is no hurry. What did Seyss-Inquart mean when he said that the relation between Germany and Austria must be put on a new basis?

*Glo.:* What did he mean by that? Well, he means that Austrian independence will remain intact, won't it? But that everything here will be made National Socialist.

*G.:* Well, we shall see about that. Besides, listen. The formations here will have to be sent to Austria within the next few days. It's in the interest of Seyss-Inquart himself that he should get perfectly reliable formations which are absolutely at his disposal.

*Glo.:* But Seyss-Inquart will discuss that with you.

*G.:* Yes, he can discuss it with me.

*Glo.:* So that he knows who will come into Austria. But that can wait a couple of days.

*G.:* All right, and by seven-thirty to-night I will hear from you that the Cabinet has been formed.

*Glo.:* Yes, sir, he will have accomplished it by then.

*G.:* He will also speak with the Fuehrer at seven-thirty; and as far as the Cabinet is concerned, Keppler will bring the names. Oh, I forgot to mention Fischboeck. Fischboeck will get the portfolio of Trade and Commerce.

*Glo.:* Why, of course. That goes without saying.

*G.:* Kaltenbrunner will get Security, and Bahr [-Lohr?] will get the Army. For the moment, Seyss-Inquart is to take the Army himself. The Department of Justice has been decided already. Do you know who?

*Glo.:* Oh, yes, indeed.

*G.:* Tell me his name.

*Glo.:* Well, your brother-in-law, isn't it?

*G.:* Is it?

*Glo.*: Oh, yes.

*G.*: Listen. Be careful. All the Press people must be removed immediately and our men are to take over.

*Glo.*: Yes, sir. And the man whom we have mentioned in connection with the Security Department . . .

*G.*: Kaltenbrunner? Yes. He is to get Justice. And then listen. Take care immediately of the Press people, and then seven-thirty.

[Another speaker, Lieutenant-General Muff, comes to the telephone and reports.]

*Muff*: Keppler cannot come till at five-forty.

*G.*: I have just given the names to Globocnik.

*M.*: May I mention just once more that the party formations in exile be let loose only when they ask for it here?

*G.*: Yes, no, the Fuehrer wants to— But the Fuehrer will discuss it with Seyss personally. They are the best-disciplined formations, and will be under the immediate command of Seyss. That is his best guarantee.

*M.*: Yes, but the impression abroad . . .

*G.*: We will take care of that. Foreign policy will be decided exclusively in Germany. Besides, Seyss and the Fuehrer will discuss that later. It will take anyway quite a while before they can be set in motion. In any case, they won't come to-day, or to-morrow, or the day after to-morrow.

4. *Goering to Dr. Hueber (his brother-in-law), March 11, 1938, 5.20 p.m.*

*Hueber*: I was just looking for the gentleman to tell him the same thing myself.

*Goering*: Now listen, Franz. You take over the Department of Justice, and, on the express desire of the Fuehrer, you also take Foreign Affairs for the time being. Later we shall find somebody else for it.

*H.*: Just one more thing: Fischboeck intends to call on the Fuehrer before he definitely accepts his new charge.

*G.*: Oh, no, he is not to do that. It is not necessary now.

*H.*: In that case he will call you. I am also against it.

*G.*: Yes, he can call me later. There is no time for that now. And he is not to cook up any special reservations. He must show some responsibility worthy of the historical moment, and act accordingly. Of the Cabinet posts he

is to reserve Commerce for himself; Kaltenbrunner gets Security, you the Department of Justice and, for the time being, Foreign Affairs.

H.: Does he know that already?

G.: No, the latter he does not know, but I shall tell him so myself. He is to form the Cabinet immediately, and he is not to fly up here, because the Cabinet must be formed by seven-thirty. Otherwise, everything is changed, and we have to revise all our decisions.

H.: Why, yes, of course. I'll do everything as you told me immediately.

G.: Oh, yes, there is one more important point which I forgot before, and which really goes without saying: quickest possible disarmament of the reds who were armed yesterday, and no pussy-footing, either, of course. Well, he is to call me immediately: There is no point in his flying here. Just a moment. He is to ring me at the number 125224.

5. *Seyss-Inquart to Goering, March 11, 1938, 5.26 p.m.*

*Seyss*: The situation is now as follows: The Austrian President has accepted the resignation, but he takes the point of view that only the Chancellor is responsible for Berchtesgaden and its consequences. Therefore, he would like to give the Chancellorship to a man like Dr. Ender. At the moment our men are with him, Globocnik and the others, trying to explain the situation to him.

*Goering*: Well, listen to me. What you have just told me changes the entire picture. Tell the President, or anybody else, that this information is totally different from what we had been told earlier. Globocnik reported to me on your orders that you had been appointed Chancellor.

S.: I, Chancellor? When did he say that?

G.: An hour ago. He said you had been appointed Chancellor, and that the party had been re-established. S.A. and S.S. were doing duty as auxiliary police, he said.

S.: No, that's all wrong. I suggested to the President that he should appoint me Chancellor; but with him that usually takes three or four hours. As far as the party is concerned, we are not yet in a position to re-establish it. But the S.A. and the S.S. formations have been ordered to take over police duty.

G.: Listen. That is no way of doing things. Under no cir-

cumstances. The whole thing has been started now; so listen. Somebody must tell the President that he is to appoint you immediately as Chancellor, and that he must accept the Cabinet as we have decided, so that you get the Chancellorship and the Army . . .

S.: Herr Generalfeldmarschall, Muhlmann has just come in. He has been there just now. May he report to you?

G.: Yes, go ahead.

Muhlmann: The situation is this: The President is still most stubborn in his refusal. He demands that an official diplomatic *démarche* take place on the part of the Reich. We—that is, three National Socialists—tried to speak with him personally to point out that the situation is such that he can do nothing but comply with our demands, but we were not even admitted. It looks, therefore, as if he had no intention of giving in.

G.: Hm . . . [short pause] Give me Seyss-Inquart again.

S.: Hello.

G.: Listen. Will you please go immediately, together with our military attaché, Lieutenant-General Muff, to the President, and inform him that if he does not accept our demands then and there—you know what the demands are—then the troops which are already stationed all along the borders will march, and Austria will have ceased to exist? Lieutenant-General Muff is to go with you, and he is to insist that you be admitted at once. Please phone me immediately about Miklas' reactions. Tell him also that we are not joking. There was a slight hiatus just a moment ago because of the erroneous reports that were received here, but, as things are now, the invasion of Austria will begin on all parts of the border to-night. If we are in possession of the report that you have been appointed Chancellor by seven-thirty p.m. the marching orders will be stopped and the troops will remain on our side of the border. You had better decree the immediate re-establishment of the party with all its affiliated organizations, and free the National Socialists from any restrictions throughout the country. Call them out on the streets everywhere, and—report by seven-thirty p.m. Lieutenant-General Muff is to go with you. I shall give Muff these orders myself. If Miklas could not understand the situation in four hours, he'll understand it now in four minutes.

S.: Well, all right.

6. *Goering to Keppler and Muff, March 11, 1938, 6.28 p.m.*

*Keppler:* I have just talked to Muff. His *démarche* ran parallel to mine, and I didn't know anything about it. He has just been to see the President, but the latter refused again. I am calling upstairs again to find out whether the President would like to talk to me after all.

*Goering:* Where is Muff now?

*K.:* Muff has come down again. His *démarche* was without success.

*G.:* Well, what does the President say?

*K.:* That he won't do it.

*G.:* Well, then Seyss-Inquart will have to depose him. Go upstairs now, and tell him bluntly that Seyss-Inquart is to call up the National Socialist Guard, and that I will give marching orders to the troops within five minutes. Give me Muff on the telephone.

*Muff:* Well, it is a fact now that Schuschnigg's attempt to show the world that National Socialism has no majority in Austria can only be thwarted by an armed invasion on our . . .

[Here the speaker was cut off. Three minutes later Goering called from Berlin.]

*G.:* Can I speak to Keppler?

*Vehsemeyer:* This is Vehsemeyer. Keppler is with the Chancellor.

*G.:* You mean with the President.

*V.:* No, with the Chancellor. They are all together, the President and Chancellor, and also Mayor Schmitz.

*G.:* Well, I shall stay on the phone here. Vehsemeyer, things must happen fast now. We only have three minutes left now.

*V.:* I know, sir. Yes, sir. Here is Keppler.

*K.:* I was upstairs once more with the President, but he has refused everything.

*G.:* Refused again! Well, Seyss must call me at once.

*K.:* He is here. He can speak to you at once.

*Seyss:* Seyss-Inquart speaking.

*G.:* Well, what's going on?

*S.:* Pardon me, Herr Feldmarschall, I did not get you . . .

*G.:* What's going on?

*S.:* Well, the President has not yet changed his mind. He has not yet decided one way or the other.



G.: Well, do you think there will be a decision within the next few minutes?

S.: Well, I should think that it can't last much longer than five or ten minutes. But probably, well—I think it will last another five or ten minutes.

G.: Now listen. I am willing to wait for another few minutes. I expect you to call me then immediately on the priority wire here in the Reichskanzlei. But you must waste no time. I cannot take the responsibility; in fact, I am not supposed to wait another minute. If things don't happen within that time you will have to take over by force. Do you understand?

S.: Yes—you mean when he threatens?

G.: Yes.

S.: Yes, all right, we'll manage that all right.

G.: Don't forget to ring me immediately on the priority wire.

1. *Seyss-Inquart to Goering, March 11, 1938, 7:57 p.m.*

Seyss: Dr. Schuschnigg will announce on the radio that the German Government has given an ultimatum to Austria.

Goering: Yes, I heard about that.

S.: The present Cabinet has voluntarily suspended itself. General Schilhawsky is in command of the army here, and has given orders for a withdrawal of Austrian troops from the borders. The gentlemen here have decided to sit and wait for the invasion.

G.: In other words, he did not charge you with the formation of a new Cabinet?

S.: Oh, no.

G.: But he has suspended you?

S.: No. Nobody has been suspended, but the Cabinet has, so to speak, retired from its functions and will let things take their course now.

G.: And you have not been appointed? Your appointment has been refused?

S.: Oh, yes. That was never accepted. They take the view that things might as well come to a head now; I mean to the invasion. They think that as the invasion takes place the executive power will automatically go to somebody else.

G.: All right, then. I am going to give marching orders now to the troops. And it is up to you to see that you are in

charge. Inform all leading personalities of what I tell you now: Everybody who resists our troops or organizes resistance will be summarily dealt with by our tribunals. The tribunals of the invading troops. Is that clear?

S.: Yes.

G.: Regardless of rank or position. Leading personalities as well.

S.: Yes. But orders have been given already by them not to resist.

G.: That makes no difference! The President did not appoint you, and that, too, is resistance.

S.: Ah, well . . .

G.: All right, now. You have got your official orders.

S.: Yes, sir.

G.: Best of luck to you. Heil Hitler!

8. *Goering to Lieutenant-General Muff, March 11, 1938, 8.25 p.m.*

*Goering:* Please tell the following to Seyss-Inquart: As we see things here, the present Cabinet has resigned. But he himself has not resigned. He is therefore to continue in office, and is to take the necessary measures officially in the name of the Austrian Government. The invasion is going to take place now, and it will be announced that whosoever resists our troops will have to bear the consequences. The Austrian formations [Austrian Nazi formations exiled to Germany] can join them any time—or rather can march with and under the protection of our regular troops. Seyss is to see that things run smoothly over there.

*Muff:* Yes, he will see to that. Seyss has already broadcast.

G.: And he is to take over the Government now. Yes, take over now, and bring things rapidly to a conclusion. And Miklas—well, the best thing would be if Miklas would resign himself.

M.: Well, that he will not do. We have just had a very dramatic scene. I talked to him for about fifteen minutes, and he declared that he would not yield to force on any account, and that he would not appoint a new Cabinet.

G.: Oh, so he won't yield to force?

M.: He won't yield to force.

G.: Well, what does he mean? Will he be ousted bodily?

M.: Yes, I imagine he will just stay put.

G.: All right. Perhaps if one has begotten fourteen children one has to stay put. I don't mind. Tell Seyss that he is to take over the Government.

9. *Keppler to Goering, March 11, 1938, 8.48 p.m.*

*Keppler*: I would like to report what has happened: President Miklas has refused to do anything whatsoever. The Cabinet, however, has ceased to function all the same. I talked to Schuschnigg, and he told me that they had laid down their posts. . . . Seyss spoke on the radio, and announced that in his capacity as Minister of the Interior he would carry on the business of government. The old Cabinet has given orders to the army not to resist in any way or form. So there won't be any shooting.

*Goering*: Ah, well, that doesn't make any difference anyway. Now listen. The main thing is that Seyss-Inquart takes charge of all functions of the Government now, that he secures the broadcasting facilities, et cetera. And listen. Seyss is to send the following telegram to us. Take it down: "The provisional Austrian Government, which after the resignation of the Schuschnigg Cabinet sees its duty in the re-establishment of law and order in Austria, urgently asks the German Government to assist it in this task and to help it to avoid bloodshed. It therefore asks the German Government to send German troops into Austria as quickly as possibly."

*K.*: Well, S.A. and S.S. are on the streets here, but everything is quiet and orderly.

*G.*: Oh, yes, another thing: Seyss is to occupy the borders at once, so that they won't smuggle the money out of the country.

*K.*: Yes, sir.

*G.*: And, above all, he is to take over Foreign Affairs now.

*K.*: Yes, of course we have not got anyone yet for that post.

*G.*: That makes no difference. Seyss will take over, and he will call in a couple of men to assist him. He is to take those whom we have suggested. He is to form a provisional Government. It is quite unimportant now how the President feels about it.

*K.*: Yes, sir.

*G.*: Form a provisional government as he had planned and inform the other countries.

*K.*: Yes, sir.

1 - (Austrian Requiem)

G.: He is the only one who has any power in Austria now. Well, our troops will be across the border to-night.

K.: Yes, sir.

G.: All right. And he is to send the telegram as soon as possible. And tell him also that we would like . . . He does not really have to send the telegram. He has only to say that he did. You get me? All right, then. You will call me about this either at the Fuehrer's or at my place. Now get going. Heil Hitler!

10. *General Bodenschatz from Berlin to Keppler, March 11, 1938, 9.54 p.m.*

*Bodenschatz:* I need the telegram very urgently!

*Keppler:* Tell the Generalfeldmarschall that Seyss-Inquart says it is in order.

*B.:* That's wonderful. Thank you very much. So Seyss-Inquart says that it is in order.

*K.:* Yes.

11. *Prince Phillip of Hesse, German Ambassador in Rome, to Hitler, March 11, 1938, 10.25 p.m.*

*Hesse:* I have just returned from the Palazzo Venezia. The Duce took the news very well indeed. He sends his very best regards to you. He said that he had heard the story about the plebiscite directly from Austria. Schuschnigg told him last Monday. Upon which Mussolini replied that such a plebiscite would be absolute nonsense, an impossibility, a bluff—and that one could not do things like that. And Schuschnigg replied that he could not change anything now—everything had been arranged and settled. So Mussolini said if that was so the Austrian question no longer interested him.

*Hitler:* Then please tell Mussolini that I shall never forget this.

*Hesse:* Yes, *mein Fuehrer*.

*Hitler:* Never, never, never. Come what may. I am also ready to sign quite another agreement with him.

*Hesse:* Yes, I have told him that already.

*Hitler:* Once the Austrian thing is out of the way I am ready to go with Mussolini through thick and thin; it's all the same to me now. . . .

*Hesse:* Yes, *mein Fuehrer*.

*Hitler:* And listen. Sign any agreement he would like. I feel no longer in that terrible position which we faced only a short while ago—militarily, I mean, in case I got into a conflict. You can tell him again: I thank him most heartily. I will never forget him for that! I will never forget him!

*Hesse:* Yes, *mein Fuehrer*.

*Hitler:* I will never forget that. Come what may—oh, I will never forget him. Whenever he should be in need, or in danger, he can be sure that I will stick to him, rain or shine . . . come what may . . . and if the whole world were to rise against him. I will, I shall . . .

*Hesse:* Yes, *mein Fuehrer*.

12. *Goering from Berlin to Ribbentrop in London, March 13, 1938, 9.15 a.m.*

*Goering:* You know already that the Fuehrer has charged me with the running of the Government, and I thought I would ring you and give all the necessary information. The jubilation in Austria is indescribable—you can hear that on the radio.

*Ribbentrop:* Yes, it is fantastic, isn't it?

*G.:* Yes, indeed. Our last march—the re-occupation of the Rhineland—is completely eclipsed by this event, especially as far as the joy of the people is concerned. . . . The Fuehrer was deeply moved when I talked to him last night. You must realize that it is the first time he has seen his home again. But I really wanted to talk to you about the political things. Well, the story about our having given an ultimatum to Austria is, of course, nonsense. The ultimatum was given to the Schuschnigg Government by the National Socialist Ministers in the Austrian Cabinet and by the people's representatives. Later on more and more prominent people took up our point of view. The only thing which these Austrian Ministers asked us, of course, was that we should back them up if necessary, so that they would not be completely trampled down once more and shot to pieces in a civil war. And we told them that we would under no circumstances tolerate a civil war instigated by Schuschnigg. It does not matter really whether the reds were armed on Schuschnigg's orders or merely with his knowledge. They actually paraded in the streets,

and we have photographs of these parades. Well, that constituted, of course, a considerable source of danger. Besides, don't forget that Schuschnigg kept making powerful speeches, saying that they would fight to the last man, et cetera. So we could not know in advance that they would capitulate so easily; and therefore Seyss-Inquart—who at this time was already in charge of the Government—asked us to invade immediately. We were already at the border with our troops because we could not know in advance whether there would be civil war or not, you see? Well, these are the historic facts which can all be proved by documents. . . .

The Fuehrer thought that you—now that you are over there anyway—might tell the people a bit how things really are, and tell them especially that if they think that Germany gave an ultimatum to Austria they were completely misinformed.

R.: Yes, I did that already, when I talked at great length with Halifax and Chamberlain. It was quite clear from the start. . . .

G.: I just wanted you to tell them again—no, not again—I mean tell Halifax and Chamberlain these things: (1) it is not true that Germany issued any sort of ultimatum to Austria. That is a lie of Schuschnigg's. Because the ultimatum was issued by Seyss-Inquart, Glaise-Hortenaus, and Jury. (2) It is not true that we issued an ultimatum to the President of Austria. That was also done by the others, and I believe that a German military attaché accompanied them on Seyss's request because of some technical detail or other. He was merely there to say yes or no in case Seyss-Inquart should ask whether Germany was willing to send troops, in case they were needed. But he was not to tell the others—merely Seyss-Inquart, you see? And, furthermore, I want to make it quite clear that it was Seyss-Inquart who had asked us here—both orally and then by telegram—to send troops, because he did not know how things stood in Vienna and Wiener Neustadt and other places where arms had been issued; and because he could not know how the V.F. [Patriotic Front], which always talked such a lot when it was a question of words—how they would react. So, you see: the entrance of our troops into Austria took place on the express demand of Seyss. . . .

R.: My conferences here in London are at an end. If I hang around here with no good reason it might look funny. I received the very best impression of Chamberlain, by the way.

G.: I am glad to hear that.

R.: Yes, I had a long talk with him the other day. I don't want to repeat it on the telephone, but I received the decided impression that Chamberlain is honestly trying to bring us closer together. I told him then that a *rapprochement* between England and Germany would be much easier once the Austrian question had been cleared away. And I think he saw it, too.

G.: Well, listen. As long as the whole problem down there has been solved, and since there is no more danger of any excitement or disturbance now—and, after all, that was the trouble spot from which any real danger could have started—well, now the people should be grateful to us for having cleared it up.

R.: Well, and even if a bit of excitement should result now from the change, it can be all for the good for a German-English *rapprochement*, if one considers the great outlines of the thing. I told Halifax at the end of our conversations that a *rapprochement* was honestly desired here; whereupon he replied that he was a bit worried about Czechoslovakia.

G.: Oh, but no, no. That is out of the question!

R.: I told him then and there that we had no interest and no intentions whatsoever of starting anything in that direction. On the contrary, I told him if our Germans were decently treated there we would surely come to an understanding.

G.: Yes, I, too, am sure that Halifax is a very reasonable man.

R.: My impressions of both Halifax and Chamberlain are really excellent. He thought that for the moment it might be a bit difficult with public opinion here, because, after all, it looks a bit like a solution by force, et cetera. But I have the impression that the normal Englishman—the man in the street—will ask himself: What has England got to do with Austria?

G.: Why, of course. That is clear. There are things which are the people's business and others which are not. . . .

R.: You know, I had the impression the last time I spoke to Halifax that he did not make any direct replies to my arguments—the way I put them to him. But he told me in the

end that he, too, was in favour of a German-English *rapprochement*.

G.: Well, after all, everything is fine and very peaceful. Two nations have found each other, are lying in each other's arms, rejoice and give voice to their jubilation.

R.: There is one more thing I wanted to say—although I have left no possible room for doubt here in this matter. If— Hello! I say, if there should be anything, any sort of threat or trouble, anything at all, in consequence of this latest development—I mean in that case the Fuehrer and the entire German nation would back it up one hundred per cent, wouldn't they?

G.: Well, I will tell you something confidentially: Lord have mercy upon them—that is all I can say. The Fuehrer—the cold, reasonable man—is quite different in this matter, where his own home is concerned. He really has his heart in it. I believe if the man received any sort of threat in the Austrian question he would never, never give in. Neither would either of the two nations. It would turn out to be a fanatical thing both in Germany and in Austria.

R.: Yes, I know it would.

G.: No, there can be no doubt. Anyone who threatens us now will have to face both nations and their fanatical resistance.

R.: Indeed, Herr Goering.

G.: Well, then, I shall see you here. I am very much looking forward to seeing you. The weather here in Berlin is wonderful. I am sitting here wrapped up in blankets on my terrace in the bracing air and drinking my coffee. Later I have to go in and deliver my speech. The birds are singing, and every now and then I can hear through the radio the outburst of joy and jubilation over there. It is colossal.

R.: Oh, it is wonderful!



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