

THE INDEPENDENCE OF AUSTRIA

The Moscow Three-Power Declaration

THE Declaration about Austria, at the Moscow Conference, may be regarded as a success of British policy. Mr. Churchill was the first Statesman to recognise that Austria was a victim and not a voluntary follower of the Nazis. He was never confused or misled by the so-called Plebiscite and by the Propaganda manoeuvres of the Nazis. In the darkest hours of Austria's destiny Mr. Churchill believed in her honesty and happier future. As early as in 1940, he told the world that Austria ranks amongst those nations for whom Great Britain drew her sword, and gave in this way to all freedom-loving Austrians, both at home and all over the world, consolation and hope in their very grave hours.

The famous declaration of Mr. Eden, in the House of Commons, on September 9th, 1942, that the British Government "do not regard themselves as being bound by any change effected in Austria in, and since, 1938" (which remark was almost verbally repeated in the Moscow Declaration) was in complete accordance with Mr. Churchill's policy. The full recognition of the Moscow Conference must be acknowledged with deep gratitude.

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The International Status of Austria

The International Status of Austria is now unambiguously secured. She is neither a part of Germany nor her satellite. She is an independent State, whose territory was occupied by the enemy. Her situation towards Germany is, in no way, different to that of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Greece, Holland, France, Norway, and ~~Sweden~~

etc. The Austrian people are exposed in the same way to the German terror as these other aggressed nations. The great number of Austrians detained in Prisons or Concentration Camps or executed, gives ample proof that the force of resistance in Austria is by no means less than in the other countries occupied. The fact that the Austrians are pressed into the German Army is extremely regrettable, but they are as helpless as the Czechs, the French, the Poles, etc., who are forced to work in numbers reaching Millions for the German War Machine. In a total war, mechanised like the present one, the worker in the armament factory or on the land is as indispensable as the soldier at the battle front. The Germans imposed conscription on the Austrians, and everyone who opposes it, faces death. We must repeat: Resistance and the fervent wish to shake off the German yoke are quite as strong in Austria as in the Allied countries occupied by the Germans. It is most important to recognise this fact.

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The Status of Austrians in this Country

Another point must be discussed in the light of the Moscow Conference. As the three Great Powers declared the Annexation as null and void, the Austrians living in this country must now be recognised as Austrians and *not*—as is the case with thousands of them—as *Germans*. To continue to regard Austrians as of German nationality because they were forced to accept a German passport is a great injustice, and in contradiction to the policy of the British Government and to the decision of the Moscow Conference.

The Future

The Independence of Austria, secured by the three Great Powers, is a great event of international significance. We are sure that a free and independent Austria will be in a position to make an important contribution to the great and unavoidable tasks that will confront all civilised nations after this war.

The Austrian Democratic Union, an Association of free and democratic Austrians, has formed a Reconstruction Committee composed of prominent Austrian experts, and they are doing preparatory work in this direction.

Since its foundation the Austrian Democratic Union

has done its full share to popularise the idea of Austria's independence as a European necessity. Now it is imperative that Democracy be established in a liberated Austria. Also in this direction the Austrian Democratic Union will fulfil its part.

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Austrian Unity

The Austrian Democratic Union was always an advocate for Austrian Unity in this country and everywhere. It earnestly hopes that the achieved security of Austrian independence will cause politics to disappear and make unity possible.

Three Telegrams

Sent by the Austrian Democratic Union on November 2nd, 1943.

Prime Minister WINSTON CHURCHILL,

10, Downing Street, S.W.1:—

WE WELCOME MOST WARMLY MOSCOW DECLARATION CONCERNING AUSTRIA AS IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS JUSTICE AND LASTING PEACE SHALL NEVER FORGET THAT YOU ALWAYS REGARDED AUSTRIA AS FIRST VICTIM OF NAZI AGGRESSION. PLEASE ACCEPT OUR DEEPEST THANKS AND FERVENT WISHES FOR GREAT BRITAIN'S FINAL VICTORY UNDER YOUR WISE LEADERSHIP.

His Excellency Ambassador JOHN WINANT,

1, Grosvenor Square, W.1:—

WE WELCOME MOST WARMLY MOSCOW DECLARATION CONCERNING AUSTRIA AS IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS JUSTICE AND LASTING PEACE STOP WE ARE SURE THAT A LIBERATED AUSTRIA WILL BECOME FERVENT FIGHTER FOR THE FOUR FREEDOMS OF YOUR GREAT PRESIDENT.

His Excellency Ambassador FEDOR GUSEV,

13, Kensington Palace Gardens, W.8:—

WE WELCOME MOST WARMLY MOSCOW DECLARATION CONCERNING AUSTRIA AS IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS JUSTICE AND LASTING PEACE. WE SHALL NEVER FORGET THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE'S AND ARMY'S ADMIRABLE HEROISM IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST BARBARISM AND TYRANNY AND WISH YOUR COUNTRY SOON VICTORY UNDER THE GREAT LEADERSHIP OF MARSHAL STALIN.

Issued by the AUSTRIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION, 28, BRYANSTON SQUARE, W.1.

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