

DEMOCRATIC CONSCIENCE

SECOND REPORT OF THE
AUSTRIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION
TO ITS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS



FOURPENCE

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LEND-LEASE

by

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THE LEND-LEASE Act appears at first to be nothing more than a financial and commercial agreement. In reality, however, it is a great social achievement. It is true that it has yet to develop and find its full significance in the life of the nations, but already it has the germ of a new idea—it is indeed a discovery on the ethical plane. And ethical laws are neither unnatural nor artificial, but spring from the urgent demands of present-day humanity.

The LEND-LEASE Act puts an end to the capitalist civil war which began with the industrialisation of the weaving trade and received its first death warning with the outbreak of the present war.

How is it that the Lend-Lease Act represents such a complete break with the past? It is because men, after all, do not produce in order to possess, but in order to live. Money, as a means of payment, is robbed of its purpose in life (not only from the economic, but also from the moral angle) and turned into a means of production. That has always been its object, but our modern financial methods, invented and defended by the privileged classes, misused money—or rather, what it stands for: credit.

Up to 1939, world commerce was directed by the City of London and Wall Street, under the slogan: "So much for so few." The system of Clearing Houses, Bills of Exchange and Central Banks—which was invented in England and adopted by high finance throughout the world—gave the few an opportunity to dominate the many. It was a pyramid system, such as exists in scores of large companies and organisations where hundred thousand monetary units control many millions.

The LEND-LEASE Act, if worked out and applied as President Roosevelt meant it to be, will from now on put production, *i.e.*, work, above money.

A nation is never richer than its production capacity, provided there is a market to receive the goods produced. This has always been the case but, unfortunately for our modern world order, we have not always been able to make full use of a nation's capacity to produce; for monopolies, cartels, and trusts, etc., restricted the work potentialities and thereby the will to work, in favour of those who used their accumulated capital reserves for this fatal restriction of production. The reason for this was price manipulation with its consequent profitable effect on monopoly concerns.

In ancient Rome, they employed slaves to do their work, *i.e.*, to produce their goods. . . . In our day, people were used for unemployment, *i.e.*, for the prevention of production. Morally, the system of ancient Rome may have been more wholesome.

The LEND-LEASE Act can practically do away with unemployment (it will scarcely be possible to do away with it altogether) as it shows the method how lowered production and consumption in one region can

be balanced and overcome by a higher production capacity in other places.

I should like to stress that the Lend-Lease system, which became necessary in this war, merely denotes the beginning of a new economic order. It is by no means easy to foresee to-day how this basic thought is going to influence world economy. But one thing is certain: it is a discovery, made necessary by the course of events, capable perhaps of opening up once and for all the system of world barter—leaving money considerations far behind—to track down poverty and despair in their last hiding places and drive them away for ever. May those who are responsible for the execution and development of these ideas be conscious of the greatness of their task.

The LEND-LEASE Act is a magnificent conception, the like of which not often has been seen in our history.

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MEMORANDUM ON THE AUSTRIAN PROBLEM*

(1)

In view of the course the war is likely to take in the next few months, it seems to us that the right moment has arrived for doing justice in a practical way both to the international importance of Austria in general and to her significance in the future of Great Britain in particular.

(2)

The success of the Nazis in Austria should not be misleading. They were mainly due to the following facts:

- (a) A long period of mass unemployment;
- (b) The terror and unscrupulous propaganda by the Nazis;
- (c) The inactivity of the Great Powers owing to their unpreparedness.
- (d) The absence of effective machinery for collective security.

(3)

It should not be overlooked that the annexation of Austria was brought about by force; that the plebiscite of April 10th, 1938, was a fraudulent manoeuvre; that 65 to 70 per cent. of the Austrians were against the *Anschluss*; that Austria, although with inadequate means and methods, had been fighting for her independence against Germany since 1933.

(4)

The Austrians are not Germans. It should certainly be recognized that the Austrians differ from the Germans in a number

* Distributed by the Democratic Union to interested political quarters.

of ways; in their history, their origin and mental outlook, their traditions, etc. Not having lived in an exclusively German environment, their spirit has never been moulded by the Prussians. The fact that they speak the same language as the Germans is not a proof of their being German. The common language is merely the product of historical conditions, a fact which is equally true of Britain and U.S.A., or Germany and the greater part of Switzerland, etc.

(5)

The assertion that an independent Austria would not be viable is either deliberate demagoguery or the result of ignorance. Austria has furnished irrefutable proof that she is capable of existing as an independent State—since she did, in fact, have an independent existence during the period between the two great wars. Had not the rest of the world pursued a stupid and short-sighted policy which shook the economic foundations of all countries, Austria would not have experienced mass unemployment and all its consequences.

(6)

It is equally erroneous to assume that Austria, to survive economically, must be propped up by Germany. On the contrary, both history and recent experience have shown that for the economic life of Austria, the East, South and South-East of Europe are the areas allotted by Austria's economic life. There can be no doubt that in an economic system, far-seeing and planning ahead, independent Austria will stand a good chance not only of surviving, but of developing her life to the full. It is, however, clear that, like most other small States, Austria can only exist prosperously and securely within the framework of a properly organised world.

(7)

The social strata of the Austrian people and their mentality should afford guarantees against any form of extreme being successful in Austria, whether the extremes be of the right or left. The Austrian population consists chiefly of workers, independent small tradesmen, and independent farmers. Most of them are individualists, but at the same time, international-thinking democrats. This sociological structure of the people should be taken into consideration when dealing with the Austrian question.

(8)

The understanding and sympathy for Great Britain (which have always been traditional amongst the Austrians) speak well for Austria

as a potential ally of this country. It would be a pity to neglect this potentiality. Austria, situated as she is in the heart of Europe, might be developed to become a corner-stone of British policy in Europe.

(9)

One should not ask impossibilities from the Austrian people. They are living under the greatest terror, like the other countries occupied by the Germans. The mass executions of Austrians in recent months show clearly the growing resistance of the Austrians to the Germans. It should be recognized that the overwhelming majority of the Austrian people hates and despises its German rulers whom it wishes to shake off.

(10)

The restoration of an independent and democratic Austria appears to us to be a European necessity. Austria, having been annexed by force, should be treated as a country occupied by the enemy. Austrians, because of their history and tradition, should be regarded as the natural allies of Great Britain.

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Comments so far received on the Memorandum of the Democratic Union on the Austrian Problem:

DR. GEORGE ADAMKIEWICZ (*Polish Ministry of Information*): "Austria has been deprived of her sovereign rights and self-government no less forcibly than most of the other European nations over-run by the Nazis . . . How could Austria, with a population of six millions, resist Germany with a population of sixty millions, and even if she had done so, what chance would she have stood of being able to do so with any hope of success . . . It is my firm conviction that, in a community of free nations co-operating in Central-Eastern Europe on a voluntary basis and in enjoyment of the safeguards outlined in the Atlantic Charter and other international enunciations, the participation of Austria should be of great importance to the peace, security and welfare of this part of Europe."

GENERAL DE BAER (*Cour Militaire de Belgique*): "Personally I consider Austria as a State temporarily occupied by the Nazis and I see no reason why the pre-1938 situation should not be restored; economically, Austria does not seem to be in a situation less favourable than Hungary or Switzerland, who are well able to survive without being attached to Germany."

JONKHEER VAN BLOCKLAND (*former Dutch Minister for Foreign Affairs*): "I read the Memorandum with great interest and I can assure you that I am one of those who will cordially applaud the restoration of Austria's independence."

THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER: "I have read the Memorandum of the Austrian Democratic Union on the Austrian problem with great interest and I find myself much in sympathy with the line it takes. It is my own strong belief that the Restoration of an independent and democratic Austria is a European necessity, and I hope that Austrians will be for every reason regarded and treated as the natural Allies of Great Britain."

ADAM CIOLKOSZ (*former Member of the Polish Parliament*): "I hope an independent republican and democratic Austria will be restored if that is the will of the Austrian people, as I believe it is."

DR. E. V. ERDELY (*Czechoslovak Ministry of Information*): "The motives for restoration of Austrian independence as pointed out in the Memorandum are convincing enough, although in my opinion a few more motives pointing towards the future could be added, especially that concerning the geographical position of Austria."

MR. GEOFFREY LE M. MANDER, M.P.: "I have read through the enclosed Memorandum with much interest. It seems to set out clearly the Austrian position, but I would repeat what I have so often told you, that unity amongst Austrians in this country would be far the most effective step that could be taken at the present time."

LORD MESTON (*President of the Liberal Party Organization*)*: "I have had your memorandum on the Austrian problem and I would like to congratulate you on the moderate and statesmanlike character of your pronouncement."

MR. J. CHRISTMAS MOLLER (*Chairman of the Danish Council*): "We should like to state that the Danish people as a whole have for generations past been strong supporters of the principle that every nation should be entitled to determine for itself whether it wished to form a free and independent community with the right to govern its own affairs, and we firmly hope and believe that a liberty-loving and democratic Austria will form part of a liberated and re-born Europe."

PROFESSOR GILBERT MURRAY: "I congratulate you sincerely on your Memorandum on the Austrian problem. It is very clear, very persuasive, very reasonable. It is certainly what I, and most Englishmen, would like to believe about the Austrian problem, and it shows that we have good ground for cherishing such a belief."

SIR WALFORD SELBY (*former British Minister in Vienna*): "You know my views; I think the Memorandum states the position very clearly."

MR. PATRICK SMITH (*Austrian Editor of the B.B.C.*): "Thank you very much for sending me the copy of your Memorandum. It sets out in my opinion clearly and objectively the problems attendant on post-war settlement of Central Europe and Austria's unique position."

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THE AUSTRIANS' NATIONAL STATUS

To-day it is beyond dispute that Great Britain never recognized *de jure* the annexation of Austria. This has been made clear, if any doubt had been possible, by Mr. Anthony Eden's declaration in the House of Commons on September 9th, 1942 (*Hansard, Vol. 383, No. 101*). In answer to questions by Mr. Geoffrey Mander and Mr. John Dugdale, Mr. Eden stated:

"While H.M. Government cannot, of course, commit

themselves at this stage to recognise or support the establishment in the future of any particular frontiers in Central Europe, I must make it plain that H.M. Government equally do not regard themselves as being bound by any change effected in Austria in and since 1938."

The fact that Austrians in this country have been registered as Germans is in contradiction, both logically and politically, to this declaration. This fact is also in striking contrast with the state-

ment made by the Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, at the Mansion House on November 9th, 1940, when he said that "Austria is one of the countries for whom we have drawn the sword, and for whom our victory will supply liberation."

The unilateral declaration made by Nazi Germany to the effect that Austria was to become part of the German Reich cannot be regarded as binding on other States. Nor does it seem possible to assume that an obligation to recognize the incorporation of Austria has been brought about by the cloak of that sham plebiscite under which the Nazis endeavoured to hide their act of brute force. From the standpoint both of national and international law, the Austrians have remained Austrians, and their registration, therefore, as "of German nationality" must be regarded as a gross injustice.

We know quite well that the entry "German nationality" in most Austrians' Registration Books has been made by reason of their German passports, which they had to produce when registering. But it must not be overlooked that those Austrians who were not fortunate enough to leave Austria before September, 1938, had no alternative. They had to accept the German passport in order to be able to escape. By refusing it, they were certain to be tortured, often to death, in a German concentration camp.

On the other hand, those who had the good luck to get out of the clutches of the Nazi barbarians before September, 1938, could retain their Austrian passports and were, accordingly and

correctly, registered in this country as "Austrians."

Owing to this anomaly there are two different categories of Austrian refugees in this country: (a) Austrians, registered as Austrians, because of their Austrian passports, and (b) Austrians, registered as Germans, because of their German passports, which were forced into their hands, and which they had no possible means whatever of refusing.

And yet, after Mr. Churchill's and Mr. Eden's declarations there can be no doubt about the legal position, namely, that the forced annexation of Austria and the subsequent plebiscite, shameful humbug that it was, have in no way changed the national or international status of Austria. In view of this, surely it is an injustice to the majority of Austrians in this country to register them as of "German nationality," an injustice the continuance of which is inconsistent with Britain's traditional respect for law and equity.

We think ourselves justified, therefore, in asking that this grievance should be redressed, and the incorrect entries in the Registration Books rectified. The proof of Austrian nationality can easily be established in each case, and the various Austrian organizations will gladly help where help should be needed.

The Austrians who are benefiting by Britain's unique hospitality, and who stand wholeheartedly at the side of Great Britain and the United Nations, will be deeply grateful if these conditions could be rectified and they were all given their proper status of AUSTRIANS.

* Passed away on October 7th, 1943.

LORD VANSITTART ON AUSTRIA

(Extract from a Speech by Lord Vansittart at the Reform Club, Manchester, on September 21st, 1943.)

The mention of detachment brings me to Austria. We have all promised her liberation. From whom? Why, from Germany. Then let us say so explicitly, and tell all Pan-Germans here that we have had enough of them. Let us know our own minds. We can't have a policy otherwise. Austria's destiny and utility lie east and south-east, not west. Toward the end of 1937 I made a careful estimate from every open and secret source of the percentage of Austrians who favoured the *Anschluss*. I reached a figure of under 30 per cent. The last estimate of our Minister in Vienna was 20 per cent. The Germans well knew what would have been the result of Schuschnigg's plebiscite. We should therefore announce in advance that we shall pay no attention to any increases exacted by six years of terrorism. In practice that terrorism will probably have reduced the real percentage to something still more legitimately negligible. Anyhow, the maintenance of the *Aschluss* in any circumstances would render impossible the position of Czechoslovakia and Poland. We should have known that before 1938. Any repetition of that blindness would be a hostile act against our Allies in favour of our enemies.

I was alarmed to see in a recent publication of the Royal Institute of International Affairs indications that the authors regard the questions of Austria and the so-called Sudetenland as open ones. (There is, of course, no such place as Sudetenland except in German propaganda, and the word should in future and as a matter of policy, be strictly banned from our vocabulary.) That is what comes of having had no policy for fifty years. When earnest men sit down to evolve one, they cannot make up their minds or put down their feet. There are no "questions" of Austria and Bohemia: They are settled by the Fifth Freedom—freedom from Germany. It would be revolting to sense and honour if, in the words of Kipling—and I am glad that T. S. Eliot has restored him to his technical throne as the greatest of verse writers—

"The burnt fool's bandaged finger goes wobbling back to the fire"
—the fire of Munich. You should hear what our Allies say about this sort of stuff.

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SOME OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ON AUSTRIA

WINSTON CHURCHILL, Mansion House, November 9th, 1940. (*The Times*, November 11th, 1940.)

"... Let me remind you that, in spite of all the blows we have endured and under all the burdens we bear and amid so many deadly threats, we have not abandoned one jot of any of our obligations or undertakings towards the captive or enslaved countries of Europe, or towards any of those countries which still act with us.

On the contrary, since we have been left alone in this world struggle we have reaffirmed or defined more precisely all the causes of all the countries with whom or for whom we drew the sword—AUSTRIA, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway... For all of these we will toil and strive, and our victory will supply the liberation of them all..."

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, Mr. BRENDAN BRACKEN, House of Commons, January 28th, 1942. (*Hansard*, Vol. 377, No. 25, col. 708.)

Captain Alan Graham asked the Minister of Information (1) . . . (2) whether it is with his permission that the British Broadcasting Corporation propagate pan-German tendencies in their talks to Germany and Austria in defiance of the Prime Minister's pledge of a free Austria, given on 9th November, 1940?

Mr. Bracken: ". . . All statements with regard to the future of Austria have been based on the passage in the Prime Minister's speech to which my hon. and gallant Friend refers."

WINSTON CHURCHILL, Speech on the Occasion of the Presentation of a Trailer Canteen by Austrians in Great Britain to the Women's Volunteer Service, February 18th, 1942. (*Foreign Office Text*.)

"It is not without deep emotion that I attend this simple ceremony. Here we see the heart of Austria, although trampled down under the Nazi and Prussian yoke. We can never forget here in this island that Austria was the first victim of Nazi aggression. We know that happy life which might have been led by scores of millions in Central Europe. We remember the charm, beauty and historic splendour of Vienna, the grace of life, the dignity of the individual; all the links of past generations are associated in our minds with Austria and with Vienna."

Turning to Sir George Franckenstein, Mr. Churchill said: "You are here to link with us between the dark past, the haggard present, and what I still believe will be the glorious future. We shall struggle on and fight on. The people of Britain will never desert the cause of the freedom of Austria from the Prussian yoke. We shall go forward.

"Many long miles have to be marched and many leagues at sea to be covered by ships; many millions of miles of aeroplane flights will be accomplished; great heart effort from large masses of human beings—but we have three-quarters of the human race upon our side. Only our own follies can deprive us of victory; and in the victory of the Allies, Free Austria, held Austria, shall find her honoured place."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Mr. EDEN, House of Commons, March 4th, 1942. (*Hansard*, Vol. 378, No. 40, col. 620.)

MR. MANDER asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will make it clear that the Government would welcome unity between all sections of Austrians in this country, and that such unity must powerfully influence any sympathy or support which the Government might be inclined to give.

MR. EDEN: Yes, Sir, His Majesty's Government would welcome unity among the Austrian groups, as among other foreign groups in this country, and their attitude towards such groups would certainly be influenced thereby.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Mr. EDEN, House of Commons, September 9th, 1942. (*Hansard*, Vol. 383, No. 101, cols. 1-4.)

MR. MANDER asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will give an assurance that the Government at the final peace settlement, in so far as the future of Austria is concerned, will not be influenced by any changes effected in, and since, 1938.

MR. JOHN DUGDALE asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the liberation of Austria from German domination is one of the war aims of His Majesty's Government.

MR. EDEN: The policy of His Majesty's Government towards Austria was stated by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister at the Mansion House on 9th November, 1940, when he said that Austria is one of the countries for whom we have drawn the sword and for whom our victory will supply liberation. While His Majesty's Government cannot, of course, commit themselves at this stage to recognise or support the establishment in the future of any particular frontiers in Central Europe, I must make it plain that His Majesty's Government equally do not regard themselves as being bound by any change effected in Austria in and since 1938.

THE LATE CARDINAL HINSLEY. (*Manchester Guardian, March 30th, 1943.*)

"The restoration of Austria to freedom and prosperity is vital for the peace of Europe. As a political question the future of that once independent country is a matter for the calm action of Austrians themselves and for those who are competent to deal with international affairs. I can only pray that a solution will be found to give back to Austria the liberty which violence filched from her and to restore her to the position of a power for peace—for the peace of Christ in the unity of truth and justice."

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REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AUSTRIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION

(As delivered to the General Meeting on May 28th, 1943, by
the Hon. Secretary.)

Hardly anything is as difficult as to make a report on the activities of an association such as the Democratic Union, or rather, to shape the report in such a way that it makes the reader or listener realize the actual amount of work done.

The Executive Committee of the Democratic Union was confronted with difficult tasks. Firstly, they had to recruit a sufficient number of members; then to endeavour to achieve for themselves a right valuation amongst the numerous Austrian organizations already in existence; and lastly, to catch the eye of British and Allied offices and personalities.

As to the recruiting of members, we were faced by the question whether to aim at a mass movement or rather to apply a selective method, i.e., to invite to the Union such persons only as, to our knowledge, have shown by their past and present achievements in the intellectual or social sphere, that they are united with us in our democratic doctrine. We made up our minds to use the selective method. There were several conditions lacking for a mass movement. Above all, when the Democratic Union was being founded, the majority of Austrians willing to join organizations had already been organized.

However, we have been successful in increasing the number of our members steadily, even winning over people who have been members of other organizations. Of course, the available reservoir is still far from being drained, and each member should make it his duty to be on the look-out for new ones.

Our association, it has been proved, has almost been a necessity. Being an organization of the middle way, the Democratic Union forms an essential supplement to the existing Austrian organizations. This fact made it possible for us to act as mediators between them, and this was shown clearly when the question arose of setting up the Free Austrian Movement. Without the co-operation of the Democratic Union, the establishment of the Free Austrian Movement (FAM) could never have taken place. The chief reason why the Democratic Union advocated the creation

of the FAM was the conviction that, despite all differences in political and other doctrines, the welding of all Austrian organizations in this country into a single united body is, or ought to be, indispensable.

The Democratic Union, however, was fully aware that the FAM had but a very small prospect of its activities being successful as long as the London Bureau of the Austrian Socialists, the Free Trade Unions, and the Democratic Catholics continued to keep apart.

The setting up of the FAM naturally resulted in the surrender by the Democratic Union of parts of its "sovereignty," so to speak, to the new partnership. That is to say, that all communications with the Foreign Office, the Allied Governments, etc., had now to go through the FAM. The Democratic Union, however, was represented in each delegation and interview.

Another result of our joining the FAM was that a certain part of the working capacity of the Democratic Union was transferred to the FAM. The drawing-up of exposés, letters, programmes, etc., and also the participation in official interviews made claims on our work and time.

Yet it would have been a mistake to neglect the field assigned to the Democratic Union by its programme. In spite of our working together with the FAM, the Union had to raise as well as to strengthen its prestige. The first and most successful step in that direction was our first lecture, given on January 30, 1942. Speaker was Mr. Harold Butler, formerly Director of the International Labour Office. In the chair was no less a person than Lord Cecil. In the audience one could recognize official delegates of almost all the Allies, amongst them the U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Winant.

The series of lectures was systematically continued during the period covered by this report, and we had the honour of welcoming to our platform several outstanding personalities, of whom we mention the following: Lord Davies, Chairman of the New Commonwealth Society; Mr. Wickham Steed; Sir Walford Selby, formerly British Ambassador to Austria; the Bishop of Chichester; the Dean of Chichester; the Earl of Perth, formerly Secretary-General to the League of Nations; Lord Meston, President of the Liberal Party Organization; the Members of Parliament, Mr. Geoffrey Mander and Mr. Ivor Thomas; Lord Lytton, formerly Acting Viceroy of India; Mr. W. A. Forster, Member of the Executive Committee of the League of Nations Union; the distinguished authoress, Mrs. Phyllis Bottome; Mrs. Geoffrey Mander; Mr. C. F. Melville, diplomatic correspondent of the "Evening Standard," etc.

Owing to their outstanding quality, and also to their dignified presentation, our lectures are highly appreciated. They are, as we like to point out, regularly frequented by representatives of the United Nations. Thus the Democratic Union had opportunities of creating and fostering many personal contacts with British and Allied quarters.

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Within the period to which this report refers we published the pamphlet: "99.7 PER CENT.—A PLEBISCITE UNDER NAZI RULE." This publication was necessary in order to disseminate indispensable enlightenment. As often as one happened, in a discussion on Austria, to point out that she was the first victim of Nazism, one was invariably asked: "But why then did Austrians vote for the Nazis with nearly 100 per cent.?"—a proof that the Nazis with their sham plebiscite of April 10th, 1938, have actually succeeded in creating confusion, even in British quarters, whose good intentions towards us cannot be doubted.

That pamphlet, however, has gone far to put matters right. We sent it free of charge round to members of both Houses, to newspapers, to outstanding personalities of public life, to members of all the Allied Governments, to British administrative offices, police headquarters, etc. Judging from the letters of acknowledgment we have received, we may rightly assume that the impression it has made has been most favourable.

Of a different line of propaganda was another pamphlet we published, our first report: "Democratic Conscience." It was sent round to the same persons and offices as the booklet "99.7 per cent."

These two pamphlets also led to new contacts, both personal and by correspondence. It is, of course, impossible to lay the achieved results on the table like pieces of merchandise, but they are noticeable nevertheless. They can be felt in the steady growth of the sympathetic understanding of Austria's cause.

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It gives us great satisfaction to point out that the establishment of the Study Group of Austrian Lawyers goes back to the initiative of some members of our Executive Committee. This Study Group (chairman and hon. secretary, Dr. Abel and Dr. Bondy respectively) is absolutely non-political. It has come to be regarded as the intellectual home of former Austrian jurists. The excellent lectures, especially on English Law, Book-keeping, etc., offer to the members of the Study Group opportunities of widening their professional knowledge which later on will certainly be advantageous to them. For it may be assumed that in the coming period of reconstruction of Europe a wide field of activity will be open to the lawyer.

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The friendly relations that exist between the Democratic Union and the New Commonwealth Society, and especially with its chairman, Lord Davies, and its general secretary, Mr. N. B. Foot, resulted in a request by which we were highly honoured. The Democratic Union was asked to draw up statutes for an Equity Court to be established after the war. In contrast to the Permanent Court for International Justice already in existence, the Equity Court should be called on in cases of dispute for which the existing laws fail to provide a solution. Thus the Equity Court will have to serve as a safety-valve relieving tensions that otherwise might endanger the peace of the world.

The Democratic Union succeeded in setting up a committee of 14 lawyers (with the member of our Executive Committee, Dr. Paul Abel, as chairman) that was given the task of fulfilling the request of the New Commonwealth Society. When this committee started discussions the great difficulties of the problem appeared at once. In the end, however, it was possible to find a common platform, and a sub-committee consisting of three members was elected who were asked to work out the definite statutes. These three members were Dr. Bresch, Dr. Harpner, and Dr. Wolff, and Dr. Harpner was entrusted with the final editing. The statutes have actually been drawn up, and the writer of this report thinks himself justified in saying that the work done is legally highly distinguished and politically far-sighted. Should the Equity Court be established and our statutes, even if partially only, be made use of, we may proudly assert that we have contributed one small but not unimportant stone to the edifice of a better order among the nations.

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Outside London the Democratic Union has but one branch, that in Oxford, the president of which is Professor Dr. Walter Zweig. This group is quietly engaged in professional work, and adds lustre to the Austrian cause. We, as well as our Oxford branch, were highly honoured that at a lecture given by Professor Hertz, the chair was taken by Professor Gilbert Murray.

We could have set up branches in other places as well, but refrained from doing so out of consideration for the FAM. Even in Manchester, where all conditions would have been favourable, we left the field without any dispute; more than that, we supported vigorously the establishment of a general Austrian association. Our member, Mr. Theodor Schwarz, is one of the pillars of the now flourishing Manchester Association of Austrians.

A considerable number of our members live outside London. With them, personal contact, always so useful, is lacking, which we regret deeply. A lively correspondence, however, is being kept up with them.

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Some quarters have blamed the Democratic Union for not making sufficient efforts in the direction of social entertainment. We need not reflect on whether or not this rebuke is justified, but we should like merely to say that actually there was no time left to include that line of social obligations. On one occasion, however, we undertook to arrange for a concert. This concert (at the Dorchester Hotel, on October 15th, 1942) was given in the name of the Austrian Office, but it was the Democratic Union that made the whole rather elaborate preparations. The financial result was handed over entirely to the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, in token of the gratitude we all owe to the R.A.F. Sir George Franckenstein had the great kindness to act as patron, for which we take this opportunity of thanking him.

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In addition to the lectures, which we shall continue, and to the evening debates, started recently, we intend to establish a "School for Democracy." This "school," which is to be directed by Professor Dr. Hertz, will be open to everyone. We shall see to it that there are lectures by distinguished guests as well.

Furthermore, preparations are being made to bring into being in liberated Austria a Democratic Party. In this connection a new Constitution for a democratic Austria has also been drawn up. It will be the subject of coming evening debates.

Also a Book Society for the use of our members is being considered. Its purpose will be to purchase the most important books of the present day and make them available to the members of the Society according to a certain rota.

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We have, moreover, set up a small committee that is to outline a Charter of Human Rights. This committee has already started work. Its aim is to make sure that each nation includes in its constitution a similar Charter of Human Rights which should be unalterable and not liable to be suspended, not even by any majority's decision. This Charter will have to be so firmly anchored both nationally and internationally that its abolition (as we have lived to see it brought about in the Germany of to-day) is made impossible for all future time. The final draft will be sent round to the Governments of all Allied countries, and a general discussion will be proposed.

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The Democratic Union also approached the London International Assembly who, together with delegates of the Allied Governments, have put before the public a scheme for the education and enlightenment of the European countries, including Germany. We shall have the opportunity of communicating to them our views and suggestions.

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We are democrats and, therefore, invite criticism. To every suggestion, provided it is constructive, we shall gladly give full consideration.

One of our lecturers has coined the phrase: "Democracy is the most difficult, the most dangerous, but the most magnificent form of political philosophy." Deeply convinced as we are that democracy is magnificent, being the only way of life that makes it worth while, we shall continue our strivings.

ELECTIONS IN THE AUSTRIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION

At the General Meeting which took place on May 28th, 1943, the following were elected as members of the Executive Committee: Mr. Julius H. Meinel (President), Professor Dr. F. Hertz (Vice-President), Dr. Paul Abel, Nat. Rt Heinrich Allina, Dr. Victor Bloch*, Dr. Stephan Bondy, Mrs. Phyllis Bottome, Dr. Carl Dukes, Mr. N. B. Foot, Mr. J. L. Gibson, Mrs. Berthe Grossbard, Dr. Karl Kapralik*, Dr. E. Müller-Sturmheim, and Mr. Edward Widrich.

The Hon. Secretary's report (printed on p. 10) was acknowledged with thanks.

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WHY THE DEMOCRATIC UNION LEFT THE FREE AUSTRIAN MOVEMENT

(A CIRCULAR LETTER)

When, in December, 1942, the Austrian Democratic Union joined the Free Austrian Movement, it was done under the supposition that by doing so it would be possible to bring about a concentration of all Austrians living in this country and cherishing democracy.

Despite sincerest efforts and the greatest patience, however, the Democratic Union did not succeed in attaining that aim, i.e., the establishment of an Austrian united front. This failure was partly, amongst other reasons, due to the regrettable fact that party interests were fostered rather than purely Austrian interests.

When, on the initiative of the Democratic Union, negotiations took place between the parties, their internal quarrels were dragged before the public, quarrels, vastly detrimental not only to the Austrian cause but also to the Austrians living in this country. The Democratic Union is in no way whatever prepared to share the responsibility for such events. We are firmly convinced that each of our members is united with us in feeling it unbearable that under the eyes of our magnanimous hosts, an embittered struggle should be fought out with all the regrettable consequences of party strife.

Having considered carefully all the facts responsible for the failure of the united front, the Exe-

cutive Committee of the Democratic Union decided unanimously to quit the Free Austrian Movement.

Convinced of Austria's living power, the Democratic Union, true to its programme, will continue to fight for the reconstruction of an independent democratic Austria. Beyond that aim the Democratic Union fights for genuine democracy, for human rights and human dignity, for equality of all before the law, for international co-operation, for social security for all, and for the "Four Freedoms" of President Roosevelt—in a word, for those ideals that are at stake in this war and without which our lives would not be worth living.

We are democrats and regard the co-existence of several political parties as the true expression of democracy. In days of emergency, however, it should be the moral duty of all parties to stand together on a common platform. The fact that the Austrian parties in this country fight each other involves great danger to the future status of Austria and her people.

We Austrians who have the good luck and the honour to live in the mother country of democracy, have special obligations imposed upon us which we should continually bear in mind.

STUDY GROUP OF AUSTRIAN LAWYERS

In the summer of 1942, following the suggestion of several Austrian lawyers who are members of the Democratic Union, the Study Group of Austrian Lawyers was established. Chairman is Dr. Paul Abel, formerly vice-president of the Rechtsanwaltskammer in Vienna; his deputy is Senatspräsident Professor Dr. Lelewer. Whereas a similar attempt, made four years ago, did not meet with success owing to the events of the war, we are proud of the fact that the young association is steadily gaining ground and is, moreover, proving to be a powerful attraction to lawyers of the neighbouring countries of Austria.

The Group enjoys the hospitality of the Austria Office and is, therefore, in a position to keep the subscription relatively low, which is rather a necessity considering the financial circumstances in which most Austrian lawyers in this country find themselves. It may be added that the Association, according to its statutes, is non-political, thus (as can be stated with satisfaction) making it possible for adherents of every kind of political creed amongst the emigrants to cooperate peacefully in professional activities.

Till now the Association had the following lectures, in which a numerous audience showed themselves deeply interested: Dr. Max Bresch (Libel and Slander); Dr. Rudolph Gräupner (Natural Law and the Legal Order of the Future); Dr. Otto Harpner (The Necessity of Reforming the Democratic Ideas of What is Right); Dr. R. Hermann (The Collision of Regulations in the Laws of Inheritance); Mrs. A. D. S. Large (British Divorce Law); Dr. F. A. Mann (a—The Profession of the English Lawyer; b—Principles of Procedure in Civil Law); Dr. E. Schwelb (The Rule of Law); Dr. Georg Weiss (Problems of Confederation); Dr. E. Wolf (a—The Constitution of the British Empire; b—Law and Equity); Dr.

Hans Neufeld (English Banks, their Laws and Customs); Dr. F. R. Bienenfeld (What is Justice?); Dr. Paul Weis (English Central and Local Administration).

Furthermore, within the framework of the Association, Dr. Otto Hecht set afoot a debating course for which the British Council delegated a highly qualified lecturer in the person of Mr. Bromage.

In addition, Dr. Rudolf Gräupner holds a regular course on English Private Law and Conflict of Law (International Private Law).

Finally, Dr. Fritz Bauer lectured on Book-keeping in the Lawyer's Office.

Among the activities of the Association that of the Equity Court Committee is of special distinction. It is a Committee that has been set up by Dr. Müller-Sturmheim after an invitation he had received from the British Commonwealth Society (of the British Section of which Mr. Winston Churchill is president, Lord Davies, chairman). This committee has worked out statutes for an Equity Court to be established in order to deal with international disputes for which the existing laws are not competent to provide solution. The final editing of these statutes was done by three members of the committee, Dr. Max Bresch, Dr. Otto Harpner, and Dr. Ernst Wolf.

On the occasion of the inaugural meeting of the Austrian Group of the New Commonwealth Society the statutes for the Equity Court were handed to Lord Davies by Dr. Paul Abel.

The Study Group of Austrian Lawyers is particularly indebted to Sir George Franckenstein for the great help he had been rendering the Association in its initial stages.

* Resigned.

THE NEW COMMONWEALTH—AUSTRIAN GROUP

On July 22nd, 1943, a meeting took place at which the Austrian Group of the New Commonwealth Society was founded.

Once more the Democratic Union had shown initiative in taking the lead. First, in order to clear the path, comprehensive negotiations with the British Section of the New Commonwealth Society were necessary. The main difficulty was the regrettable fact that the Austrians are still burdened with the status of "enemy aliens," and as such should not make up a branch of a British Society. It is thanks to the magnanimity of Lord Davies (chairman of the British Section, whose president is Mr. Winston Churchill), that this obstacle was overcome by his accepting the view that Austrians in this country cannot by any means be regarded as "enemies."

Lord Davies, moreover, did us the honour of making the principal speech at the inaugural meeting of the Austrian Group, dealing in his own ingenious and interesting way with a future world system built up on the principles of law and justice.

In the course of the meeting, Dr. Paul Abel handed over the statutes for an "Equity Division" to be established within the framework of the existing Permanent Court for International Justice. These statutes were drawn up by a committee of lawyers appointed by the Democratic Union. In his report, Dr. Abel pointed out that the statutes themselves as well as a comprehensive commentary had been the work of Dr. Bresch, Dr. Harpner, and Dr. E. Wolff; the final editing was left to Dr. Harpner's care. Members of the committee were also: H. Bondy, Fritz Bauer, Rudolf Graupner, J. E. Muller-Sturmheim, Victor Lehmann, Paul Neumann, Robert Schwarz, Paul Weis.

Lord Davies was highly pleased with the committee's work; it would, he declared, go far to stimulate the British Section to further activity.

With great acclamation Professor Dr. Frederik Hertz was elected chairman of the Austrian Group, and the following were elected members of the Executive Committee: Dr. Paul Abel, Mr. Martin Bunzl, Dr. Carl Forchheimer, Dr. Otto Harpner, Professor Hans Kelsen, Dr. Therese Kindler, Leg. Rat A. Kunz, Dr. Richard Kurzweil, Mr. Julius H. Meinh, Dr. E. Muller-Sturmheim (Hon. Secretary), Mr. Arthur Nussbaum, Dr. Paul Perten, Dr. Gustav Schönberg, Dr. Robert Spitzer, and Dr. Robert Schwarz.

Briefly summed up, the New Commonwealth is "a society for the promotion of International Law and Order through the creation of a Tribunal in Equity and an International Police Force."

Recognizing that disputes and differences must at times arise between nations, that injustices may always exist, and that to deprive an aggrieved nation of the possibility of asserting its right, real or imagined, would have the effect of stabilizing grievances and injustices, the New Commonwealth proposes, as a corollary to the International Police Force and as an alternative to war, the formation of an Equity Tribunal to determine, according to the merits and not according to the respective strength of the disputants, all disputes and differences between nations which would or could, but for the preventive action of the International Police Force, lead to war.

It is thanks to Lord Davies, that great idealist, and to his persistent and never-ceasing fight for a better order, that to-day the idea of an International Police Force can be said to be becoming a universal demand.

By forming the Austrian Group, we Austrians living in England have created an instrument that should enable us to cooperate in the realization of the ideals of the New Commonwealth Society. The drawing-up of the statutes for the Equity Tribunal was the first step in that direc-

tion. The next task will be to take our share in propagating the ideals of the New Commonwealth Society.

In view of the fact that in very many cases emigré Austrians are not in a position to afford the modest contribution, the New Commonwealth Society suggested that anyone wishing to join the Austrian Group but who is unable to do so on account of his financial position, should be elected Honorary Member of the Society for the period of the war.

For those Austrians who are in a position to make a contribution we wish to point out that the minimum is 10s. per annum, and for Associate Members 2s. 6d. per annum. To members, copies of the periodical, "The New Commonwealth," will be forwarded free of charge.

The Hon. Secretary to the New Commonwealth Society—Austrian Group (Dr. E. Muller-Sturmheim, 28, Bryanston Square, W.1), will be pleased to give information and receive subscriptions.

* * *

THE NEW COMMONWEALTH ON THE STATUTE FOR A TRIBUNAL IN EQUITY

We received the following lines from the British Section of the New Commonwealth appreciating the work done by our Committee:

"I have now completed my study of the Tribunal Documents prepared by your Committee. If I may say so, they represent a really splendid piece of work. I hope they will prove to be the basis for further research in which Committees of the British and other Sections will be able to take part. But

the immediate point is that the documents do not contain any ideas or proposals to which we could possibly have any serious objection whatever, and if your Committee wish to put them forward for the consideration of the International Law Association, we should be delighted. Here again we must come to more definite arrangements later, but I can tell you now that we are delighted with the documents . . ."

* * *

A COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In accordance with its programme the Democratic Union has set up a Committee for Human Rights. It will be the task of this Committee to do its best to achieve that in the coming peace treaties those irrevocable rights are given ample scope.

The motive of our activity in this direction is the consideration that the fundamental human rights ought to be so firmly fixed both nationally and internationally that once and for all it becomes impossible for any temporal power to abrogate them. These rights being inalienable and irremissible, no majority, no matter how great, should be in a position to abolish them. The

negation of human rights as practised by the Nazis should become an impossibility in the future.

We are fully aware of the greatness and difficulty of the task, but this, we think, must not discourage us. We Austrians in this country, owing to our special experience, feel that we are not only entitled, but accordingly obliged to fight for the recognition of this human rights that are to be the fundamental law among civilized nations.

Members especially interested in the Committee's activities, may obtain fuller information through the member of our Executive Committee, Dr. Muller-Sturmheim. The

OUR LECTURES

OUR NEW ORDER OR—HITLER'S

Speaker: MRS. PHYLLIS BOTTOME.

Chairman: MRS. GEOFFREY MANDER.

English Speaking Union, November 5th, 1942.

This lecture, given by the well-known writer who is distinguished not only by her work, but also by her warm-hearted humanity, will be remembered as an outstanding experience by everyone who had the pleasure of being present. In a masterly manner, Mrs. Bottome outlined that shape of the world and its order as envisaged by Britain and her Allies, a world where the rule of the highest human principles should be firmly established. This world she contrasted with Hitler's "New Order," a world where vile barbarism, based on robbery and brute force, would hold sway.

As might have been expected of her high-mindedness, Mrs. Bottome found also words of un-

derstanding and conciliation for those who had gone astray. But for all her benevolence, she in no way overlooked the inexorable fight that has been, and will be, necessary before that type of world is possible of which Mrs. Bottome herself is so noble an advocate.

Mrs. Geoffrey Mander, wife of the well-known M.P., was in the chair, performing her function with great charm and easy skill. While doing so she showed a wide knowledge of the Continent and Austria.

The Democratic Union could not have inaugurated their new series of lectures in a better and more worthy way than by that of Mrs. Bottome.

FEDERATION

Speaker: DR. MAX ERMERS.

Chairman: MR. HEINRICH ALLINA (former Austrian M.P.).

Austria House, December 18th, 1942.

This lecture was arranged jointly by the Austrian Democratic Union and the Association of Austrian Social Democrats in Great Britain. Dr. Max Ermers, the well-known Viennese writer and journalist, outlined a federation of States to be erected after

the war, a federation stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea and the Adriatic.

The lecture was firmly based on ethnological as well as economic and political facts, and showed both realism and imagination.

THE CHURCH AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPE*

Speaker: THE RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF CHICHESTER.

Chairman: THE RT. HON. THE EARL OF PERTH (former Secretary-General to the League of Nations).

English Speaking Union, January 20th, 1943.

It is about the character of the future of Europe that the United Nations are engaged in this war against the Nazis, and I believe that the Church has a very direct relevance to a right conception of that future . . . I believe that the Church has a mission at the present time, if God will, once again to save Europe from barbarism, and show it the secret of unity . . . I shall be told that my argument means the entry of the Church into politics. But how can that be avoided without a betrayal of the Church's faith? The Gospel is relevant to the whole of human conduct. Christianity requires action, which has to be taken in the conditions of actual life. The standard by which action has to be

judged, according to the Prophets in the Old Testament, and according to the whole corpus of the New Testament, is the Law of God. It is from the Church's stand point false to say that religion has only to do with the next world and the State with this, or that religion is a purely individual and personal affair . . . When we think of the monstrous crimes committed by the agents of the Axis Powers against noble peoples of Europe, when we think of the bitter sufferings of the persecuted, Gentiles and Jews, . . . it is surely the duty of Christian believers in all countries to give their witness against force and race worship and in spite of everything to try and build up a rampart of love.

PROPAGANDA AS A WEAPON OF WAR

Speaker: MR. IVOR THOMAS, M.P.

Chairman: THE RT. HON. LORD DAVIES.

English Speaking Union, February 11th, 1943.

Mr. Ivor Thomas said no one liked the word "Propaganda," which had been defined as "the art of lying in state." There had been a search for alternative names—"enlightenment," "information," "Political warfare," and so on. In America, propaganda was commonly regarded as psychological warfare, and this came very near to its meaning; for propaganda was warfare directed at the minds of the enemy, not

only their conscious minds, but their subconscious minds, which were more important for this purpose.

Mr. Thomas described the agencies of British propaganda to-day: the Political Warfare Department, the Ministry of Information, The British Council, and the Public Relations Officers of Government Departments. A general fault of the British Propaganda machine was its staffing.

* The full text of this lecture has been published in the *Fortnightly Review*, March issue, 1943.

One would have expected full use to have been made of journalists and of the nationals of the countries to which propaganda was directed; but the propaganda authorities seemed to regard journalists as something the cat had brought in. Mr. Thomas laid down four conditions for the success of British propaganda:

1. Must be based on policy.
2. Must be based on good intelligence.

3. Must be closely linked with strategy.

4. Must be truthful.

He asked for the centralization of all propaganda activities in a Ministry of Propaganda under the general supervision of the Foreign Secretary in the War Cabinet, and for the creation of an Inter-Allied Propaganda Council. He suggested also the creation of Army Propaganda Units for work in close contact with the enemy.

AN AUSTRIAN ON THE BEVERIDGE PLAN

Speaker: DR. KARL FORCHHEIMER (Nuffield College, Oxford).

Chairman: HEINRICH ALLINA (former Austrian M.P.).

Austria House, March 27th, 1943.

In the limit of a short hour, Dr. Forchheimer gave a survey of the main principles of the Beveridge Report. His lecture was all the more impressive because at each of the items the speaker was in a position to draw parallels and comparisons with the corresponding social legislation in pre-Nazi Austria. Although in this legislation Austria had been ahead of many civilized countries, it would be a regrettable mistake, Dr. Forchheimer warned his audience, to assume that the Beveridge Plan had not anything to offer that would be new to the

Austrians. The Beveridge Report represents an overwhelming amount of ideas of which the main principles have been worked out by a man who is not only a social legislator, but also a magnificent expert in political economy. It is this special combination of abilities, hardly to be found on the Continent, that gives the Beveridge Report its outstanding character and importance.

The chairman, Mr. H. Allina, paid tribute to the great services rendered by the lecturer to the social legislation in Austria.

THE ATLANTIC CHARTER AND THE FUTURE OF AUSTRIA

Speaker: MR. W. ARNOLD FORSTER.

Chairman: THE RT. HON. THE EARL OF LYTTON.

English Speaking Union, April 8th, 1943.

Mr. Arnold Forster, discussing the Atlantic Charter and its bearing on the Future of Austria, said that Point 1 about no aggrandisement should not be inter-

preted as precluding restitution, e.g., in Austria's case. Point 2, about territorial self-determination, applied to Austria, he hoped and expected that the Austrian

people, if genuinely free to choose, would not choose *Anschluss*. But the United Nations should not, he thought, retain a right to veto *Anschluss*, as in 1919. Austria's freedom of choice would be unreal unless it were protected by collective power, and Austria must see before her some workable alternative, e.g., a Danubian confederation. Point 3, about self-government and restoration of "sovereign rights," was not unqualified. For the United Nations are not impartial, not neutral, in face of tyranny; their purpose is to destroy tyranny such as Hitler's and to build a commonwealth of free nations. A freed Austria should have just such freedom as Britain has to accept or reject restrictions of sovereignty; but no people—British, Austrian or others—should be regarded as free to reject certain laws of international life, such as the law expressing that aggression is a criminal act. And it must be recognized that without far-reaching restrictions of sovereignty, there can be no peaceful order, nor any real safeguard for the peace and welfare of Austria.

Discussing the economic Points (4 and 5), Mr. Forster emphasized the need for expansion of multilateral trade and reduction of trade barriers, together with some international Clearing Union such as the Keynes Plan proposes. He suggested that "Democratic Union" should consider the Keynes Plan in relation to Austria. Mr. Forster considered the "system of general security" (Point 8), which is the essential feature of the Charter. There could only be a system reliable enough to command confidence, if there were a widely representative international authority, with powers of supra-national government for certain purposes. The security would not be "general" unless it were based on equality of rights. And the system would afford no "security" unless the international authority acquired effective contact of certain keys of powers, military and economic. Within such a collective peace system a Democratic Austria—not Hitler's Austria or Hapsburg Austria—could achieve a new birth of freedom.

DEMOCRACY IN THE SOVIET UNION

Speaker: MR. ANDREW ROTHSTEIN.

Chairman: PROFESSOR DR. F. HERTZ.

English Speaking Union, June 8th, 1943.

Mr. Rothstein, managing director of the U.S.S.R. Telegraph Agency in London, and President of the Foreign Press Association in London, presented a splendid picture of the democratic institutions in Soviet Russia.

The ensuing discussion was

very lively. Members of the audience who have studied and learned to appreciate Western democracy had many questions to put. The answers given were full of information and highly instructive.

FAMINE—A PEACE PROBLEM OF EUROPE

Speaker: MR. JULIUS H. MEINL.

Chairman: MR. IVOR THOMAS, M.P.

English Speaking Union, June 30th, 1943.

Mr. Meinl dealt in a most interesting way with the food problem after this war. Based on deep knowledge and great practical experience, he outlined all those necessary steps to be undertaken after this war in order to avoid catastrophe. He concluded his striking lecture as follows:

"After the conclusion of the war there will be an opportunity to find a juster, sounder, and at the same time more economic common solution on the Continent of Europe. The equilibrium, that is the balance, between the production and distribution on the one hand, and mode of life and health on the other, can be restored if we will listen to the claims of nature and our conscience, rather than seek alleged material and national advantages; advantages which in the past have been very short-lived.

When Germany is beaten, and

German economic centralism is destroyed—a close-meshed net of European supra-national interests can be knotted round the neutralized plague area that the Germans of that time will be. If all the nations on the Continent are of the same mind, based on the same suppositions, the same possibilities, but also the same duties, then Germany and the diseased German spirit will no longer present a danger. The ring of the European Federation will define the sphere within which the Germans may re-educate themselves in the course of many decades—a more rapid process is unthinkable.

Permit me, ladies and gentlemen, to conclude with the wise saying of a great world citizen, Bernard Shaw: "Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it."

RECEPTION BY THE DEMOCRATIC UNION

On July 29th, 1943, the Austrian Democratic Union held an afternoon reception in honour of their British and Allied friends, which took place in the rooms of the English Speaking Union, Charles Street, W.1. Both guests and members of the Austrian Democratic Union had accepted the invitation in great numbers. The reception was a pleasing proof of the deep sympathies that Austria is enjoying in British and Allied quarters; a proof, moreover, of the fact that the Austrian Democratic Union, too, has

made many friends in this country.

Two Austrian artists played a Schubert Sonata, and their excellent performance contributed greatly to the general enjoyment. The afternoon, as one heard on all sides, was spent under the lucky star of Austrian culture.

There were, in addition, numerous opportunities to discuss with friends of Austria her various problems in a cordial and informal way. Old ties were strengthened, new ones created. Altogether the reception proved a great success.

LORD MESTON

The Austrian Democratic Union suffered a great loss: Lord Meston passed away on October 7th, 1943, on the very day on which he was to have given a lecture on "Real Democracy" for our Members.

Lord Meston was a great friend of Austria, and therefore deeply interested in the activities of our Association. The many interviews and the frequent correspondence we had with him offered us the opportunity of becoming acquainted with his high standard of thinking, and with his noble and humane attitude towards all the victims of German atrocities. We learnt also to admire his great wisdom when discussing with him the difficult problems which will have to be faced after the war.

His death is not only a great loss to Britain, but also to the world, because men like the late Lord Meston are a great stimulus to those who are engaged in creative and responsible work. The Austrian Democratic Union will always remember him with great respect and gratitude.

EVENING DEBATES

In addition to the regular lectures the Democratic Union arranged also for a number of evening debates on which subjects of current interest were discussed, and which gave our members an opportunity to examine various problems of the day.

Speakers were Dr. Ernst Gibian

("The Keynes Plan"), Mr. A. Kunz ("Austria and Central Europe"), Mr. Franz Plewa ("The Problem of the Austrian Youth"), and Mr. A. Dosmar ("Propaganda").

There will be evening debates of the same kind during the coming season.

THE BEVERIDGE PLAN

Austria, in her pre-Nazi days, had a social legislation of which we Austrians were proud, and justly so. This feeling, however, must not prevent us from appreciating the special merits of the Beveridge plan. We admit gladly that this plan with its epoch-making ideas and principles, represents one of the most important documents of our time, constituting in itself a democratic-revolutionary deed of the highest rank. From this monument of democracy and noble humanity, petty objections cannot possibly detract a jot.

We democrats should identify ourselves with the plan as best we can and act as pioneers to its becoming the basis of social reconstruction on the Continent, and especially in Austria. Every country ought to have its own sort of Beveridge plan and do everything in its power to realize it. In order to make conflicts impossible that otherwise would be dangerous to the maintenance of peace, it is necessary that the standard of social security should be as far as possible the same in all countries.

RE-EDUCATION

Lord Lytton, at a meeting of the Democratic Union on April 8th, 1943, indicated rightly the great importance of that task and asked our members to read the pamphlet on re-education, published by the International Assembly, and to make their comments on it. We recommend this booklet to our members and should be grateful for suggestions and criticisms.

It is obtainable at the League of Nations Union, 11, Maiden Lane, W.C.2.

The Democratic Union has set up an Educational Committee which will gladly accept and deal with suggestions concerning Austria. Members specially interested in the problem of re-education will please communicate with the Hon. Secretary of the Democratic Union.

CZECHOSLOVAK—AUSTRIAN COLLABORATION

Under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Vladimír Klecanda, Vice-Chairman of the Czechoslovak State Council, discussions are planned on the future relations between Czechoslovakia and Austria in the economic and political field. The Austrian Democratic Union has been invited to take part in these discussions. Deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of a close collaboration between the two countries, we gladly accepted the invitation and declared that we shall be only too pleased to give our services and also to ask our experts to give whatever help they possibly can.

In view of the fact, however, that at the time being there is no political body in this country em-

bracing ALL Austrian democratic parties, we suggested that the discussions should be carried out separately between Prof. Klecanda and the Democratic Union, i.e., separated from the Free Austrian Movement. We left the Free Austrian Movement for deeply considered reasons and it would be in strong contradiction to our policy to collaborate with it once more.

Common discussions as far as Austrians are concerned can only be of use if a concentration of all Austrian democratic forces in this country is achieved. Lacking this, separate discussions are more advisable, and also more useful under the present regrettable circumstances.

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AN AUSTRIAN COMMITTEE FOR RECONSTRUCTION

The Austrian Democratic Union established a Committee of Austrian Experts recently. This Committee will have to work out the guiding principles for the reconstruction of Austria.

Mr. J. H. Meisl has been unanimously elected Chairman of the Committee. At his suggestion a number of Sub-Committees were erected and will have to deal with the following subjects: Agriculture; Industry; Cartels; International Trade; Finance; Taxes; Social Security; Transport; Trade

Unions; Public Works; Housing; Tourist Traffic; Education; Theatre and Film; Music, Public Libraries; Press and publishing matters.

We are glad to state that a very great number of the best Austrian experts living in this country kindly consented to collaborate within the framework of the different Sub-Committees.

The result of the Committee's work will be published and distributed to all Allied quarters concerned.

We call upon our members to do their utmost and strain their sacrificial spirit to the limit to contribute to the war effort of Britain and her Allies. Those who fail to do their utmost in this struggle are betraying themselves and their children, as well as the ideals upon

which humanity and the future of mankind are based. We shall be pleased to advise you how and where to apply your effort.

Every idea or suggestion you can advance, and any aid you can give will represent another step towards the realization of Democracy.

All who want to help in the struggle for democracy, humanity and justice, all who do not want to stand aside in the present gigantic conflict between humanity and inhumanity, between freedom and enslavement, should join the Democratic Union. (Membership: Minimum Fee, 6/- per annum.)