

LONDON-INFORMATION

OF THE AUSTRIAN SOCIALISTS IN GREAT BRITAIN

DER ÖSTERREICHISCHEN SOZIALISTEN IN ENGLAND

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MAY DAY of EUROPEAN FREEDOM

RED VIENNA

WILL RISE AGAIN

MAY DAY MEETING OF THE
AUSTRIAN SOCIALISTS AND
TRADE UNIONISTS

Sunday, April 29th, 7 p.m.

AT THE

AUSTRIAN LABOUR CLUB,
31, Broadhurst Gardens, N.W.6

Speakers:—

HANNEN SWAFFER (Britain).

PAUL TOFAHRN (International
Transport Workers' Federation).

KARL CZERNETZ (Austria).

AUSTRIAN LABOUR CHOIR.

INTERNATIONAL MAY DAY
DEMONSTRATION

FREEDOM TO LIBERATED EUROPE

TUESDAY, MAY 1st, 6.30 p.m.
Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W.1

Chairman: Morgan Phillips.

Speakers: Philip Noel-Baker, M.P.;
Harold Clay; Arthur Creech-Jones, M.P..
Representatives from European Countries.

Tickets: 6d. from

FABIAN INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

Berlin has fallen. Victoriously, the Allies from East and West have made their junction across Germany. The end of Hitler's Reich is here.

So is the end of Nazi rule over Europe. Only Denmark, Norway and parts of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Italy as well as a small part of Holland still remain to be liberated. For all the other nations of Europe who a year ago were still enslaved, this May Day is the first without fetters.

All over Europe the workers will celebrate it, rejoicing in the Allied victory over Nazi Germany, welcoming the end of oppression and hoping for freedom to liberated Europe. For the first time after eleven years the workers of liberated Vienna will proudly parade their old red banners over the Ringstrasse.

This thought fills our hearts with joy. The people of Vienna have suffered and fought. They are free. The Ringstrasse is theirs again. Red Vienna will rise again.

We know that in Austria as in all other countries formerly under German occupation liberation is only a beginning. It means a twofold task ahead: material reconstruction and democratic resurrection—the removal of ruins, the rebuilding of economic life and the re-establishment of democratic institutions, of life in organised liberty.

For both these tasks, Austrians believe that their country, for geographical and political reasons, represents a test case.

For both these tasks, Socialists believe that their programme provides the best solution. Rebuilding what the war has left in ruins needs a tremendous collective

effort. Restarting democratic self-government after the ordeals of Fascist oppression needs faith and force, a combination of freedom and planned organisation. Only freedom-loving, democratic Socialism can provide this.

Throughout Europe, on this May Day, the peoples who have suffered and fought will cling to these hopes and echo these demands: freedom for man, peace among nations, social security for everyone. These are the essence of Socialism.

A MAY DAY MESSAGE TO THE WORKERS OF VIENNA

The following message was addressed to the Socialists in Vienna by the Austrian Socialists in Great Britain:—

The Austrian Socialists in Great Britain send fraternal greetings to their comrades in liberated Red Vienna on the occasion of May Day, 1945.

We are proud to belong to the Party in Austria which, once again, led the workers

in the fight for liberation and by giving active assistance to the victorious Red Army contributed to the liberation of our city of Vienna. To the fighters and to the victims we address the expression of our gratitude and our loyalty.

We hope that the alliance of all democratic forces and the co-operation of all sections of the Austrian working class, with your collaboration, will facilitate the complete liberation of the country and the establishment of a free and independent democratic Republic. We Austrian Socialists abroad shall do everything within in our power to assist you in these tasks.

Our most ardent desire is to take our place again, as soon as possible, in the ranks of our reviving Party so as to be able to help in the work of democratic and Socialist construction that lies ahead.

Long live resuscitated Red Vienna!

Long live International Socialism!

THEY WILL DECIDE: WE SHALL FOLLOW

Austrian Socialists in Britain Expect The Revival Of Their Party

A London Delegates' Meeting of the Austrian Socialists, held on April 21st, 1945, unanimously adopted the following resolution:—

This Conference welcomes the progress of the liberation of Austria by the Red Army. It reaffirms the principle accepted by all Austrian Socialists that the political leadership of the Party must be inside the country. This is evident particularly after the liberation of Vienna.

This Conference expresses the hope that the reconstitution of the independent Socialist Party in Austria is already in progress and declares to accept its decisions and directions.

It instructs the London Bureau of the Austrian Socialists to take all necessary measures in view of assuring a speedy return of political refugees to Austria so that Party members individually may take their place again in the ranks of the Movement.

In view of the favourable political developments in Austria during recent months, the establishment of the Austrian

Provisional National Committee and the liberation of Vienna, the London Bureau of the Austrian Socialists is authorised to enter into conversations with the other Austrian democratic political parties in Great Britain in order to arrive at a new form of co-operation adapted to present circumstances and present tasks.

THE RETURN OF POLITICAL REFUGEES

The Executive of the Group of Austrian Socialists in Great Britain has decided to inform the members of the Group that those who wish to return to Austria may give their names and particulars to the Secretary in writing. They will be entered in a list in readiness for submitting them to the proper authorities as soon as this becomes practical.

Those of our members who want to make enquiries about relatives and friends in Vienna should also apply to the Secretary. Although no direct communication is as yet established, the enquiries will be forwarded as soon as possible.

AUSTRIANS HELP TO LIBERATE THEIR COUNTRY

In a special issue of *London-Information*, published a week ago, we gave a survey of reports—mainly from Soviet correspondents—describing the liberation of Vienna, the active participation of the Austrian population and the reappearance of democratic political parties in Vienna. Here are additional reports, again mainly taken from Soviet broadcasts and newspapers.

Austrians Workers Leave Nazi-Held Works and Railways

Berne reports say that a mass flight of Austrian workers started from armament works and railways in the part of Austria still held by the Nazis. A few days ago, owing to the mass desertion of railway-men, traffic had to be stopped entirely on the Linz-Rottenmann line which lately has become particularly important to the Nazis. It was several hours before traffic was resumed and next day it was stopped again.

Austrian Volkssturm Desertions

Other reports from Berne point to rapid disintegration of the Austrian Volkssturm. On April 2nd, three Austrian Volkssturm battalions commanded by Major Heinrich Mark left Steyr for the front. On the way about 160 men deserted. When the battalions reached the fighting line, 300 Volkssturm men left and dispersed in the woods. Major Mark was removed from his post. The new commander, SS Sturmführer Wucher and the SS Guard detachment were killed by the Volkssturm men. Many Volkssturm men joined the partisans.

Vienna Riots Before The Liberation

From a Soviet broadcast: Inhabitants of Vienna report that at the end of February and the beginning of March riots against the Hitlerite Fascists took place there. At Favoriten the workers struck and demonstrations were held in the streets. The workers struck and

demonstrations were held in the streets. The workers demanded the termination of the war and distributed appeals for the overthrow of the Hitler Government. The SS used tanks to suppress the riots.

Note: This report fully confirms the facts first made known abroad by Jean Lambert's report on the Austrian Resistance Movement (published in *London-Information*, No. 7 of April 1st, 1945). Our readers will remember that this report listed five cases of street fighting between Austrian resisters and Nazis during the month of February, giving details of each of them. Included in the list was the mass demonstration in front of the Ankerbrot bakery on February 24th, leading to riots and shooting, which is referred to in the above report as demonstrations in Favoriten (where the Ankerbrot bakery is situated).

—AND A B.B.C. COMMENTARY

Not too many Viennese may have listened to a broadcast given on April 19th, in the Home Service by Mr. Lindley Fraser. If they did they must have felt greatly disappointed by this cold and hostile comment. It must have been particularly disappointing for the men of the Austrian Resistance Movement who have lately suffered by executions alone 800-1,000 casualties a month, have had many more casualties in street fights with the Gestapo, and have finally given active and valuable support to the Red Army in the liberation of Vienna. Mr. Fraser seemed not to be aware of any of these facts, although they have been reported before by the BBC and by Moscow radio. With no word did he mention active Austrian resistance to the Germans. It is a pity that Allied propaganda should thus appear to speak with two voices.

In Mr. Fraser's opinion Austria is an enemy country which will have to make restitution and work its passage home. This interpretation of the last sentence of the Moscow Declaration seems inconsistent with the main part of the Declara-

tion. As Mr. Churchill once stated, Austria is one of the countries for whom Britain has drawn the sword and for whom her victory will supply liberation. The Russians on entering Austria made it quite clear that they did not come to conquer an enemy country but to liberate a subjugated people.

The Austrian people are aware that they must contribute, to the maximum of their ability, towards their own libera-

tion, give the Allies fullest assistance in bringing about the final defeat of Hitlerite Germany, and destroy all roots of Fascism, Nazism and German nationalism in Austria. This is their responsibility according to the Moscow Declaration and also their own interest and intention. They will shrink from no sacrifice to achieve this aim. But they do not deserve the injustice of being at the same time declared a victim and treated as an accomplice of Nazi Germany.

FROM OUR LOG-BOOK

The horrors of Buchenwald, Belsen and the other German concentration camps have been rediscovered. Shocked and shuddering, the world hears the news, now that this bestial form of Nazi "extermination" is happily being exterminated. It could have known before.

Correspondents' reports and comments in the British Press did not fail to point out that these camps are the most pungent proof of Nazi depravity and at the same time the most striking reminder of the fallacy of some theories of national or racial "guilt." For they were first used by the Nazis against Hitler's opponents in Germany and even now the majority of their inmates are probably German.

* * *

Among the members of our Austrian Socialist Group in Britain there are many who were detained in Buchenwald for months on end, at a time when the world did not yet want to hear "atrocious stories" about Hitler's camps or did not believe them. Some of them recalled on this occasion memories which link horror with pride: how, in 1939, German and Austrian Socialists and Communists in the camp held a secret May Day meeting in spite of the Nazis. It was never betrayed.

* * *

They also told me how, at one time, political prisoners were appointed to the posts of "wardens" or hut-seniors. Some of them protected their fellow inmates against the SS and rather risked themselves to be beaten up and tortured then give them away. They were mostly German comrades. At one time, room had

to be made in Buchenwald for thousands of Austrians, mainly Austrian Jews. They in turn had to make room, later, for victims of other nationalities; some were released, some transferred to other camps --and the rest exterminated.

* * *

We are all the more happy to learn that the British M.P.s who visited Buchenwald found there at least two well-known Austrian Socialists alive: one is Benedict Kautsky, the youngest son of Karl Kautsky, the greatest authority on Socialist doctrine in the last generation. Benedict Kautsky was Secretary of the Vienna Chamber of Labour and himself a well-known writer on economics. The other is our friend Karl Mantler, Secretary of the Austrian Union of Food Workers and Chairman of the underground T.U. Central Committee during 1934-1938. All Austrian Socialists and Trade Unionists will rejoice that some of our friends may yet be saved from the horrors and able to help in Austrian Labour's work.

AUSTRIAN LABOUR CLUB

31, Broadhurst Gardens, N.W.6.

SUNDAY, May 6th, 7 p.m.

C. S. Ganley (President London Co-operative Society): The Co-Operative Movement and Reconstruction (in English).

SUNDAY, May 13th, 7 p.m.

Paul Sering: Germany in Defeat (in German).

SUNDAY, May 27th, 7 p.m.

CONCERT: AUSTRIAN and AMBER MUSIC.