

AUSTRIA DEAD LONG BEFORE HITLER COUP

(By Winston Norman)

Poor Austria! Her doom was written in the faces, voices and minds of her people long before Hitler planned his coup. Hitler didn't kill Austria. Austria was already dead, and the writer, in Vienna on news duty a few months ago, was told that by Austrians themselves.

"No matter what happens in Central Europe," one distinguished Vienna correspondent told the writer "Austria and Czechoslovakia will lose their situation is hopeless."

At that time Austria was still under the nominal 'protection' of Mussolini. They weren't expecting a Nazi coup. They were expecting a war. "Austria will be the battleground," another Viennese told me, "and as for Czechoslovakia—"

He drew a map on the coffee-shop table. "This," he said, "is what will happen to Czechoslovakia. This part goes to Germany. This part to Hungary. This part to Poland—and that is the end of Czechoslovakia."

They were not expecting Hitler to step in so soon, at the time of my visit. But they didn't have anything to lose. The Austria that I saw had already been killed by the mayhem of Wilsonian self-determination, by the ten thousand to one inflation that followed the war, by the French policy of keeping Middle Europe divided, by League of Nations interference, and by the dreadful poverty and unemployment which were an outcome of all these factors.

Gay and romantic Vienna! Her reason for existence gone, with Austria's land gone. Her beautiful buildings dark and deserted. Her kindly smiling citizens, who speak such a quaint dialect of German, trying to keep up a pretense of former greatness. Threadbare clothes. Six people doing the work of one. A terrific cost of living.

I saw people who sat in coffee shops day after day, hours at a time, surrounded by good things to eat, and yet slowly starving. Proud people, with no money to buy food. Just sitting there, interminably using the proprietor's newspapers, light and heat, because they had none of those things at home, and dared not walk the streets to wear out a precious pair of boots. The proud poverty of the Viennese was so terrible that there was something almost comical about it.

What a sad, decadent, cynical, hopeless city Vienna had become! The chief indoor sport, besides drawing maps of Middle European catastrophe, was the mongering of plots, rumor, scares, political jokes, and downright bad lies. Even correspondents do it over there. Vienna is famous for having produced, during the past few years, more false and fantastic news stories than any other city in Europe with the possible exception of Budapest.

The sense of despair and doom in Austria was thicker than cold fogs along the Danube. Hatred of the Schuschnigg regime was widespread, particularly among the Socialists. The Austrian press was totally abject. Oppressed by unemployment, the cost of living, and fear of their neighbors, the Austrian people were eating out their souls. Even though they joked about it, the sight wasn't pleasant. It's not a cheerful thing to see, such decadence among a people who are normally gay, brave and proud.

That's all ended now. Austria belongs to Adolf Hitler. And I can report only one item of encouragement for readers who don't like fascism. At the time of my visit, everybody in Vienna was agreed that Austria would some day be the bone of contention over which those powerful dogs of war, Hitler and Mussolini would get into open quarrel.

JOINT CONTROL FOR DISPUTED ISLES IS SEEN

WASHINGTON, March 18.—The United States and Great Britain may eventually exercise joint control over the little mid-Pacific islands of Canton and Enderbury, some officials indicated tonight.

President Roosevelt has taken over the islands for commercial air bases but Britain has balked. Neville Chamberlain, British Prime Minister, told the House of Commons tonight that the British Ambassador, Sir Ronald Lindsay, had been instructed to inform the United States that Britain "reserves her right over the islands."

He also announced that "proposals will be submitted in the hope of ending the controversy." American officials said they would give the proposals friendly consideration in the hope of reaching an agreement soon.

The British claim did not surprise State Secretary Hull. He told reporters it added nothing new to what he had said yesterday, and repeated that each Government has a fairly accurate idea about the attitude of the other.

The proposals Chamberlain has in mind, officials thought might refer to joint control. They did not appear adverse to the suggestion.

State Department geographers and historians, however, are of the opinion that the United States has a better right to the islands than Britain because of prior discovery and use.

Navy officials were interested in the reply given in the British House of Commons by Geoffrey H. Shakespeare, Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, to a question whether the United States could use the new drydock at the Singapore naval base.

Shakespeare said that it was a normal practice for British authorities to permit foreign warships to be repaired in British dockyards on a repayment basis.

American naval officials took this to mean that American warships could use the new drydocks, but they and the State Department said there was no agreement with Britain to this effect.

Joint Sovereignty Proposed
British diplomatic sources, commenting on Prime Minister Chamberlain's statement in the House of Commons today that Great Britain could not recognize the United States Government's claim to the South Sea islands of Canton and Enderbury, declared London would propose joint sovereignty over the disputed territories.

If the United States turns this down, they said, Britain will suggest arbitration, but whatever the solution it must take in both powers' requirements for airplane landing facilities

WILL TEXTILE INDUSTRY BE PILLORIED?

With the tabling of the Turgeon Committee's report in the House of Commons, it may be expected that Canada's textile industry will again be brought prominently before the public and debates about the textile tariff and related matters will ensue. Without anticipating the text of the report, it may confidently be expected that it will contain a mass of statistical information gathered from the Commission's long investigation and that these statistics will furnish arguments to both free-traders and protectionists.

Valuable as such arguments may be, it is to be hoped that they will not obscure what may be called the human side of the textile industry. That side is represented by the figures of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics showing the number of persons employed and the wages and salaries paid by Canadian primary textile industries.

In 1935, the latest year for which complete statistics are available, Canada's primary textile industries employed 63,441 persons, paying them \$50,586,592 in salaries and wages. If the conservative estimate of two dependents for each employee be taken, this means that employment in primary textile production supports directly more than 190,000 workers, or about 60,000 dependents, are the largest single group.

It is difficult to visualize 190,000 persons, except by comparison with known centres of population. For example, the figure is more than double that of the population of the smallest province, Prince Edward Island, estimated at 92,000 in 1936. If the industry were centralized in one place, that place would rank fifth among Canadian cities, according to 1931 census figures, falling between Winnipeg, with a population of 218,785 and Hamilton, with a population of 155,571. The textile population exceeds the combined population of the next two largest cities of the Prairie Provinces, Calgary and Edmonton. If the cities of Saskatchewan are taken for purposes of comparison, the combined populations of Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, North Battleford and Swift Current fall short of the population directly dependent on the textile industry in Ontario, the combined populations of Ottawa and London exceed the textile population by only 7,000.

It may be that one reason for the textile industry's having been a political football for many years is the fact that the families it supports are not concentrated in one city or one political constituency. While certain large cities such as Montreal and Hamilton, have large and important textile mills, essentially textile manufacture is a small town industry. The latest directory of the industry lists 474 establishments and every province except Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan is represented. In small cities and towns, such as Magog and Valleyfield in Quebec, Marysville and Milltown in New Brunswick, Welland and Dunnville in Ontario, prosperity or depression is intimately connected with the well-being of the local textile mills. In some centres, the textile mill offers the only opportunity for industrial employment, and in others, where other industries exist, many of them are dependent on textile mills for the sale of their products. Citizens of St. Catharines are well aware of what textiles mean to this city and the rest of the Niagara Peninsula.

It was clearly shown in the course of the textile inquiry that average net profits of the industry in relation to sales were not only moderate, but were lower than the profits generally considered reasonable in industrial investment. In the case of the most important group, cotton textiles, net profits over a ten-year period averaged only 5.6 per cent.

It was also shown that textile prices in Canada fell during the period the 1936 tariff was in force, in spite

on the islands, according to well-informed opinion.

Mr. Chamberlain, answering Conservative and Opposition questions, said:

"His Majesty's government maintain all their rights to the Phoenix group of islands. Last year the United States government contested the validity of the British claim to the Phoenix group of islands, in which Canton and Enderbury are situated and declined to recognize the Order-in-Council of March 18, 1937.

"Sir Ronald Lindsay (Ambassador to Washington) has been instructed to inform the United States Government that his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom cannot regard the juridical situation as in any way affected by their recent action, which included landing on Canton Island.

"This island has been effectively occupied by his Majesty's Government, on Aug. 5, 1937, and an administrative officer now resides there. He (Sir Ronald) is instructed to add that his Majesty's Government maintain all their rights to the Phoenix group.

"It is intended in the immediate future to submit proposals to the United States government, which, it is hoped, will serve as a basis for ending this controversy in a manner satisfactory to both parties."

POLITICS BEHIND THE CRISIS

Crisis would seem to be an obsolete term for describing the periodic Government upheavals in France. From the superficial factors, the fall of the second Chautemps Ministry is something less than what that term should imply. The issue is virtually the same as that which tripped up the Premier eight weeks ago, namely the nation's financial difficulties; but on his own definition of it there is 'no parallel' between the present situation and its predecessors.

In all probability former Premier Chautemps was speaking of the political factors arising out of it rather than the financial situation itself. The coalition of the United Front parties upon which he has had to depend is no longer reliable. Though both Socialists and Communists split with the Radical Socialists in refusing to grant the Government the decree powers it sought, they are themselves divided, and daily becoming more so. If the plans of M. Chautemps are the same as they were eight weeks ago, this is a welcome condition, and one well worth the resignation to take advantage of it.

of the somewhat higher protection it provided. In fact, prices of finished goods from Canadian mills declined more than the prices of the raw materials.

It is thus not in the consumer's interest that any radical change be made in the textile tariff. National welfare demands that no action be taken to jeopardize the livelihood of 190,000 Canadian citizens.

What is wanted by the Radical Socialists he leads, the Moderate Socialists and the moderate groups of the Right who follow M. Paul Reynaud, and what Leon Blum could not get out of the last crisis, is a "national union" Government. The reason it could not be had at that time was that M. Blum's own Socialist followers insisted on sticking to the United Front, refusing to be separated from the Communists. The Right groups, or some of them, would not hear of the Communists being included. Accordingly, M. Chautemps, wanting to veer Right but having to rely on the Left, formed a Ministry entirely from the Radical Socialists.

This "narrow party basis" must have made it obvious to him that he had no hope of obtaining decree powers. His sudden insistence on them (admitting their urgency) and the alacrity with which he forced the issue on the Chamber, once the Socialists and Communists had refused his offer to resign in their favor, indicate he understood this fact fully. The conclusion is that he and others of the same mind saw the opportunity of getting the set-up they wanted out of a new 'crisis', a National Union, expected to be more cohesive under the stress and strain of events to come than the United Front.

It may not work out just that way. If the inconsistency of French politics is at all consistent, it probably won't. But under the difficulties, domestic and foreign, which beset the French Government, anything that is likely to produce unity is worth a trial.

Pyrenees Frontier Is Guarded

PARIS, March 17.—Great Britain promised France naval aid tonight if Italian and German forces in Spain menaced France's North African communications.

In return, Premier Leon Blum told his cabinet France would maintain non-intervention in Spain.

By this decision, France kept her border with government Spain shut to men and munitions and dropped her plans for an immediate effort with Great Britain to negotiate a Spanish truce.

That the Spanish government appeared to have stopped the insurgents' drive toward the Mediterranean at least temporarily, also was cited by Blum as enabling France to keep her frontier shut.

Preparations, nevertheless, went ahead to assure the security of France's Pyrenees border as well as the freedom of communication on the Mediterranean, vital sea roadway of France and the British Empire.

The Army, it was said, judged the 70,000 troops now garrisoned on the Spanish border as sufficient under any circumstances. The Navy was planning to add extra ships to its Mediterranean patrol. Four destroyers will be based at Port Vendres, closer to the Spanish waters than the Toulon base.

Mr. Chamberlain's answer to Blum's appeal was taken to the French Foreign Office by Sir Eric Phipps, the British ambassador, before the prime minister announced to the House of Commons that Britain would adhere to Spanish neutrality.

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