Osterreich und Anschluss: ponderous dilemma of Austrian identity (1848-1948)

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A Thesis
Submitted to the University at Albany, State University of New York
in Partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

College of Arts & Sciences
Department of History

Jonathan Knickerbocker
2014
Österreich und Anschluss
Ponderous Dilemma of Austrian Identity
(1848-1948)

Abstract of

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of the University at Albany, State University of New York
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Austria (Österreich) has played a significant role in history for centuries, and its inhabitants have determined to be leaders in European affairs. Austrians fought wars, hosted councils, produced monarchs, and were energetic enough to build an empire that stretched from Switzerland to Serbia. As the empire grew territorially, the proportion of ruling German Austrians to non-Germans dwindled. An uneasy restlessness began to manifest itself within the German Austrian population as the nineteenth century inched along. Concurrently, a pan-German nationalism developed throughout Central Europe that proved very inviting to the Germans of Austria. Their simultaneous participation in the Austrian Empire and pan-German movement proved to be very problematic. Consequently, for 100 years (1848-1948) the German Austrians wrestled intellectually and philosophically as to their role in the German world of Central Europe. Polarization was inevitable between loyalties. Loyalty to Austria and its Habsburg dynasty battled loyalty to a greater German brotherhood. Like no other issue, Anschluss (union with Germany) brought tensions and questions to the surface, and produced the history of a people who suffered inadvertently an unmitigating series of crises of self-perception, group identity, and collective future.

Tracking the trail of this continuous crisis throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries affords the opportunity to examine the diverse forces and circumstances pressed upon the German Austrians. More importantly, the crisis producing pressures and circumstances generated rationale for convictions held. Unearthing and analyzing the rationale help to answer many questions. Questions concerning loyalty to a dynasty, loyalty to an ethnic group, Austrian relationships to the Bismarck and the Second Reich, World War I efforts, relationships to non-Germans within Austria-Hungary, National
Socialism, World War II participation, and Cold War relations to European powers present themselves. As diamonds are created by intense pressure, so too, pressures enhanced the development of and articulation of German Austrian rationale for and against Anschluss. Searching to establish an identity became increasingly tied to Anschluss. However, achieving Anschluss in 1938 unwittingly revealed that a homegrown Austrian identity had materialized. Consequently, the post Second World War Republic of Austria emerged confident, content in its own being, and fully prepared to capitalize on the revelatory fruits of Anschluss.
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Preface

The soul of man is fashioned as a repository for convictions, which, if allowed to manifest themselves, shed light upon the battles waged between the intellect, the heart, and emotions. It is also the nature of this world to force upon man, and thus the soul, difficult circumstances. As the difficulties arise, the faculties of man are put into high gear with the hopes of resolving emotional, intellectual, and philosophical tensions; all for the purpose of mapping out a course of action. The white population of the southern United States was confronted by a seriously wrenching set of circumstances in the 1860s. Seventeenth century Separatist congregations of England found themselves confronted with great internal tensions relating to their lives and future in the Dutch Netherlands. German Austrians, too, belong to this cadre of peoples destined to struggle and grapple with tensions of heart and mind, hoping to chart a course that did not offend conscience.

Nineteenth century Vienna, Austria inspires images of grace, elegance, tinkling crystal, and fine music. Vienna could claim to be the home of Johann Strauss Jr., honorably known as the Waltz King. His composition “The Blue Danube” was the epitome of nineteenth century Austrian expressions of Romanticism. The awe inspiring Danube River served as a backdrop for dancers exhibiting similar grace on the ballroom floors of Vienna. The fanfare and gaiety of Austrian life, however, served only as a façade; a façade incapable of totally suppressing an undercurrent. The undercurrent mercilessly circulated to the forefront of the German Austrian mind anxious reflections over the issue of German Austrian inclusion in an imminent
greater-German entity. On this issue, German Austrians found themselves facing unique and diverse forces that were not only overwhelming, but also fluid and fluctuating. Not only did the forces fluctuate in intensity; new and varying forces were exerted so that the composite situation and reality was constantly in a state of flux. The nineteenth and early twentieth century development of German Austrians is a history of a people who suffered an unmitigating crisis of self-perception, group identity, and collective future.

Tracking the trail of this continuous crisis throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries affords the opportunity to examine the diverse forces and circumstances pressed upon the German Austrians. More importantly, the crisis producing pressures and circumstances generated rationale for convictions held. Unearthing and analyzing the rationale help to answer many questions. Questions concerning loyalty to a dynasty and ethnic group, Austrian relationships to Bismarck and the Second Reich, World War I efforts, relationships to non-Germans within the Austrian Empire, National Socialism, World War II participation, and Cold War relations to European powers present themselves. As diamonds are created by intense pressure, so too, pressures enhanced the development of and articulation of German Austrian rationale for and against Anschluss. Searching to establish an identity for some became increasingly tied to Anschluss. However, and most fascinating, achieving Anschluss in 1938 unwittingly revealed that a homegrown Austrian identity had been materializing. Time and pressures had incrementally aided in the metamorphosis of a German Austrian reality. Aptly, the post Second World War Republic of Austria
emerged confident, content in its own being, and fully prepared to capitalize on the revelatory fruits of *Anschluss.*
Chapter One
Dynastic Hegemony

Along the Danube

By the end of the seventeenth century, many Europeans had organized themselves into strong nations with centralized governments. As a result of this development, nations such as Spain, England, Portugal, France and the Dutch Netherlands increased in prestige and power. This advancement eventually enabled them to engage in overseas colonization, and that colonization, coupled to might at home, facilitated a degree of European hegemony over world affairs.

Unfortunately, the German population of Europe did not experience unity and centralization of government. Central Europe was the home of a centuries-long entity referred to as the Holy Roman Empire. This very loose association of principalities was German in nature and disorganized in reality. One particularly odd feature of the Holy Roman Empire was the presence of Austria with its capital at Vienna. Austrian territory was partially in the Holy Roman Empire and partially outside its southeastern border. More important were the dynamics of the Austrian kingdom. Austria was a sprawling creature comprised of Germans, Bohemians, Poles, Ruthenians, Serbs, Slovenians, Croats, and Magyars. This behemoth was governed from Vienna by a minority German population (the German population was nestled principally in what is Austria today). In addition, the ruling dynasty of Austria (Habsburg) exerted significant control over the governing of the Holy Roman Empire. Therefore, for the purposes of international identity, Austria served as titular head of the German world. A superficial essence of unity was established throughout the
Holy Roman Empire, but unity and cohesiveness were at best ephemeral. The rulers of the territorial states within the empire tended to the maintenance of their individual, political and economic needs. In doing so, they rendered the confederacy starved for unity and power. Preservation of political and territorial independence by German princes produced antagonism toward Austrian Habsburg dominance. These tensions served to the stagnation of German national and international development relative to fellow nations of Europe.

Liberty, Equality and Nationalism

Refusing to be static, the European landscape experienced changes during the eighteenth century. Austrian power had grown in international circles, and not less significant was the emergence of the powerful northern German state of Prussia. The Prussians, ruled by the Hohenzollern family, exhibited the capacity for great leadership among the German peoples of Central Europe. Consequently, a polarization began to manifest itself between Prussian and Austrian leadership among Germans. The War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748) provided evidence of such polarization. King Frederick II of Prussia, believing an opportunity had materialized to enhance his state at the ascension of Maria Theresa to the Habsburg throne (1740), advanced his forces into Austrian-held Silesia. Maria Theresa did survive the war, but had to suffer the loss of Silesia. Within a few short years, antagonism between the Habsburgs and Hohenzollerns presented itself again in the Seven Years War (1756-1763). While the struggle between Austria and Prussia represented only one arena of many in this war, the reality of this polarization in the German world was clear. The Treaty of Hubertusburg (1763) restored peace between Austria and Prussia, but much to the dissatisfaction of Austrian leadership, Silesia remained in Hohenzollern control.

Infrequently is such tension kept in check for long. In this case, however, the polarization was momentarily dwarfed by a monumental upheaval of the European political and social landscape—the French Revolution. The revolution in France, starting in 1789, sent tremors across the continent. Nationalism was among the forces unleashed by the revolution. During the violent years of the republic (1792-94), the French put on display their ability to rouse the national fervor to an exalted level. While the republic was mired in political chaos triggered by radical machinations over the impending constitution, a threatening manifesto rang from the east suggesting doom to the spirit of the revolution. The Brunswick Manifesto proclaimed by Charles William Ferdinand (Duke of Brunswick) on July 25, 1792 pledged support for the former French monarch Louis XVI and his family. In short order, the combined Austrian and Prussian forces, serving under the duke, inched their way toward Paris in hopes of saving the royal family and restoring it to power. These were perilous developments, for while the French were careening toward civil war, they were also witnessing the invasion of their homeland. When all seemed lost, a spirit of dread and anger welled up within the French population; French citizens were disgusted that foreign forces would have the gall to set foot on French soil. By the might of a fraternity of French manhood, Frenchmen rallied to check the advancing armies of the Duke of Brunswick. This fervor of nationalism did not remain idle; just a few years later, after the coup d’état that secured Napoleon Bonaparte’s position of power, he harnessed that same French spirit of nationalism. Napoleon Bonaparte and his armies ravaged the nations of Europe in the building of his empire, all built on the untrammeled energies of French nationalism. Napoleon’s empire building inadvertently helped give root to nationalistic feelings among the conquered, not excluding the Germans of Central Europe.
As the last pages in the chapter of the Napoleonic Wars closed in 1815, the Congress of Vienna was attempting to subdue the flames of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity that had engulfed the continent. The reactionary philosophies held and appropriate measures deemed necessary to implement them were articulated to the greatest degree by Prince Clemens von Metternich of Austria. Consequently, the Metternich name is most auspiciously applied to the era from 1815 to 1848. Metternich was popular among the leadership of European states as he labored to uphold conservative principles of tradition, legitimacy, and divine right of dynastic rule. Metternich unleashed forces designed to rein in the popular liberalizing features of the revolution.\textsuperscript{2} These forces, invoked by dynastic and political leadership in league with Metternich, put the pinch on expressions of nationalism, particularly strong among Italians and Germans. Pinched or not, although less visible than some would have desired, German nationalism prospered. Therefore, in spite of Metternich’s efforts, he and his allies were unable to reverse the tide of liberalism and nationalism, both at home and abroad.\textsuperscript{3} Time after time, such as that of 1848, waves of revolutionary unrest swept across Europe creating the atmosphere and conditions upon which underpinnings for the realization of a German nation would be fixed.

\textbf{Revolution and Reaction}

The backlog of pent-up liberalism burst asunder the Metternichian shackles in early 1848. Revolution erupted in Paris, France, and, while not only unsettling Louis Philippe’s rule, it also put into question the form of French government. By late February Louis


\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., 68.
Philippe had abdicated and the French were on their way to establishing a republic.⁴ News of his abdication triggered many students in Vienna to make demands of their own; resulting in revolution, which will be elaborated upon below. In patriotic zeal hoping to secure liberal reforms and independence, the radicals of Venetia and Lombardy could not resist the temptation to rise up as well, especially after Metternich was cashiered on March 13.⁵ Prague and the Czechs were not to be sidelined during this tumultuous period. Rebellion broke out in Prague led by Czech enthusiasts who desired the establishment of a free state. No less excited, the Hungarians, too, determined that the time was right for independence. And in Berlin, many witnessed a revolution that set King Frederick William IV back on his heels.⁶

Returning to Austria, the outburst of liberal revolution rocked the city of Vienna in the late winter of 1848. During the first weeks of March, the city of Vienna was the scene of great turmoil. Students and working class laborers demonstrated and demanded a constitution. Emperor Ferdinand I and Metternich resorted to military action, and demonstrators were killed. In fury, the Diet of Lower Austria demanded the resignation of Metternich. Emperor Ferdinand vacillated as to the course of action to be taken when liberals targeted Prince Metternich. Ferdinand was eventually confronted with the choice of dismissing a faithful administrator, Metternich, or inciting the destruction of the Habsburg dynasty.⁷ Metternich was dismissed. The revolutionaries were finally brought to heel by military force and Emperor Ferdinand’s promise of a constitution. By late April, the imperial

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⁶ Ibid., 48.
government had a constitution in hand. The constitution was drafted by Ferdinand’s minister of interior, Franz von Pillersdorff. The Pillersdorff Constitution, as it was called thereafter, did not meet the demands of the Viennese, and, consequently, people took to the streets again. Throughout the summer the political pendulum swung back and forth between the demands of the populace and the wishes of the emperor. On his part, the emperor made many concessions, but denied the reality of these concessions by instituting harsh force to quell the revolution. His mixed messages, eventually, led to his abdication. Liberals, radicals, and nationalists from all corners of the empire, as well as dysfunctional German states to the north, heralded a new age which they believed lent credence to their respective agendas.\(^8\) Coming into a clearer vision, at least in some minds, was the possibility of the uniting of German people. In other words, the wave of liberalism was the vehicle by which nationalism might achieve its goal of a united pan-German entity.

It is all too easy to be enthralled by the details of the revolutions, and consequently not be sensitive to latent issues of significance, especially those relating to German Austrians. While revolutionary forces created deadly disturbances for some, and inspired hope of change for others across Europe in 1848, those forces fostered developments of heretofore unrealized concerns relating to the foundation upon which Habsburg rule of the empire rested. Equally important was the foundation upon which rested Habsburg hegemony in the German world. It is therefore necessary that a step or two be taken back from the discourse of the events of 1848/49, only momentarily, in order that a striking development within Austrian circles not be overlooked.

Certainly, nationalism’s sharp edge may have been effectual in creating unity in some circles; however, that same sharp edge had the equal capacity to divide and dice the sinews of political existence in other circles. It is imperative that one recognize the rising tension within the minds of thoughtful Austrians regarding the existence of an Habsburg Austrian state. From the monarchy, through the ranks of the nobility, to the peasants of the Austrian Empire, forward-looking thinkers were forced to wrestle with the foundation upon which the Habsburg dynasty existed; approaching the matter from the opposite direction, the foundations upon which the empire existed. In other words, did the Habsburg dynasty exist for the empire? Did the empire exist for the dynasty? Pressing the issue further, were the two (empire and dynasty) mutually dependent, or were both expendable? The fundamental issue for speculation was the absolute necessity of the dynasty itself. It may be said that by 1848/49, the principal function of the dynasty was that of cohesion. The lands of the empire contained people (Bohemians, Slovenians, Hungarians, for example) with no apparent reason or need to remain within the empire except for loyalties to the House of Habsburg. This being the case, the challenge facing people across the empire was generating purpose for the dynasty’s existence. In an empire of such diversity of peoples, what other role could the dynasty have, but to maintain cohesion? Yes, that was a noble and forthright purpose, until the unification of German people was broached. The union of the German only portion of the Austrian Empire with Germans of Central Europe was a grand idea. However, the power base upon which the dynasty rested was much more than the German portion of the empire. It could be expected that the dynasty without its sprawling power base would fall into non-existence. The shocking reality of the potential demise of the dynasty became apparent. Conceivably, then, its maintenance may be considered the conundrum of the century.
Maintaining the dynasty and its base seemed contrary to pan-German aspirations. On the other hand, placating the nationalistic desire of Germans in Central Europe, as well as other ethnic or regional designs within the empire, would probably make forestalling the demise of the empire improbable. One needed not consult a medium or a crystal ball to prognosticate the future difficulties of the Habsburg dynasty. In the event the dynasty divested itself of non-Germans and followed a course of German nationalism, Austria would very likely be subsumed by Prussia and the Hohenzollerns. On the contrary, maintaining the dysfunctional empire, especially under nationalistic pressures, demanded superhuman efforts, and with them the likelihood of being self-consumed in the effort.

The apparent lack of options did not prevent the Austrians and Habsburgs from casting about in search for another recourse. In their efforts to salvage former glory and prestige, unite the Germans of Europe, and avoid succumbing to the options listed above, Austrian Germans and the dynasty put stock in nurturing the concept of a greater Germany, a **Großdeutschland**. This was to be a creation encompassing Germans of Central Europe as well as the Austrian Empire in its entirety, naturally overseen by the Habsburgs from Vienna.9

An understanding of the revolutions of 1848/49, therefore, renders an invaluable service in this study of Anschluss development. They serve as the groundwork on which to anchor an understanding of the German Austrian progression toward unity with fellow Germans of Central Europe. Secondly, in that progression, the revolutions prompted excited dialogue over the logistics of creating and governing a future German state. Such dialogue and attempts at actually achieving these hopes of a **Großdeutschland** were necessary.

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precursors to bring the German people to consider *Anschluss*, i.e., union of German Austria only with a Central Europe German state. The Germans were forced to pass through this *großdeutsch* veil in order to conceptualize, like it or not, the union of German-only Austria with Germans to the north, all of which is one portion of the trail of *Anschluss*.

This tangential excursion is not without purpose. The ability to resume a perusal of the revolutions of 1848/49 with these insights may ward off the minimization of conflicts that confronted the Habsburg dynasty, the imperial administration in Vienna, and those incisive enough to perceive the potentialities of the times. Knowledge of the *großdeutsch* concept, of its existence and its pursuit, as well as the practical ramifications of its fruition, it is hoped, will assist in enhancing the backdrop against which the revolutions of 1848/49 occurred, and, now, to which attention is returned.

One key event developing out of the instability of the 1848 revolutions was the convening of the Frankfurt Assembly. The assembly had its roots in an unofficial gathering of notable public leaders at Heidelberg. During the ecstatic month of March 1848, the Heidelberg gathering promoted the summoning of representatives from across the four corners of the German world in order that a representative body, nurtured by the air of change, might have the wherewithal to effect progress toward a united German state. This was the creation of the Frankfurt Assembly. The eventual assembly was comprised of delegates from various states and kingdoms of the German Confederation and Austria. Monarchists, liberals, conservatives, as well as liberal democrats made up the assembly; over five hundred were in attendance. Consequently, over five hundred unique experiences with an array of agendas were in attendance in that revolutionary year.

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10. Sheehan, 674.
Revolutions are seldom, if ever, comparable to a sturdy ship with a well-turned rudder, gliding along under the force of a gentle zephyr. Stormy revolutionary forces were exerting pressures on the Frankfurt Assembly. While the original spirit of the assembly was that of reform within the established political system, forces and increased momentum engendered the assembly’s call for elections to secure representatives to a constituent assembly—a national parliament, and for this reason it was designated the Pre-Parliament (Vorparlament). The Frankfurt Assembly in turn, therefore, spawned the creation of a national parliament referred to as the German National Assembly, with still grander designs for constitution and nation building.

Elections were held, representatives recognized, and the exhilarated membership convened as the German National Assembly on May 18. Worthy of remark, of the 830 members of the assembly, just under 75 percent were university educated, 436 were civil servants, 10 percent were of the nobility, while only 46 were involved with agriculture. The highly educated caliber of the assembly is noteworthy; however, order within the assembly was as sketchy as that found in Europe as a whole during 1848, for diverse aspirations and philosophical perspectives covered a wide sweep of the political spectrum. The tasks seem to have been many confronting the German National Assembly: first, organize itself, then determine its purpose, and, third, implement its restructuring before it was overcome by reactionary forces from without or internal forces from within.

Fundamental concerns never ceased to present themselves to and plague the German National Assembly. The assembly’s relationship to the existing order remained a paramount

11. Nipperdey, 541.
12. Sheehan, 678.
concern, as did its authority relative to that of the states. Which of the two, the assembly or the individual states, spoke for the people was another issue that remained a thorn in the assembly’s side. Sorting out these issues and determining a united stance were complicated by the political, revolutionary and nationalistic hopes within the assembly. Assembly members held to such convictions and hopes, so that, if any passage of legislation was to be successful, concessions and compromises would be necessary. James Sheehan summarized the assembly’s productivity when he wrote, “As would often happen during the following months, the parliamentarians achieved a kind of consensus by joining a clear statement of principle with an ambiguous set of practical limits and qualifications.”

In other words, the German National Assembly was not unequivocal in its postures. It provided loopholes enough to satisfy supporters within a wide spectrum, thereby struggling to gain ground in any direction.

The fundamental issue the German National Assembly grappled with was that of creating an all-inclusive German national state. On this issue the assemblymen met with difficulties. The delegates representing the northern German states encouraged the unity of all German states. However, their encouragement was accompanied by two qualifications. First, their definition of Austria was the entity comprised of the seven entities of Upper and Lower Austria, Tyrol, Vorarlberg, Styria, Salzburg, and Carinthia (not dissimilar to modern Austria). Secondly, the new creation being spoken of would have its locus of control at Berlin, Prussia, and consequently under Hohenzollern supervision; this became the

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restyled *Großdeutschland*. While many of the delegates were not adverse to the first qualification, the second caused some to be rather disgruntled. While not implying a ubiquitous fear of Prussian influence, there was, nonetheless, occasion for various people to be adverse to increased Prussian power, in whatever form it took. In many corners of Central Europe an inherent fear of Prussian power existed. In response, the assemblymen of the more southern German states, namely Baden, Württemberg, and Bavaria, envisioned Vienna as the locus of control, and the new creation being governed by the House of Habsburg. Moreover, on grounds of Austrian patriotism, the conservative German Austrians reiterated their hoped inclusion of the entire Austrian Empire into any pan-German nation.\textsuperscript{15} Under these circumstances of highly charged emotions, the assembly progressed very slowly.

Additional factors presented themselves and had a further turbid effect on deliberations and attitudes. One of these factors was of a religious nature. The Protestants of the parliament gravitated toward an Hohenzollern advantage. Catholics, on the other hand, recognized the potential for a position of reduced strength in a Hohenzollern-based *großdeutsch* reality.\textsuperscript{16} Another factor was the uneasy feeling toward democratic institutions in light of monarchical rule so familiar to Germans and Austrians alike. As much as it was the purpose of the German National Assembly to usher in change, change had an innate capacity to foster a degree of anxiety, and it was this anxiety the assembly’s quest for more democratic institutions created.

The turbulence resulting from these factors, and perhaps the lack of progress, lent credence and energy to the idea of a further diminished German state, but of expected solidarity. That, in contrast to a *Großdeutschland*, was a *Kleindeutschland*, a German

\textsuperscript{15} Nipperdey, 585.

\textsuperscript{16} Sheehan, 690.
national state under Hohenzollern leadership, but without German Austria. This possible creation was held as a last resort idea. Ironically, this last resort was, eventually, propelled into last option status as a result of activities in Austria during late 1848 and early 1849. Admittedly, the circumstances under which the German National Assembly met were trying: there was much to accomplish, turmoil raged within and without its walls, it was encumbered by traditions, and plagued by an awareness that the window of opportunity was probably short. The significance of the assembly’s productivity, or the lack of it, became more clear when juxtaposed to the successful resurgence of the Hohenzollern dynasty, and, more importantly, that of the Habsburg dynasty, as the year 1848 drew to a close and 1849 commenced.

As mentioned earlier, the year 1848 witnessed the breakdown of traditional order in many places, and the Austrian Empire was no exception. The Austrian grip in Italy as well as Hungary dissolved, and popular unrest in Vienna was crippling. Collapse of rule fueled revolution, which, in turn, triggered further breakdown. Under these circumstances, Austrian leadership was fully involved with attempts to stabilize and prevent dissolution of the empire. The imperial government at Vienna deemed it necessary to consider all options. It, therefore, simultaneously conceded to popular demands for constitutions and liberal appointees, while searching to restore order by means of military action.\[17\]

To its credit, the Austrian military found its footing. Prince Windischgrätz put an end to the Prague unrest in June. Added to this success, General Radetzky restored Habsburg authority in northern Italy. So, too, the Polish insurrection in Galicia was crushed. Equally significant for the vitality of the administration and crown, on November 21, Prince Felix zu

Schwarzenberg was appointed minister-president. The labors of these three, faithfully serving the Habsburg dynasty, did much to alter the political atmosphere of Vienna and the empire. In fact, as a result of their leadership, it soon became evident that neither the dynasty nor the empire were to crumble. John Breuilly suggested a discernable strengthening of resolve was emanating from the core of government, “…strong central authority was being imposed and that younger and harder men than those of the pre-March era were now at the helm.”\(^\text{18}\) Unfortunate as it was, securing the dynasty and the empire also necessitated the removal of feeble-minded Emperor Ferdinand on December 2. His abdication allowed for the ascendancy of his nephew, Franz Joseph.\(^\text{19}\) The hopes of the dynasty ruling 41 territories of varying sizes were thus pinned on the ascension of Franz Joseph as of December 2, 1848. The promise of a constitution together with the enthusiasm of the youthful Franz Joseph gave hope to the future, and it was hope in this young emperor that the soundness of the empire was placed.\(^\text{20}\)

Efforts by these “younger and harder men” to restore Austrian mastery on the ground lent credibility to the Habsburg state and revitalized the imperious Austrian spirit. Schwarzenberg’s devotion to the empire rose to the occasion as he fine-tuned his response to the German National Assembly’s developing constitution. Schwarzenberg had been sending determined signals as to Austria’s position on the question of German unity. He had suggested that Austria was an empire and had to remain a united entity. He also was convinced also that Austria’s association to a Germany would not be founded on a scant peripheral relationship. By March 1849 he proposed a 70 million people strong nation

\(^\text{18}\) Breuilly, 52.  
\(^\text{19}\) May, The Hapsburg Monarchy, 45.  
\(^\text{20}\) Hildebrandt, 1.
(Austria and German states), constructed as a confederation. The confederation was to include a directory and a Staatenhaus (legislative body). The proposal had Habsburg Austria at heart, for in the Staatenhaus, Austrians were to hold the majority of delegates (38 of 70). However, the Staatenhaus was to meet every three years and, therefore, have limited political clout.\(^{21}\) The whole of Schwarzenberg’s philosophy can be summed up as three pillars. He first made it clear that Austria and the Habsburg dynasty would not be “accommodating” in regard to the struggle securing German nationalistic designs. Secondly, the maintenance of the Austrian Empire as a political, geographical, and military entity, in its entirety, was a necessity to both Germans and Europeans as a whole. His third pillar was the promise that Austria would continue to fulfill its obligations to the existing German Confederation. To those of the German National Assembly writing a constitution nurturing the großdeutsch principle, Schwarzenberg’s tenets all but nailed the lid on the coffin of their hopes.\(^{22}\) There was to be no doubt about it; the Austrian Empire in its entirety was there to stay. That is not to imply that German unity was out of the question. It did mean that from the position of Emperor Franz Joseph, Schwarzenberg, and Vienna, German unity could and would be accomplished only according to Austrian dictates; that is, if Austria, in its entirety, along with Habsburg domination were to be included.

The Schwarzenberg position did not jibe with the German National Assembly’s ideas of union and developing constitution. As the Austrian Habsburg position crystallized with Schwarzenberg’s staunch stand, German nationalists were forced to pursue assistance from the Habsburg rivals, Hohenzollerns and Prussia. Therefore, the assembly, witnessing its credibility and usefulness waning rapidly, opted to pursue a kleindeutsch endeavor with King

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\(^{21}\) Nipperdey, 584.

\(^{22}\) Sheehan, 689.
Frederick William IV of Prussia. What had at one point been considered a last resort, Kleindeutschland, became the assembly’s remaining hope. By March 1849, the German National Assembly had produced a constitution stipulating a constitutional monarchy, together with a democratically derived representative legislature, which, it was believed, had significant potential for power, all of which was to be applied to a collection of primarily northern German states.23 It was this constitution and the crown associated with it that the parliament presented to Frederick William in the spring of 1849.

As the situation was in Austria, an empire stabilized by early 1849, so, too, Hohenzollern rule had experienced a resurgence in Prussia. Clearly, by April 1849 King Frederick William was in a more commanding position, and this negated a political need to give way to the demands of revolution-sponsored institutions. Therefore, although, in regard to the Hohenzollern-Habsburg tensions, the king of Prussia would have taken some pleasure in the creation of a German nation with Berlin as its epicenter, Frederick William could not accept. He refused the crown offered to him on the grounds it was sustained by democratic constitutionalism. His future, as he conceived it, could not be shackled to liberal democracy.24 Had the revolutions of 1848 forced his hand into abiding by some otherwise politically prudent posture, he may have accepted the crown. However, the revolution had failed, and King Frederick William wanted no association with it, nor would he support preserving it by means of a constitution and its crown. As a result, past Habsburg-Hohenzollern rivalry resumed among German speaking populations after the 1848 revolutions.

23. Sheehan, 690.
24. Ibid., 691.
While Austrian preeminence was recognized in German circles during the eighteenth century, Prussian aspirations, too, were acknowledged, and from this a polarization of the two was palpable. Leadership within the German world, therefore, was at the heart of strained relations. Nineteenth century tensions, however, introduced a second dimension into the polarization. This second dimension was the geo-territorial composition of a potential united German nation. Grossdeutschland, Kleindeutschland, or total Austria inclusion were suggestions circulating, as has been noted. The outbreak of revolution in 1848 and the resultant liberal establishment of representative bodies and constitutions seemed to indicate the likelihood of a nationalistically based German land. If that was the end product, German Austrian identity may have quietly merged with that of their brothers to the north. The weakened conditions suffered by Austria and Prussia and their respective imperial institutions in 1848 were short-lived, however. The momentary experience of weakness generated an exigency to reestablish a position of power for both Hohenzollerns and Habsburgs. Their respective resurgence resulted, once more, in positioning themselves in an stubbornly polarized relationship. This polarization effectively eradicated großdeutsch aspirations; that is, a pan-German state ruled from Vienna under Habsburg oversight. If a pan-German state was to be created, inclusion of German Austria, it would seem, would be based on annexation. Although difficult to imagine how to accomplish by annexation (Anschluss)—union of German Austria to a German nation, it had to be considered. Put in a different way, Schwarzenberg’s 70 million proposal encouraged the counter kleindeutsch proposal, which, after analysis, projected a future pan-German reality only coming to fruition via kleindeutsch auspices. The subsequent renewed strength of the Austrian government, together with Emperor Franz Joseph’s ambitions for the dynasty, prompted the imperial
government to state its position concerning a united German entity; without doubt, the capital would be Vienna. In addition, echoing the Pillersdorff Constitution, nothing less than the inclusion of the Habsburg empire in its entirety would be acceptable. German Austria’s participation in a pan-German nation, therefore, could be achieved only by being severed from the Habsburg empire. Pan-German hopes, where they existed, therefore, were relegated to a state of suspension until circumstances were altered.

Plausible aspirations for unity in 1848 took wings by 1849. Not being able to please the Hohenzollern camp nor that of the Habsburgs, the German National Assembly began to dissolve. Perhaps, as it dissolved, some German Austrian assemblymen looked into each other’s eyes and mumbled, what would have happened to us if King Frederick William accepted the constitution and the crown so offered by the German national Assembly?

While not accepting this offer, Frederick William was not oblivious to possibilities. He realized it would be foolish to dismiss the opportunity for kleindeutsch reality, especially given evidence of support by some members of the German National Assembly. Frederick William simply desired his position be granted him by God, and in a way different from that of the assembly’s proposal. Even while Frederick William was preparing to receive the delegation sent by the assembly, his minister, Joseph Maria von Radowitz, was endeavoring to establish support for a Prussian centered “Union Policy.” The Union Policy promoted the creation of a “League of Kingdoms” preferably comprised of Prussia, Saxony, Hannover, Bavaria and Württemberg, which, it was suggested, would write a constitution to replace the former Bund (covenant, association). A parliament was also to be elected under the Union

Policy. While the parliament did become a reality, known as the Erfurt Parliament, the League of Kingdoms did not materialize as Radowitz envisioned; two states, Bavaria and Württemberg refused to join. Reaction to Frederick William and Radowitz’s Union Policy arose in what Saxony’s chief minister, Graf von Beust, organized as the “Four Kingdoms’ League” (touting a reformed Bund, including executive, legislative, and judicial bodies). Here restoration and reformation of the Bund seemed to be the objective, or perhaps it was checking Prussia’s leadership. Nevertheless, rivalry among German states hampered progress toward German unity. Of course, it would depend on one’s situation and location as to whether progress was being hampered or people being protected from one state’s (Prussia) devices. Typical of the era, Austrian leadership proposed yet another option through Finance Minister Karl Ludwig von Bruck. His policy, of Schwarzenberg style, proposed that the entire Habsburg empire join the Zollverein (economic based association of states), thus establishing a central European economic entity, and, again, situating Austria in a commanding position.

Forces such as these, in competition for the hearts and minds of officials and citizens alike, created friction enough to instigate hostilities. In October 1850, the Grand Duke of Hesse-Cassel withdrew from the League of Kingdoms, incurring Prussian anger. In complying with a previous agreement, Bavaria and Württemberg were to be supportive of the Grand Duke’s actions; Austria, as well, had pledged support in such a scenario of impending war. Schwarzenberg dutifully positioned himself firmly at the side of the Grand Duke and announced the fact that Russia’s support, too, was anticipated. Thus, with the cards stacked against the Prussians, King Frederick William acquiesced, and negotiations to stem hostilities

27. Breuilly, 59.
were conducted at Olmütz (1850). It was at Olmütz that the Prussians agreed to withdraw troops from Kurhesse, forsake the Union Policy initiative, as well as drop claims on Schleswig and Holstein. It appeared that Austrian intervention among the German states was as strong as ever. A subsequent conference, held in Dresden (December 1850 - May 1851), went as far as restoring the *Bund* to its pre-1848 status. Although some, Otto von Bismarck (Prussian representative), for example, attempted to put a Prussian-positive spin on the “Humiliation at Olmütz,” and diminished its reality, Austrian success in maintaining its position in German circles could not help but be realized and drive pan-German aspirations into despair. The uniting of all Germans into one Germany had been thwarted once more. Austrian’s strength of imperial union, it would appear, was the bane of any foreseeable union of German states. Austria’s strength was prevailing, which in turn stifled direct approaches to union. Indirect approaches, such as a two-step approach to a united German nation via *kleindeutsch* measures, seconded by an annexation of German Austria, were hindered as well.

The dust did settle by 1851, and Central European Germans were denied a tidy nation of their own. Austrian leadership, stable as it was, recognized that the Austrian preeminence in an all German state was encumbered by the fact that Austria was an empire comprised of a multitude of ethnicities that, too, struggled with their respective national aspirations. Yet, the Habsburg Dynasty—represented by Franz Joseph—had no intentions of dismantling the empire for the sake of 6.5 million German Austrians. In reality, while culturally the German Austrians had an affinity to their German brothers, loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty,

29. Sheehan, 715.
plus the privileges of their superior social, political, and economic status in Austria produced a counter-attraction to Austria. The one temporal consolation German Austrians had concerning their crisis of convictions was that with the dissolution of the German National Assembly and the restoration of order, no radical changes in their position had occurred, nor were there any immediate foreseeable possibilities looming.

However, like shifting slabs of ice jostled in a stormy sea, the political, diplomatic and military landscape within Europe was ever-changing. The perfidious diplomacy of mid-nineteenth century gave birth to coalitions, and unfortunately, the promises made were reneged upon almost as quickly. In this atmosphere, the young Emperor Franz Joseph felt his way along in international intrigue, enjoying successes and also suffering setbacks. Franz Joseph endured setbacks with patience, willing to wait for more opportune moments to obtain his desires. Although willing to bide his time on certain issues, he was unwilling to relinquish monitoring Hohenzollern activities to his north. Not alone in harboring suspicion, Prussian leadership was unwilling to give free rein to Austria in Central European German affairs. Not surprisingly, mutual distrust between the two dynastic families cast a long shadow over national endeavors. It appeared as though neither camp desired to broach the subject of ultimate German leadership for fear of being disappointed.

Silence in the matter proved the easier course of action, but that could last only so long, especially considering the rising influence of Otto von Bismarck. Bismarck then served as the Prussian representative to the Diet of the German Confederation. His heart was bent on Prussian supremacy over Austria in the struggle for German hegemony, and within the Diet he labored to illustrate that the good of the confederation was not to be tied to Austria. In the

32. Ibid.
context of Crimean War diplomacy, Bismarck encouraged not supporting Austria; in fact, letting Austria back itself into a corner. Although not on the scale of the Napoleonic wars, nor direct confrontation between Prussia and Austria, hostilities erupted on the Crimean Peninsula. The Crimean War (1853-56) was rooted in the ambitions of Tsar Nicholas against the Ottoman Empire. The war witnessed the efforts of Austria in league with France and Great Britain against the designs of Tsar Nicholas I of Russia.

Recounting the battling that transpired during the war is of great value; however, in this case and for the purpose of identifying with German Austrians, ascertaining the results would be more fitting and prove to be of greater worth. Negotiations in Paris brought the war to an end with the following results: Russian access to the Danube was deprived; Russian claims to having the exclusive right of protecting Christians in the Ottoman Empire was denied; and Serbians were granted their privileges under Turkish rule. While producing these negotiated results, the war proved significant because of the influence it had on international relations, particularly between Austria and Russia. Austrian anxiety fostered by Russian advances southward, the catalyst of the war, bears credibility. However, in light of Russian support rendered to Austria in regard to the Hungarian uprising in 1849, the Russian indignation at the Austrian unwillingness to consider Russian aims was equally credible. Consequently, when the Crimean War was brought to an end, Austria’s relations with Russia suffered a severe strain, this strain Austria could ill afford in light of Prussian energies. Interestingly, although certainly not his desire, Bismarck was appointed ambassador to Russia in 1859. In this capacity, Bismarck had the opportunity to strengthen

34. Sheehan, 869.
Prussian-Russian relations. While not associated with Bismarck, but pertinent to international relations was Austria’s return to war in 1859. Austria declared war on Piedmont as a measure to maintain its control of northern Italian lands. France, under Napoleon III, responded with supporting Count Camillio Cavour (Piedmont) as per their alliance formed in 1858. Little time was needed after the battles of Magenta and Solferino (Austrian losses) for Emperor Franz Joseph to seek peace with Napoleon III of France.  

In conclusion, the status of Austria had changed considerably since the Humiliation of Olmütz. By 1860 Austria was diplomatically isolated, had suffered territorial losses, and was financially strapped. While circumstances had changed negatively for Austria, Prussia was experiencing promising changes: Prince William replaced the ailing Frederick William, government repression eased, and economic prosperity abounded. Moreover, an air of confidence was tangible in the Prussian spirit. Therefore, the turbulent decade of the 1860s that brought on substantial upheaval was kicked off under these circumstances, and while some might suggest it is an overstatement to suggest that the national and political landscape of Europe after the decade was unrecognizable, it remains undeniable that the state of European affairs had been altered radically by 1871.

**Turbulent Decade**

The silence relating to Germanic hegemony began to give way to ineluctable rumblings by 1864. The titanic struggle between Prussia and Austria was sparked by the Danes’ interest in Schleswig. The Danes of Schleswig sought incorporation into Denmark, while the

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36. Nipperdey, 622.
37. Breuilly, 57.
38. Ibid., 78.
Germans of Schleswig were desirous of uniting Schleswig to Holstein, and, by doing so, creating a more viable German state. This nationalistic tension was further excited by the Danish king’s, Frederick VII, designs to establish a constitution applicable to Denmark as well as Schleswig and Holstein. Such an application of a unitary constitution to both Schleswig and Holstein ran contrary to the 1852 London Protocol.\textsuperscript{39} War was by no means an absolute necessity, but when Christian IX took the Danish throne in November 1863, as a result of Frederick’s death, and claimed Schleswig as well, red flags went up.\textsuperscript{40} Further confusion presented itself when the Duke of Augustenburg made claims to Schleswig and Holstein after such a claim was renounced by the duke’s family.\textsuperscript{41} Therefore a legitimate disadvantage to the German population was exposed, and Germans were under momentary threat. Herein was an opportunity to demonstrate leadership within the German world, and consequently both Prussia and Austria jumped at it. The two powers created and maintained a united front against Denmark in what became known as the Danish War (1864). Circumstances did not prove favorable for the Danes, and they were forced to admit defeat. The forces of Denmark being overpowered, the two victorious powers cascaded, regardless of their victory, or possibly because of their victory, into bickering. The issue causing the stir after their glorious victory was what to do with the liberated duchies. By and large, negotiations at war’s end revolved around governance of Schleswig and Holstein. According to the agreement finalized at Gastein (August 1865), it was determined that Prussia was to rule Schleswig, while Austria ruled Holstein. The agreement also included the sum of 2.5

\textsuperscript{39} Albrecht-Carrie, 127.
\textsuperscript{40} The 1852 London Protocol affirmed that the duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg were united by personal union with Denmark. However, it was also affirmed that the duchies were to remain independent entities. In addition, due to the fact that Frederick VII was without issue, he was to be succeeded by the Duke of Glücksburg. (Breuilly, 78).
\textsuperscript{41} Albrecht-Carrie, 128.
million Danish rigsdalers to be paid to Austria by Prussia, and in so doing, Austria would officially renounce claims to Saxe-Lauenburg.\footnote{Hertz, 310.}

It could be said that the agreement suited their respective immediate temporal needs. In summary, Austria secured a modest financial injection for which the treasury was in need, and avoided additional war over a state well to the north and conspicuously not contiguous. Prussia, King William and Bismarck, on the other hand, secured Schleswig. Along with Schleswig, unknowingly or knowingly, the groundwork was being laid by which to manipulate the uneasy Austria into a future confrontation, and perhaps, in Bismarck’s mind, in a not so far distant future. Bismarck was looking to create a situation whereby a natural progression into a war between Austria and Prussia would be achieved. Only months were to pass before the long avoided confrontation between German dynasties began. Simply stated, the cat was let out of the bag, Bismarck revealed the Prussian initiative to annex the two states—Schleswig and Holstein. Emperor Franz Joseph was unwilling to collaborate in such a scheme unless Austria was substantially compensated. Each side refused to give way.\footnote{Stephen Beller, \textit{Franz Joseph} (New York: Longman, 1996), 91.}

Once again rumblings turned into an explosive war. The time had come for a Prussian declaration through war—the Austro-Prussian War, 1866—that it was the standard bearer of German unity, so to war it went. Indeed, the swiftness with which Prussian forces gained success was truly indicative of significant prowess. The Austrian defeat at the culminating Battle of Königgrätz (July 3, 1866) at the hands of Prussia under the leadership of Bismarck, General Helmuth von Moltke, and King William I led to the Treaty of Prague (August 23, 1866). The basics of the treaty included: the dissolution of the German Confederation; the creation of a North German \textit{Bund}, to consist of Prussia, Schleswig, Holstein, and a host of
German states; the consideration of a South German Bund, comprised of Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg (the South Bund, if established, was to have no particular ties to Austria); Austria was to lose Venetia; and Austria was to pay reparations.\textsuperscript{44} As it stood, by means of the war, Prussia added the northern German states to its fold, which were then collectively reconstituted as the North German Confederation. Consequently, at this point, a degree of German territorial unity had been achieved, but only a degree. The playing field had been altered as well as the participants in the German struggle for domination, and no doubt further alterations were in order. For instance, while the southern German states sympathized with Austria’s cause during the Austro-Prussian war, and the population of these states did not relish the notion of unity under Prussian auspices after the war, alliances were, nonetheless, made with Prussia. In the final analysis, the southern German states of Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria and the Grand Duchy of Hesse had lost the protection Austria offered, were controlled by the Zollverein, and forced into military alliances with Prussia.\textsuperscript{45} As a result of the war and treaty, tucked between Austria and the newly created North German Confederation, the southern states were in an awkward position. They suffered isolation, and regardless of previous cultural inclinations, the weight of Prussian power was determining their future associations. In summary, the three entities, including the North German Confederation, Austria, and the southern German states, were involved in a struggle with something less than a win-win outcome guaranteed.

The Austrian defeat in the Austro-Prussian War signaled the end of an era of Austrian domination of the German world. Nonetheless, and seemingly contrary to reality, both Emperor Franz Joseph and the German Austrians recognized they still maintained and could

\textsuperscript{44} Beller, 91.
\textsuperscript{45} Breuilly, 84.
hope in the influence they believed they had in the south German states of Baden, Bavaria and Württemberg. There was still the possibility that the pro-Austrian anti-Prussian sentiments of the population in these states could be nurtured, reconstructed under Austrian leadership, and fulfill the German Austrian dream of a united Germany under Habsburg leadership.46 Perhaps this hope quieted some spirits, momentarily, but the stark reality that their hope denied the principle of nationalism could not be subdued. The greater question for German Austrians was in what geopolitical entity they were going to be when all the boundaries were redrawn?

Whether the inhabitants of the southern states were or were not inclined to favor unity with the North German Confederation, Prussian leadership wanted them in its fold. The machinations of Bismarck finally achieved their goal via war with France. What history has entitled the Franco-Prussian War (1870) was the catalyst that secured, as part of a united Germany, the southern German states. The Franco-Prussian War was a monstrously debilitating war for the French, but seen as a productive war for the Germans.47 By means of the war, the Hohenzollern dynasty finally proved successful in uniting the German states into a solid block renamed Germany, and gloried in anointing William as Kaiser William of the German Empire.

Heretofore, there had remained in the mind of the German Austrians, although faint, hope of German territorial and political unity including them. However, in the span of a few short years, Hohenzollern-Prussia supplanted Habsburg-Austrian domination among Germans, and created a modern Germany without them. The course of events from 1866 to

46. Beller, 92.
1871 locked the German Austrians out of Germany. The Habsburg dynasty, built on Austria, would never permit its firmest and ancient anchor to be gouged out of the empire, thus sanctioning its own ruin. By 1871 the German Austrians had witnessed the long sought after unification of Germans into a nation, with them, unhappily, remaining on what would seem the wrong side of the border. With little imagination, one could envision German Austrians, turning around as though from a locked gate and walking slowly away, being forced to reevaluate the circumstances in which they found themselves. They might content themselves to remain in the sprawling Austrian Empire and dominate it for personal gain. They might throw all their support behind the emperor with hopes he would not succumb to Magyar and Slavic provocation for increased political participation. Or they might irrationally allow the faintest of hope of total German unification to remain deep in their inmost being.

The list of plausible reactions to the events of the 1860s was to be further influenced by a direct act of Emperor Franz Joseph. The Hungarians had risen up in 1848, clamoring for independence, only to witness their efforts smashed by Austrian and Russian forces. Subsequently, the Hungarians were ruled as a conquered people. Prudently, by late 1866, they recognized that the time was ripe to compel Austrian leadership to acquiesce to an augmented Hungarian position within the empire. Weakened as the empire was as a result of the war in 1866, Emperor Franz Joseph agreed to a political compromise whereby the Hungarians were permitted a constitution of their own and the semi-independent status of Hungary. The Compromise (Ausgleich), was consummated by the coronation of Franz Joseph on June 8, 1867 as the King of Hungary.48

48. Hertz, 375.
The Ausgleich altered the empire to a great degree. Structurally Franz Joseph was the emperor of Austria and the King of Hungary, each having its respective constitution. The empire became known as Austria-Hungary. Hungarians gloried in the ability and freedom to rule their own kingdom, and cooperated with the emperor and Austria on military, trade, and tax collection issues. The arrangement suited the Hungarians while not posing too great an affront to the emperor. While the Hungarians experienced self-rule, the Austrian half of the empire was granted a constitution. The constitution established a parliament—Imperial Council of Austria (Reichsrat)—comprised of two houses: the House of Lords (Herrenhaus), and the House of Deputies (Abgeordnetenhaus). This august institution met at Austria’s parliament building on the Ringstrasse in Vienna.\footnote{Rolf Steininger, ed, \textit{Austria in the Twentieth Century} (New Brunswick and London: Translation Publisher, 2002), 29.}

The impact on German Austrians’ attitudes was diverse. This new arrangement could not be implemented without seriously affecting the German Austrians’ struggle to maintain superiority in a state willing to embrace equality among its inhabitants. In addition, the precedent for securing political equality had been established. If the Hungarians were granted political power, what would prevent the disjointed Slavic populations from aspiring to achieve the same rank? Some Germans Austrians deemed it unfortunate that Emperor Franz Joseph exhibited the willingness to grant political rights. The beguiling conundrum remained, then, how to perpetuate German hegemony in an empire composed primarily of non-Germans with an emperor—although German—willing to kowtow to nationalities for the purpose of dynastic preservation?

The backdrop to the 1860s and the philosophy for the future was summed up succinctly by historian Frederick Hertz when he stated, “Franz Joseph’s main aim was to
preserve his empire and that required, in addition to a strong army and prudent diplomacy, harmony and unanimity among the peoples which comprised it.”50 Much to the consternation of Germans in the empire, Emperor Franz Joseph’s willingness to put the dynasty and empire before the desires of the German Austrians proved to be his most readily available tool in maintaining stability. The circumstances of a multi-national empire and his utilization of this tactic did much to complicate the actions and reactions emanating from German quarters within the empire.

The Germans of Prussia, on the other hand, concluded that the decade of the 1860s was nothing short of capital. Much had been accomplished among the Germans by 1871. The Germans had witnessed the development of a united Germany, a German emperor had been crowned, the French humbled, and the future looked bright. However, for German Austrians the results of the decade necessitated a serious reassessment. Most of their reassuring options had been eliminated, and their situation altered greatly. As they saw it, they were not included in the new Germany, nurturing ties with fellow Germans in Germany was problematic, and they could not suppress totally patriotism to Austria and the Habsburgs. In addition, they were wary of the steadfastness of their political and social hold on Austria-Hungary, and they knew where Emperor Franz Joseph stood in relationship to the empire.

The upheaval of the two wars and the Ausgleich fostered among the German Austrians the need to look inward, not only to inner-Austria, but more significantly to their beloved German culture. Seemingly locked out of the German nation, German Austrian sensitivity to their fellow Germans of Germany could find satisfaction in nurturing cultural identity. Unity in culture would transcend political boundaries, reconcile German populations, and

50. Hertz, 373.
remedy German Austrians’ disappointments. However, as will be discussed, what was to calm sensitivities in the German Austrian psyche proved to confuse convictions in relationship to Germany, Austria-Hungary, *Anschluss*, and their own consciences.
Chapter Two

Unfamiliar Horizons

Fork in the Road

The cultural identity of Germans is age-old, and contains many particular nuances and energies that had excited romantic and intellectual notions for centuries. Not surprisingly then, Germans across Central Europe experienced an intensification of cultural awareness as the fires of nationalism burned within their hearts during the first half or so of the nineteenth century. The fire began to take on different hues after 1871, depending on one’s perspective, because unification had been accomplished. While cultural energies in Germany found expression in national pride and propagation of overseas colonization, the German Austrians witnessed not a subsiding of cultural exuberance but, rather, a swelling of German consciousness. This heightened cultural consciousness was propagated in two movements: the völkisch movement and Pan-Germanism.51 In these movements some may have found gratification, however, each of these movements tended to exacerbate the difficulties German Austrians experienced in reconciling tensions concerning their position in the German world.

The basics of the völkisch principles are fascinating and not outside the bounds of twenty-first century thought. The Volk was that like-minded culturally united entity that had and continued to serve as an identity and cohesive factor for the German people. Historian Paul Silfen wrote of the Volk in the following way, “Volk is a much more comprehensive

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term then people. It implies the union of a people with a transcendental essence.”

Silfen utilized the intellectual writings of Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, whose writings surveyed völkisch developments during the late nineteenth century. Moeller’s insights helped to portray the Volk as a living essence comprised of and found in culturally and linguistically developed people, not bound by borders. Significantly, while nations war with each other, so too volks are at odds with each others. One issue of great importance regarding Volk hostility toward another is the purity of the Volk. The völkisch movement among the Germans, therefore, had purity of the Volk among its tenets. The thriving German Volk must be rid of Slavic and French influences, for example. No less must Jewish influences be negated for the sake of the Volk. Therefore, because of the increased Jewish profile in Germany and Austria-Hungary during the second half of the nineteenth century, the völkisch movement, by necessity incorporated a substantial anti-semitic nature. Consequently, the völkisch movement was forced to consider the maintenance of the German Volk beyond national borders and the destruction of Jewish influences found within its ranks, regardless of the form the influence took. Jacob Katz, scholar of anti-semitism, offered a concise statement representative of those of German background, as well as others, reacting to the liberal developments present by the late nineteenth century. He wrote, “…yet all agreed that the role Jews were permitted to play in the economic, political, and cultural life of German society went beyond tolerable limits.” In addition, the central principles of the völkisch movement incorporated a concentration on natural living, admiration for the wisdom and

53. Ibid., 20.
insight of ancestors, and an appreciation for cosmic cycles and astrology. These principles tended to support an agricultural society rather than an industrial society. In fact, völkisch supporters railed against the industrial society, claiming it was responsible, at least in part, for the harsh, impersonal, self-centered materialism that was developing within German society. Consequently, this collective byproduct of modern industrial society, a society increasingly managed by Jewish capitalists, was a detriment to the German Volk. The völkisch movement, as a counterweight, offered comfort in the rehearsing of the glories of the ancient Teutonic gods, heroes, and their accomplishments. The völkisch movement, then, was a cultural movement, an organic movement that recognized no territorial boundary, and it had the potential to be receptive to Germans in Germany, Switzerland, and, of course, Austria-Hungary. While the völkisch potential existed in these territories and others inhabited by Germans, the völkisch movement sank its roots most readily in German Austria. This sinking of roots was facilitated by the conducive atmosphere found in Vereine across Austria. The Vereine were educational and defense associations or leagues, and these found much support among the intellectual young men in Austrian society. The growth of the Vereine inspired Anton Langgassner—an instrumental figure in the völkisch movement—to seek increased leverage by federating the Vereine. The immediate value of the movement among German Austrians was the sense of unity they might enjoy with each other. Another value of equal importance, the movement helped maintain the solidarity of the Germans in Austria-Hungary. The Germans had been masters of the empire, but forces had actively

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56. Whiteside, 51.
57. As of 1886, with its headquarters in Salzburg, the Germanenbund was created. The Austrian government became unnerved by the federation and eventually dissolved it in 1889. It was reshaped into the Bund der Germanen by 1894. (Whiteside, 56)
reshaped the empire and its status in Europe, and therefore any means, such as the *völkisch* movement, to foster German solidarity was of significance.

Concurrently, the Habsburg monarch was determined to maintain the empire, and what course such maintenance might take was anyone’s guess. The Hungarians had been granted semi-independence without too much effort in 1867. What would it take, some figured very little, for the emperor to grant more freedoms and political power to other nationalities within the empire? At what point would the emperor sanction equal suffrage to non-Germans and thus tip the political balance away from the German Austrians? The *völkisch* movement helped to increase the bond among Germans in Austria and increase the likeliness that their desires would not suffer abatement before the government and emperor. Since they were entrapped within the Austro-Hungarian Empire and their dominant role was in question, they could find comfort only within their own ranks.58 The movement played upon the fears of identity among the German Austrians.

The second movement among the German Austrians of significance was the Pan-German movement. The main tenets of Pan-German nationalism were considerably different than that of the *völkisch* movement, although the nomenclature may not suggest it. Pan-German nationalism purported much more than the name implied, the unification of all Germans. Due to the fact that Pan-German nationalism made headway in the 1870s, there was a connection between the events of the 1860s and its tenets. Most notable was the desire of German Austrians, along with their homeland, to be incorporated into Germany. This incorporation would make German Austria one state among many in the German Empire under the rule of a Hohenzollern emperor. While the *völkisch* movement focused on cultural

58. Whiteside, 43 & 44.
aspects, Pan-German nationalism sought political and territorial satisfaction.\textsuperscript{59} Pan-German nationalism maintained that culturally united Germans must by necessity be politically and territorially united as well. The implication of this tenet was the extraction of German Austria from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, although such an event might in fact be the catalyst for the empire’s total demise. Such a challenge also implied the dissolution of loyalty to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and more importantly, the Habsburg dynasty, although the empire and dynasty had been the pride of the German Austrians for centuries.

These challenges and questions of loyalty had very significant influences and potential ramifications on the German Austrian process of thought. Questions of loyalty had to be addressed. The relinquishing of long held loyalty to the imperial Habsburg family would not be a task completely without reservations. Unity within the new German nation would also necessitate submission to the Hohenzollern dynasty, the recognized enemy for well over a century. Berlin would also replace Vienna as the center from which commands were given. It is not being suggested that the vast German population of Austria-Hungary fully adopted Pan-German nationalism. At the same time, the growth of Pan-German nationalism was the pride of some, and inspired a great deal of thought for others.

Pan-German nationalism was capable of instigating a stir because its tenets propelled one onto a secondary plain of thought. Briefly stated, Austrian Pan-German nationalism was a movement that approved of the destruction of the institutions of control that had developed and continued to evolve in the industrialized West during the nineteenth century. The entire political spectrum, as well as humanitarian and ethical forces, were to be repudiated. Religious institutions and religious principles, too, were to be cast aside. Nineteenth century

\textsuperscript{59} Katz, 287.
parliamentarianism, capitalism, socialism, constitutional democracy, civil equality, and above all popular sovereignty were all disagreeable to the Austrian Pan-German nationalists. The Austrian Pan-German began to articulate the use of conflict—force—to effect a complete and lasting break with social behavior and forms of law of the nineteenth century. This political and social extremism had as its goal the unity of Germans in an entity capable of allowing the Germans to prosper and reach German potential, otherwise hindered by above mentioned institutions. The German potential had by no means been reached and would not be reached until Germans with their superior culture were united as one Volks; not united only, but also freed from the shackles of industrial society. Another stark feature of Austrian Pan-German nationalism was its desire to be cleansed not only from industry’s evils, but also cleansed from the racial dross of other ethnicities. While it may be clear that the focus of Pan-German energies was non-Germans in Austria-Hungary, one would be amiss to not make it clear that the Jewish element in Austrian society, too, was to be rooted out. Pan-German nationalism, attempting to create in spirit and territory, could not afford to create a united German state inclusive of the Jews in opposition to German racial ideas.  

Therefore, as anti-semitism was a feature of the völkisch movement, it was likewise a principle mandate of Pan-German nationalism. Austrian Pan-German theory, therefore, also synergized civil rights and racial identity. Consequently, and more particularly as the Austrian Pan-Germans recognized themselves in Austro-Hungarian society, granting civil rights along racial lines had potential advantages. Austrian Pan-German nationalism fostered an extreme German consciousness that if run to its more full course would remove

60. Whiteside, 3.
conventional nineteenth century institutions, and replace them with German institutions.\textsuperscript{61} The result would be the removal of barriers as they existed between Germany and German Austria. In effect, the trapped German Austrians would achieve union (\textit{Anschluss}) with their German brothers to the north.

These extremist concepts of Pan-German nationalism might prove difficult for the average German Austrian to accept. They would be difficult for anyone to adopt without serious contemplation. Three responses to the Pan-German movement among Austrians developed: those who responded with hearty approval; those who responded with an absolute disregard for the movement; and the bulk of society which did not dismiss the theory entirely but allowed it to linger in their minds.\textsuperscript{62} The German Austrians of the third group, more than likely, turned the principles of Pan-German nationalism around in their minds, giving some thought to every tenet and catching every facet. German Austrians had fears, hopes, and irreconcilable tensions to contemplate, and Pan-German nationalism had an extraordinary impact on their convictions.

Pan-German nationalism among German Austrians was not at full strength during the first half of the nineteenth century, probably because the absence of exclusion factors caused by the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian Wars. Prior to the wars, German Austrians, regardless of political and patriotic standing, had been able to ease tensions by reminding themselves that there remained a possibility of a unified Germany under Habsburg rule. The wars of course changed all of that hope, but, more importantly, the \textit{Ausgleich} ushered in a dynamic difficult to overlook. The \textit{Ausgleich} propagated the political doctrine of the rights

\textsuperscript{61} Whiteside, 4.
\textsuperscript{62} Katz, 289.
of man. The Hungarians had clamored for a degree of independence and gained it; meanwhile, Austria was given a working constitution enacted by the Reichsrat in December 1867. Since the emperor agreed to both and might agree to additional demands in the future, there were grounds for an uneasiness among German Austrians. At the same time, these two constitutions gave expression to German liberalism that had developed since the early nineteenth century. The tension between these two strands of thought (German liberalism and Pan-German nationalism) materialized, and reinforced the understanding that German liberalism was not compatible with ethnic/racial designs of Pan-German theory.

In the minds of liberals, the events of 1867 were the fulfillment of their passions, a crowning moment of parliamentary government. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, liberals had battled first against reactionary measures of Metternich, and secondly, the post-1848 reactionary neo-absolutism. Finally, liberals had managed to wrench out of Emperor Franz Joseph a working constitution founded on parliamentary principles. The 1867 constitution gave political voice to Czechs, Slavs, Bohemians, Poles, and Germans throughout the non-Hungarian areas of the empire. This victory was definitely worth the fight to the short-sighted German Austrians or those in the empire seeking political participation. This of course was worth rejoicing over, if one’s political hopes and aspirations culminated in equality with other nationalities. On the other hand, the sought after expunging of absolutism in this manner also destroyed grounds for German domination of the political apparatus. In this, Pan-German nationalists believed they could charge the liberals with political naivety. Only the naïve, suggested the Pan-German nationalists, believed the new

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63. Whiteside, 3.
constitutional system brought the emperor to heel, and that the non-German populations would work hand-in-hand with the German populations for the betterment of the empire.

While liberals were applauding their success, others, Pan-Germans and non-Germans, were forced to take another appraisal of their situation within the empire. The Pan-German nationalists believed their position in the Austro-Hungarian Empire had experienced change with the new constitution. Now, via acts of the Reichsrat, the hegemony of Germans within the empire could be destroyed by coalitions of non-German political forces. The Pan-German nationalists considered the role of German-Austrians in complete jeopardy. The population of the Austrian half of the empire was determined to be about 29.1 million, of which 6.5 were German. Bearing this in mind, coalitions had the potential to relegate the German population to a minute or even subservient role. In light of such possibilities, the neo-absolutism that reigned since 1849 would by all means be preferable. On the other hand, non-Germans did have an increased potential to exercise political sway, that is, if they could form working coalitions.

Many German Austrians found little comfort by 1871 in the increased political role people gloried in. This, combined with the awareness that they were locked out of Germany and locked in a potentially inhospitable empire, increased, at least in some German Austrians’ minds, the necessity to be of utmost vigilance. They must be vigilant in at least attempting to check any measures designed to decrease their jeopardized superior position. An increase in non-German power, no matter how small, might prove to lead to bigger and greater measures, and, in time, prove to be the means of destroying German dominance in Austria-Hungary. The radical Pan-German nationalists were not the majority of the German

65. Tange, 2.
66. Whiteside, 18.
Austrian population, but they represented a legitimate concern, and this concern found outlets. Therefore, it could be assured that Pan-German nationalists, ever on political patrol, would alert fellow German Austrians of governmental incursions into German dominance in Austria-Hungary.

Whatever persuasion a German Austrian felt most comfortable with, there remained still another political force to take into consideration. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, stretching from the Alps to Transylvania, was inhabited by aristocratic landowners with a custom of attentively looking out for their own interests. Traditionally, the aristocratic class dominated local politics, and the aristocracy of the empire was granted a great degree of latitude from the Habsburgs when dealing with localized domestic affairs. Customarily, the aristocracy and Habsburg monarchy lent mutual support to each other’s needs when doing so was beneficial to the maintenance of the status quo. This arrangement served adequately, but as the events of the 1860s and 70s transpired, even the aristocracy recognized the dark clouds of change stirring. The reaction by the aristocracy is both interesting and predictable. After analyzing their situation, the aristocrats determined that their surest course of action was to unify as aristocrats. Not as a unified body to crush all liberal machinations, but, rather, a unified front to maintain a privileged status. The conservative aristocracy determined to disregard ethnicity (Czezh, Slav, German, Magyar, Ruthenian) for the purpose of perpetuating their class control. The aristocracy determined that their self-interest lay in slicing through cultural barriers to uphold class and financial standing. German, Polish, Czech, and Magyar aristocrats identified in one dimension (aristocracy), while giving less

67. Whiteside, 19.
68. Ibid., 21.
credence to the ethnic dimension. Taking such a stand had ramifications in other dynamic spheres.

Aristocratic loyalty to class rather than ethnicity necessitated determining support in other spheres, not a novel insight of course. Nonetheless, articulating the basic aristocratic position of the German Austrians is an aid in a more comprehensive understanding of their rationale as well as a sounding board for other German Austrians. In addition to class loyalty, the German Austrian aristocracy threw its support behind the Habsburg dynasty. Logically then, the aristocracy would favor the maintenance of the empire, and, for that matter, its expansion, if practicable. In addition, the aristocracy sanctioned the role of the Roman Catholic Church, especially as it controlled education, as was the customary practice within the empire. The aristocrats, then, would avoid German nationalism, while respecting other ethnicities and their expressions of nationalism, and, as for the idea of dismantling the empire, as the Pan-German nationalists advocated, this did not appeal to the aristocracy. The aristocracy determined that this was the most satisfactory and self-serving course to follow, however displeased nationalistic German Austrians remained. Emperor Franz Joseph determined that this arrangement was workable for the continuation of the empire, and so, too, did the aristocracy of the various nationalities involved. Perhaps then, it is not surprising that conservative aristocrats, approvingly supported Prime Ministers Taaffe and Badeni (both of whom will be introduced later in this chapter), much to the dismay of some fellow German Austrians. Nonetheless, the German Austrian aristocrats felt at peace with their rationale; they believed themselves to be Austrians loyal to a dynasty that supported their position in society.69

69. Whiteside, 20.
Harmony within the Austro-Hungarian Empire was illusive, and unfortunately external forces tended to complicate pro-\textit{Anschluss} matters even more. The most notable factors and influences emanated from Berlin. After the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, German Austrians suffered the realization that they had not been incorporated into the long awaited modern German nation, but, as has been noted, the hope of union (\textit{Anschluss}) refused to die within the hearts of many. Regardless of their current dreams of union with Germany, they could not force themselves on Kaiser Wilhelm I and his new empire. Added to their discouragement were signals being expressed by Bismarck that did not favor union. In this sense, already dim hopes of union were forced to fade even more.

Bismarck did not reciprocate with a hearty welcoming smile the overtures of the German Austrians. Bismarck’s concept of the state rested on viability. The state had to function. He had witnessed Germany’s historical development, and it now had to function in the world of established veteran nations. He had to look to Germany’s wellbeing, rather than succumb to romantic notions of medieval German culture. If there were Germans outside the realm of Germany, that is, after its year of creation, it was not his desire to labor solely for their incorporation.\textsuperscript{70} Bismarck also saw more value, that is for Germany, in the German Austrians laboring within the Austro-Hungarian Empire to maintain their political leadership in order that the empire remain strong. Its strength would act as an aid to Germany. In this way, the German Austrians would be performing a beneficial task for their fellow Germans in Germany. The strength of the Austro-Hungarian Empire could be used to thwart Russian designs in Eastern Europe, as well as provide a German arm to the Southeast—Balkan

\textsuperscript{70} Hertz, 339.
region. In the end, Bismarck preferred German Austrians in Austria-Hungary as a means to perform a service for Germany’s international benefit.71

Bismarck’s European-wide alertness (vision) continually reverted back to the needs of Germany rather than German Austria. Germany did need the German Austrians in Austria-Hungary, and Bismarck made the point clear. Historian Alfred Low presented Bismarck as praising German Austrians, for “the balance of power in Europe makes it mandatory for Germany to preserve the Austro-Hungarian monarchy as a strong and independent power.”72 Bismarck’s desire was the utilization of the German Austrians to rule millions (Czechs, Slavs, Croats etc., 76 percent of the empire’s 42 million) for the good of Germans; Austria-Hungary was to act as an aid in balancing the national forces of Europe.73 German Austrian respectability was being threatened by Bismarck’s utilization of their efforts to act as a counterweight in European politics. Presumably, this must have also chafed against German Austrian pride and hope.

Otto von Bismarck was a supreme juggler of diplomatic forces throughout his career, and he juggled German Austrians out of Anschluss hope. Bismarck labored with his Austro-Hungarian equal (Foreign Minister Count Julius Andrassy) to produce the Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, signed December 7, 1879. Bismarck had reasoned that he must establish solid relations with Austria-Hungary or Russia, or left be isolated. Inasmuch as German relations with Russia were less than warm at the moment, he negotiated a treaty (Dual Alliance) with Austria-Hungary. In the process, negotiations and conferences proved the opportunity for Bismarck to personally appear in Vienna. His

72. Tange, 3.
73. May, The Anschluss Movement, 140.
appearance in Vienna (September 1879) was accompanied by actions, indicating for some, at least, coming to peace with a former enemy. Self-serving peace produced the Dual Alliance and sanctioned continuation of the status quo for the Austrian state.

The Dual Alliance of 1879 featured an array of interesting stipulations, whose ramifications offer yet more insight as to the difficulty of solidifying German Austrian identity. One stipulation was that the signatories agreed that should either suffer an attack by Russia, the other would come to its ally’s assistance. It can be asserted that the treaty was drawing the two states of Germany and Austria-Hungary together in such a way that diminished the likelihood of Anschluss. Germany was dependent upon Austro-Hungarian strength and stability, which in turn demanded the stabilization of German Austrian beliefs about their role in the German world. This was even further enforced by the signatories when they agreed that German Austrians were forbidden, on grounds of German national loyalty, to disrupt Austrian internal politics to the point of endangering the stability of Austria-Hungary, the state upon which the Fatherland depended. Although the full contents of the alliance cannot be included here, the Dual Alliance between Austria-Hungary and Germany certainly altered the framework within which some German Austrians perceived their relationship to the Habsburg monarch, fellow Germans in Germany, and the Germans of Austria. Possibly the signing of the treaty calmed sensitive German Austrian nerves, and gently coerced them into resigning to the fact of exclusion. Perhaps the bitter pill of exclusion was mollified by the gratification of performing a sacrificial role for the sake of the German Volk, perhaps not.

The decade of the 1870s was not to close before Emperor Franz Joseph appointed

74. May, The Anschluss Movement, 143.
75. Ibid., 142.
76. Whiteside, 22.
another noteworthy prime minister. Franz Joseph, ever mindful of maintaining equilibrium and stability, turned to a competent boyhood friend to form a new government. He appointed Count Eduard Taaffe as prime minister. Prime Minister Taaffe formed a workable coalition including clerics, Slavs, Poles and Czechs along with German aristocrats. This multi-faceted collection was soon referred to as the “Iron Ring.” This non-German based coalition remained in power until 1893. Two things significant about the Taaffe government need teasing out. Taaffe quickly implemented a policy designed to placate Slavic demands in order to maintain Slavic allegiance. Secondly, during the 1870s, the Czech deputies to the Reichsrat had refused to participate as a means to protest German Austrian domination. However productive that tactic was during the seventies, there was now no reason to absent themselves from their seats under the Taaffe administration. As a result, a new Slavicized dimension reverberated throughout the hall as the Reichsrat conducted business, much to the chagrin of the Germans of Austria.\footnote{May, The Anschluss Movement, 194.} In conclusion, two forces bore down on the German Austrians, the force of the treaty and the force of the Taaffe administration. Such forces accumulating against the objectives of German Austrians had the wherewithal to provoke melancholia heretofore avoidable. The German Austrian position of command, enjoyed for generations, was experiencing serious encroachment. Foremost of note, how were German Austrians to reconcile inner tensions over their now isolated position? Projecting into the future, a temptation hard to forego, engendered several plights including two extremes: total resignation to the likelihood of Slavic rule, or extreme radicalization of German nationalism. Therefore, the cumulative influences forced a continued wrestling over real identity for German Austrians.
German nationalism incorporated nuances as diverse as was the German situation in Central Europe, rendering the adjectives neat and tidy of little use. Words associated with this nationalism and the meaning behind them are very interesting. The very heart and soul of Central European German nationalistic designs were wrapped up in words. One’s leanings in the lengthy and ever fluctuating ordeal for German Austrians could be identified in words such as Österreich, Grossösterreich, Deutschösterreich and Kleindeutschland.

International and national affairs often upset the dynamics of the situation, forcing the relinquishing of one position, with its identifying title, and adhering to another position with its corresponding title. Grossösterreich translated into Great Austria. Those adhering to Grossösterreich promoted an Austro-Hungarian Empire thoroughly controlled by German Austrians, and that from Vienna. Deutschösterreich (German Austria) was the German based land, around which the Anschluss issue revolved; not generally considered capable of sustaining an independent state. The most popular word tossed about was that of kleindeutsch (little German). When in Germany, kleindeutsch made reference to a modern Germany without Austria. While in Austria the term kleindeutsch connoted German Austria being united to Germany under Hohenzollern rule. By 1879, this last term, kleindeutsch nationalism, among some German Austrians began to be the only hope, especially after the Taaffe administration’s policies began to be implemented. Those taking hold of this last notion with particular zeal were the Pan-German nationalists, who, because of their adherence to the Anschluss concept, are due a rehearsal of their late nineteenth century exploits.

Pan-German nationalism had its roots in the teachings of Friedrich Ludwig Jahn. Jahn

78. Whiteside, 13.
had, in the first half of the nineteenth century, advocated German national unity, while adhering to a strong romantic German identity of ritual. However, with the advent of Bismarck’s Realpolitik, the Prussian worship of brute force, and contempt for humanitarian law, Pan-German nationalism was overshadowed. Consequently, Pan-German nationalists, by the mid-1870s, were forced to advocate *kleindeutsch* nationalism. As the years passed, Pan–German nationalism within Austria-Hungary took on more and more radical ideology. The circumstances that developed internationally and nationally pushed Pan-German nationalists of Austria-Hungary to boldly advocate disunion with the Habsburgs and promote political unity with Germany. Identity as a people and hope for security, in other words, lay in *Anschluss*. In addition, and it may seem odd, Pan-Germans nationalists also advocated political democracy as well as social reforms. However, the oddity vanishes with the recognition of the foundation upon which Pan-German nationalism rests, racism. Ethnic prejudice may be a more suitable term for the idea in Austria-Hungary at the time, albeit as the decades pass, racism may be more accurate. Within the Austro-Hungarian Empire a diversity of ethnicity was prevalent, not necessarily a diversity of races. Nonetheless, Pan-German nationalists advocated the extension of or granting of civil rights, freedoms, and powers based solely on blood.79 German blood was the criterion upon which civil rights were to be granted. With the developments happening in Austria-Hungary, that is, with regard to language, nervous excitement could not help but increase within the Pan-German community.80 The pressures on German Austrians, as they watched their status crumble, instigated a spirit desiring to lash out at anything or anyone that might further diminish their

80. Judson, 198.
standing. Slavs, Czechs, Habsburgs, clerics, aristocrats, conservatives, bourgeoisie, Russians, and capitalists were all potential targets. The Pan-German nationalists’ backs were to the wall, as they saw it, and their sensitivity and reactions triggered by such sensitivity did not go unnoticed by fellow German Austrians. As the decades passed, the Pan-German nationalists acted in such a way that forced the German Austrians to reconsider their convictions in regard to Anschluss and their place in Europe.

Frenetically anxious Pan-German nationalists took it upon themselves to actively monitor all legislation proposed by the Taaffe government. The following illustrative activities of the Taaffe administration instigated a ferocity not easily calmed within the Pan-German camp, as well as those more excitable without the camp. First, 1881 ushered in the Stremayr language decrees. By means of the decrees, the Taaffe administration served notice that written and spoken Czech was to be equal to German in certain areas of administration and justice in Bohemia. Secondly, the Bohemian financial voting qualification was lowered to five Gulden, from ten; thus, the franchise was increased among Bohemians. Third, Prague University was divided into a German and now Czech College (1882). In 1886, a fourth language law was passed for the regulation of language in the Bohemian Supreme Court at Prague. As of 1886, the court could hear cases in Czech. The weight and dynamics of all these forces made for a complicated and often shifting political and social landscape upon which German Austrians had to act. These incremental changes seemed to support Pan-German nationalists’ calls for vigilance, which in turn, forced grappling with the paramount issues and fine-tuning of stances.

81. Judson, 198.
82. Whiteside, 31.
Language became the pivotal issue around which the Pan-German nationalists, sometimes supported by liberals, focused. If such emphasis on language seems absurd, the Pan-German nationalists had reason to believe that language was key to their security, concurrently to their demise. Language had the potential to make or break the German Austrians, and their identity along with it. The Pan-German nationalists saw this as their deciding issue. Most Germans in Austria-Hungary were content to speak only German, especially since German was the language of the state. Understandably, many non-Germans were bilingual. At the same time, it was not uncommon for the Austrian government to pride itself on a bureaucracy capable of managing the complicated affairs of a mature empire. Also not uncommon for a mature empire, the bureaucracy was by the 1880s a little top-heavy; good employment for good Germans. Bureaucratic careers had been a gold mine for German Austrians, and while providing financial security, the situation perpetuated the subordination of rival ethnic groups. However, should certain language laws be instituted, it could spell doom for outpopulated German Austrians.\(^83\) Equally important, new language laws could highlight the efficiency of bilingual non-Germans, securing them governmental positions traditionally held by Germans.\(^84\) Consequently, Pan-German nationalists were inordinately agitated by language schemes. It remained to be seen if this agitated excitement was of value to themselves and others, or simply Pan-German attention-drawing rhetoric?

**Austria to Her Knees**

The name most associated with Pan-German nationalism of the late nineteenth century was that of Georg von Schönerer. Schönerer was elected to the *Reichsrat* in 1873. He positioned himself on the left, following a progressive left agenda. His energies and

\(^{83}\) Judson, 197.
\(^{84}\) Whiteside, 33.
leadership transformed the undulating Pan-German nationalism into a revolutionary movement. As the movement gained momentum, Schönerer articulated and added principles to facilitate the needs of Pan-German nationalism in its unique circumstances. Foremost, he reaffirmed adherence to *kleindeutsch* nationalism. His strong nationalism based on racism was bolstered by an anti-capitalist stance. His anti-capitalism stemmed from the *völkisch* belief that industrial capitalism destroyed pure German culture. The *völkisch* movement and Pan-German nationalism were joined by a growing undercurrent among Germans of Germany and Austria-Hungary implicating the Jews with attempting to seize an overly great proportion of the economy through capitalistic measures. Schönerer’s initial election to the *Reichsrat* and the economic crash of 1873 led to an opportunity he did not fail to utilize for his benefit. He was able to feed upon as well as promote simultaneously the popular mindset accusing the Jews of involvement in the demise of thousands of artisan and peasant holdings.85 Historian Peter Pulzer wrote of the political and economic atmosphere that Schönerer made use of. He wrote: “the crash of 1873 seemed, in the popular mind, to prove the Jews’ wickedness; and that the House of Rothschild, which had kept its hands clean during the speculation, emerged unscathed from the chaos proved the Jews’ cunning.”86 Pulzer made sure to caution those interested to be aware of the mitigating affect Liberalism was yet to have on anti-semitic nationalism for the remainder of the decade. However, the point remains that Schönerer’s rhetoric was not falling completely on deaf ears, but a base of like-minded support was being developed.87 For years to come, Schönerer attempted to strengthen Pan-German nationalism by means of implicating Jewish designs to increase

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86. Ibid.
87. Ibid., 139.
control over German economies. Dovetailing together with a German resentment over implied Jewish control and lingering pain suffered by Germans during the aftermath of the 1873 market crash proved the core of Schönerer’s cause and Pan-German nationalism.88

Let it be known that Catholicism, with its rich Austrian history, also was an enemy to Schönerer’s Pan-German nationalism. Seen as cooperating with the Habsburg dynasty, the Roman Catholic Church partnered with the Habsburgs to maintain order.89 This anti-Catholic stance pushed the Pan-German nationalists to favor Protestantism. The Lutheranism of Germany thus made for a neat fit. However neat the fit, real problems presented themselves for Schönerer on this point. This seemingly neat fit became a dead end for two reasons. Catholicism had a firm grip on German Austrians, and this gave pause to Austrians seriously favoring Schönerer’s Pan-Germanism. Secondly, Protestants stressed the Old Testament God of the Jews, and this again created tension between concepts many German Austrians were attempting to unify. It is worth noting that 90 percent of German Austrians claimed Roman Catholicism as their faith in 1914.90 Although very briefly described, the amalgamation of these principles and the charisma of Schönerer increased the potential for exciting affairs in Austria-Hungary, to be unleashed on account of language.

The language bills of the 1880s drew the attention of Schönerer and the Pan-German nationalists. Schönerer made a great deal of political noise in the Reichsrat and in public, yet most seemed to believe his bark was worse than his bite. Schönerer and the Pan-German nationalists, not surprisingly, found themselves operating very close to the fine line distinguishing legal from illegal, treasonous and non-treasonous. Schönerer was arrested in

89. Tange, 1.
90. Orenstein, 2.
1888 on grounds of violence, imprisoned for four months, and denied his seat in the
Reichsrat for five years. Although set back because of his five year ban, he and the Pan-
German nationalists maintained surveillance of political activities in Vienna.

Vienna was to witness soon the disturbance of the century. In 1893, the Taaffe coalition
disintegrated. Emperor Franz Joseph appointed Prince Alfred Windischgrätz to form a new
government. Prince Windischgrätz’s administration found support from the Poles, clerics,
conservatives, and German Liberals. Emperor Franz Joseph prodded his new prime minister
to broaden the franchise, hoping to further satiate non-German demands for political
participation. A series of events mounted pressure on this fragile coalition. Under the
protestations of the Social Democrats, led by Viktor Adler, labor strikes imperiled Vienna. In
addition, the ministry’s authorization to build a Slovene gymnasium in the Styrian city of
Cilli produced a debilitating reaction, so great that the government collapsed. German
liberals refused to cooperate, Windischgrätz retired, and the furious Franz Joseph appointed
Polish Count Casimir Badeni to head a new government. Count Badeni’s cabinet soon
produced a bill to enhance the franchise as the emperor had desired. The Badeni Language
decree, as it was called, was not totally satisfactory to any group, yet each faction found
reason to support it. It was passed in 1896. As a result of the bill, now law, new elections
had to be held according to the new franchise arrangement. The Reichsrat was dissolved,
and elections slated for March 1897. Historian Arthur May succinctly stated, “The Badeni
Languages decrees loosed upon Austria the most fearful national struggle…It affected every
phase of life and for a time even called into question the very continuance of the state.”

91. Orenstien, 2.
93. Ibid., 326.
The Badeni Language decrees can be summed up in two points. As of 1901, civil servants in Bohemia and Moravia, from the highest to lowest, would have to be able to speak and write in Czech as well as German. Secondly, in lawsuits involving two languages, the language of the plaintiff was to be used, at the local level, as well as upper level courts in the case of appeals. These decrees would prove to be a detriment to German civil servants, while being very popular among bilingual Czechs. Without doubt, the ineluctable moment dreaded by zealous German Austrians had come. Schönerer and Pan-German nationalists determinedly planted their flag in opposition, and by doing so exposed the willing and not so willing to grapple with Anschluss reality.

The fluidity of political identity as it developed in Austria make it indispensable that a pause be given to examine party development. Political parties did not develop rapidly until 1867 and after. The franchise in 1867 was rather limited, and the upper class dominated the Reichsrat. However, as the decades passed and voting rules broadened political participation, the value of forming a political party system became more apparent. Groups began to coalesce into functioning parties during the 1880s and early 1890s.

Three party identifications solidified by 1895: Social Democrat, Christian Social, German Nationalist. The Social Democrats found their footing under the leadership of Viktor Adler. In brief, the Social Democrats labored for the development of a more class free society. The party attempted to pursue this creation by means of evolutionary measures, not revolutionary measures. It was through legal decision-making means of the Austrian parliament that the party endeavored to improve the lot of the working class. The party was

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95. Ibid.
predominately German Austrian in its composition, and, very significantly, believed its future was best served by maintaining the empire. The Christian Social Party was led by Karl Lueger. The party promoted the maintenance of conservative Catholic traditions. Christian Socials stood solidly behind Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical of 1891 entitled “Rerum Novarum.” The reforms of the encyclical were designed to oppose economic and social consequences of nineteenth century liberalism. The party found the bulk of its support among Germans in Austria’s alpine provinces. In addition, the party supported the dynasty and the imperial status quo, particularly supporting Archduke Franz Ferdinand.96 The third party, German Nationalist, was not a united party, rather like an association of parties with a weak common link. As was the case with the Christian Socials, the German Nationalists were in opposition to nineteenth century liberal demands for the political emancipation of broad sweeping segments of Austria-Hungary’s population. Liberal, if and when applied to the party, implied liberal measures for Germans only. Once beyond German nationalism, political platforms varied among an array of sub-parties. Nestled under the umbrella of German nationalism, the following collected: German Progressives; German Agrarians; German People’s Party; German Radical Party; and Pan-German Nationalists. Schönerer’s Pan-German nationalists, it can be concluded, represented a narrow constituency, occupying an extreme flank in a loose association.

The Badeni Language decrees sparked a nationalist struggle that lasted for years. As though recognizing that the moment had truly arrived for Pan-German leadership, Georg von Schönerer led his colleagues in the Reichsrat (reelected after five year ban) denouncing the Badeni Language decrees, and demanding their immediate annulment. The newly elected

96. Steininger, 27.
deputies to the *Reichsrat* were equally charged. Schönerer’s leadership rallied the German deputies into a united front. It was determined to utilize the strategy of obstructionism to bring government business of the *Reichsrat* to a halt. This legal tool of filibustering was to be the favored tactic, but that soon degenerated into foul speeches, ridicule, fighting, dueling and hurling through the air anything that was not affixed; bedlam broke out in the *Reichsrat*. The Pan-German nationalists, led on the floor by Karl Wolf, had finally been able to broadcast their concerns in a riveting fashion. 97 Appalled or not by the obstructionism, the implications of the Badeni Language decrees and Pan-German nationalism could not be denied.

Prime Minister Badeni was not about to be proven a man of little fortitude. He sent the deputies home, hoping the energy would subside with reduced contact. German Austrians, however, were in a state of fury, and determined to carry out similar and continued obstruction of government business on the provincial level. Prime Minister Badeni recalled the *Reichsrat* and attempted to placate the angry German Austrians by postponing the application of the language decrees. The obstructionists did not take the bait, and obstruction tactics continued. Count Badeni was finally, but sadly, removed from office.

The situation demanded stalwart action, and Emperor Franz Joseph was not an emperor without equal determination. He appointed Baron Gautsch to establish a government. Prime Minister Gautsch searched for a solution, but, as was the case with Badeni, he failed. The emperor was hopeful in his next appointee, Count Thun. As prime minister, Count Thun’s expertise at manipulation was put to the test. Unfortunately for the count, the stalemate was not broken, and Count Thun was to be replaced as well. No relief

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seemed visible on the horizon, and no business, but one budget proposal, had been passed in the 
Reichsrat since 1897. Emperor Franz Joseph finally suspended the Badeni Language
decrees, and appointed Dr. Ernst von Koerber, who took office in January 1900. It may be
assumed that the combination of a new prime minister and the suspension of the decrees
would help to restore a semblance of order in Vienna, and the Reichsrat. Had this transpired
in any other country, probably order would have been restored; it was, however, happening
in Austria-Hungary.

Austria-Hungary faced unique challenges. When the decrees were suspended, German
was restored to its pre-April 5, 1897 status. The key word in this latest development was,
suspended. Suspended did not mean cancelled or annulled. Given time, as hoped by the
emperor, the Pan-German nationalist-led obstructionism would die out, and the decrees
would be reinstated. This scheme was problematic, for Czechs considered their political
gains in jeopardy. Aware of the emperor’s designs, the Czechs in the Reichsrat were not
about to relinquish to the trash heaps of Vienna the very decrees that would enable them—
and possibly others—to advance in an empire that for centuries had squelched their political
and economical ambitions. The suspension of the decrees encouraged the Czechs to adapt
Pan-German obstructionist tactics for their own purposes. Only to add further pressures,
according to the Ausgleich of 1867, Austria and Hungary were to conduct economic
negotiations every decade in order to regulate inner imperial trade, imports, exports, and the
necessary affairs of state. The 1897 expected conference had been put on hold, due to the
obstruction crisis, and, consequently, the economic goals of the empire were in jeopardy.
Most significantly, the emperor dared not alienate the non-Germans because he desperately

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98. Whiteside, 204.
needed the Czechs’ support to facilitate the passage of the agreements anticipated in the negotiations; that was, if the conference could be conducted.99

The unique character of the empire was equally matched by the uniqueness of the participants in this debacle. Hoping to restore order under the new Prime Minister Dr. Koerber, the decrees and their suspension were not made mention of in the Reichsrat. Under these circumstances, although carefully scrutinized, some basic legislation was passed during the summer of 1900. Stubbornly not willing to admit defeat, Prime Minister Dr. Koerber then attempted to slip language legislation through. The inferno thought to have been extinguished returned in full force. The Reichsrat was again dissolved, and elections were called for in early 1901.100

This election cycle was a boon for the Pan-German nationalists. The number of Pan-German deputies elected rose to 21, and now Schönerer was in command of a revolutionary movement. The obstructionism that had started in 1897 was given renewed life by the election. The situation remained in a state of deadlock until 1907. The emperor and Reichsrat were unable to enact a complete budget from 1897 to 1907.101 Little legislation was passed during the period because polarized forces refused to budge. The emperor finally chose to resort to absolutism with the hopes of restoring order, managing the affairs of the state, and preserving the dynasty.

Only an understanding of the situation in Vienna during this tumultuous episode and what the era did for Schönerer and Pan-German nationalism allows one to realize the impact it was having on the convictions and emotions of the German Austrians. The duration of the

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100. Ibid., 326
101. Ibid.
obstructionism (1897-1907) and the sustaining of the Pan-German alertness allowed for two developments. The Pan-German nationalists were able to more fully develop and articulate their positions, and, secondly, time was granted for their message to penetrate deep into the German Austrian ethos.

“The crisis,” according to historian Andrew Whiteside, “transformed Schönerer…into the leader of a large fanatical party committed to establishing a German master race in central Europe.” In addition to kleindeutsch nationalism, by 1901 the Pan-German nationalists under Schönerer were able to broadcast a basic statement referred to as the “Basic Program of 1901.” It advocated three principles: Destruction of the house of Habsburg; Destruction of Catholicism; and Destruction of international Jewry. Yet, Pan-German nationalism meant more than kleindeutsch nationalism and the Basic Program of 1901; it propagated making peasants and working class laborers full members of a new society. The realization of the German potential could only be achieved by eliminating political limitations based on class and other distinctions between German citizens, as well as ending economic and political powers nestled in the hands of Slavs, priests, nobles, and capitalist Jews. In reality, enemies of German nationalism were found in every segment of society; however, developing a platform all nationalists could agree on was very, very difficult. Nonetheless, radicals and university students clamored to be part of the movement. Workers were inspired by bold speeches of Schönerer and the equally vocal Viktor Adler. Peasants, too, were enamored by his deepest interest in their most “uncorrupted” blood. Schönerer asserted that it was the German peasantry that had maintained the purest of German blood and culture through the generations, on the grounds that it had the least

102. Whiteside, 221.
103. May, 214.
contact with modern industrialism and philosophies.\textsuperscript{104} Peasants, as noted, harbored the truest \textit{völkisch} culture, and his task was to forge around them the tenets listed above into a workable scheme suitable to all.

To what degree did German Austrians give credence to Pan-German nationalism and Schönerer is an stimulating consideration. During the decade of political hysteria, it might be difficult to determine real and nominal support for the movement. However, research utilized by Whiteside suggests that in Sudetenland, Graz, Vienna, and Prague 50 percent of the population was actively involved. Tyrol on the other hand, was little affected. Estimates purport that at least 30 percent of the German Austrian population was affected by the Pan-German nationalist movement.\textsuperscript{105} While not offering specific percentages, Sked’s identification of Schönerer’s supporters is helpful. He states that, “…his supporters apart from nationalist students and extreme anti-semites, were mainly Germans who lived along the fault lines between ethnic groups.”\textsuperscript{106} Therefore among certain people in particular locations, Schönerer and his message were acutely popular.\textsuperscript{107} In summary, the Pan-German nationalists advocated the union of German Austria with Germany, recognition of German blood as the criterion for civil liberties, and the purification of German culture, all for the purpose of Germans securing the greatest of German potential. The stalemate in the Reichsrat lasted for ten long years, resulting in a substantial awareness of the issues, manipulations, and possibilities. What was the German Austrian to think? Anschluss had been essentially dead back in the sixties and seventies, had it not? This era, brought on by

\textsuperscript{104} Whiteside, 220.  
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., 223.  
\textsuperscript{106} Sked, 226.  
\textsuperscript{107} Judson, 227.
the Badeni Language decrees, muddied the waters of Anschluss all over again and added new inexorable dynamics.

The situation had set front-and-center the long crisis of the German Austrian position in a German fatherland. Questions of conscience, conviction, and rationale surfaced as they had in the past. What course of action, for instance, was a Catholic Austrian to take? The Pan-German nationalists promoted no class distinction and full civil liberties, but at the same time promoted Protestantism. Aching for an answer, how was it possible to force Germany to accept Anschluss? The resilient patriotism to the Habsburg dynasty threatened adherence to Pan-German revolutionary harangue. By 1897 Bismarck’s heavy hand had been withdrawn, possibly mitigating the former chilly response to German Austrian calls for Anschluss. Even if true, how could an aristocratic Austrian deny his heritage, class, fellow aristocrats, the church, and the dynasty, to support Pan-German nationalism? On the other hand, German culture and nationalism must account for something. Should another dramatic political shift occur, such as that of 1867, how faithful to their class would non-German aristocrats remain? These questions and many more created an endless introspective circle. Round and around the questions went, one generation after another.

By 1907, Schönerer and the Pan-Germans were experiencing tribulations fomented by internal and external pressures. Schönerer’s Pan-Germans took it upon themselves to be vigilant guardians of legislation proposing to diminish in any way German Austrian supremacy. Minute details of legislation were analyzed in order to prevent the passage of laws that might appear innocuous, but, in reality, offered incremental steps toward increased racial/ethnic equality; as was the case in June 1901, when Premier Koerber introduced soldier draft legislation, canal building legislation, an economic development bill, and a
budget bill. These were not troublesome, but they served to divert attention while a language bill was submitted for approval. This bill did not slip past the keen Pan-German eyes as hoped; obstruction tactics began promptly. Sustaining the vigil against just as eager Czechs, Poles, Slovenes, the emperor, administration, and less stubborn Germans was consuming. This exacting strain aggravated fissures within the Pan-German community. Two developing fissures had a devastating impact on the Pan-Germans. Schönerer demanded that his personal stance and dictates be followed without reservation. His dictatorial demands were at times offensive to otherwise willing and loyal party members. Secondly, the inclusion of the anti-Catholic program—Los von Rom—was an incongruous plank in their overall program to gain support. The pressures were too great, and the unified front collapsed. The 1907 election bore witness to this; Schönerer received 909 votes, only a fifth of the votes his victorious socialist opponent received. Those in Schönerer’s camp did not secure even one half of one percent of the votes cast. Historian F.L. Carsten offers the following figures to illustrate Schönerer’s poor election performance: Schönerer, 909 votes; Social Democrat, 4830 votes; Christian Social, 1042 votes. Evidently, the clarion call of Pan-German nationalism could not overcome the din of religion, labor, and ethnic zeal.

While Schönerer’s obstructionism had come to an end and Pan-Germanism abated, the empire remained intact, Franz Joseph survived, and political parties reorganized. Schönerer’s Pan-Germanism was an extremist fling whose popular support was unsustainable; under altered circumstances this fling might have materialized into sweeping change. The obstructionism that handicapped Austrian government forced German Austrians

108. Whiteside, 195.
to consider the trends visibly working against them. Obstructionism, while perturbing many, worked to alert German Austrians of their lethargy. So too, the plethora of factors and influences the reader has been subject to thus far serves as means to make one aware of the web-like connections each facet had with others and the trails and ramifications each harbored. Nonetheless, the last tremors of Pan-Germanism quietly gave way to what would become pre-war international tremors stemming from an epicenter deep in the Balkans.
Chapter Three
Unsavory War and Antagonistic Peace

Good Spin on a Cruel War

Emperor Franz Joseph, during the summer of 1914, found himself confronted with yet another crisis. The heir to the Austrian throne, Franz Ferdinand, and his wife, Sophie, had been assassinated in Sarajevo, Bosnia, on June 28. The shooting death of the archduke and his wife placed the emperor and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the middle of a smoldering Europe, ripe for confrontation. War was declared by leaders of Austria-Hungary on Serbia on July 28, and, by means of alliances, many of the powers of Europe were enveloped in war. Austria-Hungary, in league with Germany as well as the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria, fought a vicious war from 1914 until November 1918. The length and brutality of the First World War had devastating effects on all of the belligerent nations, Germany and Austria suffering in ways others did not. By war’s end, both Germany and Austria-Hungary suffered revolution, military defeat, and territorial loss.

The circumstances of revolution and military defeat in the fall of 1918 were instrumental in reshuffling the components of internal Austrian society. War and revolution served to dislodge former loyalties, such as patriotism to a dynasty and empire, while simultaneously fostering other initiatives. Unearthed by the war and revolutions were the latent forces of German Austria union (Anschluss) with Germany, in other words, the war inadvertently gave voice to Anschluss once again.

October 1918 was a month in which Austrian officials were never sure just what would transpire. Emperor Charles (successor to Franz Joseph who died in 1916) realized the end of
the war was imminent. Hoping to resurrect something from the dissolving Austro-Hungarian Empire, he issued a manifesto on October 16 attempting to form a federation of the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy.\textsuperscript{111} This pitiful effort of his proved fruitless against the forces of self-determination rampant throughout the empire. Giving credence to his fears, on the same day, Hungarian officials annulled the \textit{Ausgleich} (Compromise of 1867). The impending doom felt in Vienna is discernible in the words of Count von Wedel—German ambassador. He wrote, “the most responsible men [German Austrians] say today quite openly: ‘Germany must intervene, otherwise Austria will go berserk’ and warn us [Germany] not to hesitate too long.”\textsuperscript{112}

The collapsing war effort, along with the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, produced serious reanalysis of the German Austrian position. To those addressing the future at this decisive moment, three plausible options materialized. Establishment of a confederation comprised of former states of the empire was one option. States in close proximity to the Danube River seemed most likely for such an entity; therefore, for reference purposes, it was dubbed the Danubian Confederation. Such a confederation would necessitate an Austrian humiliation due to the likelihood of Austria being relegated to an acutely diminished role, and subservient to the wishes of former subject peoples. A second option was an independent Austria. The lands of Austria, however, were lacking in basic essentials; i.e., coal reserves, arable farmland, manufacturing, and security. Option three was union with Germany. This third option gained a great deal of momentum throughout October


and November 1918. To many it appeared that this third option was the most viable and with the greatest potential. As the war drew to a conclusion and the Austro-Hungarian Empire disintegrated, the three major political parties—Social Democrat, Christian Social, German Nationalist—one by one jumped on board for Anschluss. Of course, the gravitation toward this option compelled German Austrians to revisit the already sensitive notion of Anschluss.113

Change was definitely in the air, and concern over the unknown fueled anxiety. Anxiety was relieved to some degree on October 18 by Germany’s ambassador in Vienna, for Ambassador Prince Botho von Wedel spoke freely and comfortingly when he declared that “Germany would not leave Austrian brethren in the lurch.”114 Austrians believed they could count on German aid, and they wasted no time in fashioning the means to facilitate union with Germany. On October 21, the German Austrian deputies of the Reichsrat voted the constituting of their body into the Provisional National Assembly of German Representatives. The volatile atmosphere on October 21 notwithstanding, the Provisional National Assembly attempted to pass an Anschluss resolution.115 Failure of the resolution vote reflected resolute loyalty by some for the Habsburg dynasty, and an uneasy heady spirit. However, events were moving fast, history was being made, and leaders were both giving and accepting counsel. Anschluss was serious business, and although gravity seemed to pull both Germans and Austrians in that direction, it had to be accomplished properly. For instance, in deference to Emperor Charles, immediate Anschluss would be a dishonorable denunciation of the Habsburgs as a distinguished dynastic family. So too, signals from

114. Ibid, 87.
Berlin suggested maintaining a duty to an ally—the Habsburg dynasty—while the war continued. Although leadership in both Germany and Austria approved of an anticipated Anschluss, it was determined that emotions had to be curtailed and rhetoric of Anschluss toned down. Austrian excitement for Anschluss prompted Ambassador Wedel to urge that Anschluss be left to simmer until the war was brought to a close. Wisdom dictated tending to other pertinent matters; i.e., revolution, war, armistice, before Anschluss.

Meanwhile, Austria, the cornerstone of Europe for centuries, now consisting of Upper and Lower Austria, Salzburg, Tyrol, Vorarlberg, Styria, and Carinthia, had to get its house in order. The Austrians determined that the Provisional National Assembly, consisting of a diversity of political perspectives—Christian Social, Social Democrat, Catholic People’s Party, German Leftist—be equipped with a presidium representative of the deputies. The assembly elected Dr. Franz Ringhofer (German Nationalist), Dr. Karl Seitz (Social Democrat), and Jodak Frank (Christian Social) as members of the Presidium. The Social Democrats, representing 40 percent of the assembly, provided the chancellor and foreign minister, Karl Renner and Victor Adler respectively.

Feelings of helplessness may have encroached upon these leaders as they addressed pertinent matters seemingly beyond their control. Imperial Habsburg officials signed an armistice with the Allied powers on November 3. In Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated on November 9. The armistice negotiated between French Marshal Ferdinand Foch and German representative Matthias Erzberger was signed on November 11. On the very same day in Austria, Emperor Charles formally stepped aside from involvement in Austrian

117. Gould, 224.
governmental affairs. Perhaps in comparison, the crowning event during these days of activity was yet to follow on November 12; on this day, the Provisional National Assembly declared Austria a republic.¹¹⁸

These events in Germany and Austria were not happening in a vacuum. The failure of the October 21 Anschluss resolution had been a mild setback; however, a new broad-based surge for Anschluss was building in both Germany and Austria. The Presidium had espoused on October 24 a united confirmation of the body’s desire for Anschluss. When news of the creation of the Provisional National Assembly reached Germany, an apparent increase in Anschluss possibility began to be vocalized. Gustav Stresemann, industrialist and liberal politician, spoke before the German Reichstag expressing anticipation of Anschluss. Chancellor Prince Max of Baden suggested on November 9 that, “a constitutional national assembly be elected for the purpose of deciding the future form of government for the German nation “including those parts of the race which might desire inclusion within the boundaries of the Reich.’ ”¹¹⁹

Socialists in Austria voiced their Anschluss approval via the Arbeiter Zeitung. In one article entitled “Die Deutsche Revolution” the author wrote, “Only in union can the republic find protection against the overbearing imperialism of the Entente. And only in the republic can the German Proletariat find all conditions for the liberation realized.”¹²⁰ The following day another author, thought to be Friedrich Adler because he used only his initials, wrote in the Arbeiter Zeitung, “Can we continue in our loneliness and forsakenness, squeezed in by Slavic national states, and carry out the Sisyphus task of constructing an impossible

¹¹⁹. Ibid, 223.
state?…No, action is imperative and should be taken without delay…Austria on her own, unable to produce enough food for herself, would be condemned to economic withering away.”¹²¹

Those unnerving times demanded action, and the course of action appeared ever so clear, *Anschluss*. Action was taken; the socialist leadership along with the support of others steered the assembly to another monumental vote. On November 12, epic history was made; the assembly, said to be representing the spirit of the Austrian people, voted on and passed the *Anschluss* Resolution. The day after, the *Wiener Zeitung* reported that Chancellor Renner commended the Provisional National Assembly for revisiting the *Anschluss* question that had failed on October 21. The Austrian Republic, the article continued, has a responsibility to all of the Germans of Europe.¹²² *Grossdeutschland* had finally been created, Austrian officials declared Austria is a “constituent part of the German Republic.”¹²³

Those days of mixed excitement and hope suggested a degree of unity among the Austrians. Events suggested *Anschluss* was the accepted course of action by the delegates of the Provisional National Assembly. Once this determination was made Austrian officials stepped up their vocal enthusiasm for *Anschluss*. Warm overtures continued to be signaled to Berlin, yet, at times, less than excited warm responses were reciprocated; mixed messages were being received by the Austrians.¹²⁴ As noted, *Anschluss* was welcomed among Germany’s officials, but reflection and the events in Germany caused some German officials to diminish outward excitement for *Anschluss* while attempting to ascertain the most

¹²³ Gould, 225.
feasible moment to pursue it, waiting, at least, until after the anticipated peace negotiations were concluded by a particularly embittered foe. For although Austrian officials made Austria’s position clear via the *Anschluss* Resolution. Berlin officials, while sanctioning *Anschluss*, deemed it necessary, in light of the anticipated Paris Peace Conference, to avoid talk of *Anschluss*. For logistical reasons—reparations, loss of territory, French fears—consideration of immediate *Anschluss* might be detrimental to both Germany and Austria. Concurrently, another substantial force was at work, fear of the unknown. The unknowable terms to be generated by the Paris Peace Conference prompted Germans of Germany and Austria to recognize afresh a nationalistic bond. As the fear of a diminished Germany struck Germans, the sincere hope for some sort of entity—*Grossdeutschland*—took serious root. The *Anschluss* hope initiated by left wing socialist leadership in Austria was being transformed into a nationalism for Germans of both Germany’s new socialist republic and Austria. Under these unique and dire circumstances nationalism found an ally in socialism, and the energies of these two currents made prognostication difficult.

As it stood, 1919 could not help but be a year of intense labor accompanied by emotional peaks and valleys. Elections in Austria and Germany were to be held. The election held in Germany on January 19 is of particular interest. The election was for the selecting of delegates to a constituent assembly designed to draft a constitution. Austrian officials, preparing to participate in the election process as a state in Germany, were disappointed when Berlin directives excluded Austria.125 Meanwhile, an Austrian election was targeted for February, whereby delegates were to be chosen to fill seats in a national assembly designated to frame a constitution for the republic. Interestingly, some questioned

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the necessity of a constitution if Austria was to be incorporated into Germany. Nonetheless, hope and skepticism for union with Germany co-mingled throughout the spring and summer of 1919. The most exuberant Austrians could not help but believe the time had finally arrived for complete Anschluss. Congenial circumstance enabled the labor for union to finally bear its fruit. Austria had declared and voted for the Anschluss Resolution, Berlin officials were supportive, Habsburg patriotism irrelevant, but for a few more months to conclude the peace negotiations, and Anschluss would indeed be fact. One redeeming feature of the war, it could be claimed, was the circumstances leading to Anschluss. Former convictions and rationale adhered to by reluctant Austrians were no longer tenable, or at least less tenable. Germans could, as Pan-Germanism purported, press forward to attain their potential. Grossdeutschland as German Austrians had espoused for decades, was to be a reality.

That a dark gloomy anti-German cloud hung over the Paris Peace Conference became more and more undeniable as the months of 1919 passed. The leading negotiators conducting peace talks had mixed emotions and hopes concerning the philosophies of the conference. Regardless of the individual aspirations of David Lloyd George, Vittorio Orlando, Woodrow Wilson and Georges Clemenceau, the collective atmosphere that developed was one of doom for Germans. Anything minutely positive for Germans had to be rooted out.126 Such an atmosphere was not conducive to Anschluss, and thus 1919 was to become analogous to 1849. Grossdeutschland, sanctioned by the German National Assembly in 1848/49, was thwarted by the pressures of the Habsburg-Hohenzollern tensions. Likewise, Anschluss in 1918/19 was to be forestalled by the pressures of Western

European powers conniving for various reasons and goals against the defeated powers. European powers eventually produced treaties hoping to bring closure to World War I. The Treaty of Versailles signed by the Allied Powers and Germany on June 28, 1919 was designed to be stern, and was unequivocally anti-\textit{Anschluss}. The German delegation at Versailles, along with waiting government officials, were offered little recourse but to express objections and sign. Article 80 of the Treaty of Versailles read, “Germany acknowledges and will strictly respect the independence of Austria within the frontiers to be fixed in a treaty between that state and the principal Allied and associated powers; she agrees that the independence shall be inalienable except with the consent of the council of the League of Nations.”\footnote{127 “Treaty of Versailles” http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/partiii.asp (accessed October 15, 2011).} To reinforce the status between Germany and Austria, Article 434 stated, “Germany will acknowledge and uphold the Treaty of St. Germain.”\footnote{128 Ibid.} Articles such as these left little question as to the stance of Allied representatives concerning \textit{Anschluss}.

The Treaty of St. Germain fashioned for Austria was equally as brutal. The final draft was submitted to the Austrian delegation on September 2. The Austrian parliament ratified the treaty by vote of 97 to 23 on September 6.\footnote{129 Glen Sharfman, “Grossdeutschland,” www.ohio.edu/chastain/dhgross.htm (accessed September, 9, 2011), 84.} The treaty was painful for the Republic of Austria to honor, and several tenets of the treaty exemplify harsh realities. Austria alone had to accept responsibility for the Habsburg share of war guilt, and, although drastically reduced in size and resources, was made responsible for the paying of reparations charged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Austria was treated as an enemy state. National self-determination—a key principle of President Wilson—was denied to German Austrians, by the fact
that the border with Germany was to be that of August 3, 1914. In conclusion, these two treaties effectively destroyed the hopes of those in Germany and Austria desiring Anschluss. As in 1848, 1866, 1870, and now in 1919, circumstances vetoed German Austrian designs for the unity of the two German populations. One more generation of German Austrians was thrown against the unyielding anvil of German nationalism, suffering disappointment when seemingly so close to achieving the grand goal.

The signing of the two treaties sealed the fate of German Austrians, apparently. However, a glimmer of Pan-German hope remained hidden, and that, intentionally. The devastation and revolutions necessitated the writing of constitutions, and writing the constitutions in the post-war chaos took time. As time passed, enthusiasm for Anschluss in Germany was waxing--ironically roles were reversing from those exhibited in November 1918, and German officials sought a loophole in the new constitution by which to augment Anschluss. It was determined that once the Treaty of Versailles was signed, the damage was

done, and Germany’s people knew where they stood. Consequently, after the signing of the Versailles Treaty, the Weimar Constitution went before the Allied officials for approval. The last glimmer of Anschluss hope was nestled in the Weimar Constitution. Article 61 of the constitution read, “Every state has minimum one vote in the Reichstag…Deutschösterreich [Austria] is entitled, after its integration into the German Reich, to send the numbers of delegates to the Reichstag which correspond to its population…”\textsuperscript{132} If overlooked by the Allied delegation inspecting the Weimar Constitution, the article in conjunction with healing time represented a faint possibility. Article 61 of the Weimar Constitution was identified, however, and subsequently removed.\textsuperscript{133} The fate of Anschluss was sealed!

The fate of Anschluss was sealed, or perhaps not, but, more importantly, the lives of millions of people were in a state of bewilderment as to their fate. Bewilderment or not, time waits for no man, and time did not stand still for the German Austrians. The war and revolution inadvertently created two types of outlooks among the people of Austria: those whose life and identity were in the past, and the other being those whose life and identity were in the future. Anschluss meant different things to each of the types. The group whose life and identity remained in the past was comprised more of older members of the German Austrian population. This group was composed of those who were of the nobility, military command, clergy, and bureaucracy. These people had served the Habsburg dynasty, and more closely than others, staked their existence and fate on the dynasty.\textsuperscript{134} Men such as Baron Arthur von Straussenberg, Count Leopold von Berchtold, and Field Marshal Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf serve as examples. These men had served the empire in an array of

\textsuperscript{133} Low, \textit{The Anschluss Movement 1918-1919 and the Paris Peace Conference}, 447.
responsibilities; however, they lost their bearing with the demise of the dynasty and empire. Josef Redlich describes reactions and his feelings when Emperor Charles abdicated in November of 1918. He writes, “We all had tears in our eyes…Now the old Austrian black and gold [Habsburg colors] are forever dead.” To this group, generally speaking, Anschluss had been a concept they wrestled with, but had done so always in the context of the Habsburg dynasty. Anschluss had become a moot point, understandably their world had ceased to exist, and adapting to the new Austria was beyond the ability and energy of most.\textsuperscript{135} The second type, in comparison, was willing to address Anschluss with more energy. Men like Otto Bauer, Karl Renner, Friedrich Adler, and Anto Rintelen represented new Austrian leadership, leadership attempting to adapt to the new circumstances in which German Austrians found themselves. Their fate was not tied to the House of Habsburg; they represented the younger generation and the generations to follow, whose fate might possibly be anchored in Germany. As in earlier years, tension was discernible when analyzing the rationale and convictions these German Austrians wrestled with. There were numerous features to take into consideration. Weighing heavily in favor of Anschluss besides culture, language, and proximity, was economic reality. The new Austrian Republic was agriculturally poor, industry deprived, and commercially lonely. This group was not afraid to expend energy for the sake of Anschluss, if favorable circumstances presented themselves. This being the case, here another generation of German Austrians would meet face to face the seemingly inconcludable conundrum of Austrian identity.

Every population of a particular distinction will contain people of differing notions and convictions. Some Austrians were relieved that Anschluss was denied via the treaties, while

others would deem the treaties as destroying all hope. In either case, who they were, what they were, what they called home, and how they viewed their neighbor was accompanied by tension. German Austrians’ identity as German, Austrian, both, neither, remained troubling.¹³⁶

¹³⁵. Romsics, 27.
Chapter Four
The Republic of Austria

Survival

The First World War was extremely disruptive, and because it altered Europe so drastically the war serves as a pivotal juncture. Pre-war versus post-war features have been and continue to be written about by authors of remarkable talent. Industry before the war has been compared to industry after. Weapons and tactics of war have been discussed on a pre-war and post-war basis. So, too, were cultural and social developments analyzed, such as women’s roles before and after the war; unavoidable is the acknowledgement that Austria after the war was not the Austria before the war. In its post World War I state, Austria achieved Anschluss, i.e., union with Germany, for Austria eventually was united with Germany in mid March 1938.

Exasperating and unstable as the immediate post-war year or two were, life went on for Europeans and Austrians. It certainly can be noted that no nation or party had all of their hopes and aspirations completely satisfied by the events and documents proceeding from the Paris negotiations. Although the individual victors and their respective nations gloried in expectations, perceptible clouds of disappointment were too soon hovering over officials as reality dictated the improbability of demands being completely met. The vanquished had all the more reason to be less than optimistic about the future. Some of the terms in the Treaty of Versailles signed with Germany include: the surrender of all German colonies to the League of Nations as mandates; the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France; demilitarization and occupation of the Rhineland for fifteen years; German reparations amounting to £6,600
According to the Treaty of St. Germain, Austria was responsible to pay reparations to be determined by the Reparation Commission, and Austria was held responsible for the Austro-Hungarian pursuit of war and resultant damages. These were followed up with the acknowledged dismantling of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The initial shock of demands and reparations generated at and attitudes expressed in the Paris negotiations took time to wear off. Of course, the diminishing of shock did not in any way lessen the limitations and demands set upon those deemed losers of the war. However, once the emotional hysteria was brought into submission of the intellect, an analysis of the situation and a course of action of greater suitability were undertaken by Germans of both the Weimar Republic and the Republic of Austria. Analysis by Austrians, as painful as it may have been, enabled all the willing to recognize the limitations of their situation and how to proceed in order to fashion together the best existence possible. That being said, the task ahead is to examine Austria in its post-World War I state unwittingly moving toward Anschluss, and all the while maintaining a keen fix on Austrian rationale and identity. And since Adolf Hitler was a key factor in Anschluss reality, one of his celebrated military techniques will be applied as a tool of instruction. Hitler promoted the utilization of pincer attacks to achieve his ends. So, too, approaching Austria’s post-war developments via a political advance and an economic advance, as pincers, to arrive at 1938 has merit. With the political and economic foundation in place, the trail then unites into a crescendo-like advance to Anschluss, then on to the Second World War, and finally Austria’s rebirth into the Second Austrian Republic.

Political Development

The post-war Austrian political structure and political atmosphere were ripe with potential, but its republican nature was new to the Austrian citizen. While Americans and Frenchmen may have experienced thrilling sensations at the birth of the new Austrian republic, republicanism was like maneuvering into uncharted waters for Austrians. Not to suggest that such a form and means of rule were beyond the capabilities of the Austrians of the third decade of the twentieth century, but the means of governing were not what they were accustomed to. Interestingly, Germans of Germany were experiencing the same difficulties of attempting to familiarizing themselves with a non-imperial government as the Weimar Republic was being established (1919).

The Austrian situation was not totally without positive features, when considering the formation and functioning of the new republic. Territorially, Austria had been greatly diminished as a result of the war. Austria as a modern republic had only the German territory of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to contend with. An Austria of this size would not have the territorial complexities of the former empire. Coinciding with the limited size (32,000 square miles) was the limited population, and that of a more or less uniform composition. Austria, the republic, was to govern approximately six and half million citizens, as compared to 50 million in the old empire. The republic consisted of seven states (Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Tyrol, Salzburg, Carinthia, Styria, Vorarlberg) plus Vienna of a generally homogeneous makeup. To the Austrian advantage, their new post-war situation alleviated insuperable tensions caused by multi-ethnic populations housed in one political unit, as was witnessed under Emperor Franz Joseph in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.
Austria had been refashioned into a republic that had to govern itself via a political party system, a system that had to meet the needs of a population in dire straits and not totally experienced in the act of governing by democratic means. Normal pressures and stresses of governing are daunting in themselves, however, combined with post-World War I circumstances, extremely arduous. Nonetheless, Austrian leadership put one foot in front of the other throughout the 1920s, endeavoring to steer its new creation into something other than destruction. In the face of these implacable difficulties, their efforts were laudable.

Austria’s political landscape was dominated by three political parties. These political parties (Social Democratic, Christian Social, German Nationalist) and their leadership realized the absolute necessity of laboring together and presenting a spirit of unity as the Habsburg dynasty came to an end and the Versailles negotiations concluded. Because many questioned Austria’s viability, as it was truncated with little hope of trade due to protectionist policies by neighboring states, political parties assumed union with Germany inevitable. Therefore, maintaining a united front seemed plausible, or, better yet, absolutely necessary. Social Democratic emphasis on union with a like-minded Weimar Republic in Germany rendered credence to Social Democratic leadership. As the trend toward believing in Anschluss was accepted, voters favored the Social Democratic Party’s plans for meeting daily necessities as well. As the first election for Austrian National Assembly representatives was held in February 1919, the voters selected 69 Social Democrats, 63 Christian Socials, 18 German Nationalists, and a smattering of independent representatives. Karl Renner was selected to be chancellor and became leader of a cabinet comprised of six Social Democrats, five Christian Socials and four of lesser parties.139 As noted above, the mood exhibited by

139. Redlich., 318.
officials working out the terms of peace was not supportive of \textit{Anschluss}. Therefore, as the anticipation of \textit{Anschluss} faded with the limiting features of the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain, the necessity of writing an Austrian constitution increased. Furthermore, the need for a constitution presumed the permanency of the state. While acceptance of Austrian independence inched along, leadership was hammering out a constitution. The resultant constitution, finished and adopted in 1920, was referred to as the Kelsen Constitution, due to the labor and principles imbibed in it from the revered constitutional theorist and professor Hans Kelsen. While attempting to meet the needs the nation, the constitution contained features wrangled over by the political factions.\footnote{140. Walter Greinert, ed. \textit{Austria Between the Wars} (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1987), 7.} Be that as it may, the spirit of compromise was maintained in carefully crafted components of the constitution.

Compromises and a spirit of unity produced certain features within the Kelsen Constitution worth noting. Striking is the necessity Austrians placed on a strong federal construction for their state. Approximately 6,500,000 people lived in a relatively small nation—similar in size to the state of Maine—comprised of seven provinces. Each of the provinces—\textit{Länder} (Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Tyrol, Salzburg, Carinthia, Styria, Vorarlberg)—was to have a great deal of autonomy by means of a separate legislature and real latitude for local government.\footnote{141. Ibid., 8.} The impetus for this feature and probably the underlying cause for others was the reactionary mentality prevalent at the time relative to Vienna. It goes without saying that the city of Vienna was remarkable. It was the cosmopolitan center of the old Habsburg Empire, and it was the hub of an empire consisting of 55 million; certainly Vienna had no rivals in a dwarfed republic of one tenth the size. Vienna’s population of 1,800,000 represented a rather out of balance percentage of Austria’s
population. Consequently, fears existed within the separate Ländere that unless strong local
governments were constitutionally mandated, Viennese domination seemed to many an
ineluctable reality. Strong federalism was also deemed necessary as a counter against
Vienna on the grounds that it was the hub of the Social Democratic Party and its political
machinery. Consequently, the federal feature was utilized, and its features served to appease
the Christian Social fears.¹⁴²

Tensions demanding compromises were to surface in the legislative and executive
construct of the republic as well. Social Democrats were not satisfied with the notion of an
unicameral legislature, as was first suggested. An unicameral or bicameral legislature was
suitable, if, by means of the legislature, the strength of federalism was mitigated. The Kelsen
Constitution appeased Social Democrats’ demands by establishing a lower house
(Nationalrat: National Council) elected by direct universal adult suffrage, and a
complementary upper house known as the Bundesrat (Federal Council); its members were
elected indirectly via the provincial assemblies. Following the British lead, real power was
vested in the Nationalrat, and in this body representatives were responsible to an universal
electorate.¹⁴³ Compromise pushed aside the Christian Socials’ preference of the president
being elected directly by the populace. Intense fears of an autocratic element nestled in the
hearts of Social Democrats prompted demands that the election of the president be taken out
of the hands of the general population. Sufficient to allay these fears, article 38 of the Kelsen
Assembly in joint public sitting…for the election of the President…”¹⁴⁴ Thus a president

¹⁴². Macdonald, 16.
¹⁴³. Ibid., 20.
¹⁴⁴. Ibid., 128.
would secure his position indirectly via the channel of the legislature. Suitable as the constitution was and as workable as any under the difficult circumstances of the post war years, it now had to be put to use.

Austrians were in fact slowly coming to grips with the underlying issue of their identity. By adopting the constitution, what heretofore seemed an impossibility—a viable independent Austria—was being given a second chance, or a second evaluation. Circumstances fostered an ever-increasing acknowledgement, among some Austrians, of the possibility of Austria constituting a recognizable state. Further supporting this mindset was the acceptance of Austria as a member of the League of Nations on December 15, 1920. Ulterior motives aside, membership in the League suggests increasingly many Austrians were attempting to move along on the necessary affairs of state.

Harsh times have the tendency to engender a spirit of cooperation, particularly if survival is in question. The cooperation exhibited by the political leadership and their respective supporters produced the Austrian Constitution of 1920, but soon thereafter Austrian politics entered a new era. For better or for worse, utilization of the Kelsen Constitution began simultaneous with a political shift that was coursing across Germany and affecting Austria. Influences due to this political shift in Austria were manifest by the voters ousting the Renner Government and placing their confidence in a Christian Social government. On November 10, 1920, Chancellor Michael Mayr took office with his Christian Social cabinet. This political shift altered Austrian development and consequently the history that one looks back upon. Two reasons stand out as the catalyst for such a shift. Governing leadership in the Weimar government by 1920 deemed it expedient

145. MacDonald, 4.
146. Ibid.
to tone down rhetoric for *Anschluss*. This naturally had a backlash effect in Austrian hopes within political parties. The Social Democrats, with their strong *Anschluss* commitment, were left struggling to maintain their effective influence on Austrian perceptions. Equally significant in augmenting the political shift was an increasing awareness of the negative features and threats of Bolshevism. News of Lenin’s dictatorship and the Russian Civil War coupled with the threat of Bolshevism in Hungary helped to stimulate a reactionary drift away from the Social Democratic position. Therefore, for these two reasons Austrian Social Democrats witnessed an erosion of their support. The result, after years of cooperation, the leadership of the Social Democrats, led by Otto Bauer, determined to moth-ball the party in a state of self-imposed isolation. Against the advice of the highly respected and practical minded Karl Renner, Bauer led the party into a state of opposition. Under the circumstances of existing in a bourgeois democracy, as the Social Democrats saw it, the only natural role to play was opposition. The party relegated itself to the perimeter of Austrian politics, which, as shall be shown, proved to have a channeling affect. In retrospect, this strategy was inadvertently influential in channeling Austrian political development on to *Anschluss*.

Among the Christian Socialist chancellors stepping into the void left by the Social Democrats, some were more influential than others, and so their influences need to be made mention of. Johann Schober, as chancellor from January 1921 to May 1922, (this span was interrupted by a two day term held by Walter Breisky) sought to secure and realize for Austrians a regional neighborhood whereby nations could be secure and expect a degree of increasing prosperity. His labor to put forward and conclude the Treaty of Lánya with

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Czechoslovakia was an example of such designs to foster friendly relations. The treaty and his designs of a self-sustaining Austria triggered the German Nationalists’ withdrawal of support of his government. Support was lost on grounds that his approach was detrimental to the Nationalists’ quest for union with Germany. This man was to serve again as chancellor from September 1929 to September 1930. However, serving as chancellor was but one of his roles, he also served as Vice Chancellor-Foreign Minister from December 1930 to January 1932. In this capacity, he took part in promoting and agreeing to the German-Austrian Customs Union, of great significance and to be elaborated on in the pages to follow. Herein stands an example of the sensitive nature of politics in the first Republic of Austria, and, furthermore, influences on Anschluss history. Another Christian Socialist of influence was Ignaz Seipel. Seipel assumed the position of chancellor on May 23, 1922 and formed his government within a few days. His coalition government consisted of the Christian Socialists and the Nationalists. However, Seipel faced the daunting task of operating with a very slim majority. This new coalition displayed how staunch party positions proved the incompatibility of and the rift that developed between the Christian Socialists and the Social Democrats. Just as important was the continued compatibility of the Christian Socialists and the Pan-German Nationalists. To maintain the cohesivity of this new coalition, Anschluss, particularly important to Pan-German Nationalists, could never be thoroughly swept under the political carpet. In the midst of these difficulties during the twenties, Seipel pressed on, and the Austrian political arena was greatly influenced by his intellect and efforts.

149. The Christian Social and Social Democratic Parties became very antagonistic toward each other over significant issues. Traditionally education had been the domain of the Catholic Church, however, the Social Democrats were in favor of secularizing education. Secondly, the Social Democrats’ desire to create a welfare state, as it was doing within its stronghold, Vienna, was contrary to Christian Social economic independence Anschluss itself continued to be an issue of catastrophic potentials; Social Democrat’s maintenance of Anschluss hope worked against Christian Social endeavors to pursue a viable Austrian state. (Brook-Shepherd 253 & 54)
Walking a fine line, Seipel turned to address the issue of preserving the nation of Austria. Preservation attempts necessitated an acceptance of the abandonment of Anschluss. For why bother to fashion a state at a high cost if it was only a matter of time before the state was to be absorbed into Germany? Seipel understood the critical position Austria was in, thanks to the Paris Peace Conference treaties, and that Austrians were wallowing in desperate economic suspended animation. Therefore, Seipel moved to procure financial assistance for Austria, knowing fully that securing financial aid for Austria was going to be challenging, if it could be obtained at all. Seipel secured a loan through the League of Nations. Hoping for the best, Seipel and the representatives of the foreign powers met at Geneva and toiled over the loan terms. According to the resultant Geneva Protocols, Austria secured a loan of 650 million gold Kroner at the average interest rate of 7.75 percent.\footnote{150} Although the Treaties of Versailles and Saint Germain equally negated Anschluss, Allied powers, particularly France, determined to nail down even tighter the lid on the Anschluss coffin via terms of Seipel’s loan. Strings were attached to the loan. The Austrians agreed to maintain the terms of the post-war treaties and “during the twenty year period of the loan…refrain from all negotiations and from any economic or financial undertaking which might adversely affect this independence either directly or indirectly.”\footnote{151} Such limitations could not help but stir resentment among Austrians, particularly the socialists and Pan-German Nationalists. On the other hand, the loan, the concurrent reestablishment of the independent National Bank of Austria, and the consequential stabilizing of the Krone was deemed beneficial to the nation.

Unfortunately some were perturbed and dissatisfied with the chancellor’s work, going...
so far as to suggest that Christian Socials were establishing close knit ties with bourgeois capitalists Jews of Austria. Analysis of this accusation is helpful, for it represents a vehicle by which to briefly establish a sense of Seipel’s political bearings. His political principles within Austrian context had their foundations in Catholicism and his role as a priest in the church. Three areas of concern received a great deal of his attention and are illustrative of driving forces within his political and national identity: opposition to secularization of the education system, anti-Semitism, and the unlikely compatibility of Austrian Catholicism with Germany’s Protestantism. As a Catholic official, he nurtured certain tendencies and loyalties, and these were coupled with his political agenda and efforts to lead Austria to maintain independence with strong Catholicism. Austria’s independence, vitality, and viability had to be rationalized in Seipel’s intellect, and this was accomplished against the backdrop of his thoughts as composed in his *Nation and State* (1916). The application of his theorizing about the disparate loyalties granted to the state from that granted to the nation help to provide an understanding for his approach to Austria and hopes for Austrians in the 1920s. In short, Austrians need not channel their energies into union with Germany on the basis of German nationalism, but channel their energies toward their unique Austrian entity and its state. Seipel served as chancellor from May 1922 to November 1924 and again from October 1926 to May 1929, and consequently his approach to the establishment of the independent republic of Austria was influential. Of course, not all Austrians agreed with him, and he, unfortunately, was to become the target of more than words. He was shot at and struck down on July 1, 1924. He made a recovery, but very slowly.

152. Pulzer, 311.
The attempt on Seipel’s life was also a display of the violent nature Austrian society was assuming. By the middle of the decade, seven years into the republic’s life, the polarized political parties deemed it wise in their respective camps to develop paramilitary units. The Nationalists’ Heimwehr supported the ruling government. The disheartened left-wing Social Democrats were equally supported by the Republikanischer Schutz bund. Sensing the need to be prepared for any contingency, the Landbund (German Peasants’ Party founded in 1919, composed of liberal and Protestant peasants and very popular in Upper Austria, Styria, and Carinthia, in favour of the Anschluss and part of the government from 1927 until 1933) organized an army of its own, the Bauerwehr (Peasant Guard). History makes it clear, utilizing readily available armed forces to secure political ends is a temptation hard to resist. With this in mind, reciprocal violence bandied about between the camps until Austria’s republican state was in the balance. Sadly, tension rocketed in 1927. Enraged by the acquittal of apparent Heimwehr criminals, left-wing agitators took to the streets of Vienna in what subsequently was dubbed the July Revolt of 1927. Standing firm, Seipel’s government harshly broke the revolt, but not before the Palace of Justice was burned by the mob. This Red Mutiny, as it was later called, had the potential to shake up any government, especially one located in the stronghold of the political left.

Although disruptive, the Red Mutiny, in retrospect, was minimal to the struggle unleashed by the Great Depression. In less than two more years, the spirit-crushing Great Depression facilitated by the New York Stock Exchange crash did little to improve Austria’s position. Remembering an economic pincer follows, the political focus of this pincer has to

155. Ibid.
156. Jelavich, 184.
be maintained. The worsening economic and political situation lent credence to structural changes in the Kelsen Constitution. Earlier, perhaps as early as 1923, the need for changes was recognized, but only as the situation in Austria disintegrated did the energy materialize to make the changes. The changes via amendments resulted in direct election of the president; the president was given the authority to dissolve the assembly and issue emergency proclamation, and finally the president secured the position of commander-in-chief of the army.\textsuperscript{157} Even with these constitutional alterations, government coalitions were insecure, and as the economic situation eroded further during the early 1930s, few considered it likely that Austrian stability could further decline, and still hold together as a unit.

Otto Ender, governor of Vorarlberg from 1920 to 1934, served as chancellor of Austria from December 1930 to June 1931. The effects of the Great Depression continued to leave their mark on Austria’s economy during his charge as chancellor. Consequently, to prevent further deterioration and restore political confidence in the government, Chancellor Ender sent Austria’s foreign minister—Johan Schober—to Berlin to converse with German Foreign Minister Julius Curtius with the express hopes of fashioning an Austro-German customs union. Curtius represented German Chancellor Heinrich Brüning and his coalition government. Brüning faced many of the same economic and political pressures as his counterpart in Austria. Four major concerns faced Brüning: Communists, National Socialists, war reparations, and debt. His attempts to deal with financial matters by austere measures led to the deterioration of his coalition and ruling by presidential degree through Paul von

\textsuperscript{157} Jelavich, 186.
Hindenburg. His policies increased unemployment and added to the hardships citizens of Germany had to deal with, and, as a result, interest in achieving any degree of economic improvement via a customs union with Austria grew. Negotiations proceeded smoothly, on account of the representatives being cognizant that the people of both countries needed economic stimuli. It should be noted that secrecy was maintained concerning the negotiations. Why the secrecy? Surely efforts to extricate the German speaking peoples from economic despair would be met with approval from Germans themselves and fellow Europeans; that is, unless bitter spirits and grudges were too hardened to overcome. Perhaps some were taken by surprise at the responses the announcement of the Austro-German plan provoked. Nonetheless, Yugoslavian leadership along with the Czechs and Rumanians united to check the plan’s advancement on grounds that such a plan had the potential to act as a springboard to Anschluss. The announcement of the plan took the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and French premier Aristide Briand by surprise. Fearing even the taking of one small step toward Anschluss possibilities, the matter was taken before the Hague Tribunal.\(^{159}\) The tribunal determined the plan was in violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1922, and made an announcement of its determination in September (1931).

As the hope of this economic camaraderie between Germany and Austria was in the balance, the reality of Austria’s declining economic condition had became even more acute. By early 1931 the Creditanstalt, an old established bank of the imperial period, had been on the verge of collapse under the pressures of crushing debt. Unable to remain solvent, the bank collapsed in June of that year.\(^{160}\) Compounding the effects of the collapse, Vienna and

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159. Jelavich, 188.
160. Albrecht-Carrie, 454.
the industrial sector of Austria had ties to the Creditanstalt; therefore, when it fell, claiming losses of $150 million, the already grieved economy plummeted, and the worsening Great Depression only exacerbated the Austrian struggle for survival.\textsuperscript{161} Not able to withstand this shock, the Ender government failed.

Scrambling to maintain control, the Christian Socials and Nationalist \textit{Landbund} formed a coalition under the leadership of Karl Buresch. Not long after (September 1931) this shaky government faced a coup attempt under the right-wing leadership of Walter Pfriener.\textsuperscript{162} Although the coup attempt was short lived, it made it very evident that the members of Austria’s traditional coalition could no longer be counted on; the Nationalists were being wooed by the National Socialists of Germany. In Austria, as in Germany, an apparent development of Nazi fascism was occurring. Heretofore the Nationalist Pan-Germans were relegated to minimal political influence; however, by 1932, with Adolf Hitler and his Nazis securing greater political influence in Germany, so, too, the call of National Socialism was striking chords in the hearts of more and more Austrians. The result was a three way split within the Austrian population among Christian Socials, Social Democrats and Greater Germany Nationalists.

The Buresch government fell in May 1932, and into its wake the quick-minded Engelbert Dollfuss was thrust. Due to the fact that the German Nationalist faction was being steered toward Nazism, Dollfuss acted to form a government coalition built on Christian Socials, the \textit{Landbund}, and the \textit{Heimatblock} (political wing of the \textit{Heimwehr}). This coalition

\textsuperscript{162} Dr. Walter Pfriener was head of the Styrian branch of the \textit{Heimwehr}, Momentarily placed in command of the \textit{Heimwehr} by its leader Prince Ernst Rüdiger Starhemberg, who was attending to personal financial concerns, Pfriener utilized the forces of the \textit{Heimwehr} to stage a \textit{putsch} against the Austrian government on September 12 and 13. Starhemberg’s denouncement of the \textit{putsch} and its lack of organization caused the entire affair to crumble. (Brook-Shepherd 266).
provided a mere one vote majority, truly shaky ground during stressful times. Hoping to secure economic relief for Austrians and stabilize his government, as Seipel did in the 20s, Dollfuss secured a 300 million Schilling loan. However, as with the Geneva Protocol, terms accompanying the loan included references to an additional 10 year ban on Anschluss. The situation remained confused in Austria, and Dollfuss suffered ridicule and pressures from both the Social Democrats and National Socialists as a result.

As with the convergence of multiple storms, various energies and forces were swirling throughout Europe and Austria. Depression forces, energies of zealous communists, and of course by January 1933, the forces of Germany’s new Nazi chancellor, Adolf Hitler, were playing havoc with the peoples of Europe. Charting a course of economic and political soundness for a young nation amidst these turbulent forces, unscathed, proved tantamount to working a miracle. Alert to the situation and scurrying to survive on many fronts, Engelbert Dollfuss altered his course, and consequently Austria’s.

In late winter of 1933-34 a situation manifested itself, and Dollfuss determined it to be an opportunistic means to save Austria. Because voting numbers were so close in the Austrian parliament, presiding officers, first Karl Renner (Social Democrat), then Rudolf Ramek (Christian Social), and finally Sepp Straffner (Greater German Nationalist), relinquished their positions in order to be able to cast their respective vote on a piece of legislation. Consequently there remained no officer, but the president (Wilhelm Miklas) to officiate. President Miklas refused, and thus Chancellor Dollfuss issued a proclamation on March 7 that put an end to parliamentary government in Austria. On the heels of the proclamation, Dollfuss assumed emergency powers and limited civil liberties; i.e., freedom

164. Ibid., 195.
of speech, press, and assembly. In this capacity, Dollfuss’ principal support, other than the Christian Socials, stemmed from the army, the police, and the Heimwehr.

To bolster his position and that of the government, he sought to maintain extra-perimeter political sources of support. Outside Austria, his principal ally was Benito Mussolini, Fascist dictator of Italy. Italians and Austrians had become allies, strange sounding to the ears after generations of antagonism. However, these two entities that had to date experienced great animosity found security in each other. Both Dollfuss and Mussolini recognized the growing threat of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich. Therefore security, for the moment, was to be accomplished by an united front. Mussolini’s influence on Austria is difficult not to notice, although it must be understood why his influence was accepted. Dollfuss and his supporters adopted the strategy of creating a corporate state similar to that of Italy, and for this reason Italo-fascism was applied to Austria, hereafter referred to as Austro-fascism. Freedoms were restricted, the party political system abandoned, and semi-dictatorial rule was assumed in order to ensure an independent Austria. In essence, Dollfuss believed the precarious times necessitated restrictions on the populace in order to prevent Austria’s disintegration into a radicalized country, as promulgated by the Social Democrats, or into a radical Nazi state of Hitler design so desired by the extreme right wing German Nationalists. It may be concluded that with these one bold moves the Dollfuss regime was preparing to save Austria from external as well as internal threats.

Austrians tended to chafe under this firm grip, and, as a consequence, civil unrest erupted. In February 1934, violence erupted among workers in Linz who were protesting against what to them were harsh measures designed to stamp out their labor movement. The eager Heimwehr leader (Emil Fey) initiated a raid on the morning of February 12; the raid’s
design was to secure the arms caches maintained by the Socialists’ paramilitary, *Schutzbund.* Escalating tensions and rumors triggered Dollfuss to make a preemptive strike against socialist forces in Vienna. Two concerns confronted Dollfuss as matters grew in intensity. First, the forces of the *Schutzbund* amounting to over 17,000 men. Secondly, the potential, real or imagined, involvement of foreigners; examples being sympathetic Socialist Czechs or meddling Adolf Hitler. Dollfuss sought his goal of maintaining governmental control by rooting out forces and supporters at the Karl Marx Hof (a stronghold of the *Schutzbund* in Vienna). After three days, order was secured, and it could be said that Dollfuss was wise in his handling of the civil war. In the end, however, thousands of participants lost their employment, hundreds were imprisoned, ten were executed, and over 200 people died in the action. Adroitly, historian Evan Bukey summed up the political consequences when he wrote, “…it left a legacy of bitter hatred that would persist for decades and discredit the course of Austrian patriotism preached by the Christian Corporative regime.” A second spike in unrest followed in July 1934. On July 25, Austrian Nazis unleashed their planned coup. Before the coup succumbed to the government forces, Engelbert Dollfuss had been shot and subsequently died. Ironically, the Dollfuss family had been visiting Mussolini at the time of the coup, and to a funeral he had to send the family home.

It is reasonable to expect that because of the tumultuous overshadowing events of the Second World War, these events do not hold the limelight. True as this may be, the historical and political fallout resulting from the attempted coup speaks volumes. Mussolini, at this

165. Brook-Shepherd, 280.
166. Ibid., 283.
point, remained faithful to his previous comments that he would certainly not support the idea of Austria being engulfed by some 70 million Germans, in a word, *Anschluss*. Attempting to convince himself of his stance, he suggested, culturally, Vienna and Berlin were too different for Austrians to be happy with *Anschluss*.\(^\text{169}\) In light of his association with Austria and Dollfuss, Mussolini exhibited a great deal of energy and intestinal fortitude with his response to the Nazi coup attempt. He sent Italian forces to the Brenner Pass as a show of force against German Nazi aggression. Regardless of the degree to which Hitler was involved with the coup attempt, Hitler was unnerved by Mussolini’s response.\(^\text{170}\) It is difficult to suggest dogmatically the course of events had Mussolini not acted on Austrian’s behalf as he did. What may prove interesting is the insecurity exhibited by Adolf Hitler at that moment. What misery may have been averted had statesmen across Europe taken notice and exerted themselves on future occasions.

Although by historical standards these two Austrian civil disruptions were minute in the course of history, they registered in the minds of Austrian people eager for political stability. The murder of Engelbert Dollfuss ushered into power Kurt von Schuschnigg. While he assumed the chancellery well qualified and gifted, his gifts and personality tended in directions different than those of Dollfuss. Personalities and styles aside, the latter coup attempt exposed the hand of Benito Mussolini, which Schuschnigg appreciated and remained confident of. On this last note it is worth asserting that nothing in this world remains static; Mussolini’s support began to waver after he initiated war with the Ethiopians in 1935, participated in the Spanish Civil War, and witnessed the rearming of Germany and its

\(^{168}\) Ibid., 14.  
\(^{169}\) Suval, 190.  
\(^{170}\) Bukey, 15.
reoccupation of the Rhineland in 1936. The unhappy consequence of these events, for Schuschnigg, resulted in his slipping under the spell of Germany’s Nazi regime.171

One might question the necessity of rehearsing the political development of Austria following the First World War in this fashion. It is posited that a measurable understanding of politics and political maneuvering of the particulars fosters an appreciation for the situation as people were pressed into them. In relationship to Anschluss, which German Austrians had wrestled with since the writing of the Pillersdorff Constitution (1848), they were stifled now again as to a unified coherent attitude toward it. By 1934, sixteen harsh and complex years had passed since the Provisional Assembly voted for Anschluss. Had the Allied Powers permitted Anschluss at that point (1918), some assumed, a satisfied and probably economically hopeful Austrian population would have cozily nestled into a modern Germany. On the other hand, Germany suffered its own economic difficulties, which, if realistically taken into consideration by pro-Anschluss Austrians, had to be difficult to overlook. That channel of identity, however, was denied the Austrians. The result was a people fumbling around, prodded by Western European countries to remain an independent nation, yet not given the means to tackle the feat. Impossible the situation was, and this instilled in some Austrians the lurking hope of Anschluss. As has been noted, the population of Austria by 1930/32, for example, was as equally diverse in regard to Anschluss as their grandparents were in the nineteenth century. Although under different nomenclature, each generation had the same options and the same resistance. When Kurt von Schuschnigg took office in July 1934 little did he know that Anschluss would be a reality within four years. He did know that he headed a government based on the Christian Social Party that had wielded

power for 14 years, and remained in power primarily by force. It would be a distortion of reality, though, to suggest, as we shall see, that Austrians were united in identifying with Nazi Germany. This perusal of Austria’s political development through the 1920s and 30s serves to underscore that when Austrians “voted” for Anschluss in 1938 it was done not so much because of their deep devotion to Hitler’s Nazism, but as a vote in part against the Christian corporate regime that had evolved by the mid 1930s.

**Economic Development**

Austrian political development cannot help but stir the emotions, even of some who have the luxury of viewing it from afar, both geographically and historically. Even a simplistic sketch fosters a degree of sympathy for a people destined to wander in an identity desert. Politics has the ability to stir certain emotions within people, and not all have the ability to smother emotional stirrings. Emotional attachments can be subdued by some into the sub-conscience, as though out of sight, out of mind. Certainly some Austrians were cheering on the political sideline, while others, at least at times, determined to be finished with politics and the scheming of politicians. While distancing oneself from political circles and its influences may appear possible even in the tumultuous 1920s of Austria, economic development and its influences the average Austrian could not escape. Economics affected everyone in the new country and also helped in determining the course of events leading to Anschluss.

The economic history of the first Republic of Austria dovetails neatly with the political history. If tension existed politically, by nature of their mutual influences, there must have been economic tensions. Austrians suffered cruel economic shocks at the end of the First
World War. The empire was no longer in existence, and lost to Austrians were resources, machinery, industry, skilled labor, foodstuffs, and a great deal of agriculturally developed land. Forty-eight million people had been removed from Austria, as well as 262,577 square miles. Post-war Austrians faced continuous food shortages and financial collapse, which were exacerbated by reparations and war burdens, and equally stagnating were the high tariffs erected by its new neighbors. Clearly these neighboring states, even democratic Czechoslovakia, had axes to grind. In its new condition, Austria was seen as a toothless cub compared to the status it once held. The economic tariffs put in place by neighboring nations helped to support the popular conclusion equally held by Austrian elite and ordinary citizens, i.e., the new Austria designed by the Paris negotiations was simply a nonviable state.  

Some Austrians considered a Danubian federation as an economic solution; however, this option was not capable of being launched because of animosity incurred between the peoples of these new independent states—Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary—and Austria. Another strike against the Danubian Confederation concept came from Benito Mussolini. He stunted its growth out of fear of its potential interference with his imperial Mediterranean designs.  

Conveniently, for Italian ambitions, the absence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire—or some entity or entities created as the result of its demise— signaled the opportunity for Italians to advance their cause. Quietly hoping for a failed Danubian Confederation creation shed not only light on Mussolini, but also on the likelihood of Anschluss reviving as a possibility. The second among Austrian options, Anschluss, therefore never seemed to lose its appeal entirely.

The temptation to view the option of *Anschluss* as a very practical means of securing economic recovery was proving difficult to squelch. The very principle and guiding feature of the Paris negotiations, national self-determination, was overtly denied application in the Austrian case, as a whole (*Anschluss*) and partially in the cases of South Tyrol and a portion of Burgenland. Criticism against the fear generated responses by French Premier Georges Clemenceau on the *Anschluss* matter is without merit. But the economic wilderness Austria was consistently channeled into increased difficulties, which, in turn, fostered some hope for *Anschluss*, however many years off. Sympathy was in order for a people hemmed in, segregated, demoralized, and victimized by certain Allied powers. The necessity of doing something to develop economically was stifled by at least two forces. One force was the temptation to apply half-heartedly to economic ventures, on the grounds of waiting for *Anschluss*. The second force was equally important, or perhaps more appropriately phrased equally distracting. Economic success in Austria would prove the Allied powers’ wisdom in establishing an independent and viable state, and thus render *Anschluss* a moot point. Along the same line, some in Austria, particularly strong among the Social Democrats after the 1920 election and being ousted from governing, hoped for economic stagnation as a mark against the Christian Social government.\(^{174}\) Blending these forces certainly produced little real personal or national peace in Austria, let alone create a uniform Austrian identity. The point in terms of economics is that Austrians also had to battle falling victim to their own economic pessimism, while *Anschluss* kicked about in their minds.

Familiarity with the economic and monetary conditions of the Weimar Republic during 1923 and 1924 is beneficial in grasping the situation confronting the Austrians in 1921 and

\(^{174}\) MacDonald, 22.
1922. Shortages of food and fuel, along with struggling industry and high unemployment eventually triggered economic cycles that got out of control. Inflation set in by 1921, and tripped a call of alert. This alert, in turn, prompted government action. Government sponsored inflation increased in 1922, crippling the economy and personal finances. Although not quite as damaging as the hyper-inflation suffered in Germany twelve months later, people suffered in Austria. Economists tracking the Austrian inflation suggested that in 1919 2,500 Kronen per week were needed to meet the basic needs of a working class household. By mid-1920, 5,000 Kronen were needed, and 7,500 by mid-1921. Unfortunately, inflation accelerated out of control so that by January 1922, 75,000 Kronen was necessary to equal the purchasing power of 2,500 in 1919. Further yet, by June 1922 the figure had risen to the phenomenal amount of 300,000 Kronen.175

Much can be gained by easing back a step or two and analyzing the Austrian situation as others might have done in 1922 and 1923. At least three significant features rise to the surface. First, Germany, the most willing and inclined to economically aid Austria, was not in a financial situation to aid others, even fellow Germans. Threatening reparation payments and hyper-inflation were trouble enough for German banking officials such as Hjalmar Schacht. Second, formerly subjected peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Empire—Czechs, Hungarians, Poles, Yugoslavians—had little compassion for the German Austrians of the truncated Austria. For generations Austrian Germans had run roughshod over the various peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Although profit and mutually beneficial trade might have been secured, long standing bitterness was not to be overcome. In addition, a communal atmosphere among the nations of the Danube might possibly reinvigorate talks of

175. Greinert, 9.
a Danubian confederation. Against such possibilities neighboring nations were more apt to isolate rather than labor with Austria. Thirdly, West European nations were put in an awkward position because of the situation leaders had backed Austria into. It would be difficult to persuade West European statesmen to advance loans to a nation inadvertently rendered non-viable, laden with debt and reparations, and on the verge of disintegration. For these reasons alone, Chancellor Seipel seemed to be fighting a losing battle. Nonetheless, Austrian leaders such as Seipel pressed onward to achieve a sound Austria.

Recalling that Seipel secured the 650 million gold Kroner loan in 1923, in so doing, the Austrian government had to prove and maintain prudent financial management in order to secure the loan. Therefore, government expenditures were reduced drastically in order for Finance Minister Viktor Kienböck to claim he had stabilized the currency and balanced the government’s budget. A tight rein on spending and the loan did facilitate some economic activity. Electrification of the railways was by this time initiated, as well as development of water-power. Although not yet started, a very comprehensive road building program was well advanced in the planning stages. Very encouraging was the jump in agricultural production, to the point that an appreciable portion of agricultural needs were being met by Austrian farmers.176 Kurt von Schuschnigg, as a post Second World War reminiscing author, pegged 1922 as a pivotal year for Austrian economics. He wrote, “With the consolidation of the state and financial stabilization, the believers in Austrian independence increased in numbers and confidence…”177 However fruitful these developments may have appeared, an eventual economic backlash due to terms of the Seipel loan could not be avoided. Unfortunately, balancing the budget was accomplished in part by eliminating civil

176. Schuschnigg, 37.
177. Ibid, 36.
employees. Unemployment began to rise as 85,000 civil employees were fired or pressured to retire.\textsuperscript{178} Two hundred forty thousand more were to be unemployed within the span of two years. As the government attempted to operate on a balanced budget, taxes, too, were increased. The resulting twin daggers of increased taxes and decreased social services played havoc with the economy.\textsuperscript{179} One should not totally negate the value of said economic advancements, nor cast doubts on authentic Austrian gains, for Austria was proving herself viable. Perhaps it can be applicably said of Austria that the first step to recovery after suffering disappointment is recognition that that which was desired has begun to lose its charm. Meaning, national economic healing and self-identity made \textit{Anschluss} less attractive, or less a necessity.

Roaring is a descriptive word naively used to indicate the basic economic tempo of the 1920s, at least in some regions of the world. Certainly many found the decade prosperous and exciting, perhaps even some in Austria. Undeniably Seipel’s reforms and loans stabilized the currency and finances of the state by mid decade. However, the pace of Austrian economic development never accelerated. The League of Nations economic experts graciously analyzed the Austrian economy in 1925 and gave it a clean bill of health, although lackluster.\textsuperscript{180} One thorn in the side of the struggling Austrian economy was the high cost of industrial production. As costs piggybacked on to the retail price, Austrian products remained out of reach to world consumers.\textsuperscript{181} This thorn in the side of the Austrian economy was representative of others affecting Austria during the 1920s. The lukewarm character of the economy was also the result of a force depressing Austria’s will to succeed. This force

\textsuperscript{178} Jelavich, 175.
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid, 176.
\textsuperscript{180} Suval, 180.
\textsuperscript{181} Jelavich, 185.
historian Stanley Suval labeled as pro-\textit{Anschluss} propaganda. Of the propagandists, Suval wrote, “It was their self appointed task…to extinguish any spark of self confidence that remained in the Middle Class. Like good Marxists, they had a stake in impoverishment.”\textsuperscript{182} Ignaz Seipel, too, recognized the undercurrent throughout the twenties and remarked that, “as soon as the economic situation in Austria takes a turn for the better, the talk of \textit{Anschluss} will stop again.”\textsuperscript{183} Tragic for Austrians was the inability to shake off the psychological non-confidence fog imposed upon them by the pro-\textit{Anschluss} propagandists before the onslaught of the Great Depression. So for the Austrians, the decade of the “Roaring Twenties” ended in economic despair just as it had begun.

Crucial in the Austrian economic development was of course the stock market crash at the New York Stock Exchange, starting in October 1929. Wall Street and the New York Stock Exchange are towering institutions that have the capacity to entangle investors of various interests, then as today. As the market became white hot with investments in 1929, the temptation to speculate was not restricted to New Yorkers, or Americans for that matter. Investment capital from European speculators crossed the Atlantic, not excluding Austrian capital, all hopeful of remarkable profits. Shortly after the Stock Market began to crumble in October 1929, the Viennese Boden-Creditanstalt was forced to close its doors. To stave off further closures, Chancellor Schober encouraged the government, in conjunction with the Creditanstalt, to absorb financial responsibilities for other institutions.\textsuperscript{184} Wise or unwise, the policy did not prevent an Austrian economic downturn, mirroring that of other European nations; unfortunately, the result being increasing unemployment. Unemployment

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[182]{Suval, 178.}
\footnotetext[183]{Ibid, 177.}
\footnotetext[184]{Ahamed, 405.}
\end{footnotes}
increased to 350,000 by mid 1931 and continued to climb to 480,000 by 1938.\textsuperscript{185} Just as it was in the Weimar Republic, as the economic situation deteriorated, attraction to radical extremes increased. Governments of both the Weimar and Austrian Republics looked to each other as mutually beneficial means to stimulate economic recovery. The result was a concerted effort identified as the Austro-German Customs Union.

On account of six million being unemployed between Germany and Austria and economic indicators revealing no immediate hope of recovery, the governments of these two nations took to establishing an economic customs union. Announcements about the Austro-German Customs Union were made on March 19 and 22, 1931. The first to react were the French, British, Italian, and Yugoslavians. At the Ballhausplatz, representatives from these nations presented their responses to Chancellor Ender suggesting the customs union was in violation of the Geneva Protocols of 1922. Hoping to assuage objections and secure support, it was announced on March 22 that Austria and Germany were prepared to enter into negotiations with other nations to broaden the union.\textsuperscript{186} In the context of the severe depression, such a tactic to secure approval may be minimized, but the Austro-German Customs Union of 1931 appears of monumental significance. The customs union, to some, was nothing less than an act of circumnavigating \textit{Anschluss} restrictions. The matter was taken before the League of Nations, and the League rendered an eight to seven vote (September 5, 1931) ruling the union in violation of the Geneva Protocols of 1922.\textsuperscript{187}

The Austro-German Customs Union was designed to ward off further economic decay; however, even while the League was determining its judgement, the already weak Austrian

\textsuperscript{185} Jelavich, 186.  
\textsuperscript{186} Low, \textit{The Anschluss Movement, 1931-1938}, 42.
Creditanstalt was in its death throes. In response an effort was made to prop up the bank through a variety of loans (100 million Schillings from the Austrian government, 30 million Schillings from the National Bank, and 225 million Schillings from the House of Rothschild). With the announcement of the support, depositors began to make withdrawals prompting a bank run starting May 11, 1931. In less than one month, however, these funds were exhausted. Having been checked on this front, the Buresch government turned to secure further loans. Loans amounting to $250 million were agreed upon on July 15, 1932. Now becoming habitual, the multi-loan agreement contained terms preserving Austria’s political and economic independence for another ten-year period.\footnote{188}

The 1931 descent into deeper economic depression triggered the mother lode of twentieth century history. This phase of the Great Depression was a boon for Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party of Germany. Concomitantly, economic hardship fed Nazism within Austria. Economic depression was the vehicle Adolf Hitler used to secure popularity, and eventually led to \textit{Anschluss}.

The Great Depression shocked the weak foundation of Austria to the point of disintegration. An interesting question to plague reflective Austrians then and scholars today; disintegrate into what? Austrian identity was as much hemmed in in 1929 or 1931 as at the turn of the century. At the turn of the century, Habsburg versus Hohenzollern forces dominated Austrian leadership. Dominant concerns of leadership in the late 1920s and early 30s were economic forces, and these forces ineluctably channeled statesmen down the path of Austro-fascism, attempting to steer the nation between the camps of radical socialism and Nazi fascism. The lack of support by European powers, particularly that of France, helped to

\footnote{187. Ibid., 46.}
\footnote{188. Low, \textit{The Anschluss Movement, 1931-1938}, 47.}
trigger further economic collapse. Collapse hastened the necessity for the Christian Social leadership to advance down the path of Austro-fascism. Austro-fascism of the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg corporate state drove the Austrians into reactionary posture, and more willingly into union with Adolf Hitler.
Chapter Five
The Coveted Anschluss

Anschluss: A Reality

German-Austria must return to the great German mother country, and not because of any economic considerations. No, and again no: even if such a union were unimportant, from an economic point of view; yes, even if it were harmful, it must nevertheless take place. One blood demands one Reich. Mein Kampf 189

Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany on January 30, 1933. His appointment and subsequent undertakings unleashed events the scale of which the world had never seen before. As forecast in Mein Kampf, Adolf Hitler had an eye trained on his native land of Austria, and Anschluss was on his agenda. It is striking that within 35 days of Hitler securing the coveted position of chancellor of the Weimar Republic, Engelbert Dollfuss opportunistically seized power in Austria. His eye was trained on maneuvering his Austria on a path avoiding Hitler’s Nazism and his Anschluss ambitions. Anschluss, then, it appeared, took front and center stage in a particularly pronounced way between these two heads of government. While Hitler needs no introduction, and his deeds and postures have been well broadcast, Dollfuss has been less in the limelight. Nonetheless, his display of tenacity intimated a strong willed leader.

Dollfuss’ career was not remarkable before his appointment as chancellor. Born of peasant stock, and raised in Lower Austria in the vicinity of Vienna, he exuded Catholic peasant mannerisms. He enjoyed stories and jokes (his height of four feet eleven inches being the brunt of many). He laughed and listened with equal intensity and never lost his

simple, principle driven nature. His ambitions led him to law school and eventually into the political arena. His enduring interest in agriculture, meanwhile, led him to organize a peasants’ league for Lower Austria. Later in 1927, the Lower Austrian Agrarian Chamber voted him its director. In the same fashion, the federal rail lines recruited him for its administration council. His position as president of the railways facilitated his appointment to a cabinet position as Minister of Agriculture (March 1931). He gained the respect of President Wilhelm Miklas and, as stated above, was called upon to form a government. His coalition government (66 Christian Socials, 8 Heimwehr, 9 Landbund) had a majority of one, and the opposition included 72 Social Democrats and 10 Pan-German Nationalists in the Nationalrat.\footnote{190}

Dollfuss went about his work as chancellor in the same style and with the same mannerisms he had exhibited all his life. He rearranged the Creditanstalt (which had fallen in 1931) and breathed new life into it. He pressured for stern reforms in the railroad sector and civil service development. Heroically he made attempts to increase trade in central Europe by means of new treaties and currency restructuring. Illustrative of his nature was his response to the reprimand served him by the powers of Western Europe over his arms smuggling project.\footnote{191} He did cease the transportation of arms, but did not kowtow to demands of the West. Although brief the introduction, it helps to break in upon the man at Austria’s helm. Kurt von Schuschnigg summarized Dollfuss: “His outstanding quality was perhaps a highly developed sensitivity which would never allow him to forget anything which he thought unjust, unlawful or underhanded.”\footnote{192}

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\begin{itemize}
  \item 190. Gunther, 308.
  \item 191. Ibid, 309.
  \item 192. Schuschnigg, 87.
\end{itemize}
It would do good to scan the Austrian political and economic landscape from the helm as Dollfuss would have in 1933. By 1933 the deepening Great Depression was further demoralizing a people not having witnessed prosperity since prior to the First World War. Economic despair fostered discontent that further irritated shortened tempers. Unemployment and decreasing purchasing power provoked acts of desperation. Economic woes generated a willingness to forsake sound principles for the sake of survival. Dollfuss feared for the people and the nation under these exasperating circumstances. He feared extreme pressures would so confuse the population that it might succumb to acting on frenzied impulses and the blandishments of radical theorists.

However presumptuous in his pontificating, Dollfuss had as his primary goals the prevention of Austria succumbing to socialism, according to Social Democratic theory, as well as avoiding the pressures of home-grown Austrian Nazism (which included Anschluss). Assuming the posture of protecting the nation and its inhabitants, Dollfuss approached his work as chancellor with the steadfastness of his peasant-reared personality.193

Probably trained since childhood to take an inventory of his situation, one glaring liability was that his government was based on three parties, which, when under pressure, certainly had the potential to come unglued. Irksome for sure was the fact that this government rested on a majority of one. Consequently, Dollfuss assumed it prudent to jump on the opportunity to secure enhanced powers in the spring of 1933, when the Nationalrat resigned itself out of existence. Although there was a clamor for elections after March 4, the Nazi infested political landscape seen from his vantage point negated the possibility of free and genuinely honest elections.194 The situation produced logical tension: to assume

193. Schuschnigg, 92.
194. Ibid, 91.
dictatorial powers because free elections were impossible smacked of a coup d’état. Dollfuss was apparently not concerned with how history was going to view him, but rather how to steer away from multiple evils.

Austrians had been bandied about betwixt forces since 1918. Near certainty of Anschluss in 1918, followed by the bitter treaty, hyper-inflation, Allied pessimism, and economic depression, were the most pronounced of these forces. However, in Dollfuss and others like him, the seed of Austrian patriotism was taking root. For years, patriotic sentiment for an independent Austria had been an exercise of futility. Although the image of a democratic republican Austria looked bleak to one peering in from the outside in 1933 and 1934, germination of an authentic Austrian patriotism had taken place. In fact, events in Germany were having a polarizing effect on Austrians, perchance feeding that patriotism. Patriotism assumed an identity with Austria, an entity that was independent, viable and, in this case, operative without Habsburgs. For some, Dollfuss included, personal identity had experienced accretion with national identity. However, it cannot be denied that for some in Austria, the events in Germany were equally inviting. Dollfuss monitored the German political landscape as well. In doing so, his determination to forestall Anschluss increased.

Hitler was appointed chancellor on January 30, 1933, and the Nazi signature was on many events that followed. The Reichstag fire, the election on March 5 (NSDAP securing 288 of 647 seats), and the Enabling Act (Ermächtigungsgesetz) passed in later March served Hitler well. As one might imagine, the Enabling Act of March 23 proved to be a roadmap marked with at least one highlighted destination, Austrian annexation. Among other things, the act provided:

That laws may be passed under a procedure which may differ from that set forth
in the Weimar Constitution: namely, that laws which shall be formulated by the cabinet, so long as they do not have the structure of the Rechstag or Reichsrat as their subject, will have the status of laws made under the constitution. These laws are to be signed and proclaimed by the chancellor and published in the Reichs-Gesetzblatt.\textsuperscript{195}

From Vienna, Dollfuss heard of laws being passed in rapid fire order and was made aware of the results. Dollfuss’ conviction of Austria being on Hitler’s agenda was further reinforced by the Nazi leader’s initiation of the Thousand Mark Blockade policy on May 27, 1933. As of June 1, 1933, all Germans traveling to Austria were expected to have an exit visa—including a 1000 Mark deposit. It was designed to curb Austrian tourism, which in years past generated 40 million Marks in revenue.\textsuperscript{196} The policy was designed to smother what economic embers remained aglow in Austria, and thus leave Austrians with no alternative but Anschluss. Another abundantly significant law dictated the dissolution of political parties other than the NSDAP. By means of such a law (Reich’s Regent Law of April 7, 1933) a nation of 22 parties was reduced to a nation of one; thus attempting to create a unitary state.\textsuperscript{197}

The unitary state was to be thenceforth grounded on the program of the Nazi Party derived from its constitution. Three entries will suffice to substantiate the concerns Dollfuss had as Hitler strengthened his position as chancellor of Germany. Article 1 promoted the concept of self-determination; by right of self-determination the union of all Germans. Another feature stressed the equality of Germany among nations of the world and therefore sanctioned nullification of the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain. The third feature is illustrative of the demeanor of the party constitution. Article 2 prevented the points from

\textsuperscript{195} Margaret E. Ball, \textit{Post-War German-Austrian Relations} (California: Stanford University Press, 1937), 190.
\textsuperscript{196} Schuschnigg, 93.
\textsuperscript{197} Ball, 192.
being changed. Mein Kampf, the Enabling Act, and the National Socialist Constitution were sufficient for Dollfuss to maintain a serious conviction that he was dealing with a bold external enemy of the state of Austria.

Additional external enemies Dollfuss did not need; allies he did need. Frequently Austrians had been at odds with the Italians, yet a détente between the two nations materialized by the early 30s. Dollfuss saw in Benito Mussolini a much appreciated ally. Austria’s severely diminished state posed little threat to Mussolini and his Mediterranean desires. Within two months of Dollfuss taking power in Austria, he and Mussolini were engaged in frank communications. Ultimately, the two fostered a policy designed to maintain the independence of Austria. Maintaining Austrian independence depended on key factors; suppression of Austrian National Socialism ranked very high on the list. Secondly, Dollfuss became convinced that he should strike against Austro-Marxism. A third factor was the formation of a block of nations, whose collective strength could check German advances if necessity presented itself. Having these fundamental tasks securely established as policy anchors, Dollfuss set about maintaining the independence of Austria.

Until his death in July 1934, Dollfuss, perhaps with a touch of Metternich-like zeal, fought a battle for Austria’s independence. The measures he took were extreme and illustrative of his determination. On March 30 he dissolved the Socialist Defense league and denied them the permission to carry weapons or ammunition. In retaliation, Mayor Seitz of Vienna (Social Democrat haven) ordered the dissolution of the Vienna Heimwehr. Not intimidated, Dollfuss annulled the order on April 1. On April 7 Dollfuss ordered discontinuing the transmission of German National Socialists’ speeches over Austrian radio.

198. Ball, 193.
In conjunction with the above policy, on May 26 the government outlawed the Communist Party in Austria. Dollfuss also required that all civil servants proclaim their loyalty to the government by taking an oath of allegiance. In addition, no district election would be held for six months. Not afraid of offending Hitler, Dollfuss firmly saw to it that the popular Nazi orator, Hans Frank, remove his person from Austria. This cordial but firm action was predicated on a rousing vitriolic speech given by Frank in Munich about the Austrian government just prior to entering Austria. In May Dollfuss forbade the displaying of all uniforms, emblems, and flags, except the flag of Austria. The military uniform of Imperial Austria was also reverted to. In June all the Nazi houses (Brown Houses) in Austria were closed and sealed. Naturally army personnel were also forbidden membership in the National Socialist Party. Arrests of Nazis were made. The Sturmabteilung and Schutzstaffeln divisions of the National Socialists were dissolved, as well as the Styrian Heimatschutz. The greater the force Dollfuss used, the more violent Austrian Nazis became and the more restless Nazis of Germany found themselves. Bombings and attempts at other forms of terror reduced Austrian peace. Dollfuss refused to let up; more arrests were made and jail sentences handed down. He went so far as to secure permission from Great Britain and France to violate the Treaty of St. Germain in order to increase the limited Austrian armed forces from 22,000 to 30,000 men. By the turn of the new year (1934), Dollfuss submitted an appeal to the League of Nations requesting assistance in the prevention of German interference in Austrian internal affairs.

From a distance, it did appear that Austria’s internal affairs could tolerate no additional

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200. Ball, 196.
201. Ibid, 201.
jostling. However, Dollfuss also commissioned that a new constitution be written for Austria. The new constitution, drafted under the direction of Otto Ender, was issued in May 1934. The May Constitution proclaimed Austria a Christian, German, federal state established on a corporative basis. Austria would be conservative and Catholic; thus liberal Socialists as well as Marxist doctrines were not welcome. The constitution eliminated political parties and replaced them with corporations, e.g., agriculture, forestry, industry, manufacturing, and public service. Dollfuss as chancellor acquired more positions and more power as a result of the new constitution. These tumultuous times demanded courage, and for many, the German-Austrian conflict seemed overwhelming.203

It is apparent that as the spring of 1934 eased into summer the Führer of Germany and the chancellor of Austria were locked in battle. Armed with the May Constitution, as well as the support of Mussolini and the Vatican, Dollfuss used his Austro-Fascist dictatorial powers to prevent Anschluss. It could be said that a nation of almost seven million resisted the overtures of sixty million in Germany, but, of course, not all in either nation were supportive of their leaderships’ positions. Ironically, resisting, figured Dollfuss, meant incorporating Nazi-like tactics. Likening Dollfuss and Austria to Biblical David and Hitler and Germany to Goliath is not insupportable. While David removed Goliath’s head with his own sword, so, too, Dollfuss seemed receptive of using any tools of force, even Nazi tactics, to stave off an unwelcome Anschluss.

While Dollfuss and his corporate state had the support of Mussolini and the Roman Catholic Church, the question remains, what support did this regime have among Austrians? Originally, Dollfuss formed a coalition of Christian Socials, Peasant Party (Landbund) and

the Home Guard (*Heimwehr*). By 1934, the Christian Socials had been in power for fourteen years, and presumably, the Christian Socials would support the policies of Dollfuss on that note alone. However, if some vacillated between Dollfuss and *Anschluss*, acknowledgement of the fate of the Catholic Center Party in Germany being disbanded and divested of political power, effectively reestablished reason to demur inclusion into Hitler’s Reich, which had dictated the church subordinate to the state. At the same time, no communist would voluntarily advance the idea of *Anschluss* to a Nazi Germany famous for destruction of communist enclaves. One would suspect, as Dollfuss did, that little support for his regime would be forthcoming from the Social Democrats. At the same time, Hitler’s Third Reich gave Austrian Social Democrats pause. The longer Nazism was in vogue in Germany, the more disillusioned observant Austrian Social Democrats became. Many Jews of Austria had aligned themselves with the Social Democratic Party since its inception, and because of this, had reason to be disgruntled with the Austrian Christian Social corporate state. However, favoring *Anschluss* based on Social Democratic affiliation in Germany was ludicrous since Hitler banned the party on June 22, 1933; that is after he labored to destroy the Free Trades Union (ADGB) by banning it on May 2, reinforcing his opposition to radical economic rearrangements.204 For Jewish Social Democrats of Austria, any pro-*Anschluss* sentiments were impossible to maintain the longer Hitler was in power. The Nuremberg Laws of September 1935 hastened terrible persecution of Jews within Germany.205 The point is that political, national, and religious allegiances were suffering twists and turns. That being said, Dollfuss looked out on a sea of Austrians struggling to fashion sense out of their situation, only to realize *Anschluss* had once again become a veritable illusion. Apparently, at no time

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204. Kitchen, 265.
205. Ibid., 266.
had all of the necessary pieces for *Anschluss* materialized. As the pro-*Anschluss* tide rolled in in 1848, 1866, 1899/90, 1918/19, 1922, 1933/34, there always remained a feature casting a dark cloud over its completion. Internal forces, loyalties, external prohibitions, and circumstances had prevented Austrians from unreservedly identifying with *Anschluss*. As in previous times, by the 1930s many Austrians could rationalize union with Germany, but just as equally many could not rationalize union with Hitlerism.

Dollfuss had support, and of course there was support for *Anschluss*, but in this Austrian hour of trial could numbers be utilized to shed light on reality? Putting some figures to the situation, the government could claim the support of Christian Socials, *Landbund*, and *Heimwehr* amounting to 30 to 35 percent of the population, and not in favor of *Anschluss* under the circumstances. Forty percent of the population was soundly supportive of *Anschluss*, being of the Austrian National Socialist party and Pan-German parties. The Social Democrats made up the remainder of the population. Their support or lack of support could not help but shift depending on individual circumstances. Support for the corporate state regime, and for or against *Anschluss* were two entirely different things, so the situation remained tense and only served to complicate existing rationale. Furthermore, was Dollfuss an opportunistic dictator; was he a wolf in sheep’s clothing suiting his own ambitions, or a Cincinnatus answering the call of his homeland in its hour of desperate need with the enemy at the gate?

Prince Clemens von Metternich battled revolutions and civil wars for decades and wore his scars as a result. In like manner, Dollfuss, too, had to expect upheaval, and possibly scars. As discussed above, he smashed the civil uprising in February 1934, and, after days of

206. Ball, 199.
bitter fighting in Linz and Vienna, almost 200 people lay dead. Dollfuss arrested ringleaders, and they were executed. The results left hundreds in prison and hundreds dismissed from their jobs.\textsuperscript{207} This uprising and the resultant reprisals left a stain on the regime hard to efface. The second strike at the Dollfuss regime came on July 25, 1934, as the Austrian Nazis attempted a coup d’etat by storming the Chancellery in Vienna. The coup failed quickly, but not before Engelbert Dollfuss was shot and left to bleed to death. The revolution was snuffed out in Vienna, yet its remnants and aftershocks quickly spread to Nazi strongholds in Styria, Carinthia, Salzburg, Tyrol, and Upper Austria. As in February, the army performed remarkably well and doused the hopes of the Nazi forces.\textsuperscript{208} This time, however, the nation held its breath awaiting a new chancellor.

Of this coup attempt there are particulars needing to be fleshed out. At this time, Benito Mussolini firmly adhered to his association with Austria. His resolve was indicated by the dispatch of an Italian force amounting to 75,000 men to the Brenner Pass. His troop movement indicated his stance on Austrian independence and his stance on Nazi aggression. With such a display of support, one may conclude that his posture on \textit{Anschluss} was permanent. Secondly, Dollfuss’ assassination by Nazi aggression rendered further witness of the demeanor of the regime in Nazi Germany to the Austrians. Nazi German involvement or not in the coup attempt, the fabric from which German and Austrian Nazis were derived was identical. Third, Hitler’s sensitivity to the strength of his position at home and abroad was evidenced by his precipitate withdrawal from \textit{Anschluss} agitation. He postponed his \textit{Anschluss} endeavors, distanced himself from Austrian Nazis, and appointed a rather

\textsuperscript{207} Bukey, 14.
\textsuperscript{208} Ibid, 15.
conservative Franz von Papen as ambassador to Vienna.\textsuperscript{209}

Knowing \emph{Anschluss} will happen and the Second World War was to be a reality, does not diminish the fact that both were not inevitable. The 1934 uprisings, reactions to them, and the results were indicative of the possibility of checking the machinations of the Third Reich and suggestive of history taking another course. At whose feet lay the blame for the eventual \emph{Anschluss} and the war? Certainly even addressing such a question reveals a desire to expend energy uselessly. However, there remains the opportunity to question the role Austrian identity played in the breakdown of the firm stance displayed toward Hitlerism. The vacillation of Austrian identity had rendered the population susceptible to distractions, and consequently stifled nationalistic potentialities. The strong hand of Dollfuss could not be a perpetual substitute for the inherent bottom-up strength of Austrian identification with Austria.

Upon the death of Chancellor Dollfuss, during the inglorious coup attempt on July 25, President Miklas called upon Kurt von Schuschnigg (Minister of Education) to assume the powers of the chancellor. Had he the ability to see into the future, he might have preferred the burden be carried by another; however, duty prevented any demurring on Schuschnigg’s part. While acting as chancellor of Austria, Kurt von Schuschnigg and Austrians witnessed the \emph{Anschluss}. As in previous generations, Austrian identity, or the lack of it, determined whether the \emph{Anschluss} achieved in March 1938 was indeed a blessing or a curse.

Kurt von Schuschnigg did not take on the duties of chancellor in a vacuum. His personality, style, mannerisms, and philosophies had long since been crystallized. Like

\textsuperscript{209} Bukey, 15.
others in Austria, his Austrian identity had its moments of weakness, and deflated resolve. He entered the chancellery with a life-long collection of baggage; baggage that did not simply vanish because of one being in high office. So, too, the river of history was rolling along filled with energies from upstream that were to make an impact and had to be dealt with.

Forthrightly Schuschnigg made an analysis of his country’s position. He met with Mussolini in August 1934 and was comforted by his continued insistence on maintaining Austrian independence. News of the coup and the death of Dollfuss were a bonus for Schuschnigg, for the powers of Europe were appalled at the gall of the Nazis. World opinion was stacked up against the Nazis, and Hitler was piqued by the coup attempt and did retreat from Austrian interference. He attempted to distance himself from the coup attempt and sought to convince the world that he had no interests in Austria.\(^{210}\) Although giving the appearance of a united and steadfast stance on behalf of Austria and its independence, omitting the fact that maneuvering and vying for self-satisfaction among the nations of Europe would seriously misrepresent Schuschnigg’s position. In fact, the situation in Europe was heating up substantially. For instance, Mussolini’s lust for east African territory—Abyssinia—led him into negotiations with France, which strengthened Franco-Italian ties.\(^{211}\) The British smiled upon positive French-Italian relations, for it helped to strengthen the field against Germany. However, the British were not eager to commit to continental security in which they had to play a central role. An increasing sense of strength enabled Hitler to jettison the Versailles Treaty and its restrictions in March 1935. German initiatives were set in motion to craft an army of 550,000 men and an air force of 2500 planes, all of which

\(^{210}\) Jelavich, 208.
stirred matters further.\textsuperscript{212} Provoked by these factors, a conference was agreed upon for April 1935, meeting in Stresa, Italy. The Stresa Front, as it was called, consisting of the powers of Britain, France and Italy, reaffirmed the Locarno Pact and Rome agreements and pledged to resist repudiation of the treaties that kept peace in Europe—particularly the Versailles Treaty. Superficially, the Stresa Front may have encouraged Schuschnigg. However, serving their own need, the British were soon to announce the negotiation of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. The agreement, signed on June 18, 1935, stipulated the approval of a German fleet equaling 35 percent of the British fleet, thus shattering the Versailles Treaty.\textsuperscript{213} In addition, tension mounted between the British and French over the Franco-Soviet alliance—signed May 2.\textsuperscript{214} Disregard for the Soviets fostered many on the right and left in Britain to be more supportive of Germany. Still in 1935, Mussolini invaded Abyssinia, with French approval. The resultant threats of air strikes on the British Mediterranean fleet, oil sanctions, and fear of war prompted the foreign secretaries of Britain and France to negotiate what became known as the Hoare-Laval Plan (December 1935).\textsuperscript{215} The plan stipulated that Italy would annex a good portion of fertile Abyssinia; Abyssinians were to be placated with the Eritean port of Assab.\textsuperscript{216} The British public’s discouragement displayed over the Hoare-Laval Plan, because it exhibited a complete disregard for collective security philosophy, had to be a warning to Schuschnigg. Actions and reactions, it could be assumed, displayed by the members of the Stresa Front were indicative of their true nature and their probable reaction to

\textsuperscript{211} Martin Kitchen, \textit{Europe Between the Wars, A Political History} (London: Longman Group UK Limited, 1988), 72.
\textsuperscript{212} Kitchen, 271.
\textsuperscript{213} Albrecht-Carrie, 483.
\textsuperscript{214} The Franco-Soviet Alliance provided assurances by the signatories that should either be threatened by unprovoked aggressive action by an European state, the other would respond with immediate assistance. The focus of the alliance was Germany. (Albrecht-Carrie, 480).
\textsuperscript{215} Albrecht-Carrie, 490.
\textsuperscript{216} Kitchen, 75.
possible Nazi threats against Austrian independence.\textsuperscript{217}

Speech making was a favored tactic of Hitler’s, be it to provoke Germans or foreign governments. In a May 1935 speech, Hitler included great emphasis on a non-intervention policy and the renunciation of an \textit{Anschluss} agenda, which if sincere, could have been some comfort to Schuschnigg. Wisdom, however, prompted Schuschnigg to continuously test the Third Reich’s pulse on \textit{Anschluss}. He secured a key agreement signed July 11, 1936, which was supportive of Austria’s independence. The agreement worked out by Schuschnigg and German ambassador Franz von Papen included a statement of German recognition of an independent sovereign Austria. It was also agreed that internal affairs were domestic affairs only; there was to be no interference in domestic affairs of the respective nations. Schuschnigg did make the following concessions to ensure this agreement. He consented to conduct foreign affairs on the principle that Austria was a German state, and agreed to take into his government members of the opposition.\textsuperscript{218} This agreement, coupled with Mussolini’s support, may have seemed enough to allow Schuschnigg to breathe a little easier and sense a degree of confidence in Austria’s future.

Unfortunately for Schuschnigg, a fissure developed in Mussolini’s resolve. Mussolini had risen to power in 1922 as the result of ambition. He remodeled Italy as a corporate fascist state with himself \textit{Il Duce}. His ambitions, not being fully satisfied and tethered to the necessity to assuage fascism’s hunger for military glory, encouraged him to consider territorial expansion. Moving northward was out of the question, and therefore he resurrected Italian interests in Africa. As noted above, in 1935 he invaded Ethiopia.

\textsuperscript{217} Gordon Brook-Shepherd, \textit{The Anschluss} (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1963), XXIV.  
\textsuperscript{218} Jalevich, 213.
Mussolini’s adventures in East Africa drew his attention from Europe and by doing so inadvertently attenuated the bonds he had established with Austria. At the same time, Hitler embarked on a plan to revitalize the German economy via the development and increase of German armed forces. He hoped to duplicate the economic recovery crafted by Mussolini in the 1920s. In summary, while Mussolini had spun around to facilitate the creation of a modern Italian empire, similar to the glory of ancient Rome, the Germans had grown materially and in military prowess. The Third Reich was in the ascendancy by 1936. It had militarily outstripped Mussolini as far as the European continent was concerned. Military needs and aspirations helped to foster a warming trend between Hitler and Mussolini. Apparently being mutually exclusive, the warmer relations with the Third Reich meant cooler relations with Schuschnigg’s Austria. Consequently, Mussolini’s conspicuous position in relation to Austria evaporated. In addition, while Mussolini shifted into a pro-Hitler posture, Hitler’s reoccupation of the Rhineland (March 1936) gave evidence of an appeasing posture that had been taken by French and British leadership. Therefore, unless Schuschnigg could captivate leaders across Europe into forming another Stresa Front-like alliance, Austria might very well further slip into isolation.

Accordingly, the Austrian circumstances underwent fundamental alterations during the early years of Schuschnigg’s rule. Hitler was increasing in confidence, and his perception of where fellow European leaders stood was more clear after 1936. Consequently the altered playing field afforded the opportunity to reinvigorate plans for Anschluss. Perhaps hopeful that Hitler and the Nazis would be faithful to their 1936 pledge with Austria, Schuschnigg went about his business. Evidence to the contrary was uncovered by an Austrian police raid.

219. Brook-Shepherd, XXV.
on an illegal Austrian Nazi office in Vienna during the first week of May 1937. As a result, rumors of Anschluss buzzed throughout the city of Vienna, Austria, and Central Europe. Schuschnigg’s fulfillment of bridge building between the government and Austrian Nazis had backfired. He had sanctioned the creation of a panel of Austrian Nazis and Pan-Germans. The Committee of Seven, as it was to be identified, proved a nest of conspirators in league with Nazi Germany. In reality, the Committee of Seven was serving to disrupt the good-natured hope of the original design. As a result of a trail of suspicion, Austrian police raided the committee’s office in January 1938. The result was continued affirmation of substantial proof giving credence to rumors. The raid-produced proof was corroborated further by the uncovering of the developed “Plan of Action for 1938.” This then placed Schuschnigg in the position of being given notice that Anschluss was being pursued with great energy.

After serving as chancellor since the assassination of Dollfuss in 1934 and becoming aware of the Nazi German return to active Anschluss endeavors by 1938, what home support did Schuschnigg consider reliable? In determining reliable support he could not skirt economic issues, for they were front and center. The luxury of confronting national and international issues without the curse of economic depression never materialized for Schuschnigg. Furthermore, economic depression and stagnation had in themselves the capacity of rendering a statesman to the political sidelines. Schuschnigg’s corporate state’s inability to thoroughly reverse the tide of the Depression caused Austrians to speculate on the

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221. The Plan of Action included instructions initialed by Hitler’s deputy, Rudolf Hess, to incite a revolt in Austria in the spring of 1938. The revolt, it was expected, would trigger an effort by Schuschnigg to put it down and upon this potentially bloody interaction, the German Army would cross the border into Austria to stop the shedding of German blood by Germans. (Shirer, 323)
possible rewards of uniting with Germany—even a Hitler Germany. In the end, the greater economic development in Germany, the greater appeal to a significant number of Austrians at peace with Anschluss. Therefore after years of economic hardship, Austrians more and more were willing to succumb to the financial bait being offered by German economic statistics. This solely economic basis for decision making need not be criticized, especially by those financially more secure. The second precipitous economic decline of the Depression Era starting in 1931, continued to be ruinous to the Austrian banking system and consequently the industries that depended on its capital. One year before Schuschnigg assumed power, the unemployment rate stood at 44.5 percent among industrial workers and just shy of 35 percent among agricultural workers. The unemployment figures varied from city to city and region to region. While in Vienna and Wiener Neustadt unemployment was severe, other mill towns in provinces such as Salzburg and Carinthia witnessed unemployment approach the outer limits of endurance, 100 percent. Unemployment and the lack of capital ravaged the agricultural sector of the country as well. Between 1933 and 1937, over 71,000 agricultural holdings were foreclosed upon, representing 16.7 percent of Austria’s farmland.223 Therefore Schuschnigg was forced to conclude that home support based on economics was erratic and feckless.

On the other hand, Dollfuss had been and Schuschnigg was as active as other heads of government throughout Europe attempting to alleviate economic hardships. Each in turn determined to cut government spending and maintain a balanced budget. Each maintained stringent deflationary policies to stabilize the currency. Wages were frozen, and interest rates were kept high. Considering Great Depression era figures, by 1937 it looked as though

223. Bukey, 17.
the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg corporate state had managed to perform somewhat satisfactorily. Figures suggest that production, both agriculturally and industrially, was on the verge of surpassing the 1929 level. In addition, a favorable balance of trade had been attained. Tourism, a principal exponent of a viable Austria, was also rebounding. Economic indicators were expressing improvement and hope for a brighter future. However, for those Austrians out of work at the turn of 1938 and embittered by the austerity measures taken by the government, the willingness to remain absolutely faithful to an independent Austria was in question. Hitler’s Third Reich with all of its faults and shortcomings may not have been the sweetest choice, but certainly it could not be worse. A wait and see, half hoping, but certainly not confident in the Third Reich attitude was maintained by many Austrians.

Drawing a conclusion, economic factors were proving advantageous for the pro-Nazi position and brutally relevant to the Schuschnigg government. Furthermore, it needs noting that Hitler and his Nazis were anticipating a forced Anschluss, and while a genuinely supportive Austrian population would be appreciated, it was not a prerequisite. Schuschnigg, on the other hand, was well aware of the vulnerability in which he and his fellow Austrians found themselves, and therefore coveted the support of the Austrian population. When Hitler secured the position of chancellor in 1933, Austrian Pan-German Nationalists quickly revealed their support on an ideological front, as one would expect. At the same time, reaction within the Christian Social and Social Democratic camps was the removal of any Anschluss plank in their respective party platforms. However, given both the passage of time and stagnant economic factors through 1938, a decrease in the ideological repulsiveness of Hitler’s Nazism manifested itself, particularly among some Social Democrats and

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225. Ibid., 22.
Christian Socials. The citizens of Austria, as in the past, were compelled to weigh all the variables (religion, economics, class, party affiliation, ideology, region) and make a determination as to which political scenario proved the most agreeable. The support for the government and Schuschnigg was very fluid; therefore, popularity figures ranging from dismal to lackluster were common. This was the population that Schuschnigg had to work with when confronting Hitler’s Anschluss plans. Historian René Albrecht-Carrie made the following conclusion: “…the regime of Chancellor Schuschnigg lacked a sufficient basis of positive support in the country as well as a forceful personality in its leader.”

Schuschnigg walked into Berchtesgaden in February 1938 knowing full well support for the regime was very tentative, oscillating, and short on resolve. One must also come to the conclusion that Austrian patriotism and identity were liable to be illusive under the circumstances.

Berchtesgaden

The mounting strength of Hitler’s Germany militarily and economically and his position within Germany had risen perceptibly since 1934. By January 1938 overtures for a meeting between the two leaders had developed into concrete plans. His reference to the necessary meeting as inevitable is suggestive of Schuschnigg’s personal lack of desire to meet with the Führer, and he confessed the inability to eradicate a sinking feeling about the meeting. Honorably, his personal lack of desire was overcome by a combined desire and duty to perform the task for Austria and the Austrians.

Schuschnigg arrived at Berchtesgaden (a municipality in the Bavarian Alps and location of a retreat utilized by Hitler) on the morning of February 12. As the meeting got

226. Albrecht-Carrie, 518.
underway, Schuschnigg’s hope against hope that a spirit of dialogue and negotiation might be established was dashed. Disappointedly, he was made to realize that he was not in a position to negotiate. He was expected to act in a conciliatory manner, especially since Hitler orchestrated the scene displaying himself as the powerbroker encircled by top military personnel (General Keitel, newly appointed Chief of the Wehrmacht High Command; General Reichenau, Commander in Chief of 4th Army Group; General Sperrle, veteran Luftwaffe commander).227 Assuming himself to be in a position of strength, Hitler presented to Schuschnigg very substantial demands. Austrian Nazis were to be granted freedom to openly support their party’s policies and programs. Nazis of Austria—as individuals—were to be admitted to the ruling coalition, then being referred to as the Fatherland (Vaterländische) Front. The Austrian Nazi Arthur von Seyss-Inquart was to be honored with a ministerial position and specifically given control over police forces in Austria. Finally, those in prison from the Dollfuss coup were to be given complete amnesty. These demands were accompanied with a reconfirmation of previous agreements recognizing Austria’s sovereignty, independence, and German non-interference in internal Austrian affairs.228 Browbeaten by Hitler and sensing nothing to be gained by further negotiating, Schuschnigg bowed to force and agreed to the demands, and left Berchtesgaden rather dispirited. The demands as enumerated were little more than the first steps of Anschluss shrouded by a gossamer veil. Given a free rein, the Austrian Nazis, supported by German Nazi organization, would facilitate a silent coup in little time. In that sense the long awaited Anschluss was soon to be reality. However, there remained a dark cloud over Anschluss being accomplished in this manner that could not be shaken easily.

227. Brook-Shepherd, 42.
228. Jalevich, 218.
It would also be beguiling to imply an absolute open road to *Anschluss* as of February 12, 1938. Hitler was an actor and an orchestrator, and, as always, it was up to the audience to determine its perception of reality and, equally important, its forthcoming response. Schuschnigg’s signature did have to be applied to the list of demands. Schuschnigg also made it clear that his signature on the list of demands was not sufficient according to the Austrian constitution; the president—President Wilhelm Miklas—also had to apply his signature for it to be binding. Secondly, Hitler was not prepared, although he might have given that impression, for a military acquisition of Austria. Third and of utmost significance was the anxiety Hitler realized concerning the reaction Mussolini might exhibit if Austria’s independence was threatened militarily or via intrigue. Finally, Hitler was not alone in his ability to maneuver. Schuschnigg had plans as well. He eventually determined to force Hitler’s hand by turning to the Austrian people by means of a plebiscite; the people of Austria were to be given an opportunity to articulate their desires.

Schuschnigg did return to Vienna from Berchtesgaden discouraged, but nonetheless determined to put forward the best possible front. The Berchtesgaden meeting itself had been secretive, and the results kept very low key. However, on February 20 Hitler made a speech hinting at millions of Germans being held captive and suffering on account of being pro-Nazi. Following the basics of the Berchtesgaden agreement, Nazism became very visible in Austria. The freedoms permitted unleashed a frenzy of excitement on the part of Austrian Nazis. Probably the number of Austrian Nazis did not increase markedly at this moment, but the acknowledgement of and the audacity of Austrian Nazism, heretofore subdued, felt no restraint and gave an appearance of popularity. Schuschnigg’s original

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predictions were coming to fruition, and, as a result, he set in motion a plebiscite.

The call for the plebiscite was made on March 9, and the vote was to be held on Sunday March 13. Here it can be said that Schuschnigg walked the finest of lines. His submitting the nation to a plebiscite was the vehicle to inform the democratic world of behind-the-scenes aggression of Hitler, and of Austrians’ desires. If the Austrians voted to remain an independent republic, it would surely be a democratic statement against the threatening forces of an aggressive Hitler. In addition, a vote to remain independent would shift, in part, the burden of preserving Austria to the Western democratic nations, unless hypocrisy got the better of Western leadership. In this light, Austria’s blood and death would be on their hands. However, Schuschnigg’s personal convictions stood the entire plebiscite concept on its head, for he feared a German civil war. In his final analysis, submission was preferable to the shedding of German blood by Germans.

Hitler was taken aback when he received notification of the Austrian plebiscite, and he demanded it be prevented. Communication increased radically between Berlin and Vienna as a result. Determination, as if it were squeezed through communication wires, went through to Hitler’s Austrian Nazis in Schuschnigg’s cabinet. Arthur Seyss-Inquart, now Austria’s Minister of the Interior, worked on Hitler’s behalf, and was determined to influence Schuschnigg. Hitler stepped up the pressure. After ordering the mobilization of the Eighth Army, located in adjacent Bavaria, and encouraging Austrian Nazis to take advantage of their complete freedom of action, Hitler instructed Seyss-Inquart to convince Schuschnigg to rescind the call for the plebiscite. Eventually, threats of invasion prompted the exhausted
chancellor to call off the plebiscite early on the afternoon on Friday March 11. While, this rendition of events implies no hitch or catch, reality was not so.

Hitler and the Nazis had no detailed script to follow concerning Anschluss; in fact, in this matter at this time, Hitler bounced along feeling his way, and at times being nudged along by advisors. It had been determined that once Schuschnigg called off the plebiscite, he was to resign, and Seyss-Inquart was to be appointed chancellor. Eventually this was completed, but not until a prolonged refusal to accept the resignation and appointment of Seyss-Inquart by President Miklas was overcome. Schuschnigg addressed his nation at about 7:45 that Friday evening (March 11) concerning his resignation. It was not until midnight, however, that President Miklas succumbed to the pressures and acknowledged the new chancellor, Seyss-Inquart. In the meantime, upon the news of Schuschnigg’s resignation, the streets of Austria, particularly in Vienna, filled with Nazis. Excitement and energetic frenzy was not to be curtailed. A preordained fabricated need for and call for German assistance to restore order was made to Berlin. Under this pretext, Hitler ordered the Eighth Army to cross the border into Austria; commencing at daybreak (March 12).

Nothing was certain. Everything was up in the air, and Hitler was uneasy. Recalling that when forces of the Third Reich reoccupied the Rhineland two years prior, Hitler was on the edge of his seat suffering anxiety over the reaction he might expect from Great Britain and France. Once again moments of great anxiety were to accompany him as the Anschluss unfolded. Twenty-four hours after his ad hoc coup had begun uncertainty of how people and nations would react dominated his mind. In reality, Hitler was inching along simultaneously fearful and hopeful. Hitler flew to Munich on the morning of Saturday March 12. By the

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231. Bukey, 27.
232. Ibid., 26.
time of his arrival, the welcoming spirit of at least a good portion of the Austrian population had been demonstrated to the advancing forces of the Eighth Army. Not sure what to expect upon crossing the border into Austrian territory, the unambiguous welcoming acclamations by the Austrians were stunning and confirming. Consequently, Hitler wasted no time in utilizing the tide of approbation to advance his cause. He determined to return to his hometown of Braunau, conveniently located on the Austrian border. From Braunau, he advanced to the more significant city of Linz, and there addressed an ecstatic crowd estimated to have been 60,000 strong. Hitler arrived in Vienna on Monday to masses of cheering voices and waving hands. Hitler addressed the crowd, “What you feel, I have for the last five days experienced. It is a great turn of history our German people have witnessed…”

What appears to have been carried out and concluded in a satisfactory and smooth fashion, has two remarkable factors that altered the eventual outcome. As has been noted already, the crowds were vociferous in their welcoming the German troops and Hitler himself. The excited enthusiasm must be given credit for stirring Hitler to contemplate a union of a different kind with Austria. The union originally anticipated was to be associational, allowing a noticeable degree of autonomy. The apparent enthusiasm of the Austrians, in addition to the noteworthy noninterference of Benito Mussolini, strongly encouraged Hitler to go through with annexing Austria entirely. Hitler’s annexation plan was held up again by President Miklas’ refusal to sign the law uniting Austria to Germany. He resigned instead. Now head of state, Seyes-Inquart signed the German document stipulating

Anschluss. Conveniently the Reichspost of Vienna printed the document’s content in an article entitled “Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Wiedervereinigung Österrechsc Mit Dem Deutschen Reich.” Article 1, of the document read, “Austria is a province of the German Reich.”236 Although precarious from the beginning, even going back to the Berchtesgaden meeting, Anschluss was accomplished. It could be argued that to the Austrian crowds credit must be given for turning a hesitant Hitler into a demanding Hitler.

Anschluss, the coveted prize among Germans of Central Europe, had finally been achieved. Decade after decade and generation after generation had passed until finally the necessary pieces making it possible united in a symphony of energies facilitating the union of Germanic brotherhood. Although there remained enclaves of Germans outside territorial Germany, the greatest and most significant addendum was realized. Although Ein Volk (one people) status was applicable before the Anschluss, the reality of territorial unity could not help but foster a strengthened unified spirit of brotherhood. It was to this moment that Anschluss advocates had yearned, although many grew old knowing they were but carrying the torch for the next generation. Nonetheless, now in 1938, Ein Volk crafted into Ein Reich (one kingdom). Hitler had taken the given opportunity to perform for the world to see what Pan-German theorists had preached for years, the unshackling of German potential. Coincidentally, forces provided not only the formation of Ein Volk and Ein Reich, but also Ein Führer (one leader), and that being Nazi Germany’s Hitler. The future for the new Germanic entity shone bright and energetic, just as the acclamation of unity shone bright in the eyes of those greeting Hitler as he made appearances in Austria during those glorious March days. There was no room for anti-climacticism then, nor here and now. Anschluss had

236. Reichspost, “Ein Volk, ein Reich” (Vol.73, March 14, 1938), 1.
been brought to fruition, and glorying in the accomplishment was not to be subdued. Neither were the anticipated expectations to be questioned.

Post Anschluss Reality

It would be absurd to insinuate that upon the Anschluss the whole of Austria’s population underwent a metamorphosis-like experience, leaving all traces, meager or strong, of former identity and adopting new. Even if that were the case, an inevitable question would surface. To what identity would the metamorphosis tend? Would Austrians shake off their former identity and identify as Nazi Germans, as German Germans, or maybe southern Germans? Moreover, how capable was the population of the Reich to perform an act of incorporation of the Austrian population into the body of the Volk? Each of these issues presents a challenge in itself; however, success or failure of Anschluss could be wrapped up in one or more of the answers to these rhetorical questions.

Certainly, it is not absurd to suggest that many Austrians were dissatisfied with the Anschluss. Some were disheartened, and some never wanted it in the first place. Others took more time to come to the realization that their identity was not as malleable as originally believed, and therefore refutation of Austrian identity was difficult to accomplish, regardless of the Austrian exhibition of Anschluss euphoria.

Some expressions of dissatisfaction were immediately exhibited, while others needed nurturing time to determine their conclusion. Since he had a very prominent role in the Anschluss, Dr. Arthur Seyss-Inquart’s second thoughts are interesting and may serve to represent the thought of others. He was a son of Austria, a Catholic, Schuschnigg’s peer, a convert to Nazism, and an integral representative of Hitler within Schuschnigg’s government. Schuschnigg and Seyss-Inquart were both mature enough to maintain social cordiality while
at odds over Austria’s future. Much was exchanged between these two, and Schuschnigg respected him. On March 11 Seyss-Inquart assumed the predetermined position of chancellor and prepared to continue this role. He proceeded to create a cabinet of moderate national Nazis.²³⁷ It had also been predetermined that Seyss-Inquart was to make a request to Berlin for assistance. Austrian inability to restore order was the pretext created for making such a request to the Third Reich, a pretext for a Nazi takeover. Interestingly, Seyss-Inquart refused to make this call until Hermann Göring, speaking for Hitler by phone, badgered him into relenting. Acquiescing, Seyss-Inquart had the call made by the new Secretary of State, Wilhelm Keppler. However, within hours, he changed his mind. He contacted the German Military Attaché in Vienna, General Wolfgang Muff, and requested that the Eighth Army not cross the border into Austria. If perchance the armed forces had already crossed, he requested that they be recalled. Ten minutes after the request was made, Hitler was on the phone indicating that the troops would not be halted.²³⁸ Seyss-Inquart, too, was becoming aware of his pawn status. The following day, Saturday, March 11, Seyss-Inquart awoke with the task of acting as a bonafide chancellor. He later arrived at Linz to welcome Hitler as the head of state. Of this, historian Gordon Brook-Shepherd spoke volumes in a few short sentences. He wrote:

Seyss-Inquart had been going through similar empty motions of independence all day, attempts to assert himself which were so earnestly pathetic that any severity with which he is judged must be blended with certain compassion. His first thought on waking up as Austrian chancellor…had been a renewed effort to prevent the occupation from taking place at all…All that night in Linz, the bitter farce continued. Thus Seyss-Inquart tried to save his country’s face when he had already bartered away its soul.²³⁹

²³⁷. Brook-Shepherd, 179.
²³⁹. Brook-Shepherd, 192.
What had Seyss-Inquart been thinking? Evidence suggests and his actions confirm he anticipated functioning as the nominal head of, at least, a semi-independent Bavaria-like Austria.²⁴⁰ He participated happily and energetically in the dissolution of the Schuschnigg government anticipating a prominent role for himself and fellow Austrian Nazis. To his dismay, his role was minimized within hours, and he was powerless to halt the coup upon his position and that of the integrity of Austria.

*Anschluss* was one intended objective according to *Mein Kampf*; however, what constituted *Anschluss* and the means of achieving it were debatable. Seyss-Inquart misjudged what *Anschluss* would do for him. He might be the most pitied of all those involved in the *Anschluss*, for he, anticipating personal gain and possibly national gain, was brushed aside with unbelievable speed by Hitler in mid March 1938; too late to reverse the course of events, or mitigate damage. Still in his position in 1939 Seyss-Inquart battled Hitler’s appointee Gauleiter Josef Bürckel (Reich Commissioner for Reunification). Bürckel stated, “You, Doctor [Seyss-Inquart] are for preservation. I have been commissioned by the *Führer* to liquidate….”²⁴¹ He was representative of those Austrians who seemed totally on board with a Nazi based *Anschluss*, yet during the actual event recognized or least questioned the wisdom of their actions.

Zooming outward, much the same is applicable to the three major political parties that had struggled against one another and Schuschnigg prior to the *Anschluss*. Social Democratic leadership, along with Christian Socials and Pan-Germans, were antagonistic toward each other during the years of the first Austrian republic. Strife between camps resulted in the development of the dictatorial corporate state. This weakened the spirit of

²⁴⁰. Brook-Shepherd, 180.
²⁴¹. Schuschnigg, 302.
unity and identity among Austrians and in the final analysis aided in the resultant *Anschluss*. The realization that *Anschluss*, Nazi style, would eliminate even the barest semblance of independence and party autonomy came too late and too feebly. Social Democrat Karl Renner and Cardinal Innitzer, in the end, generated justification to cast their support in favor of Hitler’s *Anschluss* plebiscite on April 10. Cardinal Innitizer identified himself and Austrian Christian Socials as German Catholics, while Renner found identity for Social Democrats in Socialist Germany. Neither of these men under these circumstances, nor those they theoretically represented, found identity in Austria or Austrian institutions. One could argue that neither was their justification for supporting Hitler completely credible.\(^{242}\)

Stepping back further, as though a lens zooming out, and taking in the whole of the Austrian population, reveals similar sentiments. Hitler’s April 10 plebiscite registered a 99 percent approval rate among those who voted, said to have been 4,453,000 out of 4,484,000 eligible voters in Austria.\(^ {243}\) Long before the actual vote, the population of Austria declared its wishes. Hitler was welcomed, cheered, and revered by millions as he set foot in Austria. There was frenzied exuberance and euphoria for *Anschluss*, and an undeniable exhilaration swept across mainstream Austria, an exhilaration that swept virtually all inhibitions before it. Why and what rationale prompted such an outpouring?

Economics tipped the rationale scale for many. Austrians suffered after World War I, and, of course, during the humiliating years of the U.S. stock market crash and bank failures of 1931 and after. Enduring economic hardship was becoming harder and tiresome. In a state under this set of economic conditions, the people of Austria perceived an economic hope in the Nazi regime, the same hope that had instilled life in Germany. Weariness from

\(^{243}\) Brook-Shepherd, 204.
waiting and hope of improved economic conditions helped to feed the euphoria exhibited by
Austrians upon the arrival of German troops on March 12 and after. The likelihood of
economic recovery in Austria was an impetus not surmountable. Emotions of joy and active
participation in heralding the event by Austrians cannot be denied. The moment had finally
arrived, for the likes of the Pan-Germans, to celebrate the long awaited *Anschluss*. Another
large portion of society, who previously questioned the wisdom of union with Hitler’s
Germany, experienced the inexplicable forces of human nature to relinquish oneself to peer
and community pressures and, in fact, facilitated the continuance of pressure. The moment
people of mixed feelings ascertained the tendency of others, to offer up expressions of
approbation toward *Anschluss*, they jumped on board.

Economic factors are powerful forces to those suffering financial hardships, but by no
means did they represent the entirety of forces being exerted on the Austrians at the time.
Gordon Brook-Shepherd identified economics as a factor, but while recognizing its
influence, he did not demur from incorporating additional influences. He expressed himself
well when he wrote:

> The basic reason was psychological...Austria had written herself off as a free
country, and had been written off by the world. Some voted out of fanaticism
some out of sheer relief....The Republic had lived through two decades of polit-
ical strife and economic hardship, ending with five years of smoldering Nazi crisis
which had themselves culminated in five weeks of unbelievable tensions....The
emotional fibre of the nation had snapped with exhaustion....

Gordon Brook-Shepherd made reference to two decades (1918-1938) of political strife
and of course economic hardships. In retrospect, governing Austria after the First World War
was bound to be a thankless no-win endeavor. Threats of communism on the horizon, left to
quiver as a truncated neophyte republic, and denied meaningful substantial association with

244. Brook-Shepherd, 204.
the sympathetic ally Germany, made for an unenviable political predicament. Some Social Democrats unwisely exacerbated the inability to address national concerns in a spirit of unity. Moreover, as if not sufficiently assailed by difficulties, the Great Depression added its own woes. Although it is not without sympathy, when one looks back upon the Christian Social government and Dollfuss-Schuschnigg corporate state, the fact remains that governments must produce. Governments must provide for economic, social, cultural and religious well-being. Failing to be forthcoming with these necessities, while ever increasing in dictatorial rule, undoubtedly convinced many Austrians to cast a vote in Hitler’s favor as a means to cast a vote against the Austrian Christian Social establishment. Assuming for a moment the ability to resist Hitler’s schemes, what was it the Austrian men and women were to defend? The Habsburg dynasty was gone. Liberties and freedoms, these the corporate state had handily removed. The government and the land remained. However, resisting and shedding of blood, German blood, for the less than probable maintenance of the corporate dictatorship, seemed difficult to justify, especially given what appeared to be a qualitative economic recovery in Germany, and the uniting of Germans into a single entity.

Still another angle on Austrians resigning themselves to Anschluss needs to be brought to light. Emotionally drained, economically weary, and in fear of spilling German blood, Austrians masked second thoughts about Anschluss. Resistance was possible; however, the easier path, the path of least resistance, was to jump aboard the Hitler bandwagon. If uniting with Hitler’s Reich was the path of least resistance, when the moment came it must have seemed only reasonable to jump in with both feet, wholeheartedly. For some, embracing Hitler’s Nazi Germany took no effort because in so doing they were resurrecting the radical Pan-German spirit of Georg von Schönerer. The more skeptical undecided Austrian taking
the path of least resistance experienced an enlivening of pro-Aryan emotion. In other words, giving into the German racial theories prompted an emotional high very pleasing to the human psyche, hitherto resisted. Resigning to racial theories with Germans on the top had its benefits. Which no doubt helped in putting positive spin on a questionable future.

**On To War**

Austria had vanished and was absorbed into the German Reich. The people, if they did not fully identify with the Third Reich, were isolated and without identity as never before. In the backwaters of Europe who would take notice of Austrians after this? While Europeans and Americans watched the engulfing of a nation they created, Nazi German leadership was preparing with expediency the most efficient means by which to utilize assets acquired by the *Anschluss*. Austrian labor suited the Nazi armament industry, and certainly employment suited the Austrian unemployed. The mutually beneficial exchange was therefore not wholly without merit. Austrian farmers found a great market in the old Germany. Money was to be made, and Austrians were receptive.

Exploitative military operations were the mainstay of fascist regimes, and with this in mind, the Third Reich turned to directing its forces at Czechoslovakia, first the Sudetenland (September 1938), soon thereafter, the remainder of the nation. Ever needful of *Lebensraum* (living space) for German stock and military adventure, Hitler instigated the invasion of Poland in September 1939. These military exploits tumbled a good portion of the world into war. Austrians were part and parcel, like it or not, of a military machine taking Germans to new heights of territorial grandeur. Many German Austrians found reason to be supportive of the war and were able to benefit in a multitude of ways. Concurrently, military operations
produced pain, suffering, and atrocities that the German Austrians’ collective conscience would have to deal with. The war produced its villains, and many were Austrians.

Without negating responsibility for war crimes, the question of the war’s impact on Austria remains. The subject of the war’s impact on Austria appears multi-faceted, as well as continuous. The fact of the matter is that Austrians suffered; 65,000 Jews were outright murdered. Records indicate more than 16,000 Austrians met their death in concentration camps, and hundreds were executed because of their participation or supposed participation in some form of resistance to the Third Reich. Austrian manpower was particularly sought after by German armed forces. Of the 6.5 million Austrians, 1.2 million were required to serve in the Wehrmacht. Of that number, almost 250,000 were casualties in combat. Another 600,000 native Austrian soldiers were taken prisoner, and if one escaped death by these means, bombing killed over 24,000. Resources other than human were attractive to the Nazi arms and munitions industries. Mining and metallurgy endeavors soured Austrian territory and depleted resources for the sake of the Thousand Year Reich. Oil production was paramount to Nazi leadership, as well as nitrogen and aluminum production. In addition to these types of losses Austrian territory suffered Allied bombing. In conclusion, the war was not kind to Austria, if war could be kind.

One may indeed fail to be able to generate sympathy for Austria and Austrians as a suffering people when it was they who were active participants in propagating pro-German theories of the superior racial development and qualities of the German race. Some may be so inclined to excoriate this author for lending a sympathetic ear toward the ruination of Austria as a result of the war. Remembering the focal point of Anschluss and Austrian

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245. Greinert, 144.
246. Rauchensteiner, 145.
identity demands that the war’s impact on the material physical nation be brought to the surface, at least for summary review. Responsibility for war crimes perpetrated by Austrians cannot be mitigated on the grounds of circumstances. On the other hand, recognizing the impact of the war on Austria in relation to Anschluss has its rewards.

War is horrifying, and because it is of this nature it appears to those involved that they are attempting to survive an eternity. The Nazi Reich experienced spectacular successes during the first years of the war. These successes in Poland, Denmark, Norway, and France, for example, probably convinced some Austrians that Anschluss had truly been beneficial. By mid war (1942/43), the destructive forces of the long years of war, combined with declining instances of success, introduced questions about the future of the Austrians by the Austrians as well as others. Assuming the potential for an Allied victory, Austrians sooner or later, even those remaining defiant, had to come to grips with their future, their identity.

Helping Austrians come to grips with their future, whether they were aware of it or not, world powers began planning for a post-war world. Indicative of Allied views of post-war Austria can be found in the November 1943 Moscow Declaration. The declaration crafted by foreign ministers set the tone for further discussions and the anticipated state of Austria. Three chords were sounded in the Moscow Declaration. “Austria, the first free country to fall victim to Hitlerite aggression, shall be liberated from German domination” quickly asserted Austria as prey to Nazi German machinations. Secondly, the legality of Anschluss was denied. The declaration stated, “the annexation imposed on Austria by Germany on March 15, 1938, as null and void….they wish to see reestablished a free and independent Austria…to find that political economic security which is the only basis

247. Jalevich, 238.
of lasting peace.” The third note struck in the chord provided some understanding as to how Austrians were to view their liberation. It read, “Austria has a responsibility…for participation in the war at the side of Hitlerite Germany, and that in the final settlement account will inevitably be taken of her own contributions to her liberation.”

The Moscow Declaration provided a framework from which both Allied powers and Austrians could advance to a future arrangement. The Allied powers provided a means by which Austrians could restore their country’s credibility as a peaceable member of the world community. A fine line was being established between Austrian consensus or coercion in regard to the war. Post-war Austria depended, to a great extent, on Austrian actions during the later portion of the war. No doubt, Austrians found themselves facing personally troubling decisions, equally difficult to determine as that of formulating positions on Anschluss. In the end, Allied powers desired of Austrians confirmation of their anti-Nazi Germany stance via active resistance to the German war effort. Once again Austrian Germans were faced with an immediate dilemma: resistance could result in the death of individuals; lack of resistance was indicative of support of Nazi Germany and their perpetrator rather than victim status. Conflicting interests related to the Anschluss presented themselves to Austrians once again.

Undoubtedly, the collapse of the German front at Stalingrad, the defection of Italy from the Axis powers, and German defeats in North Africa, had a demoralizing effect on Austrians. However, Austrians remained in a state of moral confusion; at times hopeful of victory and peace, and at times hopeful of victim status and avoiding total destruction. For over fourteen months after the Moscow Declaration, Austrian judgement and emotions ebbed

and flowed with news and propaganda from the fronts. There were instances of Austrian resistance, but the war ended before Austrians really sprang into action.

Of great interest is the spectrum of attitudes presented by those knowledgeable of Austrian performance during the final year of the war. One school of thought contends that Austrian resistance was in existence, but not readily visible to outsiders and authorities and therefore not given credit. Austrians, it suggests, had really defected from the Nazi German camp, and, as a result, they were to be morally distanced from the guilt of war and its destruction. On the other hand, others contend that there appeared little if any evidence of Austrian defection from the principles of the Nazi regime. Austrians did little to hasten the end of the war, in fact, giving hope to the very end that a positive end of the war could be salvaged. More than likely, this debate will continue for a long time among Austrians as well as outsiders. Of the post-war debates Schuschnigg wrote:

> And then began the endless argument about blame and responsibility, which was both understandable and indeed useful provided people were both able and willing to remember and also could bring themselves to listen. Inevitably opinions clashed and everyone tried to prove himself right...its only human.”

Schuschnigg made reference to the endless arguments and energies spent relegating blame, perhaps the establishment of a sound second Austrian Republic would have been the place to allocate those energies.

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Vienna no less then Berlin was targeted as the Red Army advanced across Central Europe in the spring of 1945. As in Berlin, tenacious Nazis held on to Vienna rendering street fighting a necessity, but after a week (April 6-13) of grueling battle the city was brought to heel by the invading forces. Into the vacuum former statesmen gingerly stepped, but still with hopeful determination. This situation demanded a clear mind as well as discernment, for association with the Soviets might cast negative connotations, and the reliability of Soviet intentions was in question. Nonetheless, into the mix Austrian politicians went seeking to reestablish themselves and their country. Karl Renner, former chancellor (1918-1920), approached the Soviets in early April hoping he could be of service to Austria; he was. Renner was taken to Wiener Neustadt, then secure under Marshal Tolbukhim, and permitted to draft plans and programs for the administration of the future Austria. After Vienna was secured by Soviet forces (April 13), he was transferred to the capital.251

Vienna was at the time teeming with reconstituting Austrian political parties attempting to unravel the consequences of the war. The former Social Democrats were remodeled into the Socialist Party of Austria, and the Christian Socials into the Austrian People’s Party. It is fair to say that Karl Renner’s work bore fruit, for on April 20 he was charged by the Soviets with the task of forming a provisional government for Austria.252

251. Stadler, 253.
252. Ibid., 255.
Government was established on April 27, and each of the three parties—Socialist Party, Austrian People’s Party, and Communist Party—was given equal status until an official election was held. Most appropriate to accompany the formation of the Provisional Government was the *Declaration of Austrian Independence*. It read:

> The democratic Republic of Austria is re-established and shall be conducted in the spirit of the constitution of 1920. The Anschluss imposed upon the people of Austria in 1938 is null and void. For the execution of the Declaration, and with the participation of all anti-Fascists parties, a Provisional State Government has been formed and entrusted, without prejudice to the occupying powers, with full legislative and executive powers. From the day of the publication of this Declaration of Independence all military, official, or personal oaths taken by Austrians with regard to the German Reich and its government are null and not binding. From this day all Austrians are again in loyalty bound as citizens to the Republic of Austria.

As if given a second chance, the Austrians stated their relationship to the *Anschluss*, and reverted to the democratic republic of the Kelsen Constitution type rather than the corporate state of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg.

In retrospect from the twenty-first century, this was an accomplishment. It was an accomplishment, but because it was completed under the auspices of the Soviet military, Western powers were suspicious. However, the Austrians wasted no time in pursuing national elections. Therefore on November 25, 1945 the first free election in Austria since 1930 was held. The election results were telling: the People’s Party secured 50 percent of the vote, the Socialist Party 44.6 percent, and the Communist Party 5.4 percent. Apparently the Austrian commitment to Catholic conservatism was more a part of their identity than many Austrians realized. Eventually the validity of the Austrian government was

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254. Stadler, 255.
255. Ibid, 258.
recognized; however, the Allied Powers determined that sectoring off Austria and Vienna, as was accomplished in Germany and Berlin, was pertinent to the maintenance of stability in the post-war atmosphere.

The war being over and the new republic established prompted Schuschnigg, the former chancellor, after enduring years in a concentration camp, to write, “When it was all over, however, and for good or ill we were together again, we were all fifty years richer in experience, whether we liked it or not.”\textsuperscript{256} Fifty years of experience in the span of seven years, agreeably torturous, must be of some profit. As after the war he went on to express:

…”the one thing practically everybody was agreed on in its [Anschluss] existing form, no! Since then, for the vast majority of Austrians, wherever they may be, the Anschluss idea has become merely a reminder of a temporary aberration. They are united in the conviction that the Anschluss had been surmounted.”\textsuperscript{257}

The twentieth century was host to two world wars that decimated millions of lives and inflicted unfathomable destruction. In both wars Austrians were major participants. Each

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\textsuperscript{256} Schuschnigg, 330.  
\textsuperscript{257} Ibid, 331.
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war destroyed the state in which the Austrians lived; the First World War destroyed Austria as Austria-Hungary, and the Second World War destroyed Austria as Austria in the Third Reich. Each war also resulted in Austria as a newly established republic. While the pre-war state of existence of the two republics was different, it is equally significant that the post-war existence of the second republic was vastly different than that of the first.

The First Austrian Republic was crafted in less than ideal circumstances. The republic was created out of the ashes of a long lived empire that had the wherewithall to manage a corner of Europe. The new republic was forced, then, to acknowledge a diminished role and status. The dynasty around which the empire revolved was gone. The republic was isolated from trade for various reasons, as stated above. The republic was created contrary to the heralded principle of self-determination in order to prevent union with Germany. Post-war financial support was limited, and conditions of economic existence uninspiring. Its survival was its own business. Austrian post World War I development was in many ways centered on the issue of Anschluss. In other words, not being able to shake Anschluss—its total achievement or total renunciation—prevented progress.

The Second Austrian Republic entered the world community in a different set of circumstances. One immediate difference was the relinquishing of Anschluss as raison d’être. Secondly, because of Anschluss being a thing of the past, focus on Austrianism could take precedence. How that would develop and its character was not totally discernible, but the distracting influence of Anschluss was removed. Of great importance to the second republic was the post World War II-Cold War influence. Unlike circumstances after the First World War, the Cold War struggle made Austria a welcomed ally against the forces of communism. Not left to wither and fend for itself, the second Austrian republic was
supported through the Marshall Plan by Western powers; it was needed by Western powers, and its vibrancy was sought after by Western Powers. The post World War Two Austria had the luxury of facing its own internal issues without the debilitating schemes of embittered former antagonists. The intensity of the Cold War fostered a congenial coexistence with Western powers focused on the greater Soviet threat. Perhaps the experience of the aftermath of World War I engendered an appreciation for the cooperative spirit after the Second World War. Moreover, Austrian identity, nationalism, and patriotism had a new playing field upon which to develop.

What then can be said of the war as a positive note for Austrian rationale, nationalism, and identity? The war satiated Austrian clamors for Anschluss by placing them under the yoke of the Third Reich. Many Austrians foresaw the weight of the Nazi yoke, while others needed live experiential proof. In the end, as Schuschnigg suggested, the Nazi regime convinced the skeptical that an independent Austria was preferable to union with Germany. It can be presumed, that without the war the struggle to secure or not to secure Anschluss could have continued unabated. Clearly the Anschluss, as it happened in 1938, and the subsequent war were enough to cast aspersions on Anschluss; the war did Austrians a favor. The war was cruel enough, and Hitler’s Nazi regime was ravaging enough to convince Austrians to seek consolation in their fellow countrymen. The war helped to cast a favorable light on each other as Austrians, which previously had grown rather dim. The Anschluss fashioned by Hitler and the long years of war aided Austrians to see each other as something different than Germans, and the only other way was to view themselves, and each other, was as Austrians. The phenomenon had the fortunate result of enabling Austrians to finally throw off what seemed an innate desire for territorial unity with Germany, and exist contentedly
adjacent to it. *Anschluss* to the Nazi regime was like a press that forced the removal of pro-
*Anschluss* sentiment, while awakening pre-existing, although latent, belief in the Austrian self. The war also provided a convenient situation whereby Austrians could experience *Anschluss* and have a means to extract themselves should second thoughts materialize. Secondly, the *Anschluss* and war, as it was conducted, provided Austrians with victim status if things did not turn out positively, or as part of the master race if things turned out favorably. In different circumstances Austrians may have been trapped as a nonentity in a foreign nation. In an awkward roundabout way, it might be suggested that the Allied powers did Austria a favor by forbidding *Anschluss* in the postwar treaties. This would be a case of accidentally bumbling into something that proved advantageous for a people, while intending to inflict pain.

Austrians entered the Cold War Era resolved to put *Anschluss* behind and get on with the business of reestablishing their Austrian republic. The re-creation of the republic necessitated a political savviness as well as determination, while the birthing of the nation of people took on a different dynamic altogether. Since the illusive *Anschluss* card had been removed from the national identity hand, its tempting influence was too. Astoundingly, what cards left in the Austrian hand began to take on a new character. Without the *Anschluss* card, but with the effects of World War II, they revealed a combination that illustrated both Austrian uniqueness and how different Austrian Germans were from those of Germany.

Several cards were given the opportunity to reveal their hues after the *Anschluss* card was removed. One of the cards of great influence was that of Austrian Catholicism. Catholicism had been and was the bulwark of Austrian religiosity. Austrian Holy Roman
Emperors such as Charles V played a great role in the Counter-Reformation. Moreover, Austria and Austrians had embraced Catholicism, and regardless of the continued prejudices of economic theorists like Marx and Lenin and their followers Austrians remained faithful. Moreover, Therefore, Protestant Germany was not really compatible with Austrian Catholic history and inclinations. Secondly, the Austrian heritage of guarding Europe, sentry-like, from incursions from the east was not equaled by the Germans to the north. Furthermore, Austria’s long history of association with Magyars and Slavs left an indelible influence on German Austrians. Finally, in this short exercise, nationhood for Austria was centuries old compared to the recent creation of Germany in 1871. These factors, given a chance to resurface, coupled with the ease with which the war allowed Austrians to distance themselves from Nazi Germany, and the appreciable forces of the Cold War made for a combination conducive to crystallizing the awakening of Austrian identity. For years the reigning approach had been the supposed uniformity of the Germans of Germany and Austria. The reversing of the approach—exhibiting differences--revealed stark contrasts, and the contrasts lent life to a national identity heretofore smothered.

**Conclusion**

The current trek through Austrian development concerning *Anschluss* found its beginning in the post-French Revolution years, with the 1848/49 revolutions as fundamental first steps. Therefore for 100 years, one century, multiple generations, Austrians have wrestled with *Anschluss*. The issue of Austrian identity in regard to *Anschluss* has been central on the trail. The Second World War tipped the scale clearly in the non-*Anschluss*

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independent Austria direction. This being the case, the dreadful war did the Austrians a favor or two. While not attempting to diminish the destruction of the war, it is suggested that the war served as an aid to Austrians in search of self-identity. As diamonds are created by intense pressure, so, too, pressures enhanced the development of and articulation of German Austrian rationale for and against Anschluss. Searching to establish an identity for some became increasingly tied to Anschluss. Achieving Anschluss in 1938 unwittingly revealed a homegrown Austrian identity had been materializing. Aptly, the post World War II Republic of Austria emerged confident, content in its own being, and fully prepared to capitalize on the revelatory fruits of Anschluss.

Austria’s relationship with the Anschluss has not diminished since the end of World War II. The brunt of this exercise has been to rebuild the trail of Anschluss influence, but as it has only been the trail to, there is a trail extending from Anschluss. For the last two centuries Anschluss has been axial in Austrian national identity. Anschluss in light of the war associated with it has proven to be equally tenacious in influencing rationale on the collective memory of the Austrian nation on this side of 1938. It has been hinted at that there has been and continues to be an Austrian national debate as to the Austrian role in the Anschluss. Was Austria the first victim, or a consenting participant? Once again, therefore, it becomes apparent that Anschluss was and continues to be pivotal in Austrian national identity.

259. Thaler, 5.
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