

The Euro-Elections

Signs of Spring come to Austria

by Hermann Trapier

The European elections are generally favorable to movements that defend the concept of Europe for Europeans (see cover story). Prospects are especially favorable in Eastern Europe but also in Austria, where the nationalist Right goes from strength to strength despite a recent split (see "What Happened in Austria," AR, Dec. 2008).



Joerg Haider and Stefan Petzner.

The Right came out the big winner in elections for two regional parliaments held on March 1 that forced a serious retreat on the ruling Social Democrats.

Despite the death in an automobile accident last October of its charismatic leader, Joerg Haider, the Alliance for the Future of Austria had great success in the province of Carinthia, where Mr. Haider was governor for 10 years. The Alliance got no less than 45.5 percent of the vote, or 4 percent more than in the previous election. The Austrian Freedom Party, Mr. Haider's former party and still reliably nationalist, got 3.8 percent of the vote, which put the combined Right at very close to 50 percent. The Social Democrats dropped 10 points to just 28.6 percent.

The Social Democrats also faltered in the parliamentary elections in the province of Salzburg, but were still the number-one party with 39.5 percent, which ensured that their leader, Gabi

Burgstaller, would continue as governor.

The traditional-conservative People's Party, which shares power at the national level with the Social Democrats in a grand coalition, also lost votes in Salzburg, where the nationalist Right made clear gains. The Freedom Party took 13 percent of the vote, which was 4.3 percent better than at last balloting. The Alliance for the Future of Austria, which seems to be limited in its influence to Carinthia, did not manage to send a member to the regional parliament.

Austrian press accounts of these results slipped into bad taste, underscoring the posthumous success of Mr. Haider: "He polls better dead than alive," was the predominant theme.

There was a sympathy vote, to be sure, but that does not explain every-



Heinz-Christian Strache.

thing. Mr. Haider's colorful personality was rather in conflict with the electorate's views of homosexuality, and that may help explain why a party with his platform does better without the man himself. On the other hand, one of the main architects of the Alliance's impressive win in Carinthia was Stefan Petzner, the "spiritual son" and reputed lover of the dead leader. He was briefly Mr. Haider's successor but was removed for speaking openly about their relationship. Mr. Petzner, who remained in the background but was very active in the

Le Pen Continues to Terrify

The Euro-Parliament has a tradition: After every election, the oldest member speaks at the inaugural session. The Euro-deputies are now in a stew because at age 80, none other than Jean-Marie Le Pen of the French National Front will be the senior member. As the French Socialist member Aurélie Filippetti explained, Mr. Le Pen is "a danger for democracy," so must not be given the floor.

What to do? Since the Euro-elections operate according to proportional representation, it would be possible to drag someone out of retirement and put him at the head of a party list. Former Portuguese prime minister Mario Soares is 84 and ex-chancellor of Germany Helmut Schmidt is 90. There was some talk that one of them could be persuaded to preside over the opening session and then resign his seat.

After that idea went nowhere, it now appears that the Euro-parliament will rewrite the rules to make sure Mr. Le Pen cannot poison the air. The outgoing president will have the right to inaugurate the new session, and if he is not re-elected the former vice president may preside. Bruno Gollnisch, Mr. Le Pen's deputy in the French National Front, poured scorn on this maneuvering. "The ones who want to change the rules are scoundrels and thugs," he said.

It is not the first time the parliament has been disgraced by poor losers. After the 1989 elections, film-maker Claude Autant-Lara was the oldest deputy at age 88. Horrors! He was a National Front candidate. That year, he was at least allowed to speak, and give a well-regarded warning on the American threat to European culture, but the majority of the deputies ostentatiously walked out of the chamber when he took the podium. 

Alliance's landslide win in Carinthia in March, says he is very optimistic about the upcoming Euro-elections on June 7.

The results of the elections on Carinthia and Salzburg raise once again the question of the relations between the two nationalist parties. In Carinthia, the Alliance appears to be on its way to becoming the ultra-dominant party while the Freedom Party does not seem able to get past the 5 percent barrier required to get into the regional parliament. In Salzburg province, on the other hand, the Freedom Party is well positioned while it is the Alliance that is out in the cold.

On election night, after the returns were in, the national head of the Freedom Party, Heinz-Christian Strache, pronounced himself in favor of reunification of the two parties. The head of the Alliance in Carinthia, Uwe Scheuch, did not reject the idea out of hand, declaring:

"During my eight years with Joerg Haider I learned that one must never completely rule out anything. . . . Reuni-

fication is not under discussion at the present time. I speak deliberately about 'the present time' because I have learned that political strategy makes no sense if taken in a time-frame of any less than 10 years."

In Austria, we can imagine the two parties coexisting in a way that allows each to do well. This is because the Alliance, which is so powerful in Carinthia, is more or less marginal in the other provinces. It may well be that the Alliance will be the vehicle of nationalism in Carinthia while the Freedom Party will represent the rest of the country. This could lead to a non-aggression pact within Austria and what would, in effect, be an alliance between the two parties within any nationalist group that may form

Comptage ethnique ?

DANS MA CLASSE, YA 11 BEURS, 14 BLACKS, 6 TURCS, 4 PAKISTANAIS, 1 FEUJ ... ET YA LUI QU'EST RIEN.



Ethnic head count? In my class there are 11 Arabs, 14 blacks, 6 Turks, 4 Pakistanis, 1 Jew . . . and then there's him. He's nothing.

within the European Parliament.

Springtime has arrived with much promise for the Austrians. **Q**

Translated from Rivarol (rivarol.com), March 13, 2009.

Whitewashing Jack Johnson

A perfect hero for our times.

by Addison N. Sheffield

Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and Representative Peter King (R-NY) have joined documentary filmmaker Ken Burns, a noted apologist for blacks, in a bid to get a posthumous pardon for the first black heavyweight boxing champion, Jack Johnson (1878-1946). Earlier efforts to arrange a pardon for Johnson's conviction for violating the Mann Act have been unsuccessful, with one bill stalling in Congress just last year. However, Johnson is a hero to many blacks and to the most truckling sort of whites, so there is a good chance President Obama will grant a pardon. During his lifetime many Americans considered his a career a standing insult to whites—which makes him a particularly appealing candidate for amnesty.

Jack Johnson, who was born in

Galveston, Texas, but later moved to Chicago, was the original loutish celebrity athlete. In the early 20th century, when white supremacy was still the norm, he taunted his opponents both in and out of the ring, and boasted about



Heavyweight champion Jack Johnson.

his endless fornications with white women. He was the first black man even to be allowed to fight for the prestigious heavyweight championship, which he

won from Tommy Burns in 1908 in Sydney, Australia. In a particularly cruel fight, he not only insulted his opponent, but held him up several times when he was about to go down so he could punish him some more.

Johnson's claim to the title was disputed, however, because Burns had been declared heavyweight champion following the voluntary retirement of the undefeated champion, James Jeffries. Many people considered Burns something of a fake because he had never fought Jeffries.

The call went out for a "Great White Hope" to regain the title for the white race, and in 1910, former champion Jeffries came out of retirement for what was widely billed as "the fight of the century." Jeffries said he accepted the challenge "for the sole purpose of proving that a white man is better than a Negro," but he had not fought in six years and had to lose 100 pounds to get back to fighting weight. After Jeffries hit the canvas twice in the 15th round and conceded the match, there