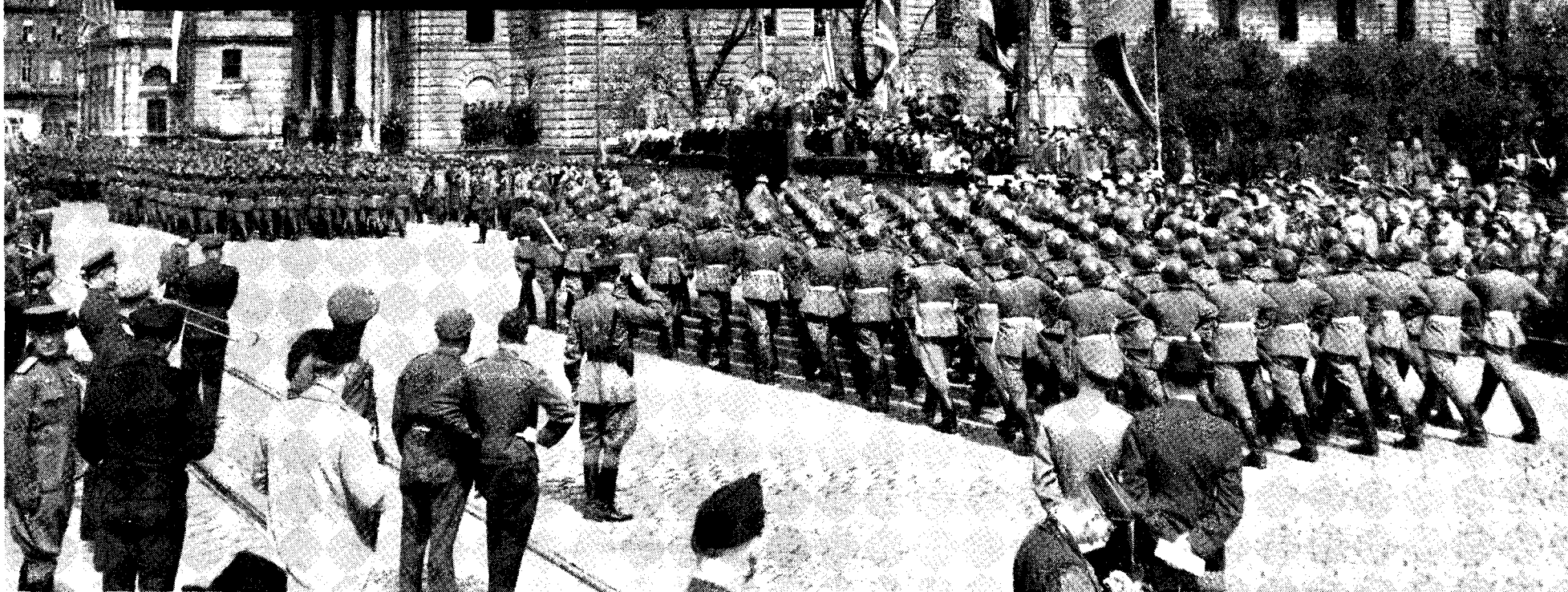


AUSTRIA'S IN THE MIDDLE

BY EDWARD P. MORGAN



PRESS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Caught between Russia's ambitions and the West's affection for the status quo, Austria is chastened, bedraggled — afraid even to joke about its liberators

OVER the reviewing stand in Vienna's broad and sunny Schwarzenbergplatz, the flags of the Big Four snapped smartly in the spring breeze. It was April 13, 1946, and the occasion was a large and gusty if somewhat synthetic celebration of the first anniversary of the Red Army's capture of the city from the Germans. American, British and French troops joined in the parade but the Russians, of course, carried the day. (The name of Schwarzenbergplatz, incidentally, would soon be changed, according to the newspapers, to Stalin Square.)

Above one end of the reviewing stand, set apart from the four other flags, the streaming red-and-white banner of Austria was raised too, but it was so long that it kept reaching out and flicking the hats of officials on the platform. Finally a Red Army soldier seized it and with a bulging knot tied it down securely to the pole.

"There's Austria for you," a cynical bystander remarked; "lashed to the mast."

Back in the good old days when Hitler was acquiring European real estate with the ease of a Florida speculator, hundreds of thousands of Austrians exulted

in the *Anschluss* achieved by their native son. But the Allies decided the nation had sinned less than it had been sinned against, and the Moscow conference of Foreign Ministers in 1943 pledged to work for a free, democratic and independent Austria. The country was not to be conquered, but "liberated."

Today six and a half million Austrians are tasting the full bitterness of disillusionment. In what few of their cafés are open, the forlorn Viennese, trying to savor the memory of coffee, sip a witch's brew of soybeans and barley and observe wryly that they might be able to stand another war but never another liberation.

Instead of being free, Austria, which is only a little larger than the state of South Carolina, is cracked up into four parts controlled by the Russians, Americans, British and French. The government is beholden to the Allied Council and until very recently had been saddled with an occupation cost of some 350 million schillings (35 million dollars) a month. In May, following a Russian concession, the Council reportedly agreed to cut this figure 75 per cent. But the resulting one billion schillings a year, of which the Soviets are expected to collect about half, represents nearly 35 per cent of the Austrian national budget and is a backbreaking burden because the nation faces the loss of a tremendous amount of resources in reparations.

The Austrians will tell you that the occupying powers are more preoccupied with watching one another than with the welfare of Austria and that the nation has become a battleground of power politics between Russia and the West.

Convinced that Austria will become a "nation of beggars" if things go on as they are, President Karl Renner recently suggested that a force from the United Nations organization take over the occupation from the four Allies so the dispute on reparations could be resolved, zonal boundaries erased and the country united for recovery.

With a black cigar stump set against the white foliage of his broad mustache and trim spade beard, the seventy-five-year-old socialist conceded in an interview that Austria now was in a ticklish position, caught "between the interests of London, Paris, Washington and Moscow." For Austria to look exclusively one way or the other would make somebody angry, Renner said delicately. "We must be careful about our friendships. What we want is direct relations with the United Nations."

The Americans and British and, less bluntly, the French accuse the Russians of trying to pull Austria completely into the Soviet orbit under the guise of collecting reparations. According to Doctor Karl Gruber, blond and handsome young Austrian Foreign Minister, if the Russians get all they claim, they will wind up with control of nearly 75 per cent of the nation's industrial wealth.

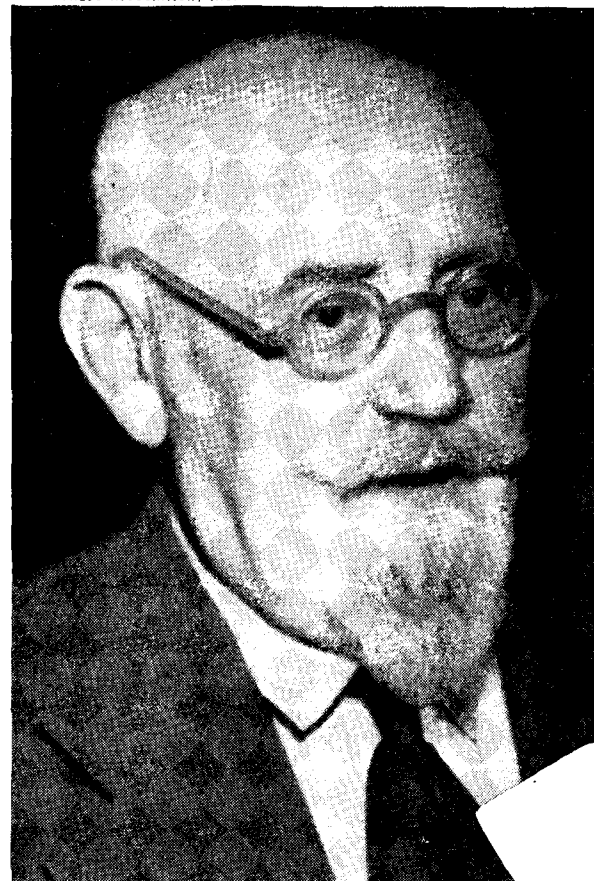
Here in all its dynamism is posed all over again the \$64 question of "What are the Russkies up to?" With devastating simplicity, the Russians repeat they want only security and friends—which they are not so sure they have here. With candor, their Western allies counter with the question: How far from home must you push your lines of defense

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Red Army troops march through Vienna's Schwarzenbergplatz to mark capture of the city from the Germans. Note Austrian flag (right) lashed to pole

Dr. Karl Renner, head of Austria's provisional government, says Austria wants direct relations with the U.N.

PRESS ASSOCIATION, INC.



Collier's for July 13, 1946



HEADACHE DOWN SOUTH

BY WALTER DAVENPORT

INTERNATIONAL

The crosses burn again as white-hooded Ku Klux Klanners initiate new members in Georgia while thousands of spectators look on. The Klan's revival coincides with moves in the South to permit Negroes to vote in Democratic primaries

With mechanization and industrialization, Dixie is suffering all the pangs of economic transition. The early stages are painful

THE fiery cross of the Ku Klux Klan yellows Stone Mountain. A thousand slack-jawed citizens wrapped in soiled sheets shamble in its glow, mumbling something we can't make out. A prayer to an odd god. They plead with Georgia to abandon her regeneration and return to Tobacco Road. Five thousand Georgians jam the surrounding roads drinking beer, jeering, shouting ribald criticism. A girl who doesn't look any too sober stands up in a car screaming: "We want Gene!" She means Ole Gene Talmadge, the hero of the Kluxers, who yearns to be governor again.

A gigantic insurance peddler, turned minstrel for votes, is twanging, crooning and clowning his way toward Alabama's governor's chair. Alabama's economic bosses, her industrialists, her conservatives shudder, not because this Big Jim Folsom banjoes his way to power but because he's endorsed by the C.I.O. Communism is the next, the last step, they say. Big Jim's about as much a Communist as Herbert Hoover.

Dark Mississippi, sorely sick with Bilbonic plague, is scared because her youth—white and black—are deserting her. Incidentally, that's true of Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina, too. Mississippi breeds children, educates them after her fashion, then loses them because she offers them less—much less—reason than other states for staying. Her population is growing old, uncherished by youth. Who's to do tomorrow's work?

Louisiana has just shed the last of its Huey Long rags. A personable young man, De Lesseps Storey Morrison, has almost miraculously become mayor of New Orleans. He wants to make gambling and gamblers respectable, wants to license them, regulate them, siphon money from their pockets into the city treasury. There is some mild applause but you can't hear it for the laughter of the bookmakers, the professional bettors, the price layers, the dice rollers, the shills. Prostitutes poke their machined heads out of French Quarter windows to tell the teeming sidewalks: "Sorry, chum, you can't come in. We're being reformed for a couple of weeks. Don't go far away, chum."

In Texas a few thousand young Democrats are in revolt against the old political

order. Only yesterday they cast straight conservative votes alongside their New Deal-hating fathers. They're topside Texas men and women. It's not the conventional underdog, have-not rebellion. This fight is a clearly defined alignment of what you'll see throughout the South—a battle between the old "traditionalists" and the young "realists." These young Democrats consult with C.I.O. directors. They've allied themselves with labor, urging Texas to elect as her governor a Baptist preacher, an educator whose liberalism cost him his job as president of the University, Homer Rainey.

The old "regular" mouthpieces call them Communists, fellow travelers. But some of these mouthpieces have the grace to blush as they say that. In their ranks you'll find just about as much Communism as you will in the chamber of commerce. Homer Rainey is on the air. His program, Religion and Life, is part evangelism, part crossroads philosophy, part minstrel, but less mawkish than the tory Pappy O'Daniel stuff. The old regulars plead with Pappy to come down from Washington and save them with his Dear Sweet Lil Ole Mammy croonings.

Thus and thus the South on the surface today. But underneath all this capping and belling churns one of the most poignant bellyaches that Dixie has suffered since no one remembers when. From Virginia to Texas and on up to Kentucky, the South is split into two camps—those who yearn for the return of yesterday and those who are preparing for tomorrow whatever it may bring. The latter, the realists, may be in the minority now but they'll win. The all-too-apparent economic forces behind Dixie's reconversion from war will see to that.

King Cotton Takes a Back Seat

The old tyrant, cotton, is no longer king. He is not exiled like so many pre-war human majesties, but the high throne he once occupied alone is surrounded and isolated by such carpetbagger commodities as the sweet potato, cattle, rice, hogs, fruit, dairy products—commodities which before the war were despised incidentals where they were cultivated at all. With this flight from cotton and groping for economic salvation, Dixie is bidding for manufacturing industries. The traditionalists hope they can be had without organized labor. The realists want it unconditionally, know that it must be had.

It is customary to think of the traditionalists as old men and the realists as young. Actually neither years nor wealth are dividing characteristics in either

group. In Georgia an industrialist sits across the desk from his executive vice-president son. The old man tells us with fitting oaths that he'd rather see the South return to Stephen Foster somnolence than that the C.I.O. drive to organize the Southern worker should succeed. His son, his executive vice-president, shakes his head, smiles gently, spreads his hands. The drive will succeed, he says. Maybe not in a day nor in a year. But, he adds, tradition can't stop it.

The son tells us, privately, not to take the old man too seriously. Last week the father threw out of his office a solicitor for funds for Ole Gene Talmadge's campaign to regain the governorship, with all his hates and prejudices.

In Alabama a banker argues with a client young enough to be his son. The young man shouts that for two cents or less he'd join the Ku Klux Klan, racket that it is, to fight the C.I.O. and Communism and Communists and anyone tolerant of them. The older man smiles this time, says the young man is fighting windmills. He says that there is no more danger of Communism than there is that Mobile Bay will be frozen over by morning. As for the C.I.O. drive, well, he says, he has always thought kindly of the old Chinese aphorism: that when the inevitable is no longer avoidable why not relax and enjoy it?

But the South's reconversion is not at all as simple as all that. If it were merely that diversified agriculture and industrialization were to replace the old one-crop economy there wouldn't be much to worry about. However, it's a story of the salvation of an unknown number of human beings. The number may be as high as ten million. No one knows.

Like the rest of the country, the South has had no time to take accurate stock of her dislocated human wealth. A couple of million men and women (a rough surmise) left her farms and farm towns to go into emergency war industries. Authorities who should know, even if they don't, estimate that much fewer than twenty-five per cent have trickled back. The overwhelming majority will never go back. The mechanical cotton picker, almost a complete realization now, will take the place of something like a million and a half families who once lived as tenant farmers, sharecroppers and small-acreage planters—perhaps five million people.

And before going deeper into the subject, more than fifty per cent of the cotton grown in America was produced by these humble folk, the majority of them Negroes. Slowly, gradually, the small farm is being absorbed by the big

plantation. The sharecropped acres and the tenanted sections will be served by the machine and not the vanishing field hand. Whether Dixie is to become industrialized to a sufficient degree to give work to the idle agricultural worker is not yet to be answered; but that her agriculture is to be mechanized is certain.

Walk the South's city streets and roam her country roads if you want to see the larger picture. The traditionalists will scowl at the idleness he sees and at the sneers that he hears from the idle when they're offered eighteen, twenty and twenty-five dollars a week to take common jobs. He sees Communism in every face, hears it in every job rejection. But we found no fact nor facts to give weight to his fears.

A Mild Case of Red Infection

The only place in the South where we found Communist activity with life enough in it to work up a mild tremble was in Houston. There, a few wandering Reds had been engaged in a small and furtive *Putsch*. They said that they had enlisted three thousand, seeking twenty. But they were holding no recruiting meetings. We found no printed propaganda. Calm and responsible authorities told us that five hundred recruits would be nearer the truth than three thousand and that inquiry had revealed that only one person in ten in the five hundred had become an actual Communist Party member. And almost all of these were college undergraduates, none wage earners or workers.

Political radicalism or suspicion thereof has been repudiated by the C.I.O. in its Southern drive. Van Bittner, pilot of the drive, has denounced political radicalism and its agents, naming names. Nor is there any evidence that he is not wholly sincere. For example, he repudiated the Southern Conference for Human Welfare. The Conference, its headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, is a left-wing organization working diligently, ceaselessly and intelligently among Negroes and the poorest of poor whites bent on making them race, class and politically conscious, exhorting them to protest as a group against their too frequently dismal lot.

At any rate, they are suspected of Communist sympathies and Mr. Bittner does not want his far from easy job to be made all the heavier in the South by a share of such sympathy. We mention all this only to get rid of it. The real story in Dixie today is much more important.

Billions of dollars built immense war emergency industries in the South. To

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PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY WILLIAM SHROUT