DOLFFUSS AND THE FUTURE OF AUSTRIA

By John Gunther

VIRTUALLY unknown two years ago, Dr. Engelbert Dollfuss has become the political darling of Western Europe. Two years ago you might have seen him in the chambers of the Austrian parliament which he subsequently killed — his cherubic little face gleaming, his small, sturdy fists a-flutter — and wondered what sort of career awaited a politician so personally inconspicuous. This year London and Geneva as well as Vienna have done him homage. Whence this sudden and dramatic rise? Partly it derives from his personal qualities, which are considerable; partly it is because events made him Europe’s first bulwark against Hitler, a sort of Nazi giant-killer. And stature came to him paradoxically because he is four feet eleven inches high.

Dollfuss was born a peasant and with belief in God. These two facts are paramount in his character. They have contributed much to his popularity, because Austria is three-fifths peasant, with a population 93 percent Roman Catholic. Much of his personal charm and force comes from his extreme simplicity of manner; his modesty and directness amount almost to naïveté. Here is no iron statue like Mustapha Kemal, no fanatic evangelist like Hitler. A foreigner approaching Dollfuss with a compliment will hear a broad farmer’s accent in reply, “Ach . . . aber gehen Sie . . .” (“Oh, go on . . .”) His speeches are extraordinarily unsophisticated. He listens to speeches of other members of his cabinet, like Dr. Buresch, the Finance Minister, with the respectful attention of a child in school. When he speaks himself, he is tense, awkward, overworked, sincere. There is no pomp or cant in him. He enjoys jokes about his size. And his deep religious faith gives him something of the curious innocence of old, wise priests, an innocence as impregnable to the wiles of adversaries as the most glittering sophistication.

His smallness, too, makes him popular. Affection seems to come easily for anyone four feet eleven. Let no one, however, mistake this “Millimetternich” for a weakling. When he took office people laughed at him, gently, because he was so small; they had forgotten the good old story of David and Goliath. Yet Dollfuss
does not rely primarily on cleverness. He is not clever in the way that the other Metternich was clever. He is small, rubbery, tough, and strong. He is tiny physically, but not a dwarf. His smallness is shapely; all the features, diminutive, are well-formed.

Dollfuss was born in Texing, a hamlet in Lower Austria about 80 miles from Vienna, on October 4, 1892. Thus he is the youngest as well as the littlest of the dictators. His mother and brothers still cultivate the soil on the farm where he was born. He worked his way through school, studied law at the University of Vienna, and went to Berlin as a graduate student in economics. The war came and he served three years at the front. He went in a private and left a first lieutenant, no mean feat in the old army. After the war he entered Austrian politics.

This means that he had to swim thereafter in one of the most confused and confusing whirlpools Central Europe knows. The Austrians, a gentle and civilized people, are almost unique in that they deplore aggressive nationalism. The Austrian does not think that he is better than anyone else, he sometimes wonders if he is as good; his political nature is skeptical, lazy, and fatalistic; he thinks of the irredentism of Hungary or the chauvinism of Germany as simply ill-bred. But this scorn of international ballyhoo serves to intensify political strife at home. The Austrians use all their energy on fellow Austrians. Seldom with bloodshed. The Austrians abhor bloodshed. Otherwise the country would have succumbed to civil war long ago. The Austrians simply talk, talk, talk, and then compromise. The main opposing factors in the civil struggle have been the reactionary peasants of the Catholic hinterland and the Social Democrats, progressive and agnostic, concentrated in their Marxist citadel, Vienna. Austrian history for ten years has been a tug of war, religious and economic as well as political, between these highly competitive and mutually exclusive forces.

Dollfuss became, naturally, a member of the Christian Social party, led by that astute cleric, Monsignor Ignaz Seipel. He was interested mostly in farming and he organized a peasant's league in Lower Austria. By 1927 he was director of the Lower Austrian Agrarian Chamber. He became a deputy. The federal railways needed an agricultural expert and he joined its administrative council. In October 1930 he took over the presidency of the railways. But he was still a more or less obscure figure. In March 1931 he got a cabinet post as Minister of Agriculture. A year later an
exasperating cabinet crisis provoked the resignation of the minority Christian Social government of Dr. Buresch. Dollfuss was unexpectedly called to form a new government. The legend is that he prayed all night before accepting. He did accept, and on May 20, 1932, formed a coalition which commanded a majority of exactly one in the Nationalrat, the lower chamber of parliament.¹

No one thought he would last long. He was simply another Christian Social lamb led to Social Democrat slaughter. But fate was on his side. The immediate issue was ratification of the Lausanne Loan which was to bring 300,000,000 schillings to hard-pressed Austria. The Social Democrats and Pan-Germans opposed ratification because — this seems quaint today — the protocol contained a provision forbidding Austria to jeopardize its independence by union with another country, e.g. Germany. Dollfuss wanted the loan ratified. Here enter two main factors in the story: (1) his luck, (2) his sense of drama. On August 3 a motion of censure faced him. Early that morning Dr. Seipel died. Dollfuss promptly swore in a successor and dragooned every member of his coalition, sick or well, into the chamber. One deputy was carried in by three comrades, another tottered up on crutches, and two others came direct from hospitals swathed in bandages. The censure motion was defeated, by one vote. Dollfuss won. And by such unconventional, even tyrannical behavior! — exclaimed the Austrians, shocked and impressed. Then on August 17 the ratification came up. Dollfuss won again, and again by one vote. The missing adversary was the former Chancellor Dr. Schober — who had died the night before.

During the next few months almost all his work was in economics and finance. He cleared up the wreckage of the Credit Anstalt, the great Austrian bank which had crashed the year before. He set about stringent reforms in the civil service and railroad administration. He sought to thaw the frozen trade of Central Europe by relaxing currency restrictions and negotiating clearing treaties. He uneasily maintained his shaky coalition. Europe first heard his voice in January. An Italian arms com-

¹ The party line-up was the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Socials</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>Heimwehr</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landbund</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>Opposition</td>
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<td>Social Democrats</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>Pan-Germans</td>
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pany smuggled 50,000 rifles and 200 machine guns to Hungary, with the Austrian town Hirtenberg as relay point. News of this secret and illegal operation leaked out and the Powers protested. The French and the British demanded not only the return of the arms but a statement on oath proving that they had recrossed the frontier. Dollfuss agreed to return the arms but flatly refused to give any sworn statement as requested. The Franco-British demand was, he said, an insult to the honor of a sovereign nation. The Powers climbed down. Dollfuss’s prestige went up.

On March 4, 1933, the Austrian parliament committed suicide. In a squabble, marvelously Austrian, about whether or not a certain deputy had improperly voted, the speaker, the Social Democrat Dr. Renner, lost his temper and resigned. The two deputy speakers lost their heads and resigned too. This left the Nationalrat without a chairman, and, legally, it could not reconstitute itself, because by law only a speaker or deputy-speaker can call a session. It was a ridiculous little contretemps, but it ended parliamentarism in Austria. Dollfuss pounced on his opportunity. He resigned office (having learned the good political lesson never to offer resignation except when you are indispensable) and was reappointed with emergency powers. On March 7 a flood of decrees deluged Austria. Dr. Dollfuss had begun his march to dictatorship.

Meantime, enormous and foreboding, the shadow of Adolf Hitler was falling over Austria. The Austrian people are German; the two countries are contiguous; the Nazi triumph in Berlin was bound to produce echoes of emulation in Vienna. The last general election in Austria, in November 1930, had given the Nazis not a single seat. Naziism was not indigenous to the skeptical, civilized soil of Austria. But it grew. Provincial elections in April 1932 gave the Nazis 16 percent of the vote in Vienna, 18 percent in Lower Austria, 22 percent in Salzburg. By the time Hitler became German Chancellor, Nazi leaders in Austria (and agitators imported from Germany) were shouting defamations of Dollfuss, claiming Austria as part of Nazi Germany.

The Nazis in Berlin want the Gleichschaltung (assimilation) of Austria largely because their Pan-German tenets do not hold water so long as 6,500,000 Austrian Germans sneer at the swastika instead of worshipping it. Union of Austria with Germany is
a cardinal point in Nazi doctrine. Hitler himself is an Austrian. Hitlerite Germany badly needed a triumph in foreign policy. The offensive against Austria would serve to cloak discontent at home. For these and other reasons the onslaught began, and Dollfuss was jerked by Hitler, his enemy, into international celebrity. And the rage of the Nazis when he refused to lie down and be eaten, when he insisted on the right of Austria to remain independent, precipitated a grave European crisis.

Had the Nazis behaved less stupidly Austria might very well have fallen into their lap. Dollfuss might easily have been manoeuvred into elections, which the Nazis could have won. The biggest Nazi card was Austrian defeatism; the Austrians don't like to fight and their attitude in early spring was more or less, "Oh well, if the Germans want us so badly, why not?" And Dollfuss, precariously juggling his majority, was in constant danger of sabotage and betrayal by jealous partisans. Any party leader might sell him out to spite the others. Moreover, he was fighting not only the Germans outside the country but perhaps a quarter of his own people. But instead of biding their time the Nazis began an extraordinary campaign of terrorism and violence. This served to challenge Austria to stand on her own feet, awoke dormant Austrian patriotism, and rallied many lukewarm citizens to the Dollfuss banner. Two years before, even the Social Democrat party was firmly pro-Anschluss. Now it is the opposite. Reason: the Hitler terror.

The list of acts of Nazi violence in Austria during the spring and summer is a long one, too long to print. Shootings, intimidations, assaults, bombings, slanders and libels, were of daily occurrence. Dr. Dollfuss fought back. On May Day he forbade the usual Social Democrat celebrations and to the amazement of the populace filled the Ring with troops and barbed wire — as a show of force against the Nazis. On May 16, the Bavarian Minister of Justice, visiting Austria on a propaganda tour, was expelled. The Germans retaliated by imposing a 1000-mark fine on German tourists to Austria, a serious blow to the Austrian tourist traffic; Dollfuss retaliated by closing all the Brown Houses in Austria, forbidding the Nazi uniform, and arresting some hundreds of Nazi agitators. His luck kept with him. In Berlin the Austrian press attaché, Dr. Wasserbaeck, was arrested and expelled. This happened the night before Dollfuss was to address the London Economic Conference. The incident dramatized his
appearance and he got a great ovation. The Nazis countered with more violence. On June 20 Dollfuss decided that enough was enough and outlawed the Nazi party.

And then began a war, one of the queerness wars ever known anywhere, a war fought bloodlessly (except for casualties in minor border frays) but a war nevertheless. The Nazis invaded Austria. They crossed the frontier — through the air. Their planes dropped propaganda leaflets; their radio station in Munich hurled speeches. The first broadcast was on July 16, the first pamphlet raid on July 25. Throughout the following weeks the tension increased until the Great Powers found it intolerable; first Dollfuss was given permission to increase his army by 8,000 men to full treaty strength; then France, Britain and Italy protested in Berlin. The Germans gave an evasive answer. The airplane raids stopped, but the broadcast raids went on and violence in Austria increased. Things looked dark for Dollfuss.

III

But presently the tide turned. Dollfuss went to Italy to visit Mussolini, his third talk with him in the year, and returned with a promise of Italian support in his pocket. Mussolini does not want Austria to go Nazi. This would in effect bring Germany to the Brenner pass and almost to Trieste. There are 200,000 Germans in the South Tyrol and the further Germany is away from them the better Mussolini likes it.

At home Dollfuss turned from defense to attack. He sought to build up something concrete and positive in Austria as an alternative to Naziism, and so created what he called the Fatherland Front. This was not to be a party. It was to be an organization, a movement rather, above parties, which the parties might join. Its program — bold indeed for Austria — was unification of the country on a patriotic basis.

Dollfuss was moved to this step by the gradual realization that the party system in Austria as elsewhere in Central Europe was breaking down, while bitter partisan rivalries between individual leaders was meanwhile becoming more and more intense. Even the Social Democrats, ossified at the top, were disintegrating below. Some young socialists joined the Nazis. The Nazis flirted with the socialists hoping to incite them to a general strike. The socialists did not fall into this trap, and indeed informally offered Dollfuss a coalition instead. Dollfuss turned them down. His
The excuse was that if he allied himself with the Marxists he would lose his own right wing, the Heimwehr, to the Nazis. Even so the socialists tolerated Dollfuss, even passively supported him; they knew that he was their own best defense against the Nazis. Party lines began to lose their significance. A young man named Schwaninger, for instance, was killed in a Nazi frontier raid near Kufstein; he was a member of a Heimwehr patrol and the Heimwehr gave him an imposing martyr’s funeral. Actually, he was a Social Democrat. But after his death the Heimwehr preferred to conceal this and the Social Democrats did not claim him. Again, in Styria, a serious strike broke out in the steel works of the Alpine-Montan Gesellschaft, the biggest industrial company in Austria. The Social Democrat workmen there were persuaded by Nazi agitators, obeying orders from Berlin where the company is partly owned, to down their tools. The government stepped in, sided with the workers, raised their wages, and installed a commisar to run the company. Meantime, the Styrian Heimwehr had gone Nazi. Confusion mounted on confusion. Christian Social officials in Carinthia, where the Nazis were especially strong (possibly because Carinthia is the Austrian province furthest away from Germany), used Social Democrats as bodyguards. There was, finally, an unwritten understanding that the socialist general staff would support the government with their private armed forces if the Nazis, now reaching the crest of their strength, invaded Austria and attempted to capture Linz or Salzburg.

Dollfuss, alarmed by these intimations of party chaos, nursed his Fatherland Front carefully for a few months. Then, choosing his moment well, he called a huge meeting for September 11, the 250th anniversary of the delivery of Vienna from the Turks, and the 500th of the erection of St. Stephen’s Cathedral. Ostensibly the meeting was to be the high point in the campaign against the Nazis. Dollfuss announced also that he would use the occasion to outline the future policy of the government. He did, very thoroughly. He sounded the death of the old party system. And he virtually overthrew the Austrian constitution. Passages from the speech are worth quotation in full:

The time of the old, liberal capitalistic thought is over, the time of the old, liberal ordering of society; the time of Marxist leading and misleading (führen and verführen) of the people, and of parties and party bossing, is over. . . . But the government will not go in for Gleichschaltung or terror. . . . We will
create a social, Christian, German state of Austria on Staendische foundations with a strong authoritative leadership. . . . In the fight against Marxism the government will never take away the rights of the workers.

The government was restrained only by its German-ness from taking the steps to protect Austrian honor and independence (i.e. against the Nazis) which it would have taken against any other country long ago. Even if Austria is small and poor, it has a right to its honor.

The speech produced cries of resentment from two supporters of the government, each of whom interpreted it in different ways. Vice-Chancellor Winkler, the leader of the Landbund and organizer of a National Front of his own, attacked "Austro-Fascism" and warned Dollfuss that the new system must be democratic. Young Prince Starhemberg, titular leader of the Heimwehr, decided that Dollfuss had gone entirely Fascist and threatened to boycott the Fatherland Front if he hadn't. Dollfuss acted with energy and precision. On September 21, with the schism getting daily more serious, he reorganized his cabinet. He eased Winkler out, removed General Vaugoin from the war ministry, which he had held for twelve years, and made him instead president of the railways; withdrew Major Fey from headship of the police; cajoled Starhemberg into allegiance; and himself took five portfolios. The little Chancellor, be it noted, saw to it that the police, army and Heimwehr — the legal armed forces of the country — were all three delivered into his hands. The episode is remarkable in that Dollfuss used neither force nor threats. The day before people in the coffee houses had been asking what would be the result of the crisis; they laughed and said, "Oh, as usual, a compromise." But there was no compromise. Dollfuss, with his earnest voice and innocent eyes, asked for power, and power was given him. Without a murmur, like hypnotized sheep, Vaugoin handed over the army, Winkler the Vice-Chancellorship, and Fey the police. The Heimwehr and the Christian Social Party then formally entered the Fatherland Front. Old General Vaugoin started work on the railroads as if he were re-tackling the army organization which he had begun twelve years ago. Dollfuss has an amazing power over his close associates. His friends in the government regard him as the Hebrew judges regarded the infant Samuel.

The Nazi attack seemed meantime to have burned itself out. No one can be sure; by the time this article is in print Dollfuss may be in exile or a prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp; but at the end of autumn he seemed fairly safe. The Germans, having
left the Disarmament Conference, for the moment had bigger game than Austria to watch; and the fact that their November 12 elections were fought on an incredible, almost grotesque, "appeal to peace," made frontal onslaughts on Austria difficult. And of course the attempt of a young Nazi to assassinate Dollfuss helped him enormously. His luck again! A button deflected the bullet; and the bullet deflected a crisis. The campaign for an internal loan was just getting under way, and his escape from death inevitably dramatized it into a considerable success.

So Dollfuss stood in the autumn. He had a breathing spell. What next?

IV

The first job was to write and promulgate the new constitution. The Russians gave the word "Soviet" to the world, Italy and Germany contributed respectively "Fascismo" and "Nazi." In the same way we may have to learn to use a uniquely Austrian word to express the basis of the projected Austrian system, "Staendische." Untranslatable literally, it means something between "corporative" and "guild." The idea is borrowed from a Papal Encyclical, the Quadragesimo Anno of 1931, wherein the Pope pleaded for the end of social strife and urged the adoption of a corporative organization of society as a cure for class war. Obviously it will follow closely Catholic principles and Italian Fascism; but it is not identical with the Mussolini system.

Details of the constitution are not yet ready, but it appears that industries, trades, and professions will be required to organize themselves on a guild basis. Employers and employees alike are to join the guilds. Each guild will have representation in a corporative chamber, the Staendehaus. Members will not be elected by general franchise but appointed by the local guild units. Class organizations, like the trade unions and federations of industry, if not actually dissolved, will be stripped of power. The government of the state will be multi-cameral. The Nationalrat is to be reorganized, according to present plans, as a Volkshaus with about 75 members instead of 165. They will probably be elected on modified party lines. The upper house, the Bundesrat, will, as at present, represent the federal provinces, but apparently in the form of a small federal council instead of a large assembly. Above Staendehaus, Volkshaus, and the reformed Bundesrat is to be a new council of state of about 20 members, apparently to be
chosen by the President of the Republic to represent expert opinion in finance, agriculture and industry. These plans may change; indeed, daily reports bring conflicting versions of the project. And the scheme can hardly be put into operation for some months at least.

Meantime Dollfuss has a second job. He has to deal somehow with the Social Democrats.

Dollfuss is no friend of Viennese Social Democracy. From the beginning he announced that he would steer a center course, devoted equally to attack on the socialists to his left and on the Nazis to his right. As far back as April the socialist defense force, the Schutzbund, was (theoretically) dissolved. Recently the assault grew warmer. The special financial privileges of Vienna were curtailed. The Arbeiter Zeitung, the chief socialist newspaper, labors under a cruel censorship. Socialist workers on the railways, who number 85 percent of the personnel, have been ordered to join the Fatherland Front on pain of losing their jobs. Socialist parades, meetings, and speeches are forbidden. This is all bad enough, but worse may come. "We shall deal with the Austrian Bolsheviks in due time and at our convenience," recently said Major Fey, now the Vice-Chancellor. "Heraus with the Marxists in the Rathaus!" shouts young Starhemberg. So far Dollfuss has refused to be stampeded by the Heimwehr into overt destruction of the Socialist Party. This would cause a general strike which might bring the Nazis in.

The socialists feel very badly let down. They say, with great justice, that for six months they have refrained from overt opposition to Dollfuss in order not to embarrass him in his fight against the Nazis. They were saving their own necks by this policy, of course. They hated the Nazis worse than they hated Dollfuss. But what is the point of having let Dollfuss save them, if now he turns to exterminate them just as the Nazis would have done? They expected gratitude, and now Fey threatens them with concentration camps. The Social Democrats are the largest party in Austria, and the best organized. They have created a magnificent socialist experiment in Vienna, turning it into one of the most prosperous and progressive municipalities in the world. Some 60,000 families have been housed in handsome tenements built

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2 This was an early order by General Vaugoin when he took over the railways. But, even under Dollfuss, Austria remains characteristically Austrian. At a recent press conference an official of the chancellor's office was asked if the Vaugoin order was "serious." "Ach, pure rhetoric," he replied. Nevertheless, the socialists are frightened. A member of the Fatherland Front must sign a pledge renouncing class struggle.
out of taxes and distributed to workmen practically rent free. Slums have been abolished. An immense program of paternalism is in successful operation. Is this achievement now to crash in ruins?

Time and time again the socialists have threatened a general strike. But not since 1927 have they called one. A reason is their own decency. They don’t want civil war and bloodshed. Their decency is, of course, ruining them; because it is Dollfuss’ best weapon against them. He continually presses them harder, gambling on the chance that they are too decent, or too timid, to make real trouble. But now some sort of showdown approaches. The Staendische system, if it is introduced full force, means the death of trade unionism. The Social Democratic Party must fight or fall.

The Dollfuss adherents claim with some justification that the socialists have only themselves to blame for their unhappy plight. They are out in the cold not because Dollfuss is a villain but because socialism, in its moderate Second Internationale form, crushed between Communism and Naziism, is as old-fashioned as a horse-car. Dollfuss does not want personally to be a dictator. But throughout all Central Europe the old party system is dying; liberal democracy was a handmaiden to private capitalism; the world economic crisis has dealt private capitalism a staggering blow; and democracy innocently enough takes the consequences.

Enemies of Dollfuss, on the other hand, say that he is sparing Austria the mercies of Brown Fascism only to make way for a Black Fascism as fundamentally repressive. He is crushing the Nazis only to crush the socialists too. His Fatherland Front does not arise from the hearts of the people but is simply a clever dodge with which to fight the Nazis, and the Staendische scheme is nothing more than a fancily-worded swindle to defraud the workers of their remaining rights. Italo-Fascism or Hitler-Fascism — they are one and the same, according to this view, and equally pernicious.

One thing is certain. The Dollfuss system will not mean a terror. But if the Nazis do somehow succeed in taking Austria, then there will be a butchery. Proportionally there are many more Jews in Austria than in Germany*, and they are concentrated conspicuously in Vienna, where much anti-Semitism lies

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*There are 194,584 Jews in Austria, 2.93 percent of the population. In Germany the percentage is less than one percent.
latent. Austria, moreover, will not be simply *Gleichgeschaltet* like Saxony or Bavaria; Austria is a disorderly and rebellious province to be sacked and punished. An Austrian Legion has been formed in Germany, presumably to take part in this adventure. And it is said that all manner of Bavarian and Silesian roughnecks, whom the Germans themselves will be glad to get rid of, have been promised a free hand in the streets of Vienna, when — and if — Dollfuss fails.

The little Chancellor has still a third ambition to develop, one which has brought him much international attention: his theory that Austria can live alone. *Anschluss* is legally out of the question, because the Powers forbid it; a Hapsburg restoration uniting Austria and Hungary into a sort of rump-monarchy is often talked about, but is hardly practical politics at the present time; and the obstacles to a general Danubian confederation are probably insuperable. These have been the three orthodox solutions to the Austrian "problem." Dollfuss says "No" to all three. As far back as September 1, 1932, he announced his belief that Austria could and should stand alone and live alone. Now to make an active patriot out of an Austrian is an immense task. Austrians are Viennese, or Tyrolese, or Styrians, or Carinthians; their local pride runs high; their national pride usually is dormant. Part of the extreme charm of Vienna is its concentration in one organism of these rival local spirits, plus the blood confusion of Hungarians, Jews, Czecks, Slovaks and other sorts of Slavs who have watered, colored, and peppered the original Teuton stock. But Austria, says Dollfuss, is to become a nation; more, a nation permanently neutral, peaceful, and self-sufficient, like Switzerland.

The country must, nevertheless, play politics with its hungry neighbors. It listens attentively to vague proposals for an Italo-Hungaro-Italian bloc. It listens equally attentively to the surreptitious blandishments of Dr. Beneš and the Little Entente. Moreover, with Vienna the heart of Europe, it inevitably is a point of friction between the rivalries in Central Europe and the Balkans of Germany, France, and Italy. Austria is (a) a permanent block to German *Mittel-Europa* dreams, so long as it withstands the Nazis; (b) a vital factor in Italian ambitions *vis-à-vis* Jugoslavia, and at the same time an embarrassment to Italian friendship with Germany; (c) an absolute necessity to the independence of
Czechoslovakia. And the loss of Austria’s independence would be a grave embarrassment to Hungary, a shock to Great Britain, and a calamity for France. At the moment it seems that fear of Hitler has drawn Italy and France closer together than in some years. Dollfuss, the little boy, by bearing the brunt of the Hitler attack, has brought the big fellows together.

The Powers have been kind to Dollfuss not merely for his own sake. They admired his courage — yes. They enjoyed the spectacle he provided of a good fight — yes. But they knew that his stand was a test case of the whole peace treaty structure. Dollfuss, by opposing Hitler, made Austria in effect a state committed to a status-quo rather than a revisionist policy; and other states, watching Dollfuss, have been inclined to dilute the pure liquors of their revisionism. This is especially true of Italy, who, as we have already noted, does not want the Prussians on the Brenner. Nor do any of the Powers want to encourage Germany in further adventures in prestige politik.

In general, too, Dollfuss has become a sort of 1933 variant of the Pilsudski who ten years ago beat the Bolsheviks off from the gates of Warsaw. Then, as now, a powerful national but latently international crusade sought to spread out beyond its original confines. Pilsudski prevented communism from overspreading Western Europe. Today Dollfuss in Vienna stands in a similar relation to militant Naziism. It is on his head that the first Nazi wave has broken. Should Austria go Nazi, then Hungary and Czechoslovakia, even Switzerland, even Denmark, may feel the Hitler hammer. The frontiers of Germany are tingling from the aggressive strain to which they are submitted from within. From Holland to Danzig, right around the circle, Naziism seeps from Germany across the borders. Note the new military items in the expenditure of Denmark, of Holland, of Switzerland — three states which never before thought of themselves as subject to possible invasion. Austria was the objective of the first attack. It failed. But it was a lesson. Europe gives thanks to little Dollfuss.