

THE SITUATION IN AUSTRIA

Jewry's Desperate Plight

WE publish below a fuller report received by us by air-mail of the critical events that have affected the lives of Austrian Jewry within the last fortnight, and of their reaction to the Nazi terror that has overtaken them. A brief cabled account appeared in our last issue.

Vienna, March 13th.

Nazi terror against the Jews in Austria began with the arrest of about 100 well-known Jewish bankers and businessmen by Nazi Storm Troopers, acting as auxiliary police and armed with rubber clubs and daggers.

Storm Troopers this morning raided the offices of the Austrian Zionist Federation, the Jewish Cultural Foundation Fund (Hayesod), the Jewish Cultural Fund, the Palestine Office and the editorial offices of the Zionist paper, "Die Arbeiter." After a thorough search the offices were closed and all the money found on the premises was confiscated. Jews who called at the offices for information during the raid were detained and questioned by the Nazi Storm Troopers.

Among the arrested Jewish men are the brothers Hermann and Leo, who were active in the Jewish sports movement. The windows of the Schiffmann department stores were broken a few days ago during a demonstration.

"Perish Judah" are written with increasing frequency throughout Vienna. Members of the Army Officers' Club to-day paraded through the streets of Vienna shouting "Hitler!" and "Out with the Jews!"

The Austrian Athletic Front expelled all the Jewish associations.

Expulsion from Cultural Life.

WHILE the complete elimination of Jews from Austrian cultural life has already begun, Herr Hermann Roedel, manager of the Austrian National Theatre, the Burgtheater, has been replaced by the well-known anti-Semitic director Mirko Yelusich, who was some time ago elected as director of the purely "Aryan" theatre.

The manager of the "Deutsches Volkstheater" and the "Operntheater", headed by Heinrich Rohrer, were also dismissed. The director of the

Volkstheater, Herr Jahn, a converted Jew, has been replaced by Director Ehmann. The stage manager of the Josefstadt Theater, Dr. Lothar, whose contract had been extended for five years a few days ago, has been replaced by the actor, Robert Valberg.

All the other Jewish members of the theatres are to be dismissed in the near future, it is announced here.

The "Reichspost" announces the dismissal of the Jewish directors of the Wien Theatre, Hellmar, father and son, and the directors of the Scala Theater, Dr. Beer, and of two members of the People's Opera House, Ernst and Kowalski.

Changes in Press.

THE premises of the paper, "Gerechtigkeit," organ of the Christian Harand movement against anti-Semitism, have been closed and sealed. The "Wiener Tag" was also suspended to-day. The "Telegraf," which was closed down yesterday morning, reappeared to-day under new editorship and name. It is now the "National Sozialistischer Telegraf." Herr Bondy, the former Jewish publisher of the paper, is reported to have been arrested after having attempted to leave the country.

Community Taken by Surprise.

THE Jewish community was taken completely by surprise by yesterday's bewildering developments, since it had hoped and believed that Chancellor von Schuschnigg would have been able to hold out against Nazi pressure.

Jewish leaders met to-day to consider measures to adapt the Jewish community to the new situation and also to consider how to establish the necessary relations with the new regime. The Jewish leaders, it is learned, realise that a complete change in the Jewish position here is unavoidable. It is expected that they will issue some guiding lines to the Jewish community.

"We Cannot Allow Silence to be Imposed on Us"

MR. MONTEFIORE ON GERMAN DEMANDS

London, March 6th.

MR. Leonard G. Montefiore, O.B.E., President of the Anglo-Jewish Association, presented the report of the Joint Foreign Committee at a meeting of the Council of the Association to-day.

It would appear, he said, that Herr Hitler wished to make any Anglo-German conversations depend on the cessation of attacks on Germany in the British Press. It was difficult to know what constituted the "unbridled slander" of which he complained. But he suspected that what was really desired was something difficult to distinguish from that process of "Gleichschaltung" with which they had become familiar in Germany. It would mean in practice that no English newspaper would dare to criticise the Nazi regime or to report events that might be displeasing to the authorities in Berlin. It would mean, among other things, that no English University would be able to provide a platform for a distinguished scholar like Karl Barth or any other of the exiles from Germany. It could not be pleasing to Berlin that the public in England should be made aware that, in Germany, Christians had become again "enemies of the human race," that Christian influences in the schools were suppressed and theological faculties destroyed. Such words might in Berlin be thought to fall into the category of what Hitler described as "unbridled slander." Foreign correspondents would have no further reason for staying in Berlin, as news for British consumption could be supplied more cheaply by German official news agencies.

"We Cannot Accept the Position."

THE treatment of the Jews in Nazi Germany, continued Mr. Montefiore, might be regarded in some of its aspects as a German domestic concern. But in other aspects, Nazi policy as displayed in the methods of persecution was of deep interest to England. They knew, if not from personal experience, from very close acquaintance of those who had personally suffered, how ruthless Nazi methods could be when they were put into practice.

"If unbridled slander is to be checked," said Mr. Montefiore, "it must be checked not merely on one side of the North Sea. We cannot accept the position that Nazi leaders should be free to bring what accusations they please against the Jews and that we must submit to such things in silence because it involves criticism of a foreign State. So long as Jews and Judaism are traduced and vilified, so long as from Nazi sources these slanders are spread to the four quarters of the world, we cannot allow silence to be imposed upon us."

Whatever decisions were come to in foreign policy must be arrived at and taken in full knowledge of the facts. And in making the facts known, Mr. Montefiore concluded, they did no disservice to their country. There were not many places in the world left where men might still speak their minds freely, and they need not be ashamed if they were numbered among those who risked unpopularity and criticism in their efforts to preserve those liberties. They would be preserved but not unless those to whom they were in any way precious united in their defence. (Applause).

PALESTINE'S REACTION TO AUSTRIAN EVENTS

A New Haavarah?

Jerusalem, March 14th.

THE Yishuv, and particularly the 7,000 Austrian Jews in Palestine, have been deeply shocked by the recent events in Austria.

The Swastika is now flying over the Austrian as well as over the German Consulate in Jerusalem.

The Jewish leaders here are considering the possibilities of facilitating the immigration of Jews from Austria by means of an arrangement similar to the Haavarah. The question of sending a delegation to the United States of America to raise funds for the "rescue" of Austrian Jews is also being considered.

Particular anxiety is felt among the mercantile community in view of the small but growing Palestine export trade to Austria. In 1935 this trade amounted to £10,000, in 1936 to £15,000, and in 1937 to £20,000. Imports from Austria, totalled £152,000 last year, including ironware, chemicals, dyes, motion pictures in which German capital holds a big interest.