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Austrian Civil War



The Austrian Civil War is coming...

The date is March 12th, 1938. The Wehrmacht crosses over the Austrian border with no trouble. The Austrians welcomed the Wehrmacht, crowds cheered, and soldiers opened the border. As they marched to Wien (Vienna) they were met with a welcoming atmosphere. Though, just months earlier the Austrian Fascists and other factions battled it out in the government.

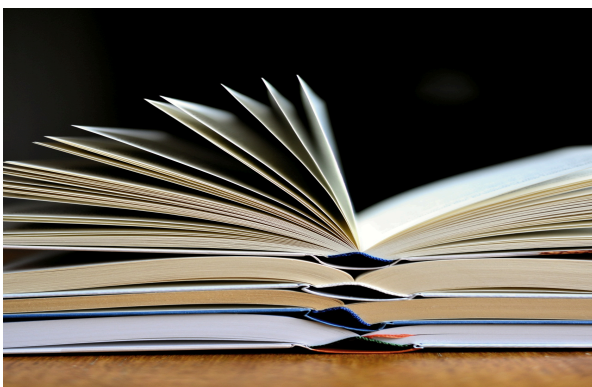
Austrian Civil War

Austrian Civil War:

4 Years earlier in 1934, Austria was unstable. Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss knew this for a fact. He started the dismantling of the Democracies of Austria to start a Dictatorship run by him and his party. In 1933 the year before his party the Christian Social Party merged with the Vaterländische Front (Fatherland Front) forming an Austro Fascist regime he had outlawed the Kommunistische Partei Österreichs (KPÖ) (Communist Party of Austria) creating more tension in the Austrian government.

In 1934 he was pressuring the Social Democratic party as well. By February 12th, it had boiled over. The police in Linz raided a local headquarters of the Republikanischer Schutzbund (Social Democratic Workers Party). The Schutzbund called for a massive armed uprising within Austria. People in Vienna, Graz, Linz, Salzburg and Steyr rose up against the dictatorship. Dollfuss in response formed the Heimwehr.

Fighting broke out most brutally in Vienna. The Schutzbund held out in newly made modern housing, barricading themselves in. They most notably barricaded themselves in the Karl-Marx Hoff. The government forces under Dollfuss shelled the building to hell. A few days later, the uprising was crushed. The Schutzbund was banned in Austria and the revolties were hung in the streets. Dollfuss had now fully created his Austrofascists dictatorship.

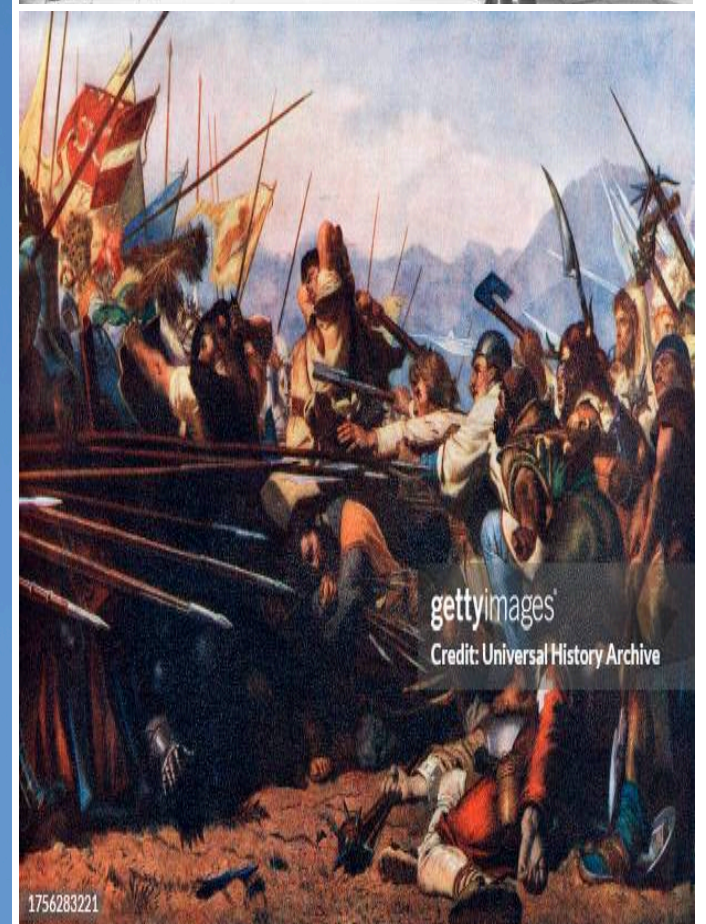


Beginning of Anschluss

Adolf Hitler had taken over Germany years earlier and was now looking for more territory. In 1938 on the fourth anniversary of the start of the Austrian civil war, Adolf Hitler had issued an ultimatum to Austria. Hitler sent chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg the ultimatum demanding that he legalize the Nazi party and include Nazis in the Austrian Government.

He accepted the ultimatum. On the 12th of February Nazis were put into government. By March 9th Schuschnigg had opened a referendum for Austrian Independence.

The Nazis didn't appreciate this, sending an ultimatum for Kurt von Schuschnigg to resign and for the referendum to halt. Schuschnigg accepts, and he resigns. On the 12th the Wehrmacht arrives.



Anschluss & After Effects

Nazis march into Austria through the border, unopposed. Tirol, Vienna, and Graz all fall. Austria was renamed “Ostmark” officially. Nazification immediately occurred. People were ousted, culture was destroyed, and Jewish men and women were rounded up. The Mauthausen concentration camp was set up, where people were prosecuted and murdered.

Over a million Austrians were drafted to fight for a country that wasn't theirs. Many Austrian pieces of culture were “Aryanized” without good reason. Austria would be freed in 7 years thankfully, but the damage couldn't be undone. **WORLD WAR II WAS COMING...**

SOURCES:

1. “Austrian Civil War.” Wikipedia, 1 Feb. 2026. Wikipedia,<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Austria>
2. “First Austrian Republic.” Wikipedia, 14 Mar. 2026. Wikipedia,<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Fi>



**Appreciate you reading these, more historical
analysis coming soon!**

