



The Austrian Ambassador
Emil Brix

requests the pleasure of your company
at a book launch and reception

to celebrate the publication (Christian Brandstätter Verlag, Vienna) of

**“Austria. Past, Present and Future”
edited by Hannes Androsch**

Introductions by Hannes Androsch
and

Angus Robertson MP

Westminster SNP Leader
Chairman of the Austria All-Party Parliamentary Group

on Wednesday, 26 January 2011, at 6:00 for 6:30 pm
Austrian Residence, 18 Belgrave Square, LONDON SW1X 8PX.

Austria is no longer an “island of the blessed”. It is time to re-examine the myths and opinions about this country. In this book a team of noted scholars, experts and journalists take on the task of putting right the image of Austria and the Austrians. In the process they examine this country’s past and present, but also its future. This multifaceted book provides ample evidence that a love for Austria does not exclude criticism of it, that patriotism must not automatically mean glossing over the facts, and that is essential to regularly survey how Austria sees itself as well as how it is assessed by outsiders. With insightful essays and a wealth of carefully selected pictures, this deluxe edition provides an authoritative and comprehensive view of Austria.

Hannes Androsch, born in Vienna in 1938, was minister of finance and vice-chancellor under Bruno Kreisky, director-general of the Creditanstalt-Bankverein, and today is active as an industrialist. He is involved in many areas of public life and founded the non-profit “Hannes Androsch Foundation at the Austrian Academy of Sciences”. Androsch is much in demand as commentator on current affairs as well as the publisher and author of numerous publications.

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Angus Robertson MP

Date of birth: 28 September 1969

Angus Robertson MP is the SNP Leader in Westminster following Alex Salmond's election as First Minister for Scotland.

Angus represents Moray Constituency where he is also the Scottish Shadow Minister for Defence and Foreign Affairs.

Before his election in June 2001 he was the European and International Affairs Adviser to the SNP group in the Scottish Parliament. Prior to that, he worked as a foreign and diplomatic correspondent in central Europe for the BBC, Austrian Radio and other leading broadcasters.

Angus was born in London and brought up in Edinburgh where he received both his Primary and High School education. After leaving Broughton High School Angus completed a MA Honours in Politics and International Relations at Aberdeen University before embarking on his journalistic career.

Angus' main political interests are Scottish independence, International and European Affairs, defence, whisky, oil, fishing, sustainable development and youth issues.

Angus lives in Moray with his wife Carron Anderson.

He is a member of the European Scrutiny Committee, Vice Chairman of the All Party Whisky Group, Vice-Chairman of the All Party Offshore Oil and Gas Group, member of the All Party Fisheries Group and participant in the Parliamentary Armed Forces Scheme.

London is calling: Androsch und die Lords

■ **UNVERKITSCHT**, ohne Eigenlob, in realistischer Sicht: Androschs Buch „Österreich. Geschichte. Gegenwart. Zukunft.“ (Brandstätter-Verlag, Bild unten) fand bei der Präsentation der englischen Ausgabe in der Vorwoche in London beeindruckte Zuhörer. Tenor des Opus: Österreich ist nicht mehr „eine Insel der Seligen“.

■ **UNVERBRÜCHLICH** ist die Freundschaft Androschs mit früheren britischen Amtskollegen: Am Vorabend der Buchpräsentation traf der Ex-Finanzminister die Lords Dennis Healy und Nigel Lawson, beide waren einst Schatzkanzler, bei einem Event der University of London zu Ehren Lord Healys.



Lord D. Healy



Lord Lawson



BOTSCHAFTER
Emil Brix (o. l.) war in der Österreich-Residenz am Belgrave Square in London Gastgeber für britische Prominenz aus Politik- und Medienszene.

From the CBI to the chancellor, the nerves are beginning to show

Like Denis Healey before him, Ed Balls has become shadow chancellor after a sudden resignation. Now he confronts an austerity consensus that is beginning to crumble



William Keegan
The Observer, Sunday 30 January 2011

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Sir Richard Lambert of the CBI: worried about growth. Photograph: Sarah Lee for the Guardian

Ed Balls is not the first Labour shadow chancellor to have been thrust back into the public eye by a sudden resignation. Way back in 1972, shadow foreign secretary Denis Healey, who wanted to be the real foreign secretary, found himself catapulted into the shadow chancellorial role after the resignation, over Labour's European policies, of Roy Jenkins.

Healey, rather like Alan Johnson, made no pretence to economic expertise. "I had no more knowledge of economics than the average newspaper reader," he wrote in his memoirs, adding mischievously, "and I had never bothered to look at the City pages."

Healey talked about being launched "on the stormy and shark-ridden seas of economic policy". Well, no one can accuse Ed Balls of ignorance of economic policy and those shark-ridden seas. But, in one of those curious twists of fate, the formidable critic of George Osborne's deflationary mission finds himself also opposing a governor of the Bank of England in whose original appointment he had a hand.

For, although Balls is perfectly content with the Bank of England's refusal to raise interest rates when the economy is already on the rocks, he is understandably concerned about the governor's continued support for the chancellor's cuts strategy. In which context, it was good news last week that in his valedictory speech, the retiring director general of the Confederation of British Industry, Sir Richard Lambert, finally got around to attacking the government for its lack of a growth strategy – although I was not the only one to wonder how Sir Richard could simultaneously be backing the government's approach to the deficit.

Now, there is little doubt that the coalition has been shaken by the appointment of the shadow chancellor from whom they have most to fear. And the ferocity of some of the attacks on Balls from right wing commentators reflects the concern of Messrs Cameron and Osborne. Balls can cope with that kind of thing – even relish the fight. He is as tough as Healey.

At this stage there is no need for the shadow chancellor to be too worried about attempts to sow the seeds of division between him and his leader, Ed Miliband. Nor, if I

were in his shoes, would I be too worried by the "what would *you* do?" questions. As Healey writes: "For opposition purposes... I found it sufficient to concentrate on attacking the contradictions and inequities in [Conservative chancellor Anthony] Barber's policy."

The essential message of Balls's outstanding speech during the Labour leadership campaign was very much in accordance with Healey's famous dictum: "When you are in a hole, don't dig deeper." But that is precisely what the coalition has been doing.

Meanwhile, I can report that, at the tender age of 93 and a half, Lord Healey is in top form, and watching the coalition – which he gives a year at most – with interest. Addressing a high-powered audience assembled by the Mile End Group of Queen Mary, University of London, last week on the theme of "Being Chancellor", Healey made it clear that during his own chancellorship – 1974-79 – the big problem, in addition to the oil crisis, was the power of the trade unions, before the block vote was replaced in the 1980s by "one person, one vote".

Healey greatly admired the way that the Austrian and Swedish governments managed to conduct successful incomes policies in conjunction with what they called their "social partners" (employers and unions), thereby avoiding the classic UK wage-price spiral.

As it happened, Healey's old friend Dr Hannes Androsch, Austria's finance minister in the 1970s, was in London last week for the launch of a book he has edited, entitled *Austria: Past, Present and Future*, which is also fascinating on Europe generally. Androsch, who has considerable experience of China, and was once chairman of the IMF's key policymaking committee, is convinced that, because of its distrust of the US, China will do its best to support the euro in its troubles. Androsch was a guest at the Healey celebration, and the two agreed that, while Austria handled the unions better than the UK in the old days, life is more difficult for all western finance ministers in the era of globalisation. As Healey commented: "I feel sorry for George Osborne, despite his politics [pregnant pause] – and his personality."

I suspect that Healey still admires the Swedish economy, which, during the week that we learned of the 0.5% drop in UK gross domestic product during the fourth quarter, was reportedly steaming ahead at a record pace, with a large trade surplus on top, and not much sign of budgetary cuts.

Which brings us back to the UK. George Osborne's hint of concessions on fuel tax in his forthcoming budget is the first sign of panic in the ranks. And Mervyn King's speech last week contained a passage that should have frightened the life out of the cuts brigade. "In 2011," he said, "real wages are likely to be no higher than they were in 2005," adding: "One has to go back to the 1920s to find a time when real wages fell over a period of six years."

I have heard some alarming reports about the growing number of citizens who do not know how on earth they are going to make ends meet this year. As the prospect of a double-dip recession grows closer, I wonder whether the coalition asks itself whether the ends justify the means. Indeed, what exactly are the ends?

Angus Robertson

Introduction

Book Launch

“Austria. Past, Present and Future”

Edited by Hannes Androsch

Austrian Residence, 18 Belgrave Square, LONDON SW1X 8PX, 26 January 2011

Ambassador, Lord, Ladies, gentlemen and honoured guests,

Start off by saying how much of an honour it is to be asked to say some words of introduction at the launch of this fantastic book.

As you can probably guess from my name and accent I am not Austrian, but I have had the good fortune to live in Vienna for nearly decade. I reported to the rest of the world about Austria via the BBC World Service, NPR in the United States and other international broadcasters as well as broadcasting to Austria about the rest of the world as a news reader on Blue Danube Radio, the then 4th national network of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation.

As an outsider who has developed a deep affinity and love for Austria as my “wahl heimat” I have had particular interest in seeing how Austria is viewed. Perhaps that is why I have been asked to speak this evening in introduction about a book that’s provides a majestic insight into Austria, Past, Present and Future.

In this week which marks the celebration of Scotland’s national poet Robert Burns I can do no better than use one of his most famous quotes:

“Oh, that God the gift would give us To see ourselves as others see us”.

If that question were to be asked from an Austrian perspective:

- One might be in luck with an impression from the musical brilliance of the New Year’s concert from the Vienna
- One might be in luck that culture vultures may have been to the Salzburg festival or Dornbirn
- One might be in luck and holidayed by the Carinthian lakes or skied in Tyrol
- One might be in luck and holidayed by the Carinthian lakes or skied in Tyrol

On checking Amazon before coming here, there were 74,000 works on offer concerning Austria in German.

“Österreich für Deutsche. Einblicke in ein fremdes Land”-„Austria for Germans – Insights to a foreign land“

“Gebrauchsanweisung für Österreich” – “Users Manual for Austria”

For those people without the good fortune to speak German, it is quite difficult, even on Amazon to inform oneself about the breadth of Austria in all its dimensions:

- There are a myriad of guidebooks,
- There are quite a few books on the Habsburgers
- There are plenty biographies about the many cultural greats,

What I have failed to find until now is a single volume which properly reflects the nation often described as the “Island of Bliss” ... the “Insel der Seeligen”.

What I have long been after is a single work that properly covers the gamut of national life:

- History
- Business and Economics
- Art
- Music
- Literature
- Architecture
- Religion
- Media
- People
- Cuisine
- Fashion
- Sport

If it were possible it would be written by 23 of the most respected commentators and authors, including:

- Professor Anton Pelinka-Austria’s leading political expert
- The broadcaster and Author Trautl Brandstaller
- The Central Europe expert Michael Frank
- The late, great literature expert Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler

To top it all, it would be published by one of Austria’s most respected post war figures, like Hannes Androsch the former Deputy Chancellor and Finance Minister in the government of the “Sun King” Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, and now a leading industrialist, commentator and author.

Of course such a book, needs to be filled with exquisite photographs, beautifully laid out ... and naturally, given the riches of subject material it must weight 3.5kg and have 600 pages.

Regardless of your interest in Austria, there is something in it for everyone, from de mainstream to the unexpected, from the ‘gemuetlich’ to the uncomfortable. The prose and content is sparkling, insightful and detailed.

I particularly like the extract in the Chapter about sport which deals with the powerhouse Jewish football club of the 1920s and 1930s Hakoah. Famed as the Austrian champions, they were also the first continental club side to beat a club side here in England with the 5-nil 1923 victory against west Ham.

Any country would be proud to have such a work, bulging with the richest of European culture, history and geography.

Every Austrian Embassy should be stocked with copies to be used as the finest calling card.

Austria and Austrians have no reason to be modest about themselves and their country, but there is also no need for an empty false swagger.

This book tells it and shows it, as it was in past days, how it is in the present and how it may look in the future.

I commend it to you all, I sincerely thank Hannes Androsch and his fellow authors for a fantastic book which should grace the collection of every reader interested in Austria.