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# Why Austria Has a Future in the Heart of Europe

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Abstract. Based on the February 3rd Declaration Issued by Wolfgang Schussel and Jorg Haider, this article suggests that Austria already is much more like Europe than one might think and will continue in this vein.

In one attempt to head off political sanctions from members of the European Union (EU) and from other nation-states, the Austrian chancellor, Wolfgang Schussel, and the (then) head of the Austrian Freedom Party, Jorg Haider, Issued a Declaration: Responsibility for Austria-A Future in the Heart of Europe. The intent of the Declaration seems to have been to show how Austria embraces values and behavior cherished by EU members. IBPP maintains that this intent was largely actualized--although not quite in the way that Mr. Schussel and Mr. Haider might have conceived.

The Declaration endorses the "spiritual and moral values which are the common heritage of the peoples of Europe" and the "true source of individual freedom, political liberty, and the rule of law." However, values which comprise the common European heritage include the development, expropriation, and exploitation of utopian ideals in the service of securing territory, commodities, products, and services, treasure, and political allegiances--and the accompanying human atrocities to secure such assets.

The Declaration endorses a government that "actively combats any form of discrimination, intolerance and demagoguery in all areas." Like other European nation-states, then, an Austrian government would seek to eradicate such phenomena in other political groupings when in its interests to do so, and employ such phenomena--again when in its interests to do so.

The Declaration endorses an Austria in which "xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and racism have no place" and there is "full respect for the rights and fundamental freedoms of people of any nationality--irrespective of the reason for their stay in Austria." Both quotes suggest that respect for aliens, Jews, and various races is a goal in the context of non-Austrians remaining non-Austrians and of protecting some pure Austrian and (European) essence.

The Declaration goes on and endorses efforts to support various political vehicles such as the Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-Racist Society, the European Convention on Human Rights, Articles 6 and 13 of the Treaty of the European Union, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The disparity such political vehicles have helped maintain between utopian ideal and reality places Austria right at the heart of Europe.

Finally, the Declaration endorses acceptance of some responsibility and self-scrutiny for "the horrendous crimes of National Socialism" and pledges to help guard against the repetition of "this darkest chapter." As with those of other European countries, the Austrian endorsement and pledge serves as a self-protective cover against responsibility and scrutiny reaching into some of the darkest recesses of "this darkest chapter."

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The Declaration ends with the assertion that "Austria as a stable and reliable country, will make her contribution in partnership for a peaceful and secure life together in Europe and the world." It is only in that Austria has too closely accessed Europe's heart of darkness that it is in danger of losing Europe's heart. (See Bohannon, P. (1993). Preliminary notes on ethnocentrism and xenophobia. In M. T. McGuire (Ed.). *Human nature and the new Europe*. Boulder, CO, USA: Westview Press; Brannigan, A. (1998). *Criminology and the Holocaust: Xenophobia, evolution, and genocide*. *Crime and Delinquency*, 44, 257-276; Declaration: Responsibility for Austria--A Future in the Heart of Europe. (February 3, 2000). <http://www.austria.gv.at/e/bundesreg/declaration.htm>.; Lederer, G. (1988). Young Austrians and the election of Kurt Waldheim. *Political Psychology*, 9, 633-647; Warnecke, A., et al. (1992). The roots of nationalism: Nonverbal behavior and xenophobia. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 13, 267-282; Wodak, R., & Reisigl, M. (1999). Discourse and racism: European perspectives. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 28, 175-199.) (Keywords: Austria, Haider.)