

The Pope's Peace Proposals

LONDON, August 16.

The Foreign Office last night issued the French text of the letter from the Pope to the King enclosing a copy of his appeal to the heads of the belligerent peoples. It follows.

To the leaders of the belligerent peoples:

Since the beginning of our pontificate with the horrors of a terrible war let loose on Europe we had in view above everything three things to preserve: Perfect impartiality towards all belligerents as is suitable for him who is the common father and who loves all his children with equal affection; continually to attempt to do all the good possible, and that without exception of person, without distinction of nationality or religion as is dictated to us by the universal law of charity which the supreme spiritual chargé has confided to us with Christ; finally, as our pacific mission also requires, to omit nothing which might contribute to hasten the end of this calamity by trying to lead people and their leaders to more moderate resolution, to hasten a serene deliberation of a peace just and durable.

Whoever has followed our work during these three painful years which have just passed has been able easily to recognize that if we have always remained faithful to our resolve of absolute impartiality and to our attitude of benevolence. We have not ceased to exhort the belligerent brothers again to become brethren, although publicity has not been given to all that we have done to attain this very noble aim.

Towards the end of the first year of the war we addressed to the nations in conflict most lively exhortations, and more, we indicated the part to be followed to arrive at a stable and honorable peace for all. Unfortunately, our appeal was not heard, and the war continued desperately for another two years with all its horrors.

It became even more cruel and extended over the earth, over the sea and in the air, and one saw desolation and death descend upon the cities without defense, upon peaceful villages and on their innocent people, and now no one can imagine how the suffering will be increased if other months or, worse still, other years are about to be added to this sanguinary triennium.

Is this civilized world to be nothing more than a field of death? Europe, so glorious and so flourishing, is it going, as if stricken by a universal madness, to run to the abyss and to lend its hand to its own suicide?

In such a terrible situation, and in the presence of a menace so serious, we who have no particular political aim, who do not listen to suggestions or to the interests of any of the belligerent parties, but are solely compelled by a sentiment of our supreme duty as the common father of the faithful, by the solicitation of our children who implore our intervention and our pacifying word, through the voice even of humanity, and of reason, we once more emit the cry of peace, and we renew a pressing appeal to those who hold in their hands the destinies of nations. But in order no longer to speak in general terms as the circumstances had counselled us in the past, we now wish to make more concrete and practical proposals and to invite the Governments of the belligerent peoples to an agreement upon the following points, which seem to be a basis of a just and durable peace, leaving to them the task of analyzing and completing them.

First of all the fundamental points must be that the material force of arms be substituted by the moral force of right, from which shall arise a fair agreement by all for the simultaneous and reciprocal diminution of armaments, according to the rules and guarantees to be established in a measure sufficient for the maintenance of public order in each state. Then, the substitution for armies the institution or arbitration with its high pacifying function, according to the rules to be laid down and the penalties to be imposed on a state which would refuse either to submit a national question to arbitration or to accept its decision.

Once the supremacy of right has been established, all obstacles to the means of communication of the peoples would disappear by assuring, by rules to be fixed later, the true liberty and community of the seas which would contribute to the numerous causes of conflict and would also open to all new sources of prosperity and progress.

As to the damages to be repaired and as to the war expenses, we see no other means of solving the question than by submitting as a general principle the complete and reciprocal condonation which would be

justified, moreover, by the immense benefit to be derived from disarmament so much so that no one will understand the continuation of a similar carnage solely for reasons of an economic order.

If for certain causes there exist particular reasons, they would be deliberated upon with justice and equity, but these pacific agreements with the immense advantages to be derived from them are impossible without a reciprocal restoration of that present territory occupied.

On the part of Germany, the complete evacuation of Belgium, with the guarantee of her full political, military and economic independence towards it, and the evacuation of French territory.

On the part of other belligerent parties, similar restitution of the German colonies.

As regards the territorial questions, as for example, those which have arisen between Italy and Austria and between Germany and France, there is reason to hope that in consideration of the immense advantages of a durable peace, the parties in conflict would wish to examine them with a conciliatory disposition, taking into consideration, as we have said formerly, the aspirations of the peoples and the special interests and of the general welfare of the great human society.

The same spirit of equity and justice ought to be followed in the examination of other territorial and political questions, notably those relative to Armenia and the Balkan states, and territories making a part of the ancient Kingdom of Poland, whose

noble and historical traditions and the sufferings which it has endured, especially during the present war, ought to conciliate the sympathies of nations.

Such are the principal bases whereon we believe the future reorganizations of the peoples ought to be built. They are of a nature to render impossible the return to similar conflicts, and to prepare a solution of the economic question so important for the future and for the material well-being of all belligerent states.

Therefore in presenting to you who direct at this hour the destinies of the belligerent nations, we are animated to see them accepted and to see thus the conclusion at an early date of the terrible struggle, which more and more appears a useless massacre.

The whole world recognize that the honor of the armies of both sides is safe. Incline your ears, therefore, to our prayer. Accept the fraternal invitation which we send you in the name of the Divine Redeemer, the Prince of Peace. Reflect on your very great responsibility before God and before man.

On your decision depend the repose and the joy of innumerable families, the life of thousands of young people for whom it is your absolute duty to obtain their welfare.

May the Lord inspire your decision in conformity to His very holy will. May God grant that while meriting the acceptance of your contemporaries you will also obtain in the future generations a splendid name of pacificators.

As for us, closely united in prayer and in penitence with all those faithful souls which sigh for peace, we implore for you the light and counsel of the Divine Spirit.

(Signed) BENEDICT.

At the Vatican, August 1.

Upon the Necessity of saying "No, I Can't Afford it"

A lesson for Canada as well as for the United States

(Theo. H. Price, in the New York Commerce and Finance).

The Food Control Bill is a law. Mr. Hoover is going to try to reduce the cost of flour by scientific purchases of wheat.

The War Industries Board announces that in fixing prices "we shall allow a reasonable price but shall deny the extortion now exacted for many articles of prime necessity."

The revenue bill levies a heavy tax on swollen incomes and will thereby compel some economy on the part of the rich but none of these instrumentalities provide the American people with the moral courage to say "No, I can't afford it," that is essential to any real reduction in the cost of living. We may pass elaborate laws and devise all sorts of machinery for controlling prices but they will be ineffective and useless until we learn again to refuse buying the things we cannot afford.

In the vast majority of cases it is our pride and not our needs that makes our income insufficient. We are ashamed to admit that we can't afford what others have and this feeling has spread and reacted until it made of us a nation rapidly conventionalized in our expenditure, habits and standards of living.

The time has come when we must be willing to be eccentric in our economy. We must be willing to wear old clothes and make them over. To ignore the periodicity of the seasons in so far as our head gear is concerned. To clean our own shoes instead of paying five or ten cents for a "shine." To drink fewer ice cream sodas. To patronize low priced shops instead of the fashionable establishments whose extravagant rents we pay in the prices demanded for the distinction of dealing with them. To tell the shopkeeper that he is charging too much and leave his wares unbought. To carry our own parcels home and demand a reduction for doing so. To save strings and wrapping paper and make kindling wood out of the boxes and barrels that come to the house instead of throwing them out to be taken away by the garbage man. To use less light and less fuel. To walk when we do not really need to pay a nickel for a ride. To teach our children that they can be happier with a few things than with many.

Those of us who are old enough to have been children fifty years ago are utterly appalled when we consider how many things that were then unthought of now have become "unnecessary necessities." To go to the theatre then was an event. Now

it is a weekly if not almost a nightly habit. To dine away from home was then almost unheard of. Now hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent each evening in this country for dinners in restaurants.

The phrase "week-end" had not then been invented and most people spent their Sundays quietly and restfully at home. Now nearly every one has to go on what Samantha called a "pleasure exertion" that involves no small expenditure. Then children were brought up to do their share of the household work and profited by the education that they acquired in doing it. Now they must be "provided with amusement." Then the scraps were saved and made into "quilts." Now they are thrown away. Then we were taught to "turn down the gas" when we left the room. Now the electric lights are allowed to burn. Then the household who kept a carriage and horses was unusual. Now we shamefully apologize if we do not own a "motor." Then we had napkin rings and used the same napkin for at least three meals. Now we must have fresh ones every time we sit down to the table. Children then used slates and pencils which cost a few cents and lasted months. Now they must have paper pads for each of which we pay nearly the price of a slate. If we were any happier or healthier for all that we think we must have today there might be some justification for the enormous increase in expenditure that is involved, but are we?

There is no statistical record of happiness by which comparison can be made, but if there were it is very doubtful whether the present would show any improvement over the past and the increase in the number of divorces suggests that life may not perhaps be as blissful as it was fifty years ago.

As to health it is true that our longevity is greater and our mortality less than it was in the past but the improvement in this respect is due to the advance of medical science and not to our increased expenditures and self-indulgence. Perhaps we shall be still better off physically if we return to the habits of our fathers in so far as purchasable pleasure and self-satisfaction is concerned.

One thing is however certain. It is that all the law the government can pass and everything that Mr. Hoover can do toward reducing prices will avail but little unless we live up to the spirit by which they are inspired and have the moral courage to say "No, I can't afford it."