

Reply of Central Powers to Pope's Peace Proffer

Following is the text of the reply of Emperor Charles of Austria-Hungary to Pope Benedict's peace proposal:

"Holy Father: With due veneration and deep emotion we take cognizance of the new representation your holiness, in fulfillment of the holy office intrusted to you by God, make to us and the heads of the other belligerent states, with the noble intention of leading the heavily tried nations to a unity that will restore peace to them.

"With a thankful heart we received this fresh gift of fatherly care which you, holy father, always bestow on all peoples without distinction, and from the depth of our heart we greet the moving exhortation which your holiness has addressed to the governments of the belligerent peoples. During this cruel war we have always looked up to your holiness as to the highest personage who, in virtue of his mission which reaches beyond earthly things, and thanks to the high conception of his duties laid upon him, stands high above the belligerent peoples and who is inaccessible to all influence, was able to find a way which may lead to the realization of our own desire for peace, lasting and honorable for all parties.

"Since ascending the throne of our ancestors, and fully conscious of the responsibility which we bear before God and men for the fate of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy we have never lost sight of the high aim of restoring to our peoples as speedily as possible the blessing of peace. Soon after our accession to the throne it was vouchsafed to us in common with our allies to undertake a step which had been considered and prepared by our exalted predecessor, Francis Joseph, to pave the way for a lasting and honorable peace.

"We gave expression to this desire in a speech from the throne delivered at the opening of the Austrian Reichsrath, thereby showing that we are striving after a peace that shall free the future life of the nation from rancor and a thirst for revenge and that shall secure them for generations to come from the employment of armed forces. Our joint government has in the meantime not failed in repeated and emphatical declarations, which could be heard by all the world, to give expression to our own will and that of the Austro-Hungarian peoples to prepare an end to bloodshed by a peace such as your holiness has in mind.

"Happy in the thought that our desires from the first were directed toward the same object which your holiness today characterizes as one we should strive for, we have taken into close consideration the concrete and practical suggestions of your holiness and have come to the following conclusions:

"With deep-rooted conviction we agree to the leading idea of your holiness that the future arrangement of the world must be based on the elimination of armed forces and on the moral force of right and on the rule of international justice and legality.

"We, too, are imbued with the hope that a strengthening of the sense of right would morally regenerate humanity. We support, therefore, your holiness's view that the negotiations between the belligerents should and could lead to an understanding by which, with the creation of appropriate guarantees, armaments on land and sea and in the air might be reduced simultaneously, reciprocally

and gradually to fixed limit and where the high seas, which rightly belong to all the nations of the earth, may be freed from domination or paramountcy and be opened equally for the use of all.

"Fully conscious of the importance of the promotion of peace on the method proposed by your holiness, namely, to submit international disputes to compulsory arbitration, we are also prepared to enter into negotiations regarding this proposal.

"If, as we most heartily desire, agreements should be arrived at between the belligerents which would realize this sublime idea and thereby give security to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy for its unhampered future development, it can then not be difficult to find a satisfactory solution of the other questions which still remain to be settled between the belligerents in a spirit of justice and of a reasonable consideration of the conditions for existence of both parties.

"If the nations of the earth were to enter, with a desire for peace, into negotiations with one another, in the sense of your holiness's proposals, then peace could blossom forth from them. The nations could attain complete freedom of movement on the high seas, heavy material burdens could be taken from them and new sources of prosperity opened to them.

"Guided by a spirit of moderation and conciliation, we see in the proposals of your holiness a suitable basis for initiating negotiations with a view to preparing a peace, just to all and lasting, and we earnestly hope our present enemies may be animated by the same ideas. In this spirit, we beg that the Almighty may bless the work of peace begun by your holiness."

TEXT OF GERMAN REPLY

Following is the complete text of the German reply to Pope Benedict's peace proposal:

"Herr Cardinal: Your eminence has been good enough, together with your letter of August 2, to transmit to the kaiser and king, my most gracious master, the note of his holiness, the pope, in which his holiness, filled with grief at the devastation of the world war, makes an emphatic peace appeal to the heads of the belligerent peoples. The kaiser-king has deigned to acquaint me with your eminence's letter and to intrust the reply to me.

"His majesty has been following for a considerable time with high respect and sincere gratitude his holiness's efforts, in a spirit of true impartiality, to alleviate as far as possible the sufferings of the war and to hasten the end of hostilities. The kaiser sees in the latest step of his holiness fresh proof of his noble and humane feelings, and cherishes a lively desire that for the benefit of the entire world the papal appeal may meet with success.

"The effort of Pope Benedict is to pave the way to an understanding among all peoples and might more surely reckon on a sympathetic reception and whole-hearted support from his majesty, seeing that the kaiser, since taking over the government, has regarded it as his principal and most sacred task to preserve the blessings of peace for the German people and the world. In his first speech from the throne at the opening of the German reichstag, on June 25, 1888, the kaiser promised that his love of the German army and his position toward it should never lead

him into temptation to cut short the benefits of peace unless war were a necessity, forced upon us by an attack on the empire or its allies. The German army should safeguard peace for us, and, should peace nevertheless, be broken, it would be in a position to win it with honor. The kaiser has, by his acts, fulfilled the promise he then made in 26 years of happy rule, despite provocations and temptations.

"In the crisis which led to the present world conflagration his majesty's efforts were, up to the last moment, directed toward settling the conflict by peaceful means. After the war had broke out, against his wish and desire, the kaiser in conjunction with his high allies was the first solemnly to declare his readiness to enter into peace negotiations. The German people supported his majesty in his keen desire for peace.

"Germany sought within her national frontier the free development of her spiritual and material possessions and outside the imperial territory unhindered competition with nations enjoying equal rights and equal esteem. The free play of forces in the world in peaceable wrestling with one another would lead to the highest perfecting of the noblest human possessions. Disastrous concatenation of events in the year 1914 absolutely broke off all hopeful course of development and transformed Europe into a bloody battle arena.

"Appreciating the importance of his holiness's declaration, the imperial government has not failed to submit the suggestion contained therein to earnest and scrupulous examination. Special measures, which the government has taken in closest contact with representatives of the German people, for discussing and answering the questions raised prove how earnestly it desires in accordance with his holiness's desires and the peace resolution of the Reichstag on July 19, to find a practical basis for a just and lasting peace.

"The imperial government greets with special sympathy the leading idea of the peace appeal wherein his holiness clearly expresses the conviction that in the future the material power of arms must be superseded by the moral power of right. We are also convinced that the sick body of human society can only be healed by fortifying its moral strength of right. From this would follow, according to his holiness's view, the simultaneous diminution of the armed forces of all states and the institution of obligatory arbitration for international disputes.

"We share his holiness's view that definite rules and a certain safeguard for a simultaneous and reciprocal limitation of armaments on land, on sea, and in the air, as well as for the true freedom of the community and

high seas, are the things, in treating which the new spirit that in the future should prevail in international relations should find first hopeful expression. The task would then of itself arise to decide international differences of opinion, not by the use of armed forces, but by peaceful methods, especially by arbitration, whose high peace-producing effect we together with his holiness fully recognize.

"The imperial government will in this respect support every proposal compatible with the vital interest of the German empire and people.

"Germany, owing to her geographical situation and economic requirements, has to rely on peaceful intercourse with her neighbors and with distant countries. No people, therefore, has more reason than the German people to wish that instead of universal hatred and battle that a conciliatory fraternal spirit should prevail between nations. If the nations are guided by this spirit it will be recognized to their advantage that the important thing is to lay more stress upon that which unites them in their relations. They will also succeed in settling individual points of conflict which are still undecided, in such a way that conditions of existence will be created which will be satisfactory to every nation and thereby a repetition of this great world catastrophe would appear impossible.

"Only on this condition can a lasting peace be founded which would promote an intellectual rapprochement and a return to the economic prosperity of human society. This serious and sincere conviction encourages our confidence that our enemies also may see a suitable basis in the ideas submitted by his holiness for approaching nearer to the reparation of future peace under conditions corresponding to a spirit of reasonableness and to the situation in Europe."

The document is signed by the imperial chancellor, Michaelis, and is addressed to Cardinal Gasparri, papal secretary of state.

Save Half Your Shoe Money

Sizes 1 to 13
Heights
6 to 17 in.

Wear Overland Aluminum Shoes
They last twice as long as all-leather, rubber or wood-soled boots and shoes.

Water-Proof, Rust-Proof, Rot-Proof
Best leather uppers. Thick felt insoles. No metal touches you. Warm, comfortable, easy to walk in. Keep feet in good condition and prevent sickness. Best by test for all work in any weather.

MONEY BACK if shoes do not meet with your approval. Write for FREE catalog which shows styles, gives prices and tells how to order. A postal brings it.

OVERLAND SHOE CO., Dept. 89 E, Racine, Wis.

LEPAGE'S
GLUE
HANDY BOTTLES
A HOUSEHOLD NECESSITY 10¢

BARGAIN OFFER

For Limited Time to New or Renewing Subscribers

THE COMMONER and Thrice-a-Week NEW YORK WORLD, both One Full Year for Only \$1.15.

Address Orders to THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Nebr.