

The White Horse Of the Apocalypse

By Rev. Benedict Deneen

(Note: This editorial from the March 5, 1943 issue of *The Commonwealth* describes a situation of such immediate and urgent necessity that it ought to be shouted from the housetops and broadcast through every house in the country. I know there are only a few who think it worthwhile to read this column, but even those few will be just as many more when the message will hit between the lines if I reproduce it here.)

It says:

The situation is so simple you have to pinch yourself to believe it is true. Canada and the United States are bursting with surplus cereals. The Argentine and Brazil are bursting with surplus meat, and would be delighted to find a market for their bulk. Swedish merchant ships are tied up at the wharves, without cargoes, with nowhere to go. Credit balances are rotting away in the accounts of various governments in exile. And all over Europe children (we won't talk about adults) are starving.

What does a starving child lead to? Creativity, of course, it can produce death. But unfortunately it very often does not produce death. It produces human beings who can at some later date reconstitute their physical strength by adequate food, but whose nervous systems are forever seared—and beyond the reach of anything but a blind admiration for force and a desire for vengeance against mankind. The experience of the last twenty-five years has proved this notoriously in the case of one generation of German youth, which suffered no such severity of starvation as is now being suffered this instant, today, this hour, by youth in France, in Belgium, in Holland, in Norway, and (Russian Relief—please note!) in occupied Russia. These are the children our children will have to live with. These children will like to destroy, they will love strength, and brute strength. They will have airplanes that will span the Atlantic, and the Chinese children will have airplanes that can span the Pacific. And they will remember who had the full granaries, and who kept those granaries inviolate. They will remember, but they will be incapable of reason; and since they will remember badly, they will remember even worse things than we have let happen.

Unless . . . we allow (for we need do nothing more than allow) the surplus wheat we own, the surplus meat and milk South Americans own, to be bought for good money, to be shipped in idle vessels, to go under unimpeachable supervision into the hungry mouths which now look up and are not fed.

What is quite beyond belief is that no one is openly opposed to our taking the only steps which can possibly spare our children from a calamity and a threat infinitely greater than the present threat. No one has lately said a word in argument against this use of what surpluses there are as insurance against a dire future for those most dear to us. To Christians no one has spoken against this clear-cut obligation in charity.

Why then are the Swedish ships not getting up steam? Why then are the grain merchants of Chicago and the proprietors of Argentine haciendas not depositing checks from the Belgian and the Dutch and the Norwegian and the Polish governments? Why is the International Red Cross able only to bewail how little it can do? Why does the French "Secours Quaker" say that it has not enough milk and vitamins to last till spring, even for the most desperate cases?

Many men and women who have seen the horror at first hand are asking themselves these questions. And there appear to be only three possible answers. A few obstinate and obdurate highly-placed British officials, who seem to think that to change your mind is a sign of weakness, stand out against the noblest and most enlightened of their compatriots. A few selfish Americans get panicky because they cannot have as many cans of tomatoes or pounds of coffee as they would like, and come to the conclusion that all surpluses are mythical. And the Russian inner circle must believe that a starved population, with its mass psychology, will always prefer to accept Communist leadership, will never prefer a leadership so vastly less human than either Communism or Fascism that we can scarcely conceive it, a leadership purely anarchical, savage, brutal, a leadership which the depths of our own being tell us can exist, though we have not seen it.

Against this small, hard core of blind folly, there is only one effective remedy. It must be dissolved in the acid of popular indignation and resolution that our children shall not have to suffer worse than the worst any of today's men and women have suffered, that charity shall not quit the world.

I find some particular devil, maybe old Scrooge himself, nudging me with a counsel of frustration, at this point. If I can make out his sniffling syllables, he seems to be asking me, "Now what good is that editorial going to do? Who's going to do anything about it? Doesn't it admit that the whole world is being held up by a few key-men? What do you expect your readers to do about it? And are you forgetting that we have a pretty assortment of internal agents working on them, too? Better relax and admit that this week's column is a discord even before it's printed."

But one thing old Scrooge, or whatever he is, does not seem willing to admit, is this: There are some readers who will not only read that editorial, but will also stop to reflect. They will say, "Of course, it isn't up to me to sign the orders that will release food for Europe's starving children. But it isn't a complication of arrangement which is holding things up. It is a complication of spirit, a lack of vital charity. And that is something I can lack of vital charity. And that is something I can go to work on. For I have a power of telepathy of prayer. I'm going to get to work right now—today, and every day—I'm praying at intensely as I can, focused like a tuning-fork: 'Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created; and I too shall renew the face of the earth!'"

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people of the world to join in this new crusade. His five principles are the first five milestones on this pilgrimage to the Holy Land of the Spirit. They provide for a nation's internal tranquility, even as the Five Points made provision for international peace.

The five principles must serve to eliminate from the post-war world all barriers created by prejudice, error, indifference, and by a long tradition of secularization of thought, feeling and action. Our next editorial will consider the five points of world reconstruction which Pope Pius XII emphasizes as essential to true national peace as a foundation for international peace.

THAT THESE MAY EAT!

All America is an food rationing now. War conditions have disturbed production and distribution of food in all its varieties. One hundred thirty million people have been eating, have had their fill, out of the granaries and barnyards of America. Scarcity and the fear of scarcity have led many to overeat, to hoard food. That all may eat and continue to eat the government has been compelled to take over the administration of food distribution. War conditions have brought starvation and near starvation to many nations of the world. "There are no atheists in foxholes," declares one who knows. Perhaps present food conditions may lead more men to realize how utterly dependent we are on God for our daily bread.

There was an acute food shortage among the five thousand men and their families who had assembled on the mountain side to hear more of Christ's word and to see more of His healing power. There would be a constant food shortage throughout the world every year but for the ordinary providence of God which makes the tree to bear, the field to produce, the fish to prosper. Christ knew the need of the crowd, knew the impossibility of securing bread for them through ordinary channels. Philip stated the case in his question, Andrew told Jesus of the boy with the loaves and fishes, both agreeing on the impossibility of feeding the crowd with such meager resources.

Then the Great Food Administrator had them to have the men sit down, and taking the loaves He gave thanks and distributed them to those reclining; likewise the fishes, as much as they wished. All were filled, and twelve baskets were needed to collect what remained.

"This is, indeed, the Prophet who is to come into the world,"—these were the words of those who witnessed this sign which Christ had wrought. They were what one would expect of them. A few loaves, many thousands of people, hunger that threatened to make men faint; then many loaves, many fishes, satisfaction of hunger, twelve baskets of leftovers. Here indeed was a sign all could appreciate. God feeds all men; hunger would be our portion were it not for His Providence! By natural means He makes the earth bring forth its fruit. He gives man food in season. Ordinary and common is the work of sowing and reaping; yet it calls for the almighty power of God. No man can doubt the existence of God, the goodness of God, without hiding the touch of God's hand that gives him his loaves and fishes, his needed food. The reasonable man, the thinking man, will see in all the food God gives him a constant reminder of the goodness of God, and of his complete dependence upon him for food and drink.

'Quiz' Corner

What are the indulgences attached to the Stations of the Cross? When should absolutely touch the cross, containing the Sacred Hosts?

The indulgences attached to the Stations of the Cross are: (a) A Plenary Indulgence, to be gained only by a sacrame nt of a saintly person authorized to do so, such as often as one makes the Way of the Cross in a church or place where it is canonically erected.

(b) A Plenary Indulgence if Holy Communion is received on the day on which one makes the Way of the Cross; or if Holy Communion is received on any day.

It is necessary to give two names to an infant as baptism? No. We have to give one name for a month following, when the saint to guide and help the newly-born Christian and hoping that the child may in future years imitate the virtue of his or her one has started the Way of the Cross. If one desires to give Cross and for some reasonable reason this is allowed—but not necessary.

FIVE and TEN Years Ago

From Mar. 26, 1938, Edition

Well organized opposition against obscenity legislation taking the form of a protest lodged before the Assembly Taxation Committee in Albany resulted in a proposed bill to repeal State censorship of motion pictures being killed in committee by unanimous vote.

From Mar. 21, 1938, Edition

An overflow throng was present for the blessing and dedication of a new organ in St. Patrick's Church, Corning, by His Excellency, Bishop Kearney.

Due to urgent protests of citizens, including priests and laity of Catholic parishes in Corning, the motion picture "Crusade Against Racism," and accompanying features were withdrawn at a local theater.

Feast Days

Sunday, Apr. 6—ST. BRUNO.
Monday, Apr. 7—ST. VINCENT FERRER.
Tuesday, Apr. 8—ST. CELESTINE.
Wednesday, Apr. 9—BLESSED MIRIAM JOSEPH.
Thursday, Apr. 10—ST. PLACIDE.
Friday, Apr. 11—ST. MARY OF EGYPT.
Saturday, Apr. 12—ST. APOLLONIUS.

'Inarticulate'. More Replies

By Rev. James M. GALL, C.S.P.

At the close of last week's article I said reluctantly that this week's must be the last of the series, "Inarticulate, Not Why?" Since then the replies have continued to pour in. There seems to be no end to them. Will the writers who were bold enough to put their thoughts on paper kindly accept my thanks even though their contributions remain, because of lack of space, unpublished?

So, just a few more samples and then we must often when things offend us in full appear in the public press.

Orange & Sullivan County, N.Y. We have recently written a ringing letter in the Herald Tribune objecting to blasphemous power. On that particular occasion we received a stinging "bulletin" (sic) acknowledging our letter but no retraction, retraction or even publication of the objection.

New York City. At school my mother was forever going up and straightening something out. Once it was something the sons were together, a fight if there ever was one, and about the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. She had listened to and misinterpreted it to the children and my mother asked her to be allowed to present the true doctrine to the children, and she did it in a simple way. She never served any another teacher about Oathless, and in years to come, she came to love my mother for the love and courageous nature she was.

New York City. My next article is "Propaganda," an expose of Bruce Glavin's fabrication article in *The Sunday Mirror*. We have the Society of Information at 25 Rockefeller Plaza to help us to expose this fraud. The article will also answer the Oathless Poll in *The Sunday Mirror* in World War II. You will be interested to know that through the Society of Information I was able to write for the Western papers 100 articles on "Oathless Fighting Free."

Bronx. After discussing that we go to Church on Sundays we say and act as differently from our parents. We have said our last words. We have never understood what being Orthodox. Are we still in our sins? Are we lost? Is it a Roman? We hold the Mass, receive the sacraments, go to Confession, receive Communion. The time may not come when we shall fight for the religion. If it does we will then appreciate it. Please be funny.

Carmel. The Church maintains some fine High schools, and schools of journalism. As part of their training the pupils could be encouraged to discuss the religious aspect of writing for the newspaper and informed by others in the subject.

New York City. Would it not be possible to form a committee which would be a clearing house in this type of situation? It is not always possible for a person to have information at hand to answer, but if a number of people could have articles sent to them and could be in a position to answer them we would certainly take a strong Catholic position in these matters. I would be very glad to be on the committee.

New York City. I spent a long weekend in a Catholic high school, the father, a graduate of a good Catholic school, the mother, a graduate of a good Catholic school, though not very intelligent. Yet I did not see a single article reading matter except the *Instructions to Candidates*.

Valley Stream, N.Y. Many Catholics do not know what news are published, but those same Catholics would be more than a little surprised to learn that a Catholic is elected the Cardinal of New York. No, not in 1939, but in 1940, and silent and silent and silent.

New York City. The ridiculous feature of this article was failing to call attention to Mr. Executive Vice-President of the *News Magazine*. He replied, "I cannot apologize for my part in the use of such a name for the *News*." It is most offensive. I am going to place a large column on the fact that our Country is dedicated to the Blessed Mother and that our Father is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. However, I do not care one who has a full appreciation as well as realization of the importance and blessedness of the Divinity.

Ozone Park, N.Y. After discussing with the girls until I was in when circumstances forced me to go to work, I was a Catholic, had studied my catechism, said my prayers, received the sacraments and that sort of thing. When I was in my room I took a position with an apostolate; a college graduate, a scholar and a gentleman. Now however, after association with the other students, with the Devil, etc., I have managed to write and express quite a bit, and I think with some credit, which I have failed to realize myself. I am still in the same firm.

San Antonio. I am sending you, under separate cover, the *Quarterly Journal of Theology*, published in Montreal by the Province of Quebec. I have marked the passage, "If we want to have unity among the leading members of the City we must build it upon sections of young people devoted to the intensive study of important questions upon which as leaders they should take a united stand."

Stamford, Conn. My fellow Catholics would say "who reads these letters?" Waste of time, etc. Sort of give you that look that implies "Yea, bravo."

Chicago. There are priests who pass the time and are too busy about many things to grasp every opportunity to uphold their faith and let the world be on the secret of it.

Palm Beach. Well, my last went into the literary world had aronic side. I had written to furnish the tone of a article critic's idea of Catholic fellowship. I had a charming letter from him in reply saying he had not meant to convey what I had tried to mean and believe it or not I am not a Catholic. If our educated Catholics write like that, what can we expect from laymen? I am always taking up Catholic defense and being one of the editors and owners of one of the oldest Catholic papers in this country, I trust my presence will make some impression.

Once again, thank you all and regards to those who wrote long, excellent letters from which I have selected a few passages.