

Exchange of Letters Between Truman and Pope

WASHINGTON, Aug. 28 (AP)—Following are the texts of the letters exchanged between President Truman and Pope Pius XII:

Truman's Letter

Your Holiness:

In continuance of the exchanges of views undertaken from time to time since their beginning, on Dec. 23, 1939, for the purpose of facilitating parallel endeavors for peace and the alleviation of human suffering, I am requesting Mr. Taylor to return to Rome and to resume audiences with Your Holiness at such times as may be found appropriate.

These exchanges have already contributed profoundly toward a sound and lasting peace and to the strengthening of the impelling convictions pursued by the peoples of the world in their quest for a moral world order firmly established in the life of nations.

I desire to do everything in my power to support and to contribute to a concert of all the forces striving for a moral world. Those forces are in the homes of peaceful and law-abiding citizens in every part of the world who are exemplifying in their own lives the principles of the good neighbor: the Golden Rule itself. They are on the farms, in the factories, mines and little shops in all parts of the world where the principles of free cooperation and voluntary association in self-government are honored.

Moral Aspirations Everywhere

These moral aspirations are in the hearts of good men the world over. They are in all churches and in schools. The war demonstrated that all persons, regardless of divergent religious allegiances, can unite their efforts for the preservation and support of the principles of freedom and morality and justice. They must unite their efforts in the cause of enduring peace if they are not, one by one, to be weakened and rendered impotent at the times of their great need. They have individually and together the duty to vindicate, by their thoughts and deeds, the great hopes for which men fought in World War II and the hopes which today all serious-thinking men and women throughout the world know must be attained.

The tasks now confronting us are formidable. The conditions for meeting the heavy problems of war settlement and of new problems still unsolved are accompanied by multiplied discouragements. Unless the moral forces of the world now join their strength, discouragement must inevitably deepen and the strength and effectiveness which thereby would be lost by these moral forces would be gained by those forces which oppose and seek to destroy them. The hopes and ideals of mankind have often been jeopardized by force. They will be jeopardized today by any division of the moral forces of the world, or by any refusal to support and strengthen the hopes and ideals of all mankind.

Speaks as Nation's Leader

As the chosen leader of the people of the United States I am privileged to pledge full faith to you once again to work with

Your Holiness and with every agency of good the world over for an enduring peace. An enduring peace can be built only upon Christian principles. To such a consummation we dedicate all our resources, both spiritual and material, remembering always that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it.

Your Holiness, this is a Christian nation. More than a half century ago that declaration was written into the decrees of the highest court in this land. It is not without significance that the valiant pioneers who left Europe to establish settlements here, at the very beginning of their Colonial enterprises, declared their faith in the Christian religion and made ample provision for its practice and for its support. The story of the Christian missionaries who in earliest days endured perils, hardship—even death itself—in carrying the message of Jesus Christ to untutored savages is one that still moves the hearts of men.

As a Christian nation our earnest desire is to work with men of good-will everywhere to banish war and causes of war from the world whose Creator desired that men of every race and in every clime should live together in peace and good-will and mutual trust. Freedom of conscience, ordained by the Fathers of our Constitution to all who live under the flag of the United States, has been a bulwark of national strength, a source of happiness, from the establishment of our nation to this day.

Renewal of Faith Sought

I believe that the greatest need of the world today, fundamental to all else, is a renewal of faith. I seek to encourage renewed faith in the dignity and worth of the human person in all lands, to the end that the individual's sacred rights, inherent in his relationship to God and his fellows, will be respected in every land. We must have faith in the inevitable triumph of truth and decency; faith that mankind shall live in freedom, not in the chains of untruth nor in the chains of a collectivist organization of their lives; faith of such fullness that it will energize men and women everywhere to build with tenacity the better social world order under self-rule. The times demand faith that is strong enough to struggle if need be for the right, that is able to endure troubles and hardships, attack and even contempt from forces of evil—and able to arise reborn and revitalized from the daily struggle.

Faith leads to hope, to determination, to trust in the truth and the good, and to sustained effort to create the kind of peace and well-being sought by humble men and women in all lands and which will ultimately prevail between all nations. Through faith, the purposes of God shall be carried out in the hearts and deeds of man. I believe with heartfelt conviction that those who do not recognize their responsibility to Almighty God cannot meet their full duty toward their fellow men.

I have asked Mr. Taylor to convey these views and to say that I seek to cooperate with the efforts of Your Holiness and the efforts of every leader of the world's moral forces. Our common goal is to arouse and invigorate the faith of men to attain eternal values in our own generation—no

matter what obstacles exist or may arise in the path.

Faithfully yours,
HARRY S. TRUMAN.

The Pope's Reply

Your Excellency:

We have just received from the hands of your personal representative, Mr. Myron Taylor, Your Excellency's letter of Aug. 6 and we hasten to express our satisfaction and thanks for this latest testimony to the desire and determination of a great and free people to dedicate themselves with their characteristic confidence and generosity to the noble task of strengthening the foundations of that peace for which all peoples of the earth are longing. As their chosen leader Your Excellency seeks to enlist and cement the cooperation of every force and power which can help to accomplish this task. No one more than we will hope for its success and for the happy achievement of the goal. We pledge our resources and earnestly beg God's assistance.

What is proposed is to insure the foundations of a lasting peace among nations. It were indeed futile to promise long life to any building erected on shifting sands or a cracked and crumbling base. The foundations, we know, of such a peace (the truth finds expression once again in the letter of Your Excellency) can be secure only if they rest on bedrock faith in the one true God, the Creator of all men. It was He who of necessity assigned man's purpose in life. It is from Him, with consequent necessity, that man derives personal inalienable rights to pursue that purpose and to be unhindered in the attainment of it.

Civic society is also of Divine origin and indicated by nature itself, but it is subsequent to man and meant to be a means to defend him and to help him in the legitimate exercise of his God-given rights. Once the State, to the exclusion of God, makes itself the source of the rights of the human person, man is forthwith reduced to the condition of a slave or a mere civic commodity to be exploited for the selfish aims of a group that happens to have power. The order of God is overturned and history surely makes it clear to those who wish to read that the inevitable result of the subversion of order between peoples is war. The task then before the friend of peace is clear.

Truth Still Has Power

Is Your Excellency oversanguine in hoping to find men throughout the world ready to cooperate for such a worthy enterprise? We think not. Truth has lost none of its power to rally to its cause the most enlightened minds and noblest spirits. Their ardour is fed by the flame of righteous freedom struggling to break through injustice and lying. But those who possess the truth must be conscientious to define it clearly when its foes cleverly distort it; bold to defend it and generous enough to set the course of their lives both national and personal by its dictates.

This will require, moreover, correcting not a few aberrations. Social injustices, racial injustices and religious animosities exist today among men and groups who boast of Christian civilization. And they are a very useful and

often effective weapon in the hands of those who are bent on destroying all the good which that civilization has brought to men. It is for all sincere lovers of the great human family to unite in wresting those weapons from hostile hands. With that union will come hope that the enemies of God and free men will not prevail.

Certainly Your Excellency and all defenders of the rights of the human person will find wholehearted cooperation from God's church, faithful custodian of eternal truth and loving mother of all. From her foundation, almost 2,000 years ago, she has championed the individual against despotic rule, the laboring man against oppression, religion against persecution. Her divinely-given mission often brings her into conflict with the powers of evil whose sole strength is in their physical force and brutalized spirit and her leaders are sent into exile or cast into prison or die under torture.

This is history of today, but the church is unafraid. She cannot compromise with an avowed enemy of God. She must continue to teach the first and greatest Commandment incumbent on every man: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with all thy strength." And the second like unto the first: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

It is her changeless message that man's first duty is to God, then to his fellowman, that that man serves his country best who serves his God most faithfully, that the country that would shackle the Word of God, given to men through Jesus Christ, helps not at all the lasting peace of the world. In striving with all the resources at her power to bring men and nations to a clear realization of their duty to God, the church will go on, as she has always done, to offer the most effective contribution to the world's peace and man's eternal salvation.

American Charity Praised

We are pleased that the letter of Your Excellency has given us the opportunity of saying a word of encouragement for all those who are gravely intent on buttressing the fragile structure of peace until its foundations can be more firmly and wisely established.

The munificent charity shown by the American people to the suffering and oppressed in every part of the world, truly worthy of the finest Christian traditions, is a fair token of their sincere desire for universal peace and prosperity. The vast majority of the peoples of the world, we feel sure, share that desire, even in countries where free expression is smothered. God grant their forces may be united toward its realization. There is no room for discouragement nor for relaxing of their efforts under the gracious and merciful Providence of God, the Father of all that is good and holy, and justice will in the end prevail.

Let us assure Your Excellency of our cordial welcome to Mr. Taylor, your personal representative, on his return to Rome; and we are happy to renew the expression of our good wishes for the people of the United States, for the members of their Government, and in particular for its esteemed Chief Executive.

PIUS XII.
Castel Gandolfo, Aug. 26, 1947.