

Harold Helfer's  
Open Letter To Hitler

Editor, The Post:

Please print the following open letter to Adolf Hitler:

Dear Hitler:

The other day I caught myself praying and I thought you might like to know about it for you were responsible for it.

Of course, they say you don't like for people to have too much to do with God, but though you may think He isn't so supreme now, He was pretty much tops until you began taking over His jurisdiction.

It was funny how it happened. I was sitting eating a dish of ice cream when my eyes happened to fall on some headlines which told how you had driven hundreds of helpless people from their homes and places of business and how, as a result, they faced eventually, if not immediately, the terror of hopeless starvation.

You may not understand how this could affect me sitting in an ice cream parlor 3000 miles away, but it did. I thought of how terrible it must be to have to count the crumbs of bread and not to know where the next few morsels would come from and I

found myself no longer able to enjoy my ice cream.

I walked out into the street and before I knew it I heard a small voice in me praying, praying for help for these people. For I realized that as long as those people were being tortured, though they were 3000 miles away, I, and thousands of others here, could never enjoy to the fullest again anything we did.

What I was doing I was not doing because anyone had ordered me to do so, or even by suggestion. I was doing it by instinct, because my very soul was touched.

And what happened to me was happening to thousands and thousands of others like me, walking on thousands of other streets, for I am but one of many people and most people are about the same.

Think of it, Mr. Hitler! That's more regimentation than in all of Nazidom.

Thousands and thousands of people walking the streets and praying, from Bagdad to Bohemia to Birmingham. My voice is small, yes, but a hundred thousand, a million voices!

Can't you hear them, Mr. Hitler, growing larger and larger! The noise of the prayers swelling, gaining momentum, becoming more and more clamorous. Booming into a crescendo, but still growing louder and louder, on to deafening proportions!

Sure, some of these voices come from thousands of miles away, but even if you issue a decree that your countrymen stuff their ears with cotton, this multitude of voices sweeping across from the four corners of the earth will be heard by them.

And then, Mr. Hitler, your people may remember that they are men and not beasts and that men do not attack and torture just because they have run across a group who are defenseless and at their mercy.

Then, even if you step out on your balcony and roar at the crowd and clench your fist and rant and rave, and even if you march up and down in front of a line of soldiers with your arms outstretched in salute, it will mean nothing.

For you will look like one of those bogey men that are forever leaping out of the jumping Jack boxes, frightening people. Of course, bogey men startle people