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Appeal for help to those in distress through the recent Gales and Floods

The Lord Mayor of London, when opening his "Flood and Tempest Distress Fund", wrote "I doubt if in the past century so much devastation and misery has ever fallen on our country in 48 hours in peace-time as that which has taken place during the past week-end".

We who have been spared are deeply shocked by the reports of destruction, loss of human lives and hardships suffered by the inhabitants of the stricken areas amongst whom there are several Swiss families. As the accounts of heroism, of sacrifice, and of tragedy, have multiplied, surely every one of us has resolved to help to the utmost of his ability.

To show our solidarity in a practical way the Presidents of the Swiss Societies in Great Britain have decided to address this appeal for funds to the members of the Colony. The Editor and the Publishers of the Swiss Observer have readily co-operated and the proposal has the full approval and support of the Swiss Minister.

In the words of the Lord Mayor, "this is not an ordinary appeal". Let us, therefore, give all that we can give and all that those so cruelly hit deserve. Donations should be sent to the Swiss Legation, 18, Montagu Place, London, W.1. in an envelope marked "Flood Distress Fund". An acknowledgement will be sent as soon as possible.

On behalf of the Presidents of the Swiss Societies in Great Britain:

W. Meier, Chairman for 1953.

We are repeating in this issue the Appeal which was published in our number of the 13th inst. by the Chairman of the Presidents of the Swiss Societies in Great Britain.

When some five months ago the Swiss Colony in Great Britain was asked to show their sympathy to the victims of the Lynton and Lynmouth catastrophe, we did not anticipate, that in a relatively short time, another Appeal to the generosity of our compatriots

living in this country, would be found necessary. (The Swiss Colony in Great Britain had collected the sum of £354.4.9. for this Fund).

This time the disaster and loss of life and material is unfortunately on a much bigger scale, the devastation and misery caused by gales and floods has attained unprecedented dimensions not only in this country, but also in Holland and Belgium. Thousands of our fellowmen have lost their homes, and were unable to save even the smallest personal belongings, and the damage caused will reach millions of pounds sterling.

We who have been mercifully spared the loss of our nearest and dearest can, and ought to show our gratitude and sympathy by subscribing generously and willingly to the Relief Fund which has been started in the circle of the Colony, thus not only showing a Christian spirit, but also as a token of appreciation for enjoying the hospitality of this country, which has given to many of us a second home.

It might be an appropriate moment to recall, that when the avalanche disaster which befell our country at the beginning of 1951, our English friends promptly came to the aid of our countrymen in distress, and that part of the amount of £3,221.0.0. which was collected at the time by the Swiss Legation, on behalf of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain, well over £1,000.0.0 came from British sources.

We have now a splendid opportunity to show our gratitude for this *beau geste* by, in our turn, rendering a helping hand.

Relief Funds for the victims in Great Britain, Holland and Belgium have been started all over Switzerland, and so far considerable amounts have been collected, let us be animated by the same spirit of helpfulness.

Grief knows no boundaries nor frontiers, the sorrow of one member of the human family is shared and felt equally strongly by all those nations which are bound together by Christian ideas and thoughts.

THE EDITOR.

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