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WE NEED THE CO-OPERATION OF CHRISTIAN AND JEW

THE greatest nations of the world are just emerging from the strain and agony of the most terrible and disastrous war in the history of mankind. From a tiny spark of hatred a great conflagration of passion spread over the world, well-nigh destroying the entire fabric of civilization. How near we have come to that catastrophe, as a result of the war and its evil progeny, they best know who have recently visited the countries principally involved and most vitally affected. Even now civilization is not out of danger, but is weak and unsteady like a man beginning to recover from a terrible fever. Infinite care and patience and wisdom must be exercised by statesmen

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and peoples and by the molders of public opinion in every nation in order to make recovery possible.

Never was there a moment when racial or religious antagonism was as dangerous and so much to be feared as in this crisis. Never were the citizens of all lands so solemnly warned to avoid the poison of hatred. The passionate hatreds engendered by the war must be crushed down and they who were foes, seeking to destroy one another, must now work together for the preservation of the civilization that is their common heritage. With the carnage and wrack and ruin of the war still oppressing us, and our hearts still lacerated and bruised, a common peril is compelling us to unite and to seek safety in fellowship and co-operation. Yesterday we relied upon the destructive arts of the warrior; to-day we must rely upon the conserving arts of the healer. Yesterday we hailed Mars; to-day we hail the Christ in whose touch is life and healing.

What perverse and malevolent genius it

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must be that chooses this moment to open the flood gates and set free the pent passions of anti-Semitism! How monstrous a thing it is that from a great historic pulpit of the Christian Church which Beecher glorified by his courageous idealism, the brutal and un-Christian appeals of anti-Semitism should be made now when the world needs, above all things, to be purged of the poison of hatred and strengthened by fellowship! How great a tragedy it is that men like Mr. Ford and his associates can find nothing to inspire them in the vast work of restoration and reconstruction; that their energies and resources are directed to the ignoble and dangerous end of inciting in the minds of millions of our people fear and hatred of the Jew, as Jew!

I am not insensible of, or indifferent to, the problems incidental to the presence in this country of more than three million Jews. Neither am I insensible of, or indifferent to, the problems incidental to our vast negro population, or to the presence of

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Europeans and their slow and imperfect assimilation. Recognizing these problems clearly and fully, I am quite certain that racial hatred and antagonism is no solvent for any one of them. The complete success of the appeals that are being made against the Jews would not benefit the Gentiles in this country in any particular. There never has been an organized propaganda of race antagonism and hatred, anywhere in the world, which benefited either race. In Russia and in Rumania—to cite only two examples—anti-Semitism has injured the Christians fully as much as it has injured the Jews. Turkish hatred and persecution of Armenians has invariably injured the Turks quite as much as it has injured their victims. In opposing the propaganda of anti-Semitism I am defending equally the interest of Jew and non-Jew. I hold no brief for the Jewish "race," so-called, or for Judaism. The only brief I hold is for the democratic and humanitarian ideals of America. That brief I hold by reason of my citizenship,

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voluntarily assumed, and the freeman's oath with which that citizenship was consecrated.

The solution of the problems arising out of the massing of so many Jewish people in our large cities requires the unity and cooperation of all men and women of good will, both Jews and Gentiles, in precisely the same way, and for precisely the same reasons, as the solution of all our other problems does. There is nothing in our history which justifies the fear that our citizens of Jewish birth will be less ready than their Christian neighbors to give their whole-hearted service to that end. There never has been a call for service to this nation which found the Jewish citizens less patriotic, less willing to serve the nation, and even to sacrifice for it, than other sections of our citizenry. From Valley Forge to Château-Thierry that record is written. I remember well that memorable day in July, 1918, when I heard from the lips of M. Clemenceau the news, just received by

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him, that our American soldiers were victorious at Château-Thierry. Later, on the way to Château-Thierry, I passed the long lines of ambulances bearing away the wounded men, many of whom were beyond all hope of recovery. Then, still later, in the great, wonderful hospital at Neuilly, I talked with many of those who fell wounded in that terrible fight. There were Jews as well as Gentiles among those men, but there was no difference in the quality of their Americanism, in their patriotism, their fortitude, or their courage.

President Roosevelt, who was too decent as a man and too loyal as an American citizen to have any tolerance for anti-Semitism, more than once called attention to the fact that citizens of Jewish ancestry and faith have, in every crisis in the history of the nation which has shown justice to them, repaid the nation with loyal service. In an address to the B'nai B'rith, June 15, 1905, delivered at the White House, President Roosevelt said:

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“One of the most touching poems of our own great poet, Longfellow, is that on the Jewish cemetery in Newport, and anyone who goes through any of the old cemeteries of the cities which preserve the records of Colonial times will see the name of many an American of the Jewish race who, in war or in peace, did his full share in the founding of this nation. From that day to this, from the day when the Jews of Charleston, of Philadelphia, of New York, supported the patriot cause and helped in every way, not only by money, but by arms, Washington and his colleagues, who were founding this Republic—from that day to the present we have had no struggle, military or civil, in which there have not been citizens of Jewish faith who played an eminent part for the honor and credit of the nation.”

There is no movement for the advancement of humanitarian ideals in this country to which American citizens of Jewish ancestry and faith have not contributed their

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full share. It is impossible for any fair-minded man who knows the facts to read without indignation the article published in the *Dearborn Independent*, June 5, 1920. In addition to charging that "Jewish business methods" are responsible for the high prices which have obtained for so long, the article accuses Jewish employers of being responsible for conditions of employment not known to the Gentile world. Lest I be accused of misrepresenting the writer of this libel, I will quote his exact words:

When the susceptible people of the nation commiserated the poor Jews of the New York sweatshops they, for the most part, did not know that the inventors and operators of the "sweatshop" method were themselves Jews. Indeed, while it is the boast of our country that no race or color or creed is persecuted here, but liberty is insured to all, still it is a fact that the only heartless treatment ever accorded the Jew in the United States came from his own people, his overseers and masters. . . .

. . . The record of the great Jews in charity is very noble; *their record in industrial reforms is nil*. With commendable sympathy toward their own people they will donate a part of their profits to rectify some of the human need resulting from the

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method by which they made their profits, but as for reforming the method by which they get their profits in order that the resulting need might be diminished or prevented, apparently it has never occurred to them. *At least, while there are many charitable names among the wealthier Jews, there are no names that stand for an actual, practical humanizing of industry, its methods and its returns.*

I respectfully suggest that these statements are intended to convey to the mind of the reader two impressions, neither of which corresponds to reality. The first impression is that Jewish employers have been and are more brutal and merciless than Gentile employers. Now, it is a fact that the "sweatshop," using that term in its strictest, technical sense, developed, in this country, after 1885—that is to say, following the great influx of Polish and Russian Jews and the equally great increase in the manufacture of ready-made clothing. But, while this is technically true of sweating, we had in this country long before the Jews came children's and women's labor under terrible conditions. In 1884 young girls and women

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worked in the factories of New Hampshire from five in the morning until seven at night, with only forty-five minutes' intermission, and their wages ranged from a dollar and a quarter to two dollars per week. Until quite recently, in our Southern cotton mills, owned and operated by Gentiles, we maintained conditions as bad as ever existed in the sweatshops of our large cities. It does not require any great amount of research to prove that Gentile employers have in the past been just as indifferent to the well-being of their employees, just as reactionary, and just as opposed to reform, as Jewish employers. I would remind the reader, in this connection, that we have never had in this country, not even in the sweatshops owned and controlled by Jews, anything approaching the terrible conditions which obtained in English factories in the early days of the factory system, when, in factories owned by Christians, little children, mere babies in fact, were made to work under conditions of revolting cruelty,

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whipped by brutal overseers, and not infrequently driven literally to death from exhaustion. Thus did Christian employers treat Christian children.

But, while it is true that in our great cities sweatshops principally developed under Jewish auspices, it is equally true that in the fight to abolish sweating Jews have taken an active and honorable part. This I know of a certainty, and the insinuations to the contrary contained in the article under discussion are as cruelly unfair and unjust as they are untrue. So, too, in the fight against child labor in the cities and factories of the North. It was my privilege to take part in that fight, and I know that in the very forefront of the long struggle for remedial legislation, helping with money and with personal service, side by side with Christians, were many men and women of Jewish ancestry and faith. I know, too, that fighting on the other side were both Christians and Jews. It is preposterous that any attempt should be made to so

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misrepresent the struggle for "the practical humanizing of industry" as to make it appear that the Jewish people in particular were either hostile or indifferent to it.

The second impression which the article is intended to convey is that in those industries which are controlled by Jews no such attempts have been made to better the lot of the workers employed in them as have been made in those industries which are controlled by non-Jews. This charge, likewise, is wholly baseless, as anybody who desires to know the truth can readily ascertain. It was my good fortune and privilege, as one of the representatives of the public appointed by President Wilson, to serve as a member of the First Industrial Conference convoked by the President in October, 1919. Among the members of that Conference chosen to represent the public were both Christians and Jews, and I venture to say that there was not one of the former who for a single moment doubted the sincerity, the patriotism, or the hu-

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manitarianism of the Jewish members. Moreover, in the course of our work there was brought to our attention an astonishing amount of information concerning efforts being made by progressive and high-minded employers in all parts of the country to introduce into their industries reforms looking to the betterment of the lot of their employees, including profit-sharing and participation in shop management and control by the workers. It is neither more nor less than the literal truth that these reports were quite as favorable to the Jewish employers as to their Christian competitors. As a matter of fact, in the ready-made-clothing industry, which is very largely in the hands of Jews, many of the most interesting experiments in industrial democracy and many of the sincerest efforts to humanize industry are being made. These things are known to every student of the problem—and they suffice to brand the statements made against the Jews in the article under discussion as both untrue and studiously unjust.

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Not only is it true that in the ever-increasing effort to bring about "the practical humanizing of industry" no distinction can honestly and justly be drawn between Gentile and Jewish employers, just as no such distinction can honestly and justly be drawn with respect to the selfishness and ignorance which result in conditions that are inhuman and oppressive; it is equally true, as a study of the records of Congress and the legislative bodies of the individual states will show beyond question, that no such distinction between Jew and Gentile can be honestly and justly drawn with respect to the mass of social legislation enacted in recent years. Socially minded men and women have supported such legislation, regardless of differences of race and creed, while men and women who lacked social consciousness, who were selfish and indifferent to the claims of their fellow human beings, have opposed such legislation, making common cause regardless of differences of race and creed.

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All this is exactly as it should be, of course, and precisely what might be expected to result from our ideals, our institutions, and our laws. It would be tragic and disastrous, indeed, if our experience were otherwise. The charges made against our Jewish citizens by the *Dearborn Independent* amount in reality to a terrible verdict of failure against America and the democratic ideal which America represents. The only hope we can have of solving the great problems which confront this nation rests, and can only rest, upon the assurance that an enlightened citizenry, united by love of country and of mankind, and undivided by race or creed, will strive with ever-increasing strength, vision, and courage toward the goal of equality of opportunity for all. Thus only shall this nation which we love fulfill the high hopes of its greatest spiritual leaders and statesmen. To destroy the faith of our sons and daughters in American democratic ideals—which is precisely what anti-Semitism is aiming to do—is a monstrous thing.