

STATEMENT BY HENRY FORD

regarding

Charges Against Jews Made in His Publications, The Dearborn Independent and a Series of Pamphlets Entitled The "International Jew"

Together With

An Explanatory Statement by Mr. Louis Marshall, President of the American Jewish Committee, and His Reply to Mr. Ford.

STATEMENT BY MR. MARSHALL

Since the publication of the statement by Henry Ford retracting the charges against the Jewish people, individually and collectively, contained in *The Dearborn Independent* and in the pamphlets entitled "The International Jew," I have been asked to explain the conditions under which that document came into my hands.

On several occasions I have been approached by various gentlemen who informed me that it might be possible to come to an understanding with Henry Ford regarding the differences existing between him and the Jews. My answer was uniformly that if he had anything to propose I would receive and consider what he might have to say.

About a month ago, Earl J. Davis of Detroit, Mich., former Assistant District Attorney of the United States, and Joseph A. Palma of New York came to my office, introduced by former Congressman Nathan D. Perlman, who had informed me that they desired to meet me in order to present various facts to my attention. They told me that they came as representatives of Henry Ford, and asserted that he had become satisfied that those whom he had put in charge of *The Dearborn Independent* had taken advantage of him by publishing the series of articles attacking the Jews, at which the latter had taken umbrage; that he was convinced that all of the charges made against them, individually and collectively, are without foundation and unjust; and that he desired to know what could be done to put an end to the strained relations on the part of the Jews toward him.

Thereupon, I reviewed the history of these defamations and of their reprints known as "The International Jew" commented upon their gross injustice, and the injury they had occasioned both here and abroad, and pointed out that the Jews everywhere have been grievously wounded by these libels, and that mere words would not heal the injury.

In answer to this, Messrs. Davis and Palma desired to know what might be done to bring about better conditions. I answered that there must be a complete retraction of all of the false charges made, a full apology and request for forgiveness, a discontinuance of the attacks which had been

indulged in these publications, the withdrawal of the pamphlets constituting "The International Jew," and a pledge that like publications would never again be made—in other words, that there must be full amends for the wrong done.

After further discussion, Messrs. Davis and Palma said that they would report to Ford what had been said in the interview. Some days later they called on me again and announced that Ford would accept these conditions. There followed further discussions at personal interviews in my office with Mr. Palma, over the long distance telephone, and otherwise, with the result that on Thursday, June 30, 1927, Mr. Palma informed me that Ford was ready to sign the document previously prepared, which is hereto attached, and later that he had signed it and wished to give it publicity through Mr. Authur Brisbane, to which I assented. I received it by air mail on Friday, July 1, 1927, together with a covering letter addressed by Ford to Mr. Davis, asking him and Mr. Palma to deliver to me the statement bearing Ford's signature.

There have been so many requests for copies of these documents and of my letter of acknowledgment addressed to Ford, that it has been deemed in the public interest to give them the publicity which is desired by all concerned.

New York, July 14, 1927.

LETTER FROM HENRY FORD
TO MR. EARL J. DAVIS
FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Dearborn, Mich.

June 30, 1927

Mr. Earl J. Davis,
Detroit, Michigan.

My dear Sir:

I hereby approve of the attached statement and authorize you and Mr. Joseph Palma to deliver same to Louis Marshall, of New York City.

Yours respectfully,
HENRY FORD.

STATEMENT BY HENRY FORD
TO LOUIS MARSHALL

For some time past I have given consideration to the series of articles concerning Jews which since 1920 have appeared in *The Dearborn Independent*. Some of them have been reprinted in pamphlet form under the title "The International Jew." Although both publications are my property, it goes without saying that in the multitude of my activities it has been impossible for me to devote personal attention to their management or to keep informed as to their contents. It has therefore inevitably followed that the conduct and policies of these publications had to be delegated to men whom I placed in charge of them and upon whom I relied implicitly.

To my great regret I have learned that Jews generally, and particularly those of this country, not only resent these publications as promoting anti-Semitism, but regard me as their enemy. Trusted friends with whom I have conferred recently have assured me in all sincerity that in their opinion the character of the charges and insinuations made against the Jews, both individually and collectively, contained in many of the articles which have been circulated periodically in *The Dearborn Independent* and have been reprinted in the pamphlets mentioned, justifies the righteous indignation entertained by Jews everywhere toward me because of the mental anguish occasioned by the unprovoked reflections made upon them.

This has led me to direct my personal attention to this subject, in order to ascertain the exact nature of these articles. As a result of this survey I confess that I am deeply mortified that this journal, which is intended to be constructive and not destructive, has been made the medium for resurrecting exploded fictions, for giving currency to the so-called Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion, which have been demonstrated, as I learn, to be gross forgeries, and for contending that the Jews have been engaged in a conspiracy to control the capital and the industries of the world, besides laying at their door many offenses against decency, public order and good morals.

Had I appreciated even the general nature, to say nothing of the details, of these utterances, I would have forbidden their circulation without a moment's hesitation, because I am fully aware of the virtues of the Jewish people as a whole, of what they and their ancestors have done for civilization and for mankind and toward the development of commerce and industry, of their sobriety and diligence, their benevolence and their unselfish interest in the public welfare.

Of course there are black sheep in every flock, as there are among men of all races, creeds and nationalities who are at times evildoers. It is wrong, however, to judge a people by a few individuals, and I therefore join in condemning unreservedly all wholesale denunciations and attacks.

Those who know me can bear witness that it is not in my nature to inflict insult upon and to occasion pain to anybody, and that it has been my effort to free myself from prejudice. Because of that I frankly confess that I have been greatly shocked as a result of my study and examination of the files of The Dearborn Independent and of the pamphlets entitled "The International Jew." I deem it to be my duty as an honorable man to make amends for the wrong done to the Jews as fellow-men and brothers, by asking their forgiveness for the harm that I have unintentionally committed, by retracting so far as lies within my power the offensive charges laid at their door by these publications, and by giving them the unqualified assurance that henceforth they may look to me for friendship and good will.

It is needless to add that the pamphlets which have been distributed throughout the country and in foreign lands will be withdrawn from circulation, that in every way possible I will make it known that they have my unqualified disapproval, and that henceforth The Dearborn Independent will be conducted under such auspices that articles reflecting upon the Jews will never again appear in its columns.

Finally, let me add that this statement is made on my own initiative and wholly in the interest of right and justice and in accordance with what I regard as my solemn duty as a man and as a citizen.

HENRY FORD.

Dearborn, Mich., June 30, 1927.

LETTER FROM MR. MARSHALL
TO MR. FORD

July 5, 1927

Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of your letter to Mr. Earl J. Davis accompanied by your statement regarding the long series of vituperative articles which since May, 1920, has appeared in *The Dearborn Independent* and which contains the most violent attacks upon the Jews. You now declare that after an examination of those articles you feel shocked and mortified because of the harm which they have done, and you ask for forgiveness.

For twenty centuries we Jews have been accustomed to forgive insults and injuries, persecution and intolerance, hoping that we might behold the day when brotherhood and good will would be universal. We had fondly hoped that in this blessed Republic, with its glorious Constitution and its just laws, it would be impossible to encounter the hatred and rancor to which our brethren have been and still are subjected in other lands. We could not at first credit the information that *The Dearborn Independent* had permitted itself to be made the vehicle for disseminating exploded falsehoods and the vilest concoctions of vicious minds, invented by adventurers who had barely found asylum here when they attempted to introduce the exotic growths of anti-Semitism.

Happily such excrescences could not flourish on American soil. Happily the enlightened press of this country treated them with contempt and as unworthy of notice. But we Jews none the less suffered the anguish of tortured memories, the nightmares of a horrible past, and the sorrow that, in spite of the progress of civilization, there were those who stood ready to misunderstand us. What seemed most mysterious was the fact that you whom we had never wronged and whom we had looked upon as a kindly man, should have lent yourself to such a campaign of vilification apparently carried on with your sanction.

The statement which you have sent me gives us assurance of your retraction of the offensive charges, of your proposed change of policies in the conduct of *The Dearborn Inde-*

pendent, of your future friendship and good will, of your desire to make amends, and what is to be expected from any man of honor, you couple these assurances with a request for pardon. So far as my influence can further that end, it will be exerted, simply because there flows in my veins the blood of ancestors who were inured to suffering and nevertheless remained steadfast in their trust in God. Referring to the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, Israel Zangwill once said that we Jews are after all the only Christians. He might have added that it is because essentially the spirit of forgiveness is a Jewish trait.

It is my sincere hope that never again shall such a recrudescence of ancient superstition manifest itself upon our horizon.

Very truly yours,

LOUIS MARSHALL.