*Munich Catholic Church Newspaper*, No. 18, May 2, 1920, p.125

Headline: “Not Jew-Hatred but Christian-Defense!”

Text: What position did Christ take on the Jewish question? He must have taken a position. For the Jewish question is the most burning and decisive, and frankly the most distressing, question of the present time. It will be the fundamental question of the future and of the end times. It is not only a national, but also an international problem, a world question that concerns all peoples. No, more! Not only a world question of political and economic life, but a worldview question, a question of spiritual warfare. For at the deepest level it is about an eternal war between earth and heaven, between Christian culture and Jewish imperialism.

This is a distressing question! For we fully recognize that among the Jews are a great number of noble people, true Israelites in whom there is nothing false; yet where is the name or the group, where is the party, where is the protest, by which the spirits can be distinguished? We would gladly greet them as friends; yet they keep silent. They reject all our complaints. They cover their degenerate ones with their power, their money, their press, their names. So it does not become possible to distinguish Jew from Jew. More

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The Jewish question is a distressing question because Christianity is the religion of peace, which is love. Yes indeed, we Christians and we Catholics know how to forbear, to forgive, to love, even our enemies! If it should ever come to pogroms against the Jews, we would be the first, in the name of Jesus, whom the Jews crucified, to want to protect them. Yet with all the love of a St. Paul, the Christian takes on the freedom and courage of a Paul in combatting anti-Christian Jewry. How this man of God stood up against the Jews in Damascus, in Jerusalem, in Antioch, in the cities of Asia Minor and finally in Rome! Christ is our model, our leader! And he called them out:

You brood of snakes and rats! How will you escape the judgment of hell? See, I send you prophets and teachers. But you will crucify and kill some of them, scourge others in your synagogues and persecute them from town to town, so that all the blood of the righteous that was spilled on the earth will come upon you, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachia, whom you murdered between temple and altar.

How would Isaiah and Jeremiah be slandered today, what names would they be called, if they came back today? They would be slandered as “antisemites”! But we are not antisemites. We are Christians, German Christians, who love their Fatherland and their Church. But both are in danger of being reduced to chains by Jewry. So I say: Not Jew-hatred but Christian-defense!

The Jewish question is distressing for yet another reason. For I fear that the rightful resistance of the Catholic people against Jewish oppression could easily be taken as a comradely alliance by elements that are just as hostile to Catholic Christianity as to Jewry. Why do you so often find that pamphlets and essays directed against the Jews contain equally unrestrained outcries against the Catholic Church, Ultramontanism, and the Jesuits? Culture war agitation is just waiting to strike whenever the struggle against Jewry is not carried out in a Christian spirit.

Then must we really fight against Jewry? Isn’t that against the spirit of the Church? On the contrary. However far back we look into the past, we find the Catholic Church in a defensive battle against secret conspiracies of the Jews. From the beginning marriages between Jews and Christians were forbidden and declared invalid. The Council of Constantinople specified that no Jew may be a judge over Christians. Medieval Saxon law stated: “A Jew may not stand surety for a Christian.” It was forbidden to have meals with Jews, and the Church’s own laws protected Christian domestic servants from coming under Jewish masters. The decrees and laws designed to defend the Christian people against Jewish exploitation were really innumerable. Thus the Jewish question is nothing new. At the end of the 15th century it was just as burning an issue as today. The Frenchman Froissard wrote in 1497:

The hatred against the Jews is so commonly spread throughout German that even the most placid men rage when it comes to discussion of the Jews and their monetary exploitation. It would not surprise me if a bloody persecution were to break out simultaneously in all areas, as they have already been driven out of several cities.

In fact the Jews had already been driven out of Cologne in 1426, out of Saxony in 1432, out of Bavaria in 1450, out of Würzburg in 1453, out of Magdeburg in 1493, out of Württemberg in 1496, and this movement could have led to a powerful social transformation if the emergence of Luther and the Reformation had not shifted the focus. At the same time the Jews were banished from Russia, while in France persecutions filled the entire 14th century until finally under Charles VI they were banned from the kingdom in 1394. On English soil the battle was already pitched in the year 1290. But the struggle was particularly tenacious and full of twists and turns in Spain, where the national uprising and the struggle for religious liberation against the Moors culminated in an altercation with Jewry. For these had allied themselves with the Muslim conquerors and threatened throne and alter through secret conspiracies. For that reason King Ferdinand the Catholic finally executed in 1492 the Edict of Expulsion. To defend against intrigues by the Jews and Moors who remained, who had let themselves be baptized without any inner change, a special court of inquiry was instituted, that so often-slandered Inquisition. Superficial writing of history and a corruptible partisan spirit, often led astray by Jewish representations, later made that discharge of self-defense of an oppressed people and defensive measures of national governments into persecutions and pogroms against Jews. The guilt for the constant distrust and often bitter struggles, however, lay with Jewry itself. For wherever Jews rise up, where they attain to power, influence and wealth, they prove themselves to be oppressors of peoples and persecutors of Christianity. For them it is all about the realization of all those illusory hopes for the Kingdom of God, on account of which they rejected and crucified the Savior. For them the Kingdom of God is really nothing else but the world domination of Israel and its religion. For the sake of this hope the Jewish people undertook powerful revolutions against the Roman Empire, which finally ended with the complete destruction of their national greatness and the scattering of the Children of Israel throughout the whole world. The bloody war was followed by secret and open struggle with economic means and weapons of the mind. The Jews sought first of all to tear apart young Christianity with heresies. Evidence of that is found in so-called Gnosticism. At the same time, however, they stepped up at every opportunity to agitate for persecution of Christians. Jew-hatred was already at work in the court of Emperor Nero and occasioned the first persecution of Christians. Jew-hatred vengefully built the pyre for the martyr bishop Polycarp. Jews were the favorites and counselors of the apostate Emperor Julian, who wanted to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem to please them and to defy God. Jews conspired with the Persians against the Christian Emperor in Constantinople. In short, wherever a conspiracy is at work against the Christian State, Jews stand at the very least as helpers in the background. That was so in the past; that is so in the present. On this account next time!