September 26, 1938

Dear Mr. Bellamy:

Pardon the delay in replying to your letter of the 17th. I was out of town when it came and the last few days have been so anxious between threats of war and the destruction the hurricane has been bringing to friends that I have been neglecting my correspondence.

I know of no cause to which I could give myself more gladly than one which seemed to me to promise to stem this rising anti-Semitic tide. It is the most saddening, as well as the most threatening, thing in the country, more serious than any threat in communism. But I could not join a campaign which combined anti-communism or anti-anything else with an effort to give the Jew his full rights and recognition in the United States.

As I look at it the Jew is contributing to every worthwhile effort of American life. It is their contribution to American culture which should be emphasized.

If the Jew and the Gentile do their part in strengthening democracy, making clearer its purpose, communism will fade out. It is much less powerful than conservative minds see it. My own notion is to give it a chance - let it talk itself out.

The true answer to communism is democracy, more democracy and still more democracy. What we need in this country is a crusade, not against communism but for democratic ideals. The dictators of Russia, Germany and Italy have held before their youth splendid promises of a future rich powerful countries sitting in the sun the fruit of their systems. We have let them out-promise us.
What we need is to reinstate, re-illuminate the democratic system. If these fine Jewish friends of yours could lead in such a revival it would be their noblest contribution to a country which has opened its doors as wide to them as could be expected, human beings being what they are. They soon would be carrying with them, in my judgment, the lunatic fringe which now they denounce. It is not by denouncing the crazy ideas of unhappy people that we are going to work out a nobler civilization, dear Mr. Bellamy. We have had enough of that - it has been utter failure. We must show them something better.

So you see I cannot go along in any movement which proposes to attack even that which seems to me so wrong-headed as the kind of Jew and Gentile communist we are getting in this country. They will have their use if they arouse us to the necessity of a clearer demonstration both of the beauty of democratic ideals and the possibility of their practical application.

This is about the way your proposition looks to me. And please say to your Jewish friends that I am honored by their desire to have my judgment.

Very sincerely yours

Mr. Francis R. Bellamy
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New York City