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“Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech”

Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal Battle Against Hate Speech reveals the surprising roots of today’s hate speech controversies by recounting a long-forgotten episode in the career of one of America’s most beloved industrial kings. During the 1920s, Henry Ford’s newspaper attacked Jews both in the U.S. and abroad as purveyors of an alleged conspiracy to take over the government. A young lawyer named Aaron Sapiro challenged Ford, charging him with libel in a federal lawsuit. The story of this incredible David-vs-Goliath struggle shows how law, religious faith, and anti-immigrant views dovetailed into a powerful force that was used to harm innocent people. Sapiro’s case ended in mistrial in 1927, yet it raises timeless questions: whether and how law should restrain powerful interests in society; how religious communities can be scapegoated for political and ideological purposes; and what happens when the most influential person in society uses his resources to spread hate and intolerance. A documentary film based on the book is currently in development. The lecture will be illustrated with historic still photos and a short video.

Sunday, September 27, 2015

3:00pm

**Siena Room A&B
St. Thomas Aquinas Center**

Sponsored by the Aquinas Educational Foundation and the St. Thomas Aquinas Center