



18 November 2016/17 Cheshvan 5777

Dear Shir Tikvah:

A generation ago, Pastor Martin Niemoller (z"l) wrote the following in response to the Shoah/Holocaust/World War II.  
First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out-  
Because I was not a Socialist.  
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out-  
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.  
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out-  
Because I was not a Jew.  
Then they came for me-and there was no one left to speak for me.  
It is a powerful, aching call to stand up against injustice.

And it always troubled me-the despondence and the desperation. Not because it isn't real; it surely is. But because I ached for a call to stand up and speak up in the affirmative.

Why on earth was I waiting for someone else?

Here is my reply.

In response to Martin Niemoller (z"l):

First they came for the African Americans and I spoke up because I am my sisters and my brothers keeper.  
And then they came for the women and I spoke up because women hold up half the sky.  
And then they came for the immigrants and I spoke up because I remember the ideals of our democracy.  
And then they came for the Muslims and I spoke up because they are my cousins and we are one human family.  
And then they came for the Native Americans and Mother Earth and I spoke up because the blood soaked land cries and the mountains weep.  
They keep coming.  
We keep rising up.  
Because we Jews know the cost of silence.  
We remember where we came from.  
And we will link arms, because when you come for our neighbors, you come for us-  
and THAT just won't stand.

Shabbat Shalom,

Michael