

My name is Rabbi Jeffrey Shron, and I am the senior rabbi of Kehilath Israel Synagogue in Overland Park, KS. My congregation is very concerned about the rise of anti-Semitic occurrences in the United States and throughout the world, many of them influenced by the anti-Israel propaganda of the BDS movement. I also had family that were survivors of the holocaust, the outcome of hateful bigotry directed against the Jewish people.

The official persecution of the Jews began on April 1, 1933, when the Nazis initiated a boycott of Jewish businesses and shops throughout German. The Star of David was painted in yellow and black across thousands of doors and windows. Signs were posted saying: "Germans, Defend Yourselves. Don't buy from Jews, The Jews are our misfortune!"

The United States has the obligation to support its ally Israel, the only Democratic country in the Mideast region, a country where every citizen has equal rights and human rights protection under the law, that does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender or national origin, a country that is one of the first to come to the aid wherever and whenever there is a natural catastrophe in the world, a country that has provided the technology in science, medicine, computers, agriculture, conservation, desalinization, energy & defense, and has willingly shared the technology with its friends. For any group or business to single out Israel for boycott, divestment and sanctions is just another form of anti-Semitism, which we know leads to violence and persecution of Jewish people worldwide, and is certainly not a pathway to peace in the Middle East.

This April 1, 2017, the Kansas Legislature has the ability to speak out and say no, we will not tolerate persecuting the Jewish people via the Jewish State, and will not do business with anyone or any business who supports the spread of hatred and anti-Semitism as was done 84 years ago.

Friedrich Niemöller was a Protestant pastor and social activist.

First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for the Communists and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist.

Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me.