

February 28, 2023

Dear Governor Dunleavy, Senate President Stevens,
Madam Speaker Tilton, and Members of the Legislature

We, the undersigned, can't know the experiences and prejudices that African Americans encounter in the U.S. Even though our empathies and hearts go out to them, we also can't fully understand what Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans, and Hispanic Americans suffer in the way of discrimination. But as Jews we know intimately what it is like to be the continuing victims of prejudice, discrimination, forced labor, and murder for thousands of years, just because we are Jewish. We know where it comes from, and what it looks like. It is our history.

And just like Germany in the 1930's, anti-Semitism is rising again at an alarming rate, globally, and becoming more accepted, even in the U.S. With the voices of "Jews will not replace us." in Charlottesville, mass shootings in Synagogues in Pittsburg, attacks in California and Texas, and even a Swastika painted at our own Alaska Jewish Campus this past year. To say the least, we feel threatened in our own communities. As the more people suffer, the more they blame us Jews.

Let me remind you of the famous quote by a prominent German Lutheran Pastor, Martin Niemoller, who was first a supporter of Hitler, and then suffered in prison for being an outspoken critic:

“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.”

There are many sources of threats against the Jewish community, with Israel as the epicenter. Just one is the constant attempts by Iran, Hamas, Hizbollah, and other Radical Islamists doing everything in their power to destroy Israel. Both the Palestinian and Israeli peoples deserve a homeland of their own living within safe and secure borders within a two-state solution. Fortunately, through the Abraham Accords, in the last two years, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Sudan have all established full and warm diplomatic relations with Israel. In part because, as Sunni nations, they all fear a nuclear Shiite Iran. Those countries are very critical of the Palestinian leadership for not coming to the peace table.

Unfortunately the Palestinian leadership has refused to come to the negotiating table for more than twenty years. Instead Israel is attacked with rockets, suicide bombers, and even incendiary balloons from Gaza. More recently, Hamas has launched terror attacks from the West Bank

instead of the Gaza Strip, in order to not suffer direct retaliation on itself. It was instrumental, as an unintended consequence, in helping to elect a more right wing and hawkish government again led by Benjamin Netanyahu.

One of the main arsenals of attack against Israel is a global campaign to weaken Israel by turning the world against it. Largely by blaming Israel for the suffering of the Palestinian population instead of the Palestinian leadership who has a history of sacrificing generations of Palestinians in a hopeless quest to destroy Israel.

The primary weapon in that global arsenal is the propaganda campaign to have countries, organizations, and companies boycott, divest from, and sanction Israel. Otherwise known as the BDS Movement. Which is aggressively fostered on American college campuses. The BDS movement helps to amplify resentment towards Jews, and is a direct contributor to the rise of anti-Semitism in the U.S., and certainly around the world. It does so by design. It gives closet anti-Semites permission to openly express their hatred for Jews. This past Saturday was labeled as "A Day of Hate" by many who are openly anti-Semitic. If one tells a lie often enough, people believe it. Like the Jews killed Christ. Instead of the fact that it was the Romans that did.

We the undersigned leaders among the Alaskan Jewish community are asking for your help in having the State of Alaska condemn the BDS movement, and act to not be complicit, knowingly, or unknowingly, in this insidious and

anti-Semitic tool of war being waged against the survival of Israel and the Jewish people. We would respectfully ask that this be done either administratively, or through legislation in the form of HB 2. And time is of the essence, as there is a surge in anti-Semitism that needs to be put in check sooner rather than later.

With the greatest of sincerity;

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Jay Green
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