

Name: _____

Class: _____

First They Came...

By Martin Niemöller
1950

Martin Niemöller (1892-1984) was a German anti-Nazi activist and Lutheran pastor. Niemöller initially supported Hitler, but he soon came to strongly oppose the Nazi party. From 1937-1945, Niemöller was imprisoned in two concentration camps and narrowly escaped execution. The following quotation was made by Niemöller and published in 1950. As you read, take notes on the author's use of repetition.

- [1] First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out — Because I was not a Socialist.¹
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out — Because I was not a Trade Unionist.²
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.



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1. A socialist is a person who believes that industries should be collectively owned or controlled by the government rather than by individual people and companies.
2. A trade unionist is a person who belongs to a trade union (a group of workers who have organized in order to advocate for better wages, better hours, etc.).