

“No Place for Us”

Editorial

January 1997

Mr. Rapoport responds to a story in the business section of the *Waco-Tribune Herald* about a company called “The Shepherd’s Guide.” The entrepreneurs of this company have made a directory that any business can buy space in, but only Christian companies can receive “the Shepherd Guide trademark.” The owner of the company has to sign a statement that says he or she has “received Jesus Christ as my personal savior” in order to be granted the trademark.

Rapoport’s first point of contention against The Shepherd’s Guide is its financial hypocrisy. The company allows businesses owned by atheists, Muslims, Jews, and other non-Christian beliefs to buy space in the directory, but not receive the trademark. Rapoport sarcastically comments, “I thought that was generous of them.” Non-Christian groups were not good enough for the trademark, but their money was good enough for the company.

Rapoport’s second point is that these types of groups break down the “sense of community” this society desperately needs. In the name of God the Ku Klux Klan terrorized and murdered innocent people. Other religious hate groups continue to isolate people for their beliefs. Rapoport does not fault the entrepreneurs for wanting to make money. However, he disapproves of making money at the expense of the separation of church and state.

Rapoport ends his letter with quotes from two stories of loss and hate. Sophocles wrote in his play *Antigone* that, "We were born not to share in hate, but to share in love." During the Fascist regime in Germany, Rev. Martin Niemoeller kept his mouth shut when the Nazis came for the Jews, the Communists, and other groups. He justified his tolerance of these acts because he did not belong to any of the targeted groups. Niemoeller wrote, "Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up." Rapoport asks his readers to consider the motives of companies like The Shepherd's Guide and to determine how long it will take these groups to find a reason to isolate them.