

“Home of the Brave (Immigrants and Pilgrims and Refugees)”.....The Story Behind the Song

My father was a Mennonite minister. When I was in high school, we lived in a small farm community in central Illinois. 2500 hard working folks.....all of us of European descent. Around my junior year, my dad became passionate about the civil rights movement. And he began preaching from his pulpit about justice and a big love that transcends political and racial divides.

I honor my father for who he was. And for the stand that he took. He passed along to me his love of humanity....a sense that we are all one. I also inherited his voice.....the need to speak out when my heart is broken by what I see.

It's clear that there is a worldwide crisis concerning immigration and the thousands upon thousands of refugees. My heart is breaking as a mother is separated from her children, and deported from our country....as people flee their war-torn homeland, hoping to find a new home for themselves and their children, only to find closed doors.

In February of 2017 I wrote “Home of the Brave (Immigrants and Pilgrims and Refugees)” with Karen Drucker and David Roth. We found that we had a common concern about the state of our country and the world, and we did our best to approach this complicated subject with heart and humanity.

I remember the words of Martin Niemöller, the German pastor, who after World War II said....

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.