# Kentucky Governor Leads Condemnation of Libertarian Party's Comparison of 'Vaccine Passports' With Nazi Persecution of Jews

Ben Cohen

MARCH 31, 2021

Kentucky's governor has slammed the state's third-largest political party for comparing proposed COVID-19 "vaccine passports" to the yellow star badges that the Nazi regime compelled Jews in occupied Europe to wear on their outer clothing.

"Comparing vaccines to the Holocaust is shameful," Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear (D) declared on Twitter, in response to the Holocaust analogy drawn by the Libertarian Party on its own Twitter feed on Monday.

"This group should stop politicizing the pandemic and apologize — there is no place for antisemitism in Kentucky," Beshear stated.

The offending post was published on Monday afternoon. "Are the vaccine passports going to be yellow, shaped like a star, and sewn on our clothes?" the party tweeted.

Disturbing comparisons between the Nazi persecution of the Jews and the social distancing protocols introduced to counter the pandemic over the last year have become more and more frequent in extremist circles, particularly in Europe. At a protest in the French city of Avignon earlier this month, demonstrators carried makeshift yellow stars marked with the words "Not Vaccinated" instead of "Jew." At the same protest, speakers compared a proposed EU passport reserved for those who have been vaccinated against COVID-19 to Nazi racial antisemitism.

In Germany, meanwhile, the trope had become common enough that the city of Munich last May went as far as to ban the display of mock yellow stars at anti-social distancing rallies.

Despite the condemnation of Gov. Beshear and other public figures — including Anti-Defamation League CEO Jonathan Greenblatt, who called the post "ignorant and shameful" — the Libertarian Party doubled down on its original stance, continuing to insist on a close resemblance between the Nazi extermination of six million Jews and millions of other vulnerable minorities with the public health measures introduced by elected governments.

"How can we say 'never forget,' if the people who are opposed to Government tyranny in all forms can't speak up?" the party tweeted on Wednesday afternoon.

It continued: "The holocaust (sic) didn't happen overnight. It was a heinous, multi-year genocide that started long before Kristallnacht. When Libertarians say never again, we mean it."

Other libertarian advocates were less impressed with the Nazi analogy.

"Governments shouldn't be imposing vaccination requirements for activities, but restaurants, movie theaters, and other private businesses may well want to assure customers that everyone in the space has been vaccinated," David Boaz of the libertarian Cato Institute think tank in Washington, DC told the Louisville *Courier Journal*. "There are reasonable debates about those issues, and clumsy Holocaust comparisons aren't helpful."

Lexington Rabbi Shlomo Litvin observed that the Libertarian Party's tweet reflected a more widespread habit of casually invoking the Holocaust.

"It's morally wrong to make this comparison, but it's not an uncommon one, unfortunately," Rabbi Litvin told *CBS*. "In fact, it's a growing issue of using Holocaust comparisons to make literally any political point you want to make."

Litvin added that the Holocaust "had nothing to with a choice,"  whereas "this passport issue is a choice."