



Interfaith Communities United For Justice And Peace

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Religious Communities must stop blessing war and violence!

ICUJP Statement on Citizens and Immigrants: Unite Against Racism and the War System – Adopted May 22, 2006

The anti-immigrant group "Save Our State" (SOS) is joining with Minuteman Jim Gilchrist, Ted Hayes and his "Crispus Attucks Brigade," Gary Ratner (American Jewish Congress in Orange County), Kelvin Smythe (San Diego coordinator of Republicans for Black Empowerment), Republican fringe presidential candidate Mark Klein and others for a self-described "Civil Rights March Against Illegal Immigration" through downtown Los Angeles on Sunday, May 21st.

What a contradiction! Civil rights are human rights. If they are not for all of us, then they are not "rights" at all but merely privilege. When racism toward some groups begins to spread, with the backing of highly-placed officials, it contaminates other groups and breeds bias and prejudice across the board.

As members of Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace (ICUJP), we assert that our faith traditions have in common the injunctions to love our neighbors as ourselves and to aid the strangers in our midst. They do not tell us to aid strangers only if they have the proper papers, or to love our neighbors only if they will work for low wages in our factories, fields, and homes.

On May 21st, the anti-immigrant forces plan to march up Broadway (starting at noon) for a 2 p.m. rally at City Hall. We fear that their intent is to drive a wedge between citizens and immigrants, especially those from Mexico and Central America. Especially pernicious is their opportunist attempt to convince African-Americans to ally with a racist group that would doubtless not hesitate to turn against them next.

Therefore it is critical for all of us, immigrant and citizen alike, to recognize our common interests and stand together peacefully in solidarity, not only against the message of the march, but also against racist and exploitative immigration "reform" legislation.

Some might urge us to "stay away" in the vain hope that "no one will pay attention to them." Some might say that if they don't get attention, they'll go away.

But that strategy didn't work when Nazis marched through the streets of Berlin in 1928, and it's not likely to work now.

Let the media show not only the hate-filled and exclusionary message of the march but also our signs and banners, our faces and voices, manifesting the love our faith traditions teach: love not only for "Americans" but for all people. Let us assemble in the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's non-violent struggle for human dignity.