

**Remarks by Dr. Warren H. Stewart, Sr., Senior Pastor
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Phoenix, Arizona**

at

ARIZONA'S CALL TO THE NATION

Sunday Afternoon, April 25, 2010

Organized by Reform Immigration for America

ReformimmigrationFORAmerica.org

Held at the First Institutional Baptist Church

“THE STORY OF THE STRUGGLE”

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Bienvenido a la Iglesia Bautista de Institucional de primera, mis hermanos y hermanas en la meseta para la justicia y la igualdad. Dios bendiga a todos ustedes y gracias por elegir a venir aquí en este día sagrado para tal una ocasión histórica.

Translation – Welcome to the First Institutional Baptist Church, my brothers and sisters in the cause for justice and equality. God bless all of you and thank you for choosing to come here on this sacred day for this historic occasion.

Thank you, Petra Falcon, Kit and Ian Danley, all of the veteran as well as emerging leaders in our beloved Latino Community, Clergy, Governmental Officials, our special out-of-the-state guests, Community Activists and all others, for allowing me a few minutes to speak on **“THE STORY OF THE STRUGGLE.”**

We, here in Arizona, are witnessing the historic and necessary 21st century awakening of the spirit of the victorious Civil Rights Movement of the 20th century. To God be the glory! Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Cesar Chavez, Dorothy Height, Medgar Evers and countless other Civil Rights leaders of the 1900s are cheering us on in our new millennium campaign against racism, bigotry, prejudice, intolerance and ignorance in “high places.” Many of the same unjust and insensitive actions that gave birth to the Civil Rights Movement more than a half a century ago are raising their ugly, mean-spirited, narrow-minded heads in local, country and state governments in our awesome State of Arizona. And we will *not* stand idly by and *not* put up a vigorous, God-inspired fight until there is “justice and liberty for all” regardless of race, creed, color, culture, class, country of origin or language.

As people and leaders of faith in the God of Love, Justice, Liberty and Equality, we stand *against* Arizona Senate Bill 1070 which our “misguided” state legislature and governor passed and signed into law this past week. Throughout the Bible the Word of God calls for loving

kindness and consideration for “resident aliens” and foreigners in our midst, exhorting God-fearing people, not to “wrong or oppress them.” Even Jesus Christ, in Matthew 25, informs us that we will be judged by our God on how we “welcome a stranger” among us. We also learn from the Bible that *no* human beings are illegal or illegitimate no matter the color of their skin, the language they speak or the country they come from.

With that being said, “*WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE: CHAOS OR COMMUNITY?*” to raise a most relevant question by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 50 years ago. I offer this to be our response – **NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION**. And, here are its successive and successful steps:

First, RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION, which is HOLY ANGER at SB1070 and its oppressive, unjust and racial-profiling consequences;

Second, DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS with powers and authorities which can strike SB1070 down;

Third, INCREASING PUBLIC, PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS, including prayer, fasting, sit-ins, teach-ins, marches and rallies that do not let up;

Fourth, POLITICAL ACTION at the voting booths and 1,000s of new voters;

Fifth, SELECTIVE PATRONAGE, i.e., BOYCOTTS, if and when necessary;

And, **Sixth**, IF ALL ELSE FAILS, NON-VIOLENT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

Now, that’s “**THE STORY OF THE STRUGGLE.**”

I close with this--in Genesis 50 after Joseph had been made Prime Minister of Egypt even though years earlier his own brothers sold him into slavery, his brothers with whom he had reconciled thought that he might pay them back from the wrongs they had done to him. When Joseph heard of their concern, he responded to them, “Do not be afraid! Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a great people . . .”

Well, all I’ve got to say right now is,

THANK YOU, ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE, FOR SB1070!

THANK YOU, GOVERNOR BREWER, FOR SIGNING SB1070!

YOU MAY HAVE INTENDED FOR IT TO DO HARM TO THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE OF COLOR AND OF LATINO DESCENT, BUT GOD INTENDED IT FOR GOOD FOR HIS GREAT PEOPLE!

THANK YOU, ARIZONA, FOR SB1070, BECAUSE FROM THE HIGHEST OFFICE IN THE LAND, FROM LEADERS OF TENS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, FROM CHURCHES, SYNAGOGUES, MOSQUES, TEMPLES AND STOREFRONTS, FROM AROUND THE WORLD, **YOU HAVE AWAKENED THE HISTORIC 21ST CENTURY CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN OUR GREAT NATION!**