



Global Nonviolent Action Database

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Arizona grassroots activists protest anti-immigrant measure (SB1070), United States, 2010

May

2010

to: 27 July

2010

Country: United States

Location City/State/Province: *Arizona*

Goals:

To force the state of Arizona to repeal SB1070, a law that requires immigrants to always carry the documentation of their legal immigration status.

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 036. Performances of plays and music

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 038. Marches

Methods in 3rd segment:

Methods in 4th segment:

Methods in 5th segment:

Methods in 6th segment:

- 036. Performances of plays and music
- 038. Marches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 060. Suspension of social and sports activities › Musicians refuse to play shows in Arizona ("SoundStrike")

Classifications

Classification:

Defense

Cluster:

Human Rights

Group characterization:

- Undocumented Immigrants
- immigration activists

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:

Alto Arizona, Puente Arizona

Partners:

National Day Laborers Organizing Network (NDLON)

External allies:

UNITE HERE, Copwatch, Ruckus Society, Repeal Coalition

Involvement of social elites:

Musical artists: Rage Against the Machine, Los Tigros del Norte, Kanye West

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

- Alto Arizona
- Copwatch
- NDLON
- Puente Arizona
- Repeal Coalition
- Ruckus Society

Groups in 2nd Segment:**Groups in 3rd Segment:****Groups in 4th Segment:****Groups in 5th Segment:****Groups in 6th Segment:**

- Kanye West
- Los Tigros del Norte
- Rage Against the Machine
- UNITE HERE

Segment Length: *Approximately 2 weeks*

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer, Sheriff Joe Arpaio, state government of Arizona

Nonviolent responses of opponent:

Not known

Campaigner violence:

Not known

Repressive Violence:

Not known

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

0 points out of 6 points

Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

Growth:

3 points out of 3 points

In May 2010, Alto Arizona, an immigrants' rights organization, began assembling different grassroots groups to come together for the "Human Rights Summer." Inspired by the Freedom Summer of the Civil Rights Movement, the goal of the Human Rights Summer was to force Arizona to overturn the controversial immigration law SB1070, which stated that all adult foreigners in the United States for more than thirty days must register with the US government and keep their registration documents with them at all times. Violation would be considered a federal misdemeanor and could lead to arrest. The law was spearheaded by Governor Jan Brewer and Sheriff Joe Arpaio.

The project began with training workshops hosted by the Ruckus Society, which taught courses on direct action and publicized and supported the work of its trainees on their widely read blog. Soon, Alto Arizona began networking throughout Arizona to find grassroots organizations to participate in the Human Rights Summer. Alto Arizona planned to protest continuously for a month before SB1070 took affect on 27 July.

At the beginning of the campaign, a group called Puente Arizona began organizing small units called Barrio Defense Committees. These groups were structured after groups that activists used in El Salvador. Thousands of people joined these committees, which organized training workshops for activists. Members specifically taught their neighbors about their own legal rights, and helped them work on English language skills so that they could better defend themselves against police.

Another group, called Copwatch, joined these units to help local immigrants document police misconduct such as racial profiling and harassment. The campaign also worked with the Repeal Coalition, a grassroots organization which invited the National Day Laborer Organizing Network to help structure their campaign using techniques like house calls and neighborhood mapping.

On 13 May, Alto Arizona released a series of protest posters to be distributed throughout Arizona and especially in Phoenix. The posters highlighted the racial profiling and related methods used by Arizona state police. The posters accused the state government of implementing "racist fascism". The images used highlighted day laborers and immigrant families with mothers and children.

On 19 May, the campaigners promoted the release of an album they had solicited called "A Line in the Sand." The album was a collaboration between various musicians, some unsigned and some from major label rosters. It featured protest songs specifically discussing SB1070, 287g, and other immigration law issues, calling out the US government on policies of racism.

On 29 May, over 100,000 people from across America came to Arizona to march on Phoenix in protest of SB1070. The march began at Steele Indian School Park and continued to the State Capitol building. Because so many people had come from out of town, Puente Arizona organized home stays for people with nowhere to sleep. When the march began at 10 am on the 29th,

protesters showed their creativity. Banners read “Obama Keep Your Promise” and “Legalize Arizona.” Other activists wore t-shirts reading “indocumentado”, publicizing their immigration status. Others carried US flags. One unit of activists carried a piñata depicting Governor Jan Brewer with the words “Racism is Ugly”.

On 20 July 2010, one week before Governor Jan Brewer scheduled the official implementation of SB1070, Alto Arizona announced the beginning of a “SoundStrike”, in which they petitioned musicians to boycott performing in Arizona. The SoundStrike was led in part by Zack de la Rocha, the Mexican American lead singer of Rage Against the Machine. De la Rocha released a statement to the press explaining why he will not support SB1070 on 21 July. Rage held a benefit concert at the Hollywood Palladium in Los Angeles, California, on 23 July to rally support for the Human Rights Summer. Jornaleros del Norte, a band of day laborers and activists writing about immigration inequality, opened the show. Together, they raised \$300,000 for the campaign.

Many other notable musicians joined the SoundStrike, including Kanye West, Nine Inch Nails, and many Latin acts such as Los Tigres del Norte. Fans petitioned Lady Gaga in mass numbers. She had an enormous show scheduled in Phoenix three days after the implementation of SB1070. However, she did not respond.

On 27 July 2010, beginning at midnight when the law was officially instated, eighty local activists blocked the entrance to Guadalupe, a primarily Hispanic and Native town outside Phoenix. They held banners and chanted, expressing their distaste for Joe Arpaio, the notoriously brutal Phoenix Sheriff who promoted SB1070. Their banners proclaimed that law enforcement working for Arpaio was not welcome in Guadalupe.

The same day, NDLOM assisted in bringing 550 members of fellow union UNITE HERE, who, with AFL-CIO support, joined the protests in Phoenix on the last day of the Human Rights Summer. As the campaign drew to a close, its many constituent members separated again and began planning their next assaults on Jan Brewer, Arpaio and Arizona’s interpretation of American immigration law.

Research Notes

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