

Riverside Rejects Racism

Saturday, September 26, 2009

RIVERSIDE, California -- In response to a planned neo-Nazi demonstration at a day labor site in Casa Blanca, Riverside's historically Latino community, numerous community groups united to oppose racism in their city. Over 30 organizations endorsed the rally, which saw the participation of over 150 people who listened to and gave speeches, shared fruit and water, and enjoyed music and a strong sense of solidarity.



The extraction of a tree in front of Riverside City Hall was a slight snag early in the morning, but with less than a week's preparation, such incidents are unavoidable. Fortunately, the work was done before the sound equipment was set up and speakers didn't have to contend with the noise of the machinery.



MC Kevin Akin
by Rockero Monday,
Sep. 28, 2009 at 1:48 PM
rockero420@yahoo.com

Kevin Akin, longtime Riverside activist, state chair of the Peace and Freedom Party, and a principal organizer of the rally, dubbed "Riverside Rejects Racism," was the master of ceremonies, and after a few introductory words, introduced the Rabbi Suzanne Singer of the local Temple Beth El.

"If I could get this many people for Saturday services, that'd be great!" she joked, before taking a serious tone. "As many of you know, my mother survived Auschwitz, but she lost her whole family in that camp. As we all know, the Nazis tried to annihilate Jews, gypsies, homosexuals. They succeeded in killing six million Jews and at least five million others. So I'm horrified, stupefied, outraged, that the Nazis are back, that they have headquarters in Riverside--I really hope that wherever they go to find an office, they won't get a lease.

"As a Jew whose family was wiped out by the Nazis and whose people were targeted for death, I decry these activities and I decry them in no uncertain terms. Now I was asked if it wouldn't be better to just ignore their activity, because by putting attention to them we are giving them publicity. That's what the Germans said when Hitler rode to power."

She then quoted the poem attributed to the pastor and one-time Nazi prisoner Martin Niemoller:

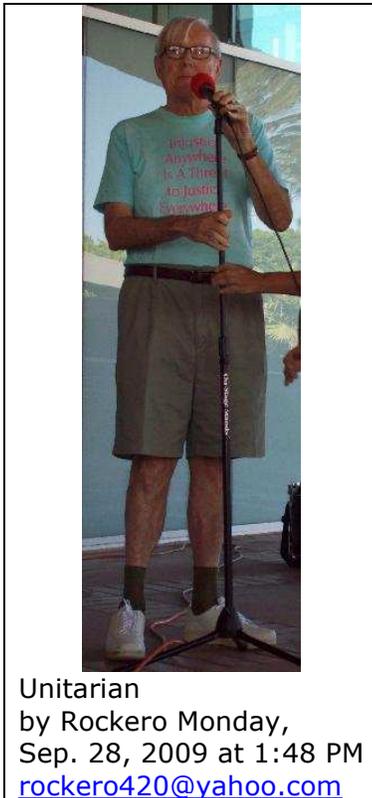
"First they came for the communists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a communist; Then they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist; Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist; Then they came for 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 out for me."



Rabbi Singer
by Rockero Monday,
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"Today is Shabbat Tshuvah, which literally means, 'Sabbath of Return.' It's the Sabbath that leads up to the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur, which takes place tomorrow night. It's a time for reflection and atonement. May the Nazis take this opportunity to do Tshuvah, repentance, for their hateful behavior. Thank You."

The next speaker was from the Universalist Unitarian Church of Riverside.



"Today I put on my Martin Luther King t-shirt largely because I knew that we'd be meeting in the shadow of his statue. I think it's important at this meeting that we as Unitarians, and all of you, send a strong message to these Nazis that they are not--are not welcome in Riverside. These people obviously do enjoy the right of free speech, but in preaching their hatred, are obviously abusing it. We as Unitarians of course are all-welcoming to all people of all faiths, of all backgrounds, et cetera, but we are not welcoming to hatred. My belief and my hope for this meeting is that of the 25 the number of 25 will increase exponentially. I know that I'm part of two or three other groups in addition to the Unitarians that would be willing to sign on and I think that Mike Kinsman's idea is great that this should only be a beginning of this effort to thwart any activity that this group chooses to undertake in the city of Riverside, so in the words of Martin Luther King, 'we shall overcome.'"

Akin next introduced David Holguin of the Aztlan Brown Berets, who had to leave early to be present at the day labor corner. But first he gave the proviso: "The organizers of this particular rally take no position whatever on the effort by some to gather in Casa Blanca to defend day laborers against a possible Nazi attack. We just want to urge you to be careful, be discreet, do not give the Nazis anything they want, anything that will make them happy, and be safe."

Holguín then began:



Brown Berets
by Rockero Monday, Sep. 28, 2009 at 1:48 PM
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"Mexica Tiahui. My name is David Holguin, and I'm the commander of Brown Berets from San Bernardino. We are Mexican warriors, we are Chicanos, we are Brown Berets. A lot of you'll know our organization. We've been around now 40 years. We grew out of the 60s Chicano Movement and we have matured much and we have reorganized and we have become a much better, stronger organization and been able to help our people much more than we have done in the past. Our involvement in this, when we found out Tuesday, we got on the ball, we started connecting with all the organizations that we have been involved in the past. We have people coming in from Los Angeles right now.

"We just got word about three minutes ago the Nazis are at Casa Blanca now. They made a caravan, they didn't march there, they're over there, so in urgency, we're all going to take off to go confront them. We done do some confronting, we're going to be safe about it, we're gonna use non-violence, we're prepared

that if they use violence, that we will use our legal knowhow, some of us have our guards and we can actually arrest them, and we intend to if the police don't."

A round of applause broke out:

"We don't need these guys in our city! If people had organized, if people had gotten together like this when Hitler was doing that, that war would have never happened, they never would have killed all the people they did. But everybody sat around. We can see that that is not going to happen here in Riverside, California, we should not allow it to happen in our country. We will not allow it.

"What the Brown Berets do, is basically, we take care of our people. We feel that nobody else is going to take care of us; we have to take care of ourselves. [...] We knew that they were going to be there, the Nazi headquarters is only four miles away from here. At another point we will give an address to them. But they're here. They're not going to go away so easily. They are planning another march and demonstration in the city of Rialto in the next couple of weeks. Their purpose right now is recruitment. They're out to get the youth! They're addressing the youth, those that feel left out of the other youth groups, other youth groups in school, whatnot, reject certain people and they're targeting those kids! [...]"

Be aware that the Nazi party has been here for two years now. They've decided that now's the time to let the community know that they're here. Now it's our time to let them know that they're not wanted here and that we won't tolerate it!"

Before introducing the next speaker, Akin made a comment about the media. "Very often , media will report on rallies, saying that they were attended by about 'so many' people. There are certain media outlets that will say that there were 'about 20' people here today. And I would like to do a count-off. It would take just about a minute, and it would give us exactly the number of people who are here. One by one, people counted themselves off one-by-one with the occasional burst of laughter as more than one person called the same number.

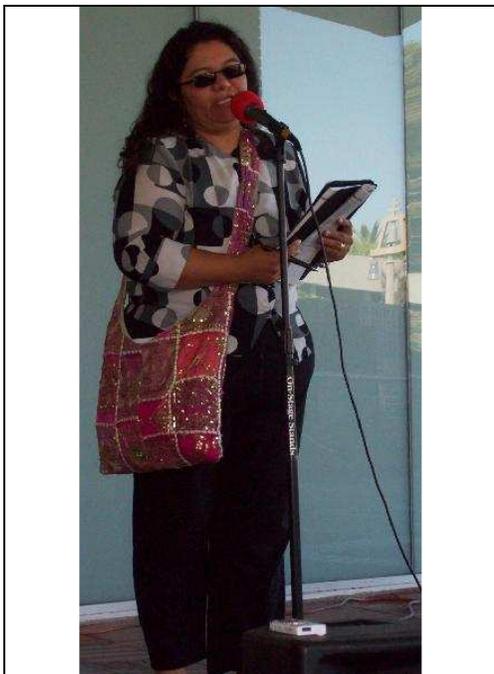
The next speaker was Chris from the United Democrats of Moreno Valley:

"Unfortunately, our nation depends on cheap labor in order for the greedy companies to make larger and larger profits. The neo-Nazis claim that they are here in Riverside to protest against illegal immigration and day laborers. I have one important question to ask. Who in Riverside County told them to speak for us? We are the Democrats of the Moreno Valley and we demand comprehensive immigration reform, health care reform, an overhaul of the educational system, and for the Riverside sheriff's department to rescind the racist 287(g) program and to stop immigration stops disguised as DUI checkpoints." He then urged civic participation in the form of voting.



Moreno Valley United Democrats
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Next was a member of the Moreno Valley Parents Association:



Moreno Valley Parents' Association
by Rockero Monday,
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"Buenos días compañeros a todos. Estamos aquí con lo siguiente: Somos Moreno Valley Parents' Association, Asociación de Padres de Moreno Valley, familias educándonos para tener un entorno social y académico mejor. El problema que se ignora no mejora. Y estamos aquí hoy como familias demandando respecto para nuestras comunidades mexicoamericanas, latinoamericanas, América del Sur, caribeñas, judíos y afroamericanos. Decimos no al odio y sí a la unidad ya que somos la clase trabajadora que juntos, podemos causar impacto. Y somos una fuerza que es necesario se tome en cuenta. Cumplir esta misión necesita muchas voces, manos y pies trabajando juntas, y las mejores ideas no son las mías ni las tuyas. Son nuestras. Y el valor consiste en seguir adelante, y a pesar del temor, continuar. Sí se puede compañeros. ¡Adelante!"

[Good morning, friends. We are here for the following reason: We are the Moreno Valley Parents' Association, families educating ourselves for a better social and academic environment. The problem that is ignored does not improve. And we are here as families, demanding respect for our Mexican-American, Latin American, South American, Caribbean, Jewish, and African-American communities. We say 'no' to hate and 'yes' to unity since we are the working class that together, can have an impact. And we are a force that must be taken into consideration. Fulfilling this mission requires many voices, hands, and feet working together, and the best ideas are neither mine nor yours. They are ours. And courage means continuing forward, despite fear, to persevere. It can be done, friends. Onward!]

Ruthie Goldcorn then spoke on behalf of the Democratic Club of Moreno Valley:

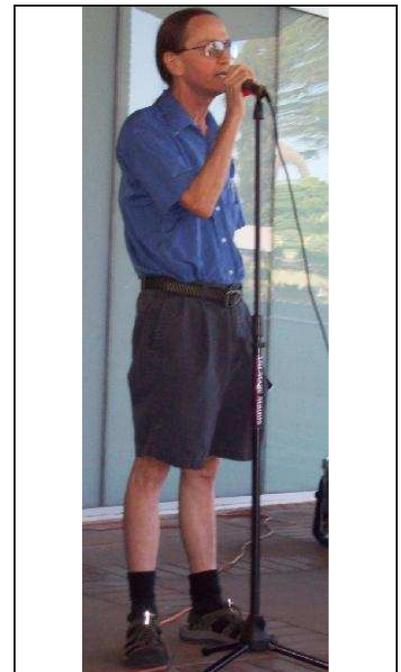


Moreno Valley Democratic Club
by Rockero Monday,
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"The Democratic Club of Moreno Valley prides itself on its community activism. We are a political organization, we are a certified club of the Riverside Democratic Party since 1992, but we are in the community, we are at the community, we are with the community, whenever, wherever, however we stand with the community against hate, against racism, against racist attacks and assaults on the basic human dignity of the residents of Riverside County and the state of California and this country. We are here because we stand with you, and as a woman, as a Jew, and as a quote-unquote 'defective,' I would be at the top of the Nazi hit parade! So we stand here, I stand here with you, and the Democratic Club of Moreno Valley stands with you as a community activist organization carrying forward the basic values of human rights, civil rights, the right to self-determination, the right to live free. And Riverside County is not apart from any other area in California as the Nazis would have you think. They used to have friends here! They do not have friends in Riverside County anymore! They will not be welcome here anymore!"

Gene Berkman then spoke on behalf of the Riverside County Libertarian Party:

"Good Morning! Shabbes Tov! I am Gene Berkman, Vice-Chair of the Riverside County Libertarian Party. I own Renaissance Bookshop on Magnolia Ave in Riverside. We offer the largest selection of anti-Nazi books in English and German for sale in Southern California. Libertarian just means we are for liberty. Libertarians oppose Nazis and national socialism in every aspect. Nazis glorify the all-powerful state. We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state. We strive to limit government power. Nazis glorify war and violence. Libertarians favor peace--international peace and social peace. We reject the rule of force in human affairs. Nazis elevate racial collectivism to a fundamental principle. They denigrate, degrade, and destroy individuals found guilty of belonging to a collectively "guilty" race. Libertarians defend the dignity of the individual and individual freedom. When there was a real Nazi Empire--not just some clowns in dress-up costumes--many from Riverside County fought to liberate Europe from national socialism, my dad among them. There is no room in Riverside County for those who wear the uniform of an enemy of American freedom. Never again nazism! Long live freedom and a free America! ¡Viva la libertad y América libre!"



Riverside Libertarian Party
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Akin himself then spoke on behalf of the Riverside County Peace and Freedom Party:

"I'm the county chair of the Peace and Freedom Party. Most of you know I'm active in all sorts of other things too, I'm a member of Temple Beth El, that's my rabbi, I'm a membership of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and I see many members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation here, I'm active in the Save Our Chinatown Committee, and I see a bunch of members of it here, too. [...] The Peace and Freedom Party lists its basic positions as being in favor of democracy, environmentalism, feminism, racial equality, and socialism. We're talking about real socialism. We're not talking about national socialism. The Hitlerites came up with this "national socialist" dodge back many years ago because socialism was so popular in Germany, they put it in their name even though they're for the precise opposite. They were financed by some leading industrialists, and they represented the open, terrorist dictatorship of a few of the wealthiest people in society. We're for the opposite of that. We're for democracy, we're for broadly spreading the control of our society, both its political and economic aspects, among all the people. All of the political groups that have shown up here today are opposed to Nazis, and we work with them all on various things and it's nice to see you all here."

He then introduced a representative of the San Bernardino County Peace and Freedom Party, who, before speaking, asked volunteers to hand out the water the sponsoring organizations had donated.

"Compañeros y compañeras, amigos y amigas, brothers and sisters in the struggle, yo soy integrante del comité central del partido paz y libertad del condado de San Bernardino. También colaboro con la red de respuesta rápida, que es la primera línea de defensa para la gente inmigrante. Trabajo también con muchas otras organizaciones comunitarias, y políticas, y culturales. Y yo aquí estoy ahorita para primero, antes que nada, agradecerles a todos ustedes por estar aquí, para denunciar el odio y el racismo, y para decir una cosa brevemente. Que esta agrupación que está ahorita, ya, molestando a los jornaleros de Casa Blanca, es una agrupación fascista. Y ¿qué es el fascismo? Por uno, se trata del racismo a nivel de la calle, ¿verdad? Que es lo que están haciendo ellos. Pero se trata también de una coyuntura, un conjunto de los poderes económicos y políticos. Y éste es el gran peligro que corremos. Que la unidad de esos dos poderes nos quiten a nosotros todos nuestros derechos. Y éste es un proceso que ya está en marcha. Y ¿qué más es el fascismo? Es una manipulación de los medios de comunicación. Y esta es otra cosa que vemos muy obviamente, muy claramente, ya lo notó el compañero Kevin. Entonces una manera de combatir esto es no aceptar lo que nos dicen de plano los medios masivos de comunicación sino ser los medios de comunicación. Escribir nosotros mismos. Publicar nuestros propios periódicos. Nuestros blogs. Sitios de internet. Ésta es una manera de democratizar los medios de comunicación y es un paso adelante para la capacitación de todo el pueblo. Ésto es lo que quiero decir, y gracias a todos."

[Comrades, friends, brothers and sisters in the struggle. I'm a member of the central committee of the San Bernardino County Peace and Freedom Party. I also work with the Rapid Response Network, which is the first line of defense for immigrant people. I also work with many other community, and political, and cultural organizations. And I'm here now to first thank you all for being here, to denounce hatred and racism, and to briefly say one thing. That this grouping which is at this very minute bothering the day laborers of Casa Blanca, is a fascist grouping. And what is fascism? For one, it's about street-level racism, right? Which is what they are doing. But it also means the conjunction of the economic and political powers. And this is the great danger we face. That the unity of these two powers might take away our rights. And this is a process that is already underway. And what else is fascism? It's a manipulation of the media. And this is something else that we see very obviously, comrade Kevin has already pointed it out. So one way to combat this is to not accept what the mass media tells us, but rather to be the media. Write ourselves. Publish our own newspapers. Our blogs. Websites. This is a means of democratizing the media and it's one step forward for the empowerment of all people. This is what I want to say, and thank you all.]

The next speaker was Emilio Amaya, a tireless defender of the immigrant community in the Inland Empire. He began with chants of "¡Sí se puede!" and "The people united will never be defeated!"

"We have several types of nazism. The 20 people in Casa Blanca, but we then we have the people in our own government, in our city government, in our county government. For two years, our community has been under seige by the Border Patrol and by the immigration office! Every day, day in, day out, every day they separate families. Every day, they separate children from their parents. It's not just today that this is happening. It's not right to separate families! They're protesting against immigrants and day laborers, but this struggle has to be carried out every day, and we need your support. We have been out there with the day laborers, videotaping Border Patrol abuses, we have been going to the detention centers, trying to release our people. Sometimes we feel alone. But today we know we have 152 people with us that are going to help us stop immigrant-bashing! That's going to help us stop immigrant-scapegoating! ¡Sí se puede! ¡Sí se puede! Thank you."

Next came Jennaya Dunlap, a spokesperson for the Inland Empire Rapid Response Network:



"We are here to say no more racism, no more anti-immigrant racism, no more raids, and no more separations of families. No more injustice against the hardworking immigrant community! Basically, the Rapid Response Network are a group of volunteers that are the first line of defense for the immigrant community, and we directly help the immigrant community to prevent separations of families, respond to raids, and other injustices committed against the immigrant community. We have two hotlines that people can call to report any abuses against the immigrant community, raids that are happening, if a family member is in detention, and we help the best we can. I have cards with me with the two hotline numbers and I encourage people to come take some, not only for themselves but for friends and other people in the community. Thanks. ¡Sí se puede!"

Inland Empire Rapid Response Network
by Rockero Monday,
Sep. 28, 2009 at 1:48 PM
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The following speaker represented the Western Inland Empire Coalition Against Hate:



Western Inland Empire Coaliton Against Hate
by Rockero Monday,
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"Good morning, my name is Dr. Kenya Davis-Hayes, and I'm a board member of the Western Inland Empire Coalition Against Hate. Very briefly, both of my grandfathers fought in World War II. My mother integrated the schools. And when I stand at this rally today, I actually see how far we've come, and that this is something that needs to be safeguarded. The Western Inland Empire Coalition Against Hate serves as a network between law enforcement officials, city leaders, to make sure that all of you are indeed safe against hate crimes. We are a network that, literally, if you find yourself victimized of a hate crime we make sure that you get the fullest protection, that you have the greatest amount of information possible. Something to realize--I was on-line and the Southern Poverty Law Center said that hate groups are on the rise 54% nationwide. Can you imagine churches, synagogues, community organizations having a spike in recruitment by 54%? How far we would be. That would be amazing! I work at a university, a spike in enrollment? Fifty-four percent, hooray! But unfortunately, we aren't quite there. And I'm actually quite gratified to see all of you there. A

colleague, Mr. Mike Kinsman is actually going to circulate more information about our organization as well as a flyer that we have created about the myths and realities of undocumented immigrants, to see that they are not exactly the grand threat to society that the neo-Nazi party and other organizations would have us to believe. So thank you so very much, and have a great day, I'm glad to see you all."

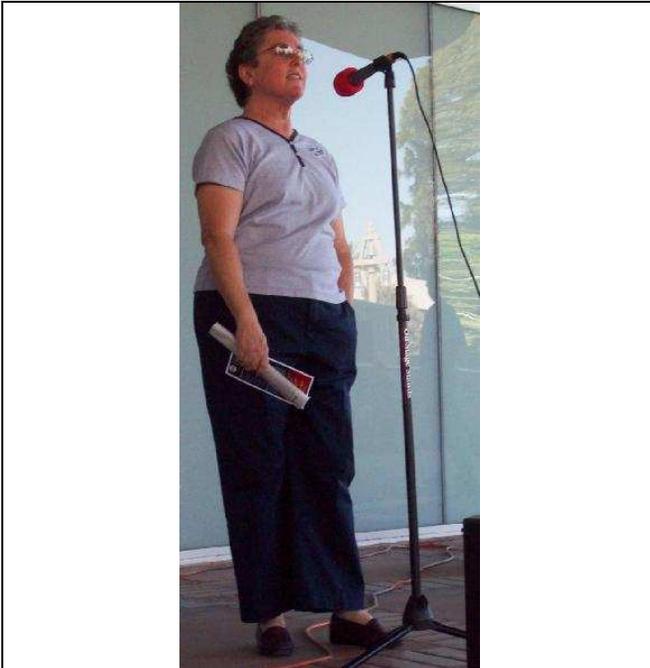
Afterward, Sergio from the Riverside Community College Student Alliance for Education, accompanied by three other members of the group, took the stage.

"We are a group of students who support undocumented students. As you guys know, undocumented students cannot apply for financial aid, so we fundraise money to give them scholarships so that they can continue their education. Because we believe that education is what we all need, and that's what the nazis need because they're ignorant people, they're not educated, so here to speak up for education. And we also support immigration reform. If you are pro-immigration reform, you can send [the] text message "justice" to 69866. It just costs you like a normal text message, and if you would share that with your daughter or your son or whatever. Like I said, we just need to be educated because the only way to be SAFE is to be educated."



Riverside Community College Students Alliance for Education
by Rockero Monday, Sep. 28, 2009 at 1:48 PM
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The next speaker was from the Laborers' International Union of North America Local 777:



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"I don't know how many of you realize that in both the fascist Japan of the 1930s and Nazi Germany, labor unions were a prime target. In Japan in particular, they were taken out very early. Now, why would this be? Well, labor unions tend to bring up inconvenient issues in states where the individual really has no role. They whine about the rights of workers, in this country, they often whined about the fact that the rights of workers don't take you very far without your voting rights and your other civil rights to give you the power to back up these kinds of demands. So speaking as an employee of LiUNA 777, and a possible target of Nazi aggression, all I can tell you is that our organization, as well as our parent organization Laborers' Union International, will do our best to prevent that from happening on our watch."

Michael Dunn, accompanied on stage by two other members, next orated for the Inland Communities Fellowship of Reconciliation:

"¡Sí se puede! I've known Emilio Amaya for quite some time now. We were all involved in the sanctuary movement. I'm here today to represent the Inland Communities Fellowship of Reconciliation. You see our banner here. We are a group that's affiliated with the national and international fellowship of reconciliation, organizations that started nearly a hundred years ago in the aftermath of the First World War, a time when it was not unusual for Blacks to be hung in the South, strung up for whatever imagined offenses. It was a time when Nazis were just coming to power in Germany. It was a strange time, but really, when you think about the history of these things, what we're talking about is an



Fellowship of Reconciliation
by Rockero Monday, Sep. 28, 2009 at 1:48 PM
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illness, a sickness in society arising out of fear, fear that engenders all sorts of hate crimes, intolerance, acts of violence. We here represent the antidote to that--we are the antidote. ¡Sí se puede! We're here about a deeply spiritual and deeply moral issue, and I think you all understand what that is. The issues of intolerance that lead to crime, to violence, to mistreatment, to racism, to bigotry, all of those things that are associated and that are embodied in the word 'nazi.' We are here, sí se puede. Thank you very much."

José García then spoke on behalf of the Fernando Pedraza Day Labor Coalition:

"Estamos aquí para repudiar el racismo, no solamente aquí en Riverside, sino en todas las ciudades, porque el racismo no es bueno para nadie, no es bueno para ninguna comunidad. El racismo lo único que provoca es el odio entre nosotros mismos, y nos hemos dado cuenta que por la humanidad hay que seguir luchando en contra del racismo. El racismo es un cáncer que tenemos que eradicar. Los niños en las escuelas no se educan con odio. Se educan con amor. Y aquí esto es un ejemplo de que nuestra comunidad no está de acuerdo con que estén demostrando este tipo de ataques, ya sea aquí en Riverside, en San Bernardino, en Ontario, donquiera que estén los nazis, hay que repudiarlos. ¿Por qué? Porque los nazis únicamente lo que vienen es a dividir nuestras comunidades. Y creo que entre un ser humano, de humano a humano, no tiene que haber esa división porque finalmente somos todos de la misma raza humana, ¿no? Y, bueno pues, nada más quiero invitarlos a que sigamos luchando en contra del nazismo, en contra del fascismo y seguir adelante y es todo porque hay muchos oradores que también quieren compartir su palabra. Bienvenidos y muchas gracias."

[We are here to repudiate racism, not just here in Riverside, but in all cities, because racism is no good for anybody, it's no good for any community. All racism provokes is hate amongst ourselves, and we have realized that for humanity, we must continue struggling against racism. Racism is a cancer that we have to eradicate. This children in schools are not educated through hate. They are educated with love. And here, this is an example that our community does not agree with the fact that they're manifesting this type of attack, whether it's here in Riverside, in San Bernardino, in Ontario, wherever the Nazis are, we must repudiate them. Why? Because the only thing the Nazis come for is to divide our communities. Y I think that being human, from human to human, that division doesn't have to exist because at the end, we are all from the same human race, right? And well, I just want to invite you to continue struggling against nazism, against fascism and to continue forward, and that's all because there are many speakers who want to share their words. Welcome and many thanks.]

At that moment, Kevin Akin announced that the Nazis had left the corner they had staked out as a base to launch their attacks on the Latino community of Casa Blanca, which sent a roar through the crowd. He then introduced Francisco, who spoke for the Comité Pro-Democracia en México.



Comité Pro-Democracia en México
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gracias. Gracias por estar aquí."

"Yo he hecho algún trabajo con el Comité Pro-Democracia en México, mayormente en el condado de Los Ángeles. Tengo poco tiempo trabajando aquí en Riverside, me moví hace poco. Pero bueno, básicamente, nuestra resistencia es en contra del racismo, en contra de la persecución política, y en contra de la persecución a los inmigrantes. Porque los inmigrantes, lo único que hemos venido a hacer en este país, es hacer lo grande. Hemos contribuido con nuestro esfuerzo diario, diario, diario. Los mejores pagados, somos los inmigrantes. A mí me gustaría ver a los nazis cultivando las fresas, llenos de lodo, y sin comer, en jornadas de diez horas. Les besaría la mano. Ellos son incapaces de sentir piedad o compasión por otro ser humano. Lo que a nosotros nos mueve en este momento es lo que el corazón quiere decir: la unidad, el respeto. Lo que nosotros hacemos es respetar a los demás, y es lo que exigimos a los demás. Y nuestra resistencia básicamente es eso. Es que queremos que nos respeten porque no somos delincuentes, no somos criminales. Muchas

[I've done some with the Pro-Democracy in Mexico Committee, mostly in Los Angeles County Los Angeles. I've only been working here in Riverside a short time; I just moved a little while ago. But basically, our resistance is against racism, against political persecution, and against the persecution of immigrants. Because the only thing we immigrants have come to this country to do is to make it greater. We've contributed our efforts daily, daily, daily. We, the immigrants, are the best-paid. I would like to see the Nazis farming strawverries, covered in mud, and going without food on ten-hour workdays. I would kiss their hands. They are incapable of feeling pity or compassion fpr another human being. What moves us at this moment is what the heart means: Unity, respect. What we do is respect others, and that's what we demand from everyone else. And our resistance is basically that. We want to be respected because we're not delinquents, we're not criminals. Thank you very much. Thanks for being here.]

Then a woman, introduced as a member of Redlands PFLAG, approached the microphone:



LGBTQ solidarity
by Rockero Monday,
Sep. 28, 2009 at 1:48 PM
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"I am not a member of PFLAG, I am not from Redlands, but since there is no one here, I felt compelled that I need to speak to you. I am a member of the GLBT, which is the gay and lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and questioning group, and PFLAG is a very important part of having someone that has sexual orientation other than what is considered mainstream in society. PFLAG stands for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Many of you know people that fit into the LGBT category, many of you know people that know them. The Nazis definitely said, 'You are not acceptable' and they were automatically marked for the extermination and the labor camps, no matter what race, religion, ethnic group, economic status, we were gone under the Nazi regime. In our society it's very easy to say, 'We are not one of them. 'They' are over there. We are over here.' I am very happy to see all of you come out against the Nazis. My uncle fought them. My father fought them. My mother worked in the defense plants, so did my aunt. My one aunt had relatives in Italy who are no longer. My other family members in Czechoslovakia and Hungary are also no longer, thanks to the Nazis. I very, very, very, very much appreciate you all being here, and when the issue of sexual orientation comes out, please remember that everyone has worth, dignity, and value and we work in many occupations with many people. Thank you."

The next orator pronounced for the Inland Empire Do Peace and Nonviolence Alliance, part of the campaign for a US Department of Peace. As she spoke, a volunteer handed out apples and oranges to the members of the audience.

"Good morning peace people! I am first a poet, then a world citizen and a human being, then a student, a woman, a wife, a mother, a daughter, a granddaughter, a sister, a cousin, a niece, a friend. And I'm also family to brown-skinned, light-skinned, English-speaking, slang-talking, bald-headed, tattooed, Latin, Hispanic, Native, hoodlum, whatever you want to call them, original survivors and descendants and inhabitants of America. We have lived within this culture, working to be defined as something beyond what we look like, where we're imagined to be from, and what neighborhood we live in. If I'm gonna lose my voice, Amnesty International has evidence that I might be deported simply because of the color of my skin even though my family has been here for six generations, before it became California before it was part of the United States. I might be deported. I don't even speak Spanish! Pero estoy aprendiendo. I'm learning.

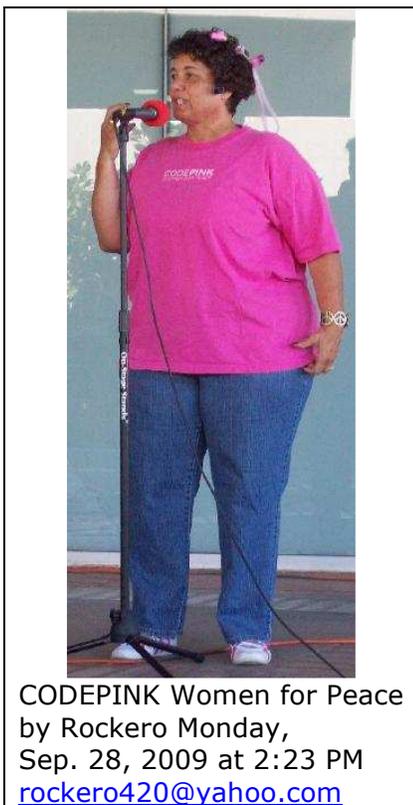
"Because of all of the voices that I am, as part of my story, as a poet, a human being, a world citizen, along with all the voices that I am, I am an activist volunteering and lobbying for the public good. Lobbying my congressman and imploring my community to support the establishment



Representative of the Inland Empire
Do Peace and Non-Violence Alliance

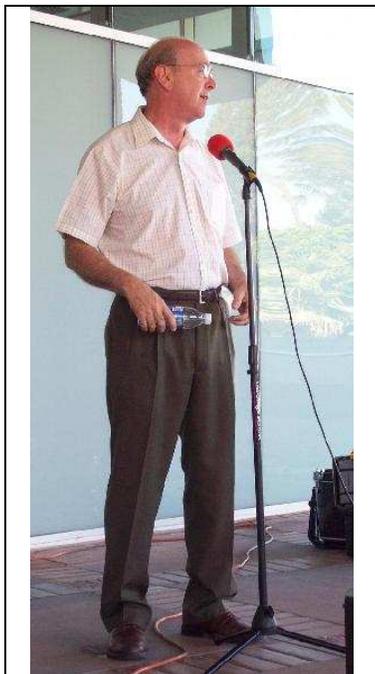
of a US Department of Peace and Non-violence. There are better answers to the challenges we face, it is time to make peace a line item on every budget, personal, city, county, state, national and international. What we know when we study peace is that there are ways to indicate violence, there are ways to indicate the rise of hate we are witnessing now. Have a bad economy. Have a one-sided media that stirs up the basest fears in any human being, and you will have violence. Have an education system that does not teach a sense of history and understanding of reconciliation of our past mistakes and our future possibilities. Have that education system and we will stir up hate if it's not available. we know these things and yet we are focusing very little of our resources and energy on coming up with the answers. There are answers. There are answers! How many of you believe that there are answers? How many of you are living peace after a very, very personal decision to decide that non-violence was the only way that made sense? So as a community, the Department of Peace would be that decision, to put that kind of response on what matters and what works and what restores community and unity. I don't know what went wrong in those folks' lives that they have chosen hate, but it is a community responsibility to address those issues and stop them before they have a chance to feed and grow into something else with other people. Thank you so much for being here today! Welcome peace people and keep the fight going."

She was followed by a member of CodePink Women for Peace:



"I'm Corla Coles, I'm the Inland Empire coordinator for CODEPINK Women for Peace and Social Justice and global solutions. If there's anything that CODEPINK stands for, it stands for peace, it stands for justice, and that's why we are here. I have greetings to you from Maine, from CODEPINK Maine, saying they marched down the streets in Maine and we filled the streets with thousands of peace people and filled the streets with love, which is what we need to do to diffuse that hatred. We have greetings from Hawai'i, I have greetings from National CODEPINK. Thank you everyone for coming together. As a woman who is half-Jewish, I had another reason to be here, obviously, because that nasty "N" word means something different to us than it means to others. I am so pleased to be here, and folks, look around, you're surrounded by people who care about what's happening. Can we put this many feet on the street for peace? We go to the rallies, we have ten or fifteen people. Can we put this many feet on the street for social justice? Can we put this many feet on the street for health care? All of those issues are intertwined in order to bring us together, so let's work together folks! Exchange names!"

Bill Hedrick, the only candidate for congress who showed up, was allowed a few words:



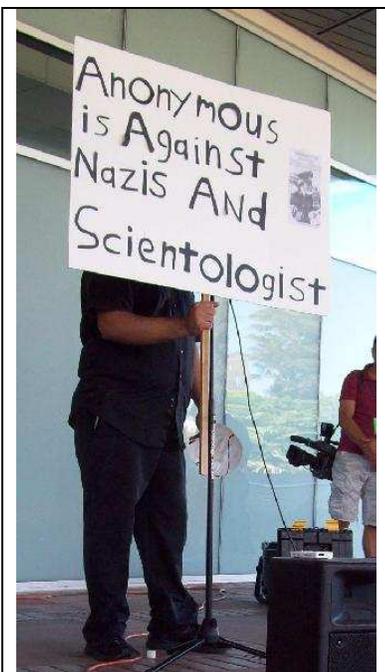
Bill Hedrick
by Rockero Monday,
Sep. 28, 2009 at 2:23 PM
rockero420@yahoo.com

"Thank you so much. I will just take a moment of your time. You've heard from a number of eloquent speakers this morning. We are all here because we are appalled at the possibility of such deep intolerance and hatred rearing its head in our community. But you know the fact of the matter is that this is the face of Riverside. It is multi-ethnic, from different religious backgrounds, different political affiliations, but we unite in one common cause. And that is a deep-seated belief in tolerance, in justice, this is the face of progressive Riverside. That's what it's all about. I am so proud to be here to share this with you and I applaud Kevin and the other sponsors for responding so quickly, at a moment's notice of this threat to the community. Thank you so much, Kevin."

Rabbi Singer had reserved a few moments at the end of the rally to deliver a final message:

"Really, the reason I wanted to come up here was to thank you, Kevin, and the other organizers and I think we should give Kevin and the other people a big hand. Thank you for organizing this. That's what I really wanted to say, and show our appreciation because, as Bill Hedrick has said, it was just in a few days you managed to pull all of this together. Very very appreciative. We thank you so so much for doing this. Thank you all for coming. I'd like to just bless you with the priestly blessing.

'May G*d bless you and keep you. May G*d always be a shining presence in your life. May G*d grant you the most precious of all blessings, the blessing of peace. Shalom, Amen.'



Anonymous
by Rockero Monday,
Sep. 28, 2009 at 2:23 PM
rockero420@yahoo.com

A man wearing the mask worn by the protagonist of the recent film V for Vendetta had been standing in the back holding a large sign with the words "Anonymous is Against Nazis and Scientologists." He approached the emcee and negotiated permission to talk, which was eventually granted. He began addressing the crowd, but members thereof protested that they couldn't properly hear. "Anonymous" then quickly removed his mask, covering his face instead with his sign, and began again:

"There's been a couple stares, a couple of questions about the mask. There is a very good reason for it. I'm not going to say it. There is one thing I'm going to say. The worst thing someone can call you is a racist. The worst thing someone can say to you is that you hate others for no apparent reason. The worst thing that can happen to you is that you're stared at every single day and people ask you 'Why?' I just wanna leave here, wanna thank everybody for coming out. Just want to let everybody know that Anonymous does support you. We have our own cause, but for today, we support you. Thank you."



Son Real
by Rockero Monday,
Sep. 28, 2009 at 2:23 PM
rockero420@yahoo.com

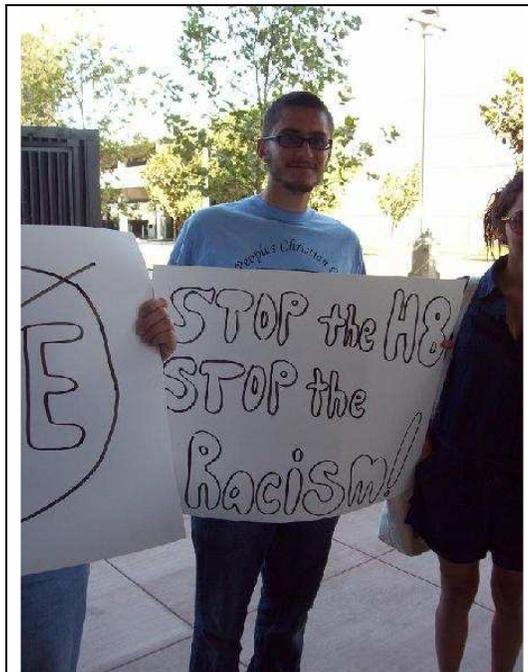
We were then treated to several songs of peace and justice by el Difunto Acústico, and several more selections by Son Real, as organizers cleaned up, participants chatted and networked, and we laid the groundwork for solid anti-racist coalitions for future pro-community actions. If the Nazis dare return, they will again find themselves again sorely outnumbered, as the Riverside and the greater Inland Empire community have, through this rally among other actions, resounding rejected their message of racial hatred which will never find a receptive audience here.



Crowd
by Rockero Monday,
Sep. 28, 2009 at 1:48 PM
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COPEPINK, ipresente!
by Rockero Monday, Sep. 28, 2009 at 2:23 PM
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These men said they were representing the Department of Justice's Office of Community Reconciliation.

Feds
by Rockero Monday, Sep. 28, 2009 at 2:23 PM
rockero420@yahoo.com