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The Issue in Brief

Even before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, immigrants in the US suffered dramatic increases in their incarceration rate due to draconian provisions in the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act.

These provisions included allowing the INS to reclassify some misdemeanors, such as shoplifting or the possession of small amounts of drugs, as aggravated felonies requiring detention and deportation. This new law made this reclassification retroactive so that immigrants with convictions 15 or 20 years old could be detained and deported.

The law also decreased the discretionary power that immigration judges had to release immigrants by requiring that all undocumented immigrants with any criminal conviction be held without bond.

In the four years following the implementation of this law, the number of INS detainees increased from 8,200 to more than 20,000.

A factor impacting the treatment of detained immigrants is the use of Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention centers. These centers are designated as short-term facilities, yet people end up being there for years in overcrowded conditions with no access to resources generally found in facilities that are designed for longer-term detention.

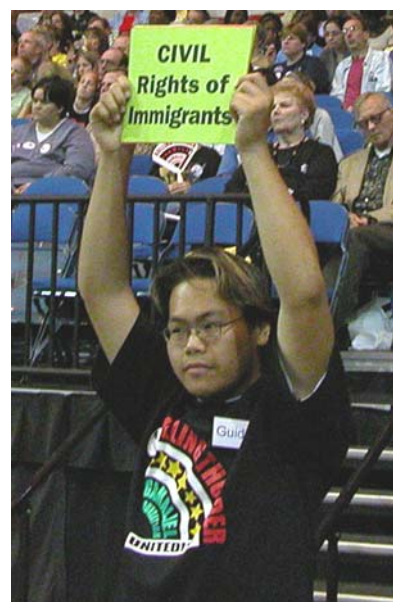
In New Jersey, asylum seekers are being housed in the Elizabeth Detention Center, originally designed to warehouse boxes, not human beings. Most detainees at that center are there for 3 or more years waiting for a decision on their asylum application.

The detainees come from countries such as Haiti, the Ivory Coast, Kenya, and Nigeria, where there is civil unrest, internal war, and armed violence. It is likely that their asylum applications will be approved, yet they are required to be jailed while the lengthy asylum application process proceeds.

The local Gamaliel affiliate in New Jersey is engaged in a campaign that seeks to close this warehouse and to pass laws that ensure fair and timely legal hearings and other measures of due process and humane treatment for detainees.



JUBILEE Elizabeth Detention Center Demonstration



A member of the WISDOM floor team signals that the CRI campaign is next on the agenda of Wisconsin's ROLLING THUNDER RALLY. Wisconsin affiliates nurtured the relationship with Senator Russell Feingold that led to federal comprehensive immigration legislation being introduced this past year.



CRI Newsletter

THE TIME HAS COME FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM!!!!

Washington, D.C., May 4th, 2004, Senator Kennedy and Representative Gutierrez introduced the Solve Act, comprehensive immigration reform legislation that includes issues of legalization, family visas, and worker protections.



Gamaliel CRI leaders present Rolling Thunder shirt to Representative Gutierrez

Gamaliel Foundation's Washington, D.C., Rolling Thunder Campaign Briefing

On June 24, Gamaliel Civil Rights of Immigrants' leaders from across the country descended on the Dirksen Senate building. Leaders presented African Zulu Sticks to Senators Clinton, Feingold, and Kennedy for their commitment to safe, orderly and comprehensive immigration reform.



Bloody cross presented to Representative Hestettler's Chief of Staff

They also held accountable others like Senator Grassley and Representative Hestettler who are not acting on American values that are

the basis of the CRI campaign.

Gamaliel rolled the thunder of justice for immigrants across our land.

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CRI 2005 FOCUS

- Passage of comprehensive immigration reform
• Protecting the rights of refugees and asylees
• In-State Tuition campaigns
• Closing detention centers
• Solve Act event in D.C.
• Local ordinances for the protection of civil liberties

## ROLLING THUNDER Moves CRI Message

Twenty-six Rolling Thunder meetings held before the November elections delivered the message and the demands of Gamaliel's first national issue campaign, the "Civil Rights of Immigrants."

This campaign aims at policies that will normalize the status of vast numbers of immigrants in this country.

Sunday, April 4, 2004, was a significant turning point in the campaign. On that day leaders from WISDOM, MAC, and CRI staff met with Senator Feingold of Wisconsin. His commitment led to a significant victory for CRI, the introduction of the SOLVE Act (Safe Orderly Legal Visas and Enforcement), a comprehensive immigration reform bill.

The CRI leadership table actively seeks support for and passage of the Solve Act. This bill provides a realistic path to citizenship for all deserving immigrants and a genuine, earned legalization program for undocumented workers.



CRI/Immigrant leaders delivered 500 to 1,000 immigrants to local Rolling Thunder meetings in ten states from

California to Connecticut. Many legislators made commitments to co-sponsor the SOLVE ACT including:

- Rep. Jesse Jackson, D-IL
- Rep. William Clay, Jr., D-MO
- Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-CA
- Rep. Davis, D-IL
- Rep. Schakowsky, D-IL
- Rep. Kilpatrick, D-MI
- Rep. Larson, D-CT
- Rep. Kildee, D-MI
- Rep. Mike Doyle, D-PA
- Rep. Payne, D-NJ
- Sen. Lauterberg, D-NJ
- Rep. Strickland, D-OH

Our allies Rep. Gutierrez, Sen. Feingold, and Rep. Menendez, as well as successful candidates Obama, (Sen.) D-MO and Carnahan, D-MO, all supported the Rolling Thunder meeting in their states.

In the coming year the Civil Rights Leadership Table will work with Senator Feingold on Civil Liberties legislation aimed at stopping post 9/11 targeting of immigrants and people of color.

### Focus of Civil Rights of Immigrants Issue Reflection session at 2004 NLA:

- Evaluate the accomplishments of Rolling Thunder meetings
- Develop "State Campaign" strategies to ensure implementation of in-state tuition, driver's license laws, detention center policies, and immigrant protection ordinances.
- Identify legislators that are on the fence and plan how to go after them locally.
- Develop plans to expand the religious leaders' support. The Civil Rights for Immigrants national agenda is supported by more than fifty significant religious leaders who have signed the *Civil Rights of Immigrants Theological Statement*.

All these components strengthen our network focus on national comprehensive immigration reform and impact the lives of our immigrant children.



## CRI Participation in Immigrant Workers' Freedom Ride

### California

The Oakland Coalition of Congregations (OCC)

Mary Gonzales organized the participation and got people to the California rally.

### Connecticut

United Action Connecticut

Interfaith Coalition for Equity and Justice (ICEJ)

Lazaro Benitez was hired part-time to organize all the Spanish-speaking member congregations for participation. Gamaliel worked with Jeremy Haicken, the HERE organizer, to hold a local turnout rally in Hartford. A full-page article appeared in the Latino paper. We had turnout from every Gamaliel affiliate congregation for the NY event.

### Illinois

United Congregations of Metro-East (UCM)

Metropolitan Alliance of Congregations (MAC)

Aurora Area Religious Organized Network (AARON)

Joliet Area Churches Organized Body (JACOB)

South Suburban Action Conference (SSAC)

Pilsen Neighbors Community Council (PNCC)

Council of Neighborhood Organizations (CNO)

Juan Escarena and Juan Soto led the organizing team that held successful fundraisers, ran turnout rallies, and organized the Gamaliel bus. They had a team of young people on the bus.

### Indiana

Interfaith Federation (IF)

Theresa McCoy-Wood led the organizing as the CRI representative for IF. They had a large turnout to host the Freedom Riders. They focused on getting a meeting with their Congressman, John Hostettler, and the head of the subcommittee on immigration. They had a team of leaders on the bus.

### Iowa

Quad Cities Interfaith (QCI)

Father Rudy Juarez led the organizing for Gamaliel by working on turnout from the churches and participating in the rally.

### Maryland

Baltimore Regional Initiative Developing Genuine Equality (BRIDGE)

David Casey and Kathy Schap worked on the turnout for the DC events. They also organized a local event and attended the organizing meetings with the unions.

### Michigan

Metropolitan Organizing Strategy for Enabling Strength (MOSES)

The Jeremiah Project (JP)

Northeast Organization Allied for Hope (NOAH)

Residents United Through Hope (RUTH)

The Ezekiel Project

ISAAC

CB3 Youth Council

They worked on organizing turnout and delivering their congressional delegation.

### Minnesota

ISAIAH

Elizabeth Badillo-Moorman and Angel Morales lead the organizing of a march attended by 1,000 people. They held fundraising events and had a delegation on the bus.



ISIAH IMMIGRATION RALLY

### Missouri

Metropolitan Congregations United for St. Louis (MCU of St. Louis)

Churches Allied for Community Improvement (CACI)

Churches Committed to Community Concerns (CCCC)

Churches United in Community Action (CUCA)

Manos Unidas

Metro Organization for Racial and Economic Equity (MORE2)

Maria Knapp led the organizing of the congregations for the turnout at the rally, participated on the Freedom Ride and generated several newspaper articles.

### New Jersey

The Jubilee Interfaith Organizing Project (JIO)

They had a team in NJ that worked with Ana Garcia-Ashley. All the congregations participated in the Liberty Park Rally. They hosted the Gamaliel delegation and got the busses to NY. There was great participation from our Haitian members in Jubilee.

### Gamaliel National Clergy Caucus Theological Statement lifts up values that drive CRI

"The Civil Rights of All Immigrants" is available at the CRI, GNCC, and PrintShop webs at [www.gamaliel.org](http://www.gamaliel.org)

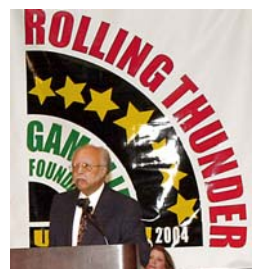
A Spanish translation, "Derechos Civiles Para Todo Inmigrante," is also available.

During the course of this year many national leaders have affirmed the values of the CRI campaign by becoming signatories.

Included among signatories are:

Bishop Mark Hanson, presiding bishop of the ELCA,  
Dr. William Shaw, President of the National Baptist  
Convention USA, and

Dr. Robert Edgar, General Secretary of the National  
Council of Churches.



Dr. William Shaw keynotes Milwaukee NLA