

Alveda King: Would MLK Boycott Florida After Zimmerman Trial?

In light of all the discussions occurring now about boycotting the state of Florida because of the unrest over the Martin/Zimmerman verdict, I believe that certainly it is appropriate to express, in a peaceful and nonviolent manner, the concerns that are being raised.

In regards to the 1960s, people are asking me, "Would this Florida boycott have been an appropriate target back then?" Certainly in the 20th century, boycotts were the order of that day, so possibly yes, that could have happened back then. Of course I cannot say whether Martin Luther King Jr. would have led such a march since he's not here, but according to his own words, we can believe he would have opposed stereotyping and profiling. Yet we can also believe he would be calling for peaceful, nonviolent resolution as well as reconciliation of the one human race.

In his April 16, 1968, "Letter from Birmingham Jail," he wrote, "We who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive."

He said in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, "I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant."

Along these lines, there is a movement that is occurring at the same time as the Florida boycott, and that is the reconciliation rallies rising up in Florida at this time led by people of good will in every ethnic group.

Charisma magazine's Steve Strang, one of the organizers of the restoration meetings in central Florida, had this to say in a recent column: "The George Zimmerman acquittal a week ago has brought to the surface racial divides in our country, and it's time for believers in Jesus to get involved because the best answers are spiritual, available to us through fervent prayer. There must be forgiveness, and mercy always triumphs over justice."

The organizers are planning on taking the reconciliation rallies across the country, saying, pretty much, that mercy overrides human judgment.

We know the judgment that acquitted George Zimmerman was man's judgment based on man's law—the "stand your ground" law. Admittedly, there are some problems with that law. However, God's justice does contain mercy. We are required to do justice, love mercy and walk upright and humbly before God.

So I'm asking that there be a reconciliation message for Florida and for the country—that we must reconcile as one blood, one human race. Truly we are one human race, and indeed we can be brothers and sisters and not combat and fight each other and kill each other.

"We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools," King said in a speech in St. Louis on March 22, 1964.

This nation needs healing. It needs a message of reconciliation. As a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I am appealing to all concerned to please consider reconciliation as a major part of the message that must be delivered.

Now, does there need to be justice for Trayvon? I happen to believe there should be. What form will that justice take? The answer has yet to be revealed.

I was truly saddened to hear that some have besmirched the memory of Trayvon by relegating him to the category of being labeled a thug with the implication that he deserves to be dead. Our children have a right to be born, to dream and to see their dreams come true. When they get off track, they should be firmly yet lovingly corrected. If we teach them and love them, they can live and not die!

This is a very tragic situation. Trayvon's dreams went to his grave with him. I'm praying that God will have the final word on all of this.

I'm praying for the Martins. I'm praying for the Zimmermans. I'm praying for all concerned.

Reconciliation is in order!

Many celebrity protestors are quietly pro-life. It would be good if they would speak to sanctity of life from conception till natural death in their efforts. Finally, in every conflict let us strongly urge repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation over boycotts.

Alveda C. King is the daughter of the late civil-rights activist the Rev. A.D. King and niece of Martin Luther King Jr. She is also a civil rights and pro-life activist, as well as director of the African-American outreach for Priests for Life. [Click here to visit her blog.](#)