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# Call a new “Solidarity Day” against racism and bigotry!

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
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Solidarity Day 1981

To AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka,  
Call a new “Solidarity Day” against racism and bigotry!  
Defend migrants and refugees!

Over 130 years ago, the Wall Street wheeler-dealer Jay Gould declared he could “hire one-half of the working class to shoot the other half.” In 1886, Gould broke strikes on the old elevated lines in Manhattan and the Missouri Pacific railroad, now part of the Union Pacific.

The present serial bigot and sexual predator in the White House has the same desire

as Gould did. Trump wants working and poor people to turn on each other and destroy everything that workers won, from social security to health safety regulations and much more.

Three days after the targeted killings of Mexican people by a white supremacist in El Paso, Texas, goaded on by Trump declaring “Stop the invasion,” nearly 700 poultry workers were jailed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Mississippi. Their children were left alone, not knowing if they’d ever see their parents again.

Many of the workers jailed in these raids were members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union. It’s not accidental that the Latinx workers had won a \$3.75 million civil rights lawsuit a year before.

[Retaliation via ICE raids](#) also occurred at plants in Salem, Ohio, and Morristown, Tenn., following work-related complaints made by workers to authorities.

ICE has become one of the biggest union busters. [It forced immigrant workers to quit at a FreshDirect](#) warehouse in Long Island City, N.Y., less than two weeks before union recognition votes were to be held in December 2007. The attempt to unionize was smashed.

### **We need a new Solidarity Day**

Based on a campaign from union locals, the AFL-CIO called for a March on Washington, D.C., on Sept. 18, 1981, to defend PATCO, the unionized air controller workers whom Reagan fired. Close to a half million workers participated.

Just as racism, sexism against women and homophobia divide poor and working people, so too, racism and bigotry promote prejudice against immigrants. Just as no child is illegitimate, no human being is illegal.

What should be illegal is Trump putting migrant children in cages and refugees in concentration camps.

The labor movement has been under attack for more than 40 years. Automation and plant closings have cut union membership wholesale. Deregulation by the capitalist government did the same to airline unions and the Teamsters.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka's own United Mine Workers has less than 40,000 members. It once had 600,000. It was the miners that built the mighty CIO during the 1930s.

But the labor movement is like an uncoiled spring with vast amounts of potential energy. Millions of workers want union protection, pay and benefits. Teachers in West Virginia and around the country have been leading the way; and Mississippi poultry workers have been standing up.

Corporate CEOs and their tool, Donald Trump, want to smash any organizing drive. Now is the time to organize a major show of workers' solidarity against Trump's offensive. We urge the AFL-CIO to call a national march, whether at the border, in Mississippi or in Washington, to say "No!" to Trump and racism.

We remember the wonderful union song and battle cry first popularized by coal miners in Harlan County: "Which side are you on!" We ask the officials of the AFL-CIO, President Richard Trumka and all of the other unions, that question: "Which side are you on?" The time to fight and defend migrants and refugees is now! An injury to one is an injury to all.

