

<https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article8951>



USA

Ten National Unions Call for Anti-Trump Resistance

- News from around the world -

Publication date: Monday 14 April 2025

Copyright © International Viewpoint - online socialist magazine - All rights reserved

Ten national unions and dozens of locals representing more than 3 million members have issued a joint statement demanding the release of immigrant workers recently snatched by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The statement names farmworker union leader Alfredo “Lelo” Juarez, who was picked up in what appears to be blatant retaliation for his organizing; SEIU Local 925 member Lewelyn Dixon, a University of Washington lab technician detained on her way home from visiting family; SEIU Local 509 member Rumeysa Ozturk, a graduate student whose detention by federal agents was captured in chilling footage; sheet metal worker Kilmar Armando Abrego Garcia, a SMART Local 100 apprentice who was sent to El Salvador’s notorious prison complex; and United Auto Workers Local 2710 member Mahmoud Khalil, abducted by federal agents in front of his eight-months-pregnant wife.

The unions are also calling on employers, university administrators, and local governments to refuse to cooperate—and demanding that elected officials “find their spines.”

Trump is reprising tactics from other times in U.S. history when “the government was actively suppressing protest and dissent,” said Carl Rosen, president of the United Electrical Workers (UE).

In the Palmer Raids of 1919-1920, immigrant leftists and labor agitators were arrested and deported, mainly to Italy and Eastern Europe. In the McCarthy era of the late 1940s and '50s, federal workers, Hollywood workers, academics, and labor leaders alleged to be communists were fired, blacklisted, hauled before Congress, and sometimes jailed.

“When a segment of the population is first targeted, it’s not going to stop there,” said Rosen. “Eventually it’s going to be used against the labor movement and any Americans who want to stand up for justice. So we were happy to join together with other unions in saying, ‘We are going to resist this.’”

Prelude to action?

Faced with Trump’s dizzying array of assaults on labor, immigrant workers, campus workers, and free speech, till now the organized working class, representing 14 million union members, has largely stayed quiet or focused on each union’s individual fights.

This joint declaration could be a prelude to more coordinated and direct action to resist the attacks.

“Hopefully this is a sign of, maybe if there were past issues with unions or organizations that maybe had differences, this could be the thing that brings everybody together, uniting for one cause,” said Edgar Franks, political director of independent farmworker union Familias Unidas por la Justicia, where Lelo Juarez is a leader. “Relationships will be established or amended, and from there we can have a united, fighting labor front.”

“Right now, there are a lot of people doing a lot of good work to try to organize,” said Faye Guenther, president of Food and Commercial Workers Local 3000 in Washington, one of the initiators of the joint letter. “I think that we will

be better served if we can set aside as many differences as we can and pull together in as broad of a table as possible.”

Find corporate targets

For labor to face down these attacks, our movements will need to be prepared to disrupt business as usual. “Clearly, Tesla has struck a nerve,” Rosen said, referring to regular protests at dealerships around the country, which have helped send the company’s stock into a tailspin; Tesla’s mega-billionaire CEO Elon Musk is spearheading the attacks on federal workers.

“I think we need to be finding additional corporate targets,” Rosen said. “There are a lot of big businesses who are profiting off of their association with Donald Trump and their willingness to assist him in carrying out his agenda.”

He harks back to the explosive public reaction in 2008 when UE Local 1110 members in Chicago took a brave step: they occupied their factory. Republic Windows and Doors was shutting down, but on the last day of shifts, workers refused to leave. They held a sitdown strike until they reached a \$1.75 million deal for severance and other benefits owed, and eventually they reopened the factory as a worker-run cooperative.

“It caught the attention of people across the country who were so angry about the banks getting all of this money while workers were getting laid off,” Rosen said. Supporters picketed Bank of America locations and even committed civil disobedience by holding sit-ins inside bank branches. “The amount of pressure that put on the bank was definitely very important in helping make sure that the workers won the settlement that they did.”

Talk it up

“The next step in this fightback requires us talking to our co-workers and neighbors about how the employers and billionaires benefit when workers are divided and afraid,” said Stephanie Luce, labor studies and sociology professor at the City University of New York and a member of the Teachers (AFT).

“We should look for spaces to have more conversations and get workers ready to take bigger actions,” she said, “because the attacks will keep coming.” She said unions are working together to build large actions on May 1 (find information at maydaystrong.org) and also recommended Labor Notes’ [“Tactics to Build Power”](#) training.

Unless members get involved, a resolution is just a piece of paper. “The petition is a tool that we need to use to unify people, but it will do us no good if the only people that sign onto it are organizations,” said Guenther. “Workers need to be in these deep conversations about what kind of world they want to have and what kind of country they want to live in.”

But Trump’s attacks have also made the case on the public stage for why workers need an institution that defends their rights: “A lot of people, not even just in the farmworker sector, have been reaching out to us about how to unionize,” said Franks. So have federal workers: AFGE reports record numbers joining.

“Strongmen and dictators feed on peoples’ fear and chaos,” Guenther said. “We have to take actions where we can show that we can win and that help overcome people’s fear.”

Ten National Unions Call for Anti-Trump Resistance

Unions can sign on to the petition [here](#) .

8 April 2025

Source [Labor Notes](#).

PS:

If you like this article or have found it useful, please consider donating towards the work of International Viewpoint. Simply follow this link: [Donate](#) then enter an amount of your choice. One-off donations are very welcome. But regular donations by standing order are also vital to our continuing functioning. See the last paragraph of [this article](#) for our bank account details and take out a standing order. Thanks.