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The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) Legacy Project stands in fierce opposition to the vicious, racist assaults against the Latinx people. The caging of human beings, forcible separation of children from parents, assassinations in El Paso and the roundup of nearly 700 working immigrants in Mississippi -- leaving hundreds of children without parents -- are only some of the latest assaults on people of color.

This use of unbridled terror is designed to send a message to Latinx people -- Native born, “documented” and “undocumented” -- that this government believes there is no place for them in this country and wants them all gone.

We stand in solidarity with the organizations and tens of thousands of people who, through their actions, speak truth to power and provide support to migrants and those murdered in El Paso.

As veterans of the Civil Rights Movement in the Deep South, we faced daily threats of terrorism, beatings, assassinations and incarceration while organizing with local residents to dismantle segregation and reinstate the protection of voting rights in direct opposition to state-sponsored terrorism, the Ku Klux Klan and local officials. For the past 60 years, many SNCC veterans have continued the struggle by working in solidarity with other activists... especially those young activists who carry on the SNCC tradition of grass roots organizing and collaborative leadership development to achieve justice and real structural change.

A fundamental threat to democracy is the upsurge of naked racism in public institutions, policies and social media against people of color, particularly against immigrants and the Latino community. Those in the highest positions of power have brazenly normalized hate by constantly referring to Latinos as ‘rapists’, ‘criminals’, ‘invaders’, ‘aliens’ and ‘animals. Since May 2018, according to Newsweek, President Trump has used the word ‘invasion’ in reference to immigration over 2000 times in Facebook ads and hundreds of times in speeches and tweets.

These were the same words that the assassin Patrick Crusius used in his online manifesto, before he walked the talk of hate by shooting nearly 50 Latinos (22 mortally) at the Walmart in El Paso. Representatives of Trump’s re-election campaign told the *New York Times* it “has no plans to stop using the term,” arguing that it was “accurate”. People of color are equal opportunity targets for the ‘racist-in-chief’, as evidenced by his: “*Go back where you came from*”, directed at four women of color (three born in the U.S. and the other a US citizen), and all elected to the US House of Representatives. The ‘post racial’ era is a myth. That myth is now dead.

Today’s racist practices under this and previous administrations are not new; they are the fruit borne of centuries of depredations upon people with different skin colors, cultures, and spiritual practices, including the decimation of the first people-Native Americans, the grafting of slavery onto the body politic and the rapacious seizing of sovereign lands and cultural assets of indigenous and mestizo (mixed race Latinos) people across the U.S. Whether white nativism or white supremacy, yesterday and today, this endemic racism has resulted in remorseless murder, torture, the tearing away of children from parents whether at



slave auctions, Native American boarding schools, or cages on the borders, together with deportations that illegally ignore human rights, due process and existing asylum laws.

Wayne Daniels, president of the Jackson, Mississippi chapter of the NAACP said in a statement about the Mississippi ICE raids to the Jackson Free Press: “This is a prime example of what happens when not enough people turn out to vote. First, they came for the Jews. We said nothing. Then they came for the Unionists. We said nothing. Yesterday, they came for the Hispanic community. Here we are today. Who they gone’ come after tomorrow? People that look like us.”

The SNCC Legacy Project stands in solidarity with organizations, churches, temples and mosques in the Latinx and other communities who stand up for human rights by providing *pro bono* legal services, taking in children orphaned by ICE raids, giving sanctuary to immigrants, and providing money, food, supplies and volunteers to migrant shelters. We also applaud the direct action of those who have taken over offices of ICE or blocked officers from seizing immigrants. These tactics -- together with long-term strategies like voting campaigns, grassroots organizing and coalition-building -- are required if this country is to survive as a democracy.

This is not politics. It is a battle for the very soul of this country.

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