

RESOLUTION 11

SOLIDARITY AND DEMOCRACY—REAFFIRMING THE LABOR MOVEMENT’S MISSION IN THE FACE OF THE THREAT OF HATE

The Constitution of the AFL-CIO begins with our pledge “to join with all persons, of whatever nationality or faith, who cherish the cause of democracy and the call of solidarity, to grace the planet with these achievements.” When the AFL-CIO was founded in 1955, our country had just won a world war against fascism. Today, while we continue to stand in solidarity with all persons around the world who cherish democracy, these words from our Constitution compel us to speak about the very real threats to democracy in America today. The AFL-CIO resolves to rededicate ourselves to our democracy—to bring hope to those who have given up on government of the people and by the people, and to stand resolutely against those who would substitute hate and division for dignity and solidarity.

We must confront despair. According to the Journal of Democracy, two-thirds of millennials believe it is not essential to live in a democracy. The source of this despair is the failure of politicians over a generation to use the tools of democratic government to help make working people’s lives better. Instead, our politics has for decades marched relentlessly toward helping make the rich richer and powerful corporations and Wall Street more and more powerful. Here at our Convention, we are defining a program and concrete action plans designed to define a working people’s agenda that will hold politicians accountable and restore working people’s confidence in our democracy.

We must build solidarity and confront those who would divide us. We are a labor movement. Our doors must be open to all who work in America. The citizen and the immigrant—documented and undocumented. Public

employees—sanitation workers and police officers, teachers and firefighters. Private-sector workers—the Uber driver and the farmworker and the coal miner, the autoworker and the hotel worker. To men and women, to workers of all races and religions, to gay and straight, and bi and trans. We must utterly reject calls for division among working people or efforts to exclude any part of the working class from the labor movement.

We must stand up against hate and scapegoating wherever it appears in our nation. We seek a nation where we value each other and a labor movement that defends the dignity of all people.

And so we resolve here today—

1. We will stand against racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, sexism and homophobia—against every kind of hatred and every form of politics that seeks to divide working people;
2. We will stand for the idea that every person is of equal dignity—that we are a country ruled by the principle of one person, one vote, not one dollar, one vote; and
3. We utterly oppose fascism and the idea that those who fight fascism are the same who raise the swastika and put on the white hood. There is no moral equivalence between the men and women who fill our military graveyards and the armies of hate they defeated.

We resolve to turn out of office anyone who threatens our democracy, and we call upon every person who holds elected office and who seeks to hold elected office to affirm these principles—from village selectmen and women to President Trump.