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“RESIST!” - Foreign Correspondent

Airs Tuesday April 11 at 9.30pm AEST on ABC & ABC iview

It's famed as the city of peace and love, but San Francisco is digging in for a fight over President Trump's order to expel millions of undocumented migrants. Stephanie March reports

The day is over when they can stay in our country and wreak havoc. We will get them out and we are going to get them out fast! – Donald Trump, January 25

In the president's sights are the 11 million undocumented migrants – that's equivalent to nearly half of Australia's entire population - who came to America illegally or overstayed visas.

But Mr Trump has a rebellion on his hands. The “sanctuary cities” movement – led by San Francisco – is a push by hundreds of cities, towns and counties to defy the presidential order. They refuse to co-operate with federal officials whose job is to hunt down and deport undocumented migrants.

We're going to protect our immigrants. We're all immigrants – Harriet, at Resist! protest, San Francisco

If they are illegally here why would we give them sanctuary? – Cody, Trump supporter

Mr Trump warns that he will strip federal funding from sanctuary cities. San Francisco alone could lose more than a billion dollars a year, but it's holding the line.

We have to not be afraid of those fights - San Francisco mayor Ed Lee in an interview with Foreign Correspondent's Stephanie March.

There's more at stake than federal funding. In California – which is on track to declare itself a “sanctuary state”, undocumented migrants account for a full tenth of the workforce.

The dishwashers, the cooks, the people picking your fruit – the whole economy really is founded on undocumented cheap labour – Nancy Charrago, San Francisco store owner

Mr Trump's chief targets are what he calls “bad hombres” - the estimated 800,000 undocumented migrants with criminal convictions.

One of them is Mexican-born Joaquin Sotelo, who was eight when his mum brought him to America. Later he served three years in jail for domestic assault. He also served five years fighting for the US in the Iraq war and has three children, all US citizens.

He now lives in a halfway house for damaged veterans. His service counts for nought

I'm now facing deportation even though I'm a US Navy veteran. This is my home. This is what I went and fought for. I deserve to be here - Joaquin Sotelo

Stories like Sotelo's just don't wash with people like Don Rosenberg, whose son was killed in San Francisco by an unlicensed driver, a Honduran who had come to the US illegally and who had earlier been caught without a licence.

Once they get here and commit a crime, we're protecting them. We're supporting them. That's the story that needs to be told - Don Rosenberg

Stephanie March reports on the battle that's widening the ideological divide in Donald Trump's America. *Resist!* airs on Foreign Correspondent at 9.30 pm Tuesday April 11 and 10.30 am Thursday April 13 on ABC TV, and 6.30 pm Sunday April 16 on News 24. Also on iView.

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