

Youth at People's Summit discuss war, Sanders, Clinton

Marcus Day
20 June 2016

While the bulk of those attending the People's Summit were middle-aged and middle class, mainly long-time participants in protest movements focused on the environment or various identity issues as well as trade unionists close to the bureaucracy, there was a smaller layer of young people who came into politics with the Bernie Sanders campaign.

The *World Socialist Web Site* spoke with several of these young people about the danger of war--largely ignored at the conference--and their attitude to Sanders' move to support Hillary Clinton as the Democratic presidential nominee.

Wesley Peters, a recent high school graduate from Pittsburgh, told the WSWWS, "Personally, I'm against war. I'm a Quaker, so I'm a non-violent person and I identify as a pacifist.

"This election is really important to me, because Hillary and Trump, in my opinion, are both in favor of war. And if they get elected, I feel like there's going to be a war soon. War makes a lot of money for both sides. And it makes me afraid for my personal well-being, and all of my friends' well-being, because any of us could get drafted.

"[War] hasn't been that big of a subject [at the summit], but it should be."

Wesley continued, "I'm definitely in full support of Bernie Sanders. It sucks that he's most likely not going to make it to the presidency. I don't really know who to put my support behind now."

When the WSWWS explained that Sanders has stated that he would use force to defend "America's vital strategic interests" and that he supports the drone assassination program, Wesley admitted, "It's because of that, you know... there's no candidate I completely identify with and feel 'that's my candidate.'"

Kanisha DiCicco, a 19-year-old student at the

University of Alabama, came to the conference with the group United Students Against Sweatshops. When asked what she thinks about war, she said, "I think it's unnecessary. I think it's a waste of money. I think it's a waste of resources.

"I'm not totally against military personnel per se, but there's this idea in America that if someone serves in the military, then no matter who you are, even if you're a doctor or a brain surgeon, you need to bow down to them because they're 'fighting for your freedom, blah blah blah.' It's heavy, heavy patriotism, especially in the South, where I'm from. I just don't see how nowadays soldiers are defending freedom. The wars aren't for freedom; it's basically just to keep our bully status.

"I don't even want to think about Trump being in charge of anything war-related. I feel like he would definitely be pro-war in the Middle East, pro-war anywhere. And Hillary has been pretty pro-war herself. Hillary and Trump are like the same as far as war is concerned. I feel like the only one who could've lessened the wars was Bernie.

"I haven't heard anything about war so far [at the summit]. War is a touchy thing. When you think 'pro-war,' most of the time you think of the Republican who's obsessed with his guns and God, and stuff like that. But there are a lot of Democrats who are pro-war too."

Kerrina, a student from Northeastern University in Boston who was listening to the discussion, added, "To me, what Trump is saying is jingoistic and extreme patriotism. But with Hillary, or with past presidents, you still have to look into what they're doing, what they're saying, when they want to go to war. While they might not be as blatantly jingoistic, you still have to look at, 'Who's benefiting from this, is it necessary,

who's hurting?'"

Rachel, 22, graduated recently from North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro and is unemployed. She said of the presidential candidates, "Personally, I don't like either one of them [Clinton or Trump]. It's tragic that those are the two most exposed candidates. And I think Sanders is going to surprise, or disappoint, a lot of people if he asks them to vote for Clinton.

"Obviously, we put a lot of money into war in America. War is usually an issue with power, territory, oil, money. For sure, since we've always been the country to force ourselves on other countries, and to pretty much go in and take from them, I think war gives a reason for them to take over and control things for profit."



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact