

Anti-Trump protests spread across the US

Our reporters
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Tens of thousands of demonstrators marched in cities and campuses around the nation Friday, continuing a wave of protests following Donald Trump's victory in Tuesday's presidential election. Demonstrators shut down stretches of interstate highways in Miami and Iowa City. High school students staged walkouts in Omaha, Nebraska and Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Love Rallies" drew crowds in New York City, Boston and elsewhere.

This week, more than 260 people have been arrested as of Friday afternoon, including 226 in Los Angeles as protesters who blocked traffic were detained. In Portland, minor skirmishes took place Thursday night between police and a small number of protesters. Portland Police fired rubber bullets and pepper spray following the smashing of car windows and other vandalism. In San Diego, 19 demonstrators were arrested for "failure to disperse" or participating in an "unlawful assembly," police said. Police forces are gearing up for large weekend demonstrations, despite the peaceful nature of the vast majority of protests thus far.

The continued outpouring of outrage at the election of Trump stands in contrast to efforts by the Obama administration and the Clinton campaign to unify behind Trump's impending presidency. While Obama claimed following the elections that "we're actually all on one team," placards and slogans at the rallies made clear large numbers are determined to resist. "Not my president" was the most common slogan among protesters across the country.

Many protesters targeted their opposition at Trump's legitimization of open racism, xenophobia and other forms of bigotry. Signs at the New York City rally Friday, attended by several thousand, included slogans defending the rights of immigrants, women and gays. However, the influence of the Democratic Party and pseudo-left organizations in elevating identity politics

above all else was seen in the significant political confusion expressed during the rally, including in signs blaming "whites" for the emergence of Trump.

A team from the WSWs distributed leaflets and spoke to demonstrators at the rally in New York. Honor Sankey, a business student at New York University, said, "I came to the protest to stand in solidarity with women, people of color, and the LGBTQ communities that will be impacted by Trump. This election has really created a time for people to become active, and I am frankly shocked by the level of ignorance in this country."

When a WSWs reporter pointed out that many areas that voted for Trump had previously voted for Obama, Sankey added, "In some ways the vote for Trump is an F-you to the political establishment. However, it is clear that his administration will not help those that voted for him."

Renzo Mayhall, a 16-year-old student from Watchung Hills High School in New Jersey, remarked, "I'm here because in the face of the results of this election as many Americans as possible should come out to show their resistance to bigotry, racism and hatred of any sort. It looks like Trump is a danger to women, Muslims and Hispanics. No one is safe except some white people."

After discussing with a WSWs reporter the continued attacks on the working class as a whole, including white workers, he added, "I understand what you are saying. I empathize with the white workers in the Midwest who are suffering and voted for Trump. I supported Sanders, but after he stopped and pledged his support to Clinton, the Democrats offered no change, and those workers were looking for some way to change things even if it was Trump. No one is safe unless we resist this."

Harrison Priest, who works for a soccer magazine, said, "I came out here for a broad spectrum of reasons,

but mostly because of the amount of inequality and injustice that Trump is for. This protest is really just the beginning, and we have to organize and build in order to address a lot of these issues.

“You can already tell that a lot of people here are upset with the Electoral College, but we are upset with the whole system. I was a big supporter of Sanders, and he would have been a better candidate than Hillary Clinton.”

After some discussion with a WSWWS reporter on Sanders’ promise to try to work with Trump, Priest responded, “[The Democrats] are doing what they have to in order to accept the democratic process and peaceful transition of power. They are giving Trump a chance, but he hasn’t earned a chance. He has already belittled us in tweets. It is deluded to think he will become a respectful president now.”

Julia, a vocal performance student at New York University, stated, “It was really the most polarized election with people retracting into their bubbles. We didn’t really encounter the other side,” in the debate.

Asked about the impact of the growth in inequality under Obama on the election, she added, “This really led to a fear of what people have to lose. It is like we are asked to choose between democratic rights or economic mobility.”

Her friend Evan added, “The inequality really separated people, and a lot of Democrats didn’t turn out to vote. Now the Democratic politicians want to work with Trump in order to implement their program, but we deserve better. We deserve a government that represents us.

“As someone just getting involved in politics it is really disheartening to be participating in a corrupt system.”



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