

Anti-Trump protests in Los Angeles: “At the end of the day, we didn’t want either of them”

Our reporters
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Protests against the election of Republican Donald Trump continued for a fifth straight day on Saturday in the city of Los Angeles.

Some 10,000 marched through downtown Los Angeles. A few dozen protesters were arrested both prior to and after the main march in the early morning and evening. Small protests also took place in the nearby cities of Long Beach and in Hollywood on Sunday morning.

While the news media and Los Angeles Police Department estimated the size of the main Saturday protest to be no more than 8,000, aerial photographs show far greater numbers, stretching across tens of city blocks.

The protesters chanted “Money for jobs and education, not for war and deportation” and “We reject the president-elect,” among others. Strong sentiment in defense of basic democratic rights was present, along with support for immigrants and their families.

While protests such as those arising in Los Angeles and across the country against what will be the most right-wing presidential administration in American history are an expression of deep social opposition, the political orientation of many involved is extremely confused and continues to show lingering support for the Democratic Party and the pseudo-left forces that promote illusions in liberalism.

Popular among the protesters was a distributed moveon.org petition to abolish the Electoral College, not because of the undemocratic nature of the archaic institution, but to deliver the presidency to Hillary Clinton based on her victory in the popular vote. Another petition was distributed calling for Electoral College members to change their votes to Clinton when

they meet on December 19 of this year.

Reporters for the *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to several protesters at the demonstration.

Jesse works in a music-recording studio in downtown Los Angeles. “I am a child of Mexican immigrants and I’m very afraid of what a Trump administration will mean for my friends and my family. I have a close relative who is undocumented and she’s also the mother of five children.

“Why should she be deported? Undocumented or not she makes a great contribution to society. She works long hours, does a great job so that she can raise great children. For me, I know this country always had a lot of problems, but I respect the fact that people had basic rights and I love that about this country. We’re going to have to fight for these basic rights.”

Although Jesse believed that the victory of Trump could be explained by lack of education among rural American voters, he at the same time stated that Hillary Clinton didn’t represent a real alternative.

“She’s a hypocrite,” he said. “First, she’s against gay marriage, then she’s in favor. First she’s in favor of the Iraq war, then she says she made a mistake. I agree she wouldn’t represent our interests either. I think you’re right about working people, white, Latino and black, having the same interests, though. We do have to unite, especially now.”

Lourdes has lived in Los Angeles for nearly thirty years and was accompanied by her niece Barbara, visiting from Brazil.

Barbara said, “I am very concerned about Trump and a lot of the racist things he said about immigrants and Muslims. I came to the protest because I thought it was interesting and I wanted to spend time with my aunt.

I've never been very political before.

"I didn't want to say much though because I'm not an American citizen, but you are right, the American president has an effect on the entire world. I think the protests here are very hopeful."

Lourdes also expressed a desire to fight for basic rights.

"I have been in this country for almost thirty years and I love it here. We have had basic rights for a long time and I think they are being taken away now. Women may not have a right to basic health care services and I worry that freedom of speech will be taken away under Trump."

When asked about whether she thought that things would have been better under Clinton, Lourdes said, "I think it would have been different but not better. Everyone is losing jobs and can't make enough money. I agree she lost because she didn't say anything about poor people suffering, and Trump filled in the blanks. I don't know how much your readers know about Los Angeles, but there are very poor people and homeless everywhere you go. It is awful."

"I'm in favor of socialism. We had Lula in Brazil who called himself socialist and promised to do many things for the poor, but he ending up doing the opposite. I think it is the working class that needs to fight for its own political power and like you say, we need to unite internationally."

Buddy Totten also attended the march and identified himself as a supporter and campaigner for Senator Bernie Sanders during the Democratic primaries. "I'm very upset with the election and I'm here to fight the tyranny and fascism and racism of Donald Trump, Mike Pence and his administration. They perpetuated this throughout their entire campaign and they are now in the office. I'm here to protest that president Obama has to give over his office to a president-elect that's been officially endorsed by the Ku Klux Klan, and I'm here to fight racism in our country."

When asked about the Democrats' conciliatory stance towards Trump, he said, "I think a lot of it's just posturing. Obama has to say something civilized because he doesn't want to see civil unrest—any more than there is—in the country right now. I think it's all a sham. I campaigned for Bernie Sanders and wanted him to be elected president of the United States. I remember Sanders said, 'If you're here to put forward a racist

agenda, which you are, then we're going to stand up and vigorously fight against that.'

"The thing is that I agree with Jimmy Dore [a comedian] when he says that the Democratic Party is a graveyard for progressives. We need a third party alternative, but I don't know what it's going to take, but we need to figure it out and we need to figure it out quick."

Referencing comments made by former House Speaker and Trump insider Newt Gingrich, Buddy said, "They're talking about restarting up the Committee on Un-American Activities. So if you're a progressive or a socialist or a communist or a Marxist, or however you politically identify, they're going to come after you and they're going to come after you hard in a very organized and intelligent way. We have rise up against that in an equally organized and intelligent way."

Douglas Young also spoke with *World Socialist Web Site* reporters as the march was beginning to wind down. "I think people should be treated equally. It's such a regression, that's what's really sad."

"I think Sanders is amazing. His support was similar to the kind of support and enthusiasm that Trump had, and I think it was a mistake for the DNC to force Hillary on the voters. I would never go so far as to defend Hillary, but at the end of the day I hope she learned something. She seemed embarrassed."

When asked about the Democrats falling in line behind Trump, he at first defended Sanders, but then said that he hadn't fully processed it yet. "At the end of the day though, we didn't want either of them [Trump or Clinton]."



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