

Anti-Trump protests continue across US for fifth day

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Protests involving tens of thousands continued for a fifth straight day Sunday in cities across the United States, reflecting broad popular outrage at the election of Donald Trump.

The largest demonstration was held Saturday in midtown Manhattan and drew some 25,000 people. Demonstrators began at Union Square in Lower Manhattan and ended up outside Trump Tower in Midtown. As protesters marched along Fifth Avenue they chanted, “We reject the president elect!” Protests continued Sunday with thousands gathering outside Trump Tower again.

Many protesters cited Trump’s statements demeaning woman and Muslims as well as his stated plans for the mass deportation of immigrants and the construction of a wall along the US-Mexican border. Others pointed to the popular vote totals, which showed a substantial plurality for Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton, although Trump gained a majority of votes in the Electoral College.

The demonstrations continued despite the groveling statements of leading Democrats, including President Obama, Hillary Clinton and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, along with the AFL-CIO president and other union leaders, who promised to work loyally with the incoming Trump administration.

While the demonstrations reflected deep hostility to Trump and a social opposition to the government of the far right that he is preparing that will only increase in the months to come, the protesters were influenced by the Democratic Party and liberal and fake left forces that are allied with it based on the promotion of identity politics.

These political tendencies are oriented not to the working class, but to a privileged upper middle class layer that is hostile to and fears the development of an independent movement of the working class. Instead, they seek to use the justified anger of workers and youth over Trump’s victory to pressure the Democratic Party.

Despite this fact, the protests drew the participation of wide layers of the population including workers, young people and professionals.

In Los Angeles on Saturday about 10,000 people marched from MacArthur Park and ended at the federal building downtown. The size of the crowd forced police to shut down

the off ramps of several freeways.

In Las Vegas, Nevada about 1,000 people marched along the Las Vegas strip, with many carrying signs declaring, “Not my president.” Several protesters were arrested after they blocked traffic on Las Vegas Boulevard following a demonstration at the Trump Hotel.

Thousands marched through downtown Chicago Saturday with some heading for Trump Tower Chicago and others marching through the downtown Loop. Police set up barricades to keep marchers from approaching the building.

Police arrested 19 people in Portland, Oregon Saturday night after a huge crowd gathered at Pioneer Square downtown. These arrests bring the total number arrested in the city during protests to 62. A protester was shot in an incident that did not seem to be directly related to the anti-Trump demonstrations. Four were detained in relation to the shooting and two were charged.

All told, several hundred have been arrested in nationwide protests since Trump’s victory in the November 8 US elections.

Protests, some sizeable, also took place in Dallas, Phoenix, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Miami, Detroit, Washington D.C. and other cities.

In Berlin, Germany, hundreds gathered at the Brandenburg Gates, some carrying signs opposing Trump. In Mexico City a group of people gathered outside the Independence Monument.

World Socialist Web Site reporting teams spoke to participants at a number of anti-Trump protests across the United States. They explained that the WSWS rejected the explanation promoted in the news media blaming the election of Trump on the supposedly racist “white working class.” The WSWS teams insisted that Trump’s vote among workers was based on his demagogic claim to represent their interests, in contrast to Clinton, whose appeal was pitched to wealthier layers of the middle class based on race and gender politics. In reality, Clinton lost because millions of workers—black, white and immigrant—did not turn up to vote, out of disgust for the warmonger and tool of Wall Street who could not conceal her hostility towards the working class.

WSWS reporters spoke to several young people attending an anti-Trump rally at Union Square in Manhattan, New York.

Suzanne, age 24, who works in the fashion industry, said, “I have not really been following politics until one year ago. During the primaries, Trump was a joke. Now, just yesterday, Obama and Trump meet. It says a lot about Obama that he meets Trump in such a friendly way. It just does not seem to be a real scenario.

“Hillary Clinton made a speech in which she did not say anything about Trump. She said we should all have faith in America.

Zora, age 14, is a high school student. “Although, I am not able to vote, I was for Bernie Sanders in the primaries, as was my whole family,” she said.

“I think a civil war is a real possibility. With Donald Trump in office a lot is unpredictable. He just spews out things that he thinks the population wants to hear because there are a lot of angry people in this country.

“The politicians promise you something and then they don’t give it to you. Trump’s appeal is that he is not a politician and has new views.

“I am unsure about socialism, but Obama, Hillary Clinton, and Trump are all for the corporations.”

There were multiple anti-Trump protests in Washington, D.C. over the course of the weekend. More than 2,000 participants attended an hour-long event in front of the White House Saturday night. Reflecting the influence of pseudo-left groups in the orbit of the Democrats, there were attempts to keep the event apolitical. The gathering was billed as a “vigil” rather than as a protest, with attendees being encouraged not to bring anti-Trump signs.

Despite the efforts of the event’s organizers, WSWS reporters noticed numerous protest signs among attendees. Several hundred demonstrators broke away from the vigil in order to march throughout the downtown D.C. area, chanting anti-Trump slogans.

Many attendees expressed anger toward the prospect of a Trump presidency. WSWS reporters interviewed Felicita, who works in finance. Felicita said she was feeling “shocked” and “disappointed” at the prospect of a Trump presidency. When asked for the reason for Trump’s victory, she mentioned that people mainly voted based on the issue of jobs. “I think Trump is giving them a false sense of hope,” she said.

Three international students also spoke with the WSWS. Yuri expressed agreement with the idea that social class was the most important issue in the presidential election. “I think race and gender were important issues,” she said, “but it turned out that class was the most important.” She noted that only 30 percent of white women voted for Clinton, even though she would have been the first female president.

WSWS reporters explained Trump was successful largely because of the anti-working class policies pursued by the Democrats for decades, which had decimated jobs and living standards in wide areas of the country. Yuri stated that Trump was falsely posturing as a friend of workers. “Trump is an

established capitalist, he doesn’t represent middle class and working class people. He succeeded in deceiving them.”

A WSWS reporting team also spoke with Hamaad, a tech industry worker and a former Bernie Sanders supporter who came to the vigil with his family. He said he was “embarrassed” at the outcome of the election. “There are some people who had economic reasons, like the promise of jobs, but from my perspective you can’t ignore his ban on Muslims and calling all Mexicans rapists,” he said.

Speaking about the economic reasons behind Trump’s vote, Hamaad said, “Minnesota and Michigan have been Democratic strongholds, but many didn’t come out to vote. The platform Hillary had just wasn’t strong enough and ignored that portion of the community.”

In San Diego at least one thousand marched in Balboa Park to protest Trump’s electoral victory. The city’s proximity to the future “wall” along the US-Mexico border and heavy immigrant population has aroused strong fears.

Cory and Matt came to show their solidarity with the rally, which was organized by the pseudo-left San Diego ANSWER coalition. Cory said, “It’s never been more apparent that our immigrant brothers and sisters, and those of different religions, need our help now more than ever.”

Cory expressed disgust with the two-party system and did not show any enthusiasm for Clinton, although he did support Sanders in the primaries. He had sympathy for an independent party of the working class and with the ideas of socialism, saying, “I’m ready for a socialist.”

Gisela came to the rally to show her opposition to the selection of Trump, but was also disgusted with the campaign of the Democrats, saying, “I think we didn’t have any real candidates.” When one of the WSWS reporters explained that Clinton’s defeat was the result of mass abstention on the part of the majority of the population, she replied, “It gives you an idea of what the population thinks as a whole.”

Katya and Meagan were both shocked at Trump’s victory, saying, “It was so confusing and baffling.” They both expressed initial support for Sanders but were upset with his eventual endorsement of Clinton, saying, “I was really upset that Sanders lost. I wish Sanders would have said more about WikiLeaks. It’s hard to accept that he stopped halfway on his ‘political revolution.’ I was disillusioned.”



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