

Millions across the US protest Trump

WSWS continuing coverage

A WSWS reporting team
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Millions of people participated in demonstrations throughout the United States and the world Saturday in a powerful and unprecedented show of opposition to the administration of US President Donald Trump. The protests were the biggest demonstrations coordinated on a global scale since the 2003 protests in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, with some estimates calling it the largest one-day protest in US history.

Protests took place in over 600 locations on every continent. The rally in Washington DC drew more than 500,000 people, twice the reported size of Trump's inauguration crowd the day before, with an equal number marching in Los Angeles.

An estimated 250,000 gathered at the rally in downtown Chicago, while as many as 175,000 people joined the march in Boston. At least 400,000 people marched in New York City, home of Trump, as well as 90,000 in St. Paul, Minnesota, at least 75,000 in Madison, Wisconsin, and 60,000 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Internationally, demonstrations took place in Mexico City, Paris, Berlin, Prague and Sydney. Up to 100,000 people marched in London, as well as in the British cities of Cardiff, Edinburgh, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Bristol, and in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The *World Socialist Web Site* has extensive coverage of the protests and presented an initial report on Sunday. We will be providing additional reports and interviews over the next few days.

Washington, DC

The massive demonstration in Washington DC flooded the city's transit system, and the city's transit authority noted its subway system had reached "crush" capacity. The organizers of the DC demonstration, which they called a "women's march," and speakers at the protest portrayed the danger of a Trump presidency solely on the basis of race and gender.

By contrast, those interviewed by the WSWS displayed a profound and genuine hatred of Trump's incoming fascistic and war-bound administration, and for the entire political system that paved the way for his rise to power.

Ed, a program director for a federal contractor, said, "What happened with the election was wrong. This is a strong statement to the new president that the election was not legitimate and the Republican Party has shown it has no right to govern.

"I am depressed and very disappointed in the American electoral system. It is antiquated, and empowers small states."

Asked about his thoughts on inequality in the election, he said, "It is beyond the tipping point. It started with Reagan and the right wing has control over the dialogue on these issues. The extremely rich demonize the more disadvantaged sections of the society. They want to make education worse, and make the environment disaster worse."

"We can't have a situation where eight people have the same wealth as over 3 billion people."

Jack, a student at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania, said, "This whole election has exposed the failure of our democratic system, and that corporations and financial interests permeate throughout politics. The politicians feel they know what is best, and they act like they have a divine mandate to do whatever is in their own interests.

"Our country is controlled by the 1 percent. As horrible as Trump is, this is the first time we saw working-class people resisting. The liberals are shocked, but they forgot about working-class people. That is why Trump could win.

"I hope something like this demonstration will empower people like they did in the 1960s, like the antiwar marches did."

After some discussion with a WSWS reporter about the US's current preparations for war against Russia and China, he replied, "It is crazy that there is this subtle warmongering [with the accusations of Russian hacking]. China and Russia are big superpowers, but they are not an immediate threat.

"The US is always pointing the finger outward, but the problems are inside the country. On the day of the inauguration there was renewed police repression of activists at Standing Rock. Where is the coverage of Standing Rock, or lead poisoning in California and Flint? Everyone is getting misled by the media."

Boston

More than 150,000 people joined the march in Boston, far outpacing the organizers' expectations. The march was possibly the biggest protest on the Boston Common since the Vietnam War-era demonstrations.

The featured speaker was Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren, who was joined by other Democratic politicians on the speakers' platform. While Warren's focus was on the Democrats' prospects in the 2018 and 2020 elections, the signs and sentiments of marchers indicated a deeply held concern about the policies of the new Trump administration, including threats to social and democratic rights and the danger of war.

"I think this is bigger than the inauguration," Samantha said, "and I think that says something. I think people want equality and peace. And that's why I think everyone is here, people of all races and colors and ages.

"I feel love here. I feel hope, although I know a lot of people are losing that. As President, Trump is seen as the face of our country. It's sad that's what the world is going to think of us now. This [pointing to the protest] is what the world should think of us. It shouldn't be an ignorant misogynistic man."

Asked about Trump's inaugural address, Samantha said, "I think it's a

nationalistic statement to say, 'We are first.' I mean, we are connected in every which way to every other country. Borders aren't real. So I don't think it was a threat of war, but I think that he doesn't see the world as big as we see the world."

The *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to Natalie and Fran at the Boston protest about Trump's inauguration.

"I watched the whole speech," Fran said. "He's an imbecile, he's a mad man, he is Hitler."

"And it's not even America first," Natalie said. "It's him first. If you took 'I' and 'me' out of his conversation, the man would have nothing to say and we all could be breathing a sigh of relief. It's very frightening and it's very sad."

Fran added, "There are people that are so far above us, that are keeping us slaves. We think we're free, but we are not free."

Natalie said the message of the march was: "Wake up, wake up, America. People are going to be in for a big shock. I don't understand how you can feel so desperate and so marginalized that you would believe somebody like that. Why would anyone believe that someone with that lifestyle, who has been rich his whole life, would even care about you?"

"Little do they realize that they're going to the showers," Fran said, referring to the Nazi gas chambers.

"We have the power," Natalie said, "but we just don't use it. It's going to take really tough times to make people realize that they have to stick together. That's the only way out of this."

The Boston protest was one of a number throughout New England, including one in Northampton, Massachusetts, which drew about 2,000. Speeches and protest signs there overwhelmingly addressed worries about gender and sexual discrimination, with various slogans denouncing "hate."

Pittsburgh

There were two protest rallies held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. About 10,000 people took part in the downtown rally and another 2,000 people joined a rally in the East Liberty neighborhood.

Ryan, Anna, Alena and Brian along with their children Ava and Ezra who took part in the downtown rally explained why they came.

"We are here to support women's rights. We were really upset with the results of the election," Anna said.

"We brought our kids and entire household here to show that we don't support what Trump wants to do. We are excited to be part of a whole movement. We want to stop Trump from taking steps backwards. He wants to defund Planned Parenthood. Abortion rates are at their lowest rate because people have access to contraception. Cutting Planned Parenthood and making abortions illegal again will only drive poor women into illegal back alley abortions while the rich will still be able to get them."

Bryan said, "The election was shocking when it happened. There will be no option for the poor. Trump is pushing the classes further apart. They are doing a lot of things that are just helping the wealthiest while hurting the poor. Look at his cabinet; they are nothing but billionaires.

"We are here so the people have a voice, we're here to take up issues of the common person who need health care and public education. What do Trump and the rich care? They have the money to send their kids to private schools and get the best health care."

"Blocking the borders is not what we are about," Ryan said. "People who come here are people who only want to have a job and support their families. People need to be able to do that."

At the East Liberty rally in Pittsburgh, Drek, a student, focused on the

role of the Democrats in paving the way for a Trump presidency. "Obama did so much in his presidency to invalidate the legitimacy of law within the United States, and now that's being handed to Trump.

"He's getting the deportations Obama carried out, he's getting the NSA, he's getting a drone program like Obama had. The big thing that scares me is that he's inheriting eight wars right now. We're in Afghanistan still, the longest war in US history.

"The country was really looking for a change eight years ago. We elected somebody who really promised a lot of change, and basically gave us eight more years of George Bush. In both economic and foreign policy, it really ended up being like Bush. He extended the Bush tax cuts indefinitely; he didn't close Guantanamo Bay. He's deported more immigrants than any other president. He ended habeas corpus. That's literally the foundation of world democracy over the last 800 years."

Asked his thoughts on building a party of the working class, Drek responded, "I don't think that the Democratic Party is the answer. I agree that there needs to be some other form of party structure."

Sophia continued, "I was so glad to vote for a woman for president, but I didn't fully agree with her politically, I don't agree with Donald Trump politically. I don't believe there was somebody who stands for who I am, as a young female student artist. It was upsetting to have that be my first election to vote in."

Asked why Trump won the election, Bella, a student at University of Pittsburgh also working as a waitress, argued, "Right now the Democratic Party is failing to represent the people who identify with the Democratic Party, or have previously through history. I'm a registered Democrat, but I feel like the Democratic Party in no way represents my personal views, and I know a lot of people feel that way."

Aubyn, a drama student at Carnegie Mellon University, stated her reasons for opposing Trump: "I'm opposed to the climate-denying, the sexism, the racism, the xenophobia. The Trump administration doesn't stand for anything except hate." She added, "I would love to break the two-party system, but it's going to be a struggle."

Thomas, a graduate student in philosophy, explained, "I'm here because we got sold out, not in November, but this spring at the DNC [Democratic National Convention].

"People focus on that there was a hack on the DNC [Democratic National Committee], not the content of the leaks. They focus on this shadow game, saying Putin and the Russians hacked it. Even if that were true, the content is still damning, and there's no proof."

He added, "The crazy thing to me is that you have Bush, who everybody was opposed to on the left. Then you have Obama come in and further his wars. He's dropped more bombs on more countries than Bush did. He took the spying game of the United States to a whole other level. He took the drone program to a whole other level. He took domestic persecution of whistleblowers to a whole other level. He's deported more immigrants than any other president in history.

"And yet the left is completely blind. We're happy to have a Trump hate fest, but we won't look critically at ourselves. That's why I'm here, because I'm generally angry. I'm half angry at all these people [at the rally], because if they were this vocal and this active six months ago, we would have had a Bernie Sanders candidate, and maybe we would have a Bernie Sanders president.

"And even Bernie Sanders sold us out. [Green Party presidential candidate] Jill Stein offered him a spot, and he said no and backed a corrupt candidate, a candidate that he knew was corrupt."

Josh, another philosophy graduate student, also expressed opposition to the right-wing policies of the Democrats, "Hillary sold us out in the '90s when she campaigned for the crime bill, for welfare reform. [Bill] Clinton was a Republican who called himself a Democrat.

He added, "Sanders voted for war in Afghanistan. He didn't vote for the invasion of Iraq, but every vote after that he voted for war."



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