

Hundreds demonstrate in San Diego against the CBP murder of Alex Pretti

Our reporter
26 January 2026

In the late afternoon of January 24, following the murder of 37-year-old nurse Alex Pretti by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in Minneapolis, there was a spontaneous demonstration at a public park in a working class suburb in San Diego, California. It was attended by about 500 people from the neighborhood, including people who had not yet heard about the murder of Alex Pretti but nonetheless felt compelled to join a demonstration against Trump's onslaught on immigrants.

Members of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) spoke to demonstrators about the call for rank-and-file committees to prepare for a nationwide general strike. There was widespread support for a general strike and the demands outlined in the statement issued by the Socialist Equality Party. Demonstrators carried signs calling for the abolition of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and prosecution of its leaders and the murderers of Alex Pretti and Renée Nicole Good. There were also signs commemorating the dozens of victims of ICE over the past year.

The demonstration indicated the growing radicalization of the working class, including an increasing hostility to the Democratic Party. When a member of the San Diego Young Democrats went to speak, he was taunted by a few members of the audience, who shouted, "Go tell the Democrats to stop funding ICE!" When the speaker replied, saying "those seven should be held accountable," referring to seven Democrats who voted with the Republicans last week, someone else in the audience said, "It's the whole party," and others shouted their agreement.

The organizers of the demonstration appealed to the audience to hear out the Democratic Party as a member of the coalition. The speaker continued, commenting,

"I'm a part of a new generation of Democrats," to which members of the audience retorted, "That's what AOC said! She voted for genocide!" and "AOC said the same thing!" The hostile response from the crowd ultimately forced the speaker to cut his remarks short.

A member of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE), David Rye, spoke from the platform, stating the demands from the Socialist Equality Party's statement calling for the organization of a national general strike.

1. The removal of ICE agents from Minneapolis and all cities; the disbanding of the organization; and the criminal prosecution of its officials and all agents responsible for murder and other acts of violence.

2. The immediate end to the vicious persecution of immigrants living in the United States; the immediate release from detention of all immigrants who have been swept up in the ICE dragnet, and the prosecution of all members responsible for violence.

3. The removal of the Trump administration from power.

He urged workers and young people to call meetings in factories, workplaces, neighborhoods and schools to discuss these and other practical proposals for effective action. "The organization of a general strike requires the initiative of the working class," he said. "The preparation of a powerful nationwide strike must not be left to union bureaucrats, let alone to the Democratic Party. They will do nothing. What is necessary is the formation of rank-and-file committees in every factory,

work location and neighborhood.”

Rye stated that such a movement requires “a political break from the Democratic Party and the framework of capitalist politics.” Citing the experiences of the popular fronts in Spain and France in the struggles of the working class of the 1930s, he stated, “We can enter the fight against fascism with the lessons of history. We’ve seen this before. In Spain, in France, in Europe in the 1930s, workers fought against fascism. But the fatal mistake was keeping capitalist liberals in their coalition. This led to their defeat, they were betrayed.”

Rye concluded, “Let’s mobilize this workers’ movement!”



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