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Massive worldwide protests against Trump presidency

By 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 massive protests were far larger than organizers expected and came as a surprise to the corporate media. They were the biggest globally coordinated demonstrations since the 2003 protests against the invasion of Iraq. Demonstrations took place in over 600 locations on every continent, including at a US research station in Antarctica.



Demonstrators in Washington DC

A post-inauguration rally in Washington DC attracted more than 500,000 people, twice the reported size of Trump's inauguration crowd the day before, and an equal number marched in Los Angeles. An estimated 250,000 gathered at the rally in downtown Chicago, where a planned march was canceled due to overcrowding, and the demonstrators simply rallied in place.

Up to 150,000 people joined the march in Boston, in what was described as the biggest protest on the Boston Common since the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations nearly half a century ago. Another 100,000 people marched past Trump Tower in New York City. Demonstrations in other US cities included 60,000 in St. Paul, Minnesota, and more than 75,000 in Madison, Wisconsin.



A portion of the demonstration in Chicago

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.

Media reporting of the demonstrations presented the protests as centered around the demand for reproductive rights, as well as various identity politics issues. Commentators were forced to

admit, however, that a large portion of participants in the demonstrations were motivated by much broader issues, including opposition to Trump's program of aggressive militarism, domestic repression, and pro-business policies.

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, more than twice the volume on inauguration day, when ridership was lower than on an average workday.

The organizers of the Washington DC demonstration, which they called a "women's march," portrayed the danger of a Trump presidency solely on the basis of race and gender. Speakers on the platform included several Democratic congresswomen, as well as feminist Gloria Steinem and a number of female actors. Steinem praised "our great leaders," Michelle and Barack Obama.

In contrast to the politics of the rally's organizers, demonstrators displayed a profound and genuine hatred of the fascistic and war-bound administration of Trump and for the entire political system that paved the way for his rise to power.

Madeleine, a Canadian-American, and Zekeh, a Congolese-American, grew passionate while speaking to the *World Socialist Web Site* about Trump's election. "It's because you only have two parties. Both of them are to blame, and I hope this is a big turning point. This nationalism is terrible," Madeleine said. "We have to be inclusive because we are all in this world."

Zekeh added, "We are living in a global village, connected like a big spider web. Patriotism and nationalism should not turn us against one another."

A large portion of the demonstrators in Washington were young people, including many high school and college students. Ryan, from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, told WSWS reporters, "I am horrified about the Trump presidency and I think that socialism is the only feasible economic system."

He was hostile to the Democrats for pledging their willingness to "work with Trump" while opposing him only on the basis of his alleged ties to Russia: "It's ridiculous. Now there is all of this xenophobia coming from the Democrats. Trump has given us so much to oppose and the Democrats make it about this?"

Many young people at the demonstration expressed hostility to the Democratic Party for its role in overseeing a massive growth in social inequality. Several young students from American University spoke about their hatred of war and their hope that opposition would lead to broader protests. "The Democrats are for the rich," said Quincy.

Rachel added, "The worst mistake was putting Clinton on the ticket. They say there is no money for public education, but the government spends ridiculous amounts of money on the military!"

Such sentiments were in stark contrast to the behavior of the Democratic Party leaders in Congress, who have expressed sympathy for Trump's embrace of economic nationalism to

promote the interests of American corporations, while demanding he take a more aggressive stance against Russia.

Democratic Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer praised Trump's inauguration, "Today, we celebrate one of democracy's core attributes, the peaceful transfer of power." President Obama described the November election as an "intramural scrimmage" and declared that the Democrats and Republicans are "all on the same team."

The massive demonstrations worldwide are just a preliminary indication of the broad popular opposition that exists to the Trump presidency. This administration, determined to pursue militarism abroad and repression at home, will be met with a mass movement in opposition to war, social inequality, and the capitalist system that produces it.