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USA

Millions protest Trump throughout United States as resistance grows

- IV Online magazine - 2025 - IVP603 - April 2025 -

Publication date: Monday 7 April 2025

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Millions of people in all 50 states, joined 1,600 demonstrations in large cities and small towns to protest against President Donald Trump and his henchman billionaire Elon Musk on April 5, with a number of small solidarity demonstrations in European cities. The “Hands Off” demonstrations, the largest anti-Trump protests yet, demanded that Trump keep his hands off democracy, human rights, reproductive rights, Social Security, Medicaid, public schools, immigrants, and LGBT people.

In New York City, where I joined the protest in the drizzle, some 50,000 people took part in a spirited march with many creative home-made signs and banners. I saw signs reading: “Hands off Our Planet,” “Disappearing People for Speech = Fascism,” and “Hands Off Our Bodies, Our Democracy, Our Freedom, Our Constitution.” And scattered through the demonstration a few signs in support of Ukraine, though fewer addressed the Palestinian genocide.

In the Republican dominated state of Ohio, Common Cause, a group that works for free and fair elections, helped to organize the protest. Mia Lewis of Common Cause Ohio said, “For many people, this will be the first protest they have attended. They are coming out not to tear anything down, but to stand up for the Constitution, for the rule of law, for our democracy. Enough is enough!”

In Colorado, a state controlled by the Democrats, 8,000 turned out at the State Capitol in Denver. “We were expecting a good turnout, but this is better than we thought it would be here,” Morgan Miransky, a volunteer organizer said, “We’re looking forward to having more people come out and join us, and we’re hoping to build this into a larger nationwide movement for resistance.”

The demonstrations were called by a variety of organizations, including the Democratic Party groups like Indivisible, workers’ groups such as the Federal Unionists Network, and environmental, religious, human rights, and civil rights groups. Yet in New York City, the largest unions such as the Service Employees International Union and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, with many Black members, failed to turn out their ranks. An exception was the union of workers of the City University of New York. Most unions failed to mobilize their members nationally, though Federal workers, many recently fired, did join the protests.

The NYC protest was overwhelmingly white, with only a small number of Black, participants in a city where Blacks make up 20%, Latinos 28%, and Asians 15% of the population. Some Latinos may have stayed home because of fear of being detained and deported, as Trump is now engaged in a massive deportation campaign. Some Black influencers on social media told their followers to stay home, that the march was not their affair. The low level of participation of Black people was an issue almost everywhere.

In some cities, particularly Washington, D.C., but others as well, Democratic Party politicians spoke in an attempt to win back support from party members who have been deeply disappointed in the Democrats’ failure to fight back against Trump. Jamie Raskin, a leading Congressman from Maryland, told the crowd, “They believe democracy is doomed and they believe regime change is upon us if only they can seize our payments system. If they think they are going to overthrow the foundations of democracy, they don’t know who they are dealing with.” Across the country, especially in state capitals, Democrats tried to woo voters, but many disappointed in Senator Kamala Harris’ campaign or in Democratic support for Israel’s genocidal war will be hard to convince.

These protests were a significant step forward, but the big unions are still not really in the fight and there is no common leadership and no consensus on whether the Democrats or mass protests represent the future. The left has

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only a small presence and plays little role so far.

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