

WE DON'T FORGET!

WE DON'T FORGET

fascist violence • murder by pigs • state repression •

2017 Inauguration  
Day Reflections From  
the Salish Sea

historicalseditons.noblogs.org  
December 2022

# We Don't Forget! 2017 Inauguration Day Reflections From the Salish Sea

<b>Milo Yiannopoulos Event Massively Disrupted at University of Washington, One Comrade Shot</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The New Reality - Reports from J20 in Seattle</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>J20 Seattle: Full Report Back from Milo Event Disruption</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>J20 in Olympia, WA: Youth Take the Streets!</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>We Don't Forget J20: Action Report Back from the Greater Seattle IWW General Defense Committee</b>	<b>19</b>

---

The Inauguration of Donald Trump on January 20, 2017 was a day of protest across the so-called United States. Some of the most confrontational took place in Seattle and Olympia on the Salish Sea. Most strikingly, an antifascist was shot amid protests at the University of Washington against fascist provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos.

So that we don't forget, this Zine compiles reportbacks from that day. Originally posted on ItsGoingDown.org and Crimethinc.com, these communiques were also reposted to PugetSoundAnarchists.org and detail the events of "J20" in Seattle and Olympia. Also featured is an action report from a year later, memorializing the anniversary of the shooting.

Fascist violence has continued to surge in the years since. All we can do is learn and keep up the fight.

# Milo Yiannopoulos Event Massively Disrupted at University of Washington, One Comrade Shot

Originally Posted 1/21/2017 at ItsGoingDown.org

Seattle – Milo Yiannopoulos was scheduled to speak at the University of Washington at J20. The exact numbers in line to attend were difficult to estimate but may have been 500 or more, many of whom were outright neo-nazis.

With a massive march in downtown which included an anarchist breakaway, perhaps only 30 antifa were on hand at the beginning to attempt to disrupt the event.

At approximately 6:00 pm, blocked up antifa formed a wall in front of the police barricade in front of the event. Over the next couple of hours, police attempted to force antifa away from the barricades, while attendees pushed to get in. Each time event security attempted to open up a different entrance, Antifa managed to force their way to the new entrance. While some reinforcements were added after the anarchist breakaway downtown were broken up, masked up antifa never numbered more than about 50, with additional unmasked liberal and student activist protestors at the edges of event.



The small number of Antifa held the line for well over two hours and prevented all but a few dozen attendees from entering Kane Hall, where the event was taking place. The vast majority of those in line, numbering well into the hundreds, were still outside when police announced they would not let any more people inside.

At perhaps 8:20 hundreds of marchers from downtown Seattle arrived at the university, filling the square with supporters of Antifa. Tragically, a comrade was shot during the later stages of the event. They remains in critical condition in the hospital. The shooter is still unknown but believed to be a Trump supporter.

<https://itsgoingdown.org/milo-yiannopoulos-event-massively-disrupted-university-washington-one-comrade-shot/>

## The New Reality Reports from J20 in Seattle

Originally Posted 1/21/17 at Crimethinc.com

*This communiqué from comrades in Seattle comes to us as the night is ending there. They offer it as a partial report of the many events that transpired: some demoralizing, some inspiring, and some horrifying. Whatever their impact, all of these events are representative of what is to come: crystallized examples of this political and historical moment.*

### The Day Begins

Seattle, bastion of West Coast liberalism and smug leftist exceptionalism, was very busy on Inauguration Day. According to the police, resistance began at 9:30 AM when “an unidentified person threw a rock through the windshield of a Bellevue Police Department officer’s vehicle” while it was parked on Capitol Hill.

The day of protests began with mass student walkouts at noon. Students from several local high schools and middle schools walked out and took the streets immediately. With hand-crafted banners, clever chants, and an air of rebellion, they blocked traffic and marched to Seattle Central Community College. Some students carried a giant banner against the new youth jail under construction.



The mood was raucous and jubilant, with that particular joy that accompanies expressing rage, in the streets, with comrades.

Unfortunately, that joyous and rebellious spirit was crushed, redirected, and preyed upon as soon as students reached their destination, a rally at Seattle Central. Socialist Alternative organizers jumped at the opportunity to recruit and fundraise. The creative signs and chants were quickly replaced by rote repetition, as chant sheets and identical pre-printed signs were handed out. Kshama Sawant, the local celebrity socialist on City Council, quickly took the stage to promote her party, Socialist Alternative, as the only way to resist Trump; she celebrated the spirit of resistance while her organizers did their best to prevent critical thinking and autonomous action while building their party apparatus. This strategy is identical to Socialist Alternative’s actions during the anti-war movement: creating student front groups, placing their signs in front, and claiming credit for the autonomous activity of students.

This is part of our new reality—the Left is already preparing for a return to the Bush years, building their membership lists and pretending to represent change while funneling people into the same ineffective electoral strategy that will never liberate us. It was disheartening, and unsurprising.

## Westlake

The main event was planned for 5:00 PM, where an autonomous breakaway march was planned to diverge from the Socialist Alternative rally. Inspired by the activities on the East Coast earlier in the day, many of us hoped to seize this moment of popular anger and present other options and examples of fighting back. Against a rally and march that was primarily engineered to build a local politician's career, anarchists hoped to offer direct action against the structures and the people that oppress us: banks, police, jails, and more.

Unfortunately, a large group was detained and attacked by riot police while en route to the rally. In the scuffle that ensued, many materials were seized, including the black flags intended to signify our presence and help other comrades find the bloc within a sea of signs.

According to SPD, the seized items also included shields reading "Right Wing Scum, Your Time Has Come," wooden poles, heavy pipes, flares, and hammers (we, of course, urge you not to take anything they report as the full truth).



This is an escalation by the Seattle Police; while they have been more than happy to attack anarchists indiscriminately in the past, until now they have not detained people and seized material prior to marches. They haven't seized people's flags since Mayday 2012, when the mayor declared a state of emergency and banned flagpoles from downtown.

This escalation of repression, on Trump's first day of office, is a worrying sign of things to come.

Under-equipped and shaken, the band arrived at Westlake only to find yet another rally featuring Kshama Sawant as the personality of the hour. Her presence was announced to massive cheers, as "the woman who needs no introduction." With the tone of a home game mixed with a populist rally, the entire event reeked of politicians and charismatic leaders. Faced with poor conditions, many comrades quickly redirected their attention to the University of Washington, where anti-fascists were demonstrating against alt-right misogynist, transphobe, and racist Milo Yiannopoulos, scheduled to speak at Kane Hall.

## Red Square

Red Square, the central plaza in front of Kane Hall, was awash with confusion and hostility when we arrived. Seeing hundreds of people spread out in the square, we were initially excited at all of the anti-fascists who had come to demonstrate—until we realized that most of them were Trump supporters, there to see Milo speak. Anti-fascists were partially blocking the stairs up to the entrance but were vastly outnumbered by a sea of mostly white, mostly male racists there to see Milo spread hate. A black bloc quickly assembled itself, growing to about 50 people, and helping to hold the line with reinforced banners and bodies. It was confusing, and chaotic; we are used to facing off with police, on terms that are familiar if frustrating. Some of us are used to facing off with explicit neo-nazi boneheads—also easy to recognize. But in the sea of college students around us, it was nearly impossible to tell who was a protestor and who was there to see Milo speak. Only the iconic red hats—many of which were gleefully liberated from racist heads and destroyed—and outright hostility in the form of pushing and shouting, clarified sides. This intermingling, along with the hands-off behavior of the police, made certain interventions difficult. Projectiles are dangerous if a crowd is mixed, and pushing a line forward into a group of unknown composition puts other potential comrades at risk. This was further complicated by conciliatory activists who placed themselves between banners and Milo supporters, determined to de-escalate situations and defuse conflict.

Despite these confusing dynamics, anti-fascists and anarchists were able to maintain a level of conflict and antagonism appropriate to the situation. Several shouting, red-faced men ended up covered in paint, and while no one as famous as Richard Spencer was attacked,

there will certainly be many racists nursing black eyes and other injuries tomorrow. These scuffles were aided by long-held anarchist tactics: banners allowed people to attack and then retreat, a somewhat cohesive black bloc allowed comrades to take initiative and then disappear, and we were able to successfully keep fascists from penetrating our ranks.

It is worth dwelling for a moment on the crowd waiting to see Milo's speech. While it was certainly mostly white, and mostly male, there were other genders and people of color mixed in. Some of Milo's adoring fans were impressionable internet denizens, easily swayed by bombastic and "edgy" rhetoric; that said, some of them were dedicated racists and bigots: one person shouted "race war" repeatedly, and another loved to call people faggots. They regularly complained that their right to free speech was being attacked, and that there was no safe space for right-wing politics.

Given right-wing attacks on marginalized communities and Milo's personal attacks on the concept of "safe spaces", it is ironic that, when they are confronted by an angry and powerful crowd of anti-fascists, they cry about their lack of protection. Also confusing was their insistence that we were the Nazis, because we wouldn't let them see their favorite fascist in person. Fortunately, few protesters present cared much about free speech for fascists at all, seeing instead the importance of shutting down fascists and preventing them from organizing. This is a welcome change after years of hearing liberals defend racists' right to free speech.

This back and forth continued for awhile, until we heard a pop and people shouting "comrade down". Many of us thought we had heard a concussion grenade go off, but gradually became aware that someone had been shot. While we are all anxious to learn more and discuss the context around our comrade's shooting, we are primarily concerned right now with their wellbeing, and with the scope of the police investigation that will follow. What we do know, based on the SPD twitter, is that a suspect has turned himself in to the police. More details may follow in the future, and they may not.

This is the reality we now live in: it is somehow not surprising for a comrade to be shot at an anti-fascist demonstration.

We saw stabbings in Sacramento, and we've seen gun violence here. This is becoming the new normal, and that is unacceptable. As we are writing this, we are also hearing reports that someone drove through downtown Olympia tonight shooting at storefronts and shouting "Hail Trump!" In this context, it is worth thinking about

how to protect and care for each other during actions, and otherwise. It is also vital that this kind of violence be passionately resisted and squashed; it is crucial to keep fighting.

The march from downtown arrived at UW shortly after the shooting, and numbers shifted dramatically in our favor. Many disappointed Milo fans left, unable to see their hero, despite the money they spent and the precious tickets they were carrying—some of which were ripped out of their hands. The talk was not completely shut down—some few people made it into the hall, and Milo spoke—but it was significantly disrupted, and the events prove that militant, uncompromising actions against fascists work. The more we disrupt their events, the more we make their hideous faces and odious politics public, the harder it is for them to organize, and the less space there is for fascist sentiments to become normalized.

## Lessons and Concerns

**1. Anti-fascism is an easy sentiment for people to get behind.** This is good and bad. We noticed anarchist tactics and aesthetics spreading more easily to liberals and other radicals than anarchist politics and analysis. At one point we found ourselves holding a banner, side by side with others dressed in black, who rushed to inform us that Bernie would have won had the system been more fair. While we are thrilled that diverse people are willing to take militant action against fascists, it is also worth remembering that anti-fascism alone is not enough. We've seen where popular fronts leave anarchists: high and dry at best, and at worst in gulags or murdered.

**2. The police and fascists are different kinds of enemies.** We've gotten very used to fighting the police in Seattle—and they have gotten used to fighting us, unfortunately. They were remarkably hands-off tonight, with the exception of the equipment seizure, and were happy to ignore scuffles and fights between protestors and racist scum. While we never look to the police for protection, it is interesting and unsettling that, despite reports of an active shooter on a college campus, they were content to continue guarding the perimeter and not intervening. Most shootings on college campuses involve campus-wide lock-downs; this one garnered no visible police response. This is yet another reminder that the police cannot—and will never—protect us; only we can protect each other.

**3. Guns are here, and the risk of gun violence—or stabbing—from white supremacists is real.** We have to prepare for these risks, but we also know that specialized, armed militancy will lead toward

isolation and increased risk. Our strength lies in the streets—in creating situations that are ungovernable, in making space for others to experiment with autonomy and direct action, and in preventing fascists from organizing. We are very aware of the threat of armed fascists, but are also certain that symmetrical warfare will end poorly for us—and for anarchism. There have certainly been historical moments when it made sense for anarchists to take up arms and go to the mountains—and perhaps people should prepare those skills, in case those times come again—but more often than not we see guns and specialized violence leading to marginalization and increased vulnerability to attacks by fascists and police alike.

<https://crimethinc.com/2017/01/21/seattle-after-j20>

## J20 Seattle: Full Report Back from Milo Event Disruption

Originally posted 1/22/2017 at [ItsGoingDown.org](http://ItsGoingDown.org)

*This communique comes from comrades in Seattle, centering on the Milo event. We offer these reports and our initial reflections to continue the process of understanding the present moment and what will come. All times are approximate.*

### J20, University of Washington, 6pm

A long queue snakes around UW's Red Square, an hour before the Milo Yiannopoulos speaking event "Cyberbullying isn't Real," hosted by the College Republicans student club, is set to begin. Milo is a darling of the white nationalist "Alt-Right" movement, and hundreds of fans are waiting to hear their favorite fascist speak. Student protests throughout the day have set the tone for the evening, and a small ring of anti-Milo people watch the spectacle while holding their signs. Besides the large police presence throughout the campus, on the square there are a few groups of bike cops and a few smaller groups spread out, and it's obvious the Hall is being used as a staging ground for police response. To the side around 15 people in black, plus maybe 20 other protesters in less coordinated attire gather. We are outnumbered. Police immediately move into the group and confiscate anything that could be even loosely imagined as a weapon: signs only, no bags they said.

It quickly becomes clear that the group needs to move from the sidelines to the center, to hold the stairs leading to Kane Hall and

block the line from entering the building. Following waving anti-fa flags, chanting "anti-fascista," the bloc circles the queue past hundreds of jeering idiots, many sporting iconic red hats and khaki pants, to take a position at the front of this line, on the steps of Kane Hall, between the crowd and the entrance. Banners were unfurled, including one that read "Smash Gay Nationalism – Queers Fight Back". The bloc is squeezed between a metal police barricade set up to control the entryway, the queue of Milo fans to one side, and students and additional protesters joining from the other side. It is tense and close – fascists and anti-fascists toe to toe. At the front it is hard to tell who is who – only during chanting do the sides become clear. The Milo crowd is largely comprised of white men of all ages, including middle and high school aged youth who seem to be riding high on a sense of power. Their signs read "Celebrate Patriarchy" and "Against the Fascism of the Left."



### 6:30 – 7pm

During this time the tension and agitation maintained without dramatically escalating, while anti-fascists continued gathering in number. The Milo crowd, attempting to be heard over the resounding calls of the anti-fascists, were intermittently chanting "USA," and once echoed the "Fuck Nazis" cry from the anti-fascists but included air humping and invitational arm movements, seemingly to imply that they did indeed self-identify as Nazis. Individuals from the Milo crowd were consistently attempting to agitate the antifa crew, yelling insults and threats, snapping cameras in faces, occasionally grabbing, pushing, or shaking the protesters.

At one point the smell of rotten eggs briefly filled the air, and a Milo fan was seen wiping eggshell and goo off his face. A younger fascist agitator who had been antagonizing the protestors throughout the evening was spotted with a bloody mouth, covered in blue paint. Red hats were grabbed and burned. From somewhere within the anti-fascist crowd a projector displayed anti-Trump statements on the walls of Kane Hall and other buildings surrounding red square. Small scuffles broke out, but none escalated beyond minor push-shove and the occasional punch, as formerly cocky fascist scum would wander too far or pick fights with people who didn't quietly submit. Peace police placed themselves between the Milo fans and anti-fascists, with their hands up, attempting in vain to pacify both sides. During this time the campus police were heavily monitoring the crowd of protesters. They snatched a medic out of the crowd, searching their bag and confiscating bottles of LAW (liquid anti-acid and water, used for eye flushing). The cops debated whether to arrest or not, and ultimately ran ID and released. During this exchange it became clear that the cops were watching the crowd from the upper stories of Kane Hall and calling in people to snatch and search. This tactic continued throughout the night, with at least a few other people with backpacks being grabbed, searched, and having bottles of LAW confiscated. The cops seemed to be on high alert for weapons, flammables, and other tools of trouble-making, but only from the protesters, leaving the Milo crowd alone. During this time it seemed that the queue was successfully blocked from entering Kane Hall.

### **7:30pm**

There were reports overheard on the police scanner of a person with a gun at Kane Hall. The campus police did not change tactics or appear to take any action regarding this report.

### **8pm**

Word began to spread through the crowd that the event had been canceled. Milo fans did not budge, instead waving cellphone displaying a live-stream of the talk that was indeed happening inside the building. Mainstream news has reported that approximately 150 were inside, though the sold-out event was held in an auditorium that seats 700, and at least several hundred of those ticket-holders were waiting outside. It is unclear how and when the people inside entered the building, but with small numbers it was impossible to block all entrances to Kane Hall. At this point tensions began to increase. A "Pepe the Frog" white nationalist banner was unfurled

by a young fascist. Milo fans threw cans of energy drinks and deployed pocket pepper-spray or mace into the group of antifa. A man waving his event ticket in the air tried to shove his way toward the building and was blocked by the large wooden signs of anti-fascists, who closed ranks to form a wall. The ticket was grabbed and destroyed. Similar scuffles would occasionally flare, though the intermingling of the crowd made pushing lines or throwing projectiles less possible.

By this point the bloc that had been stymied at Westlake had largely arrived on campus, bolstering the numbers of anarchists at the front. Many students, bystanders, and liberals had joined with the masked anarchists, enthusiastically participating in and even leading chants, singing, donning handed out masks, and helping hold the front. Socialists were in the mix as well, attempting to give political platform speeches on a megaphone but were drowned out by the impassioned chanting of those who realize that shutting down a fascist event was larger than and infinitely more important than whatever party politic the socialists were interested in spouting.

### **8:20pm**

The main march from Westlake arrived at Red Square, having made their way through Downtown, Capitol Hill, and over the University Bridge to join those blocking Milo's fans from hearing their favorite fascist in person. Cheers broke out as a wave of people and signs flowed into the square, and a sense of victory was in the air, as well as a much needed relief at the sight of back-up. The anti-fascists had been badly outnumbered until this point, but the tide had just turned. As hundreds of people kept arriving, the remaining Milo supporters were nearly surrounded.

### **8:25pm**

Scuffles broke out along the line as Milo fans were pushed away from the steps of Kane Hall. Within moments, a shot was heard – an anti-fascist comrade had been shot point blank in the stomach by a Milo fan. They were shot in the middle of the crowd, along this line where anti-fascists were face to face with the Milo crowd. They were helped out of the crowd by street medics, who immediately found a clear space and began administering emergency first aid. Campus bike cops surrounded the scene, pulling the medics off their patient and blocking them from continuing emergency aid. The cops encircled the comrade, though did not appear to have or be using emergency first aid supplies to help whatsoever, and preventing

medic help while they waited for the glorified golf cart and further assistance to remove the victim from the scene. By 8:30 they had left Red Square.

### 8:45pm

The anti-fascist crowd, with their larger numbers, began circling the building to block all entrances and exits to Kane Hall. Inside the building, news of the shooting reached Milo who declared to cheers, "If we stop now, they have won." When Milo's talk did end, police advised the small group that had made it inside the building to remove their MAGA hats, and hide any other visible indicators of their affiliation. Fashy haircuts, khaki pants, and the sweaty sheen of a fearful fascist however, cannot be hidden for long...



### 9:45pm

Milo attempted to leave UW campus, accompanied by a campus police escort. Protesters were briefly able to hold the street and block his escape and further disrupt any sense of normalcy he tries to build around his nationalist, transphobic, misogynist rhetoric.

### 10pm

Protesters had largely dispersed into the night. To disappear into the landscape of the city, anarchists and fascists alike removed their masks, hats, putting away all obvious identifiers to get home safely. We mingle as we re-emerge into the daily milieu. The enemy is all around us. Stay vigilant, stay alive, go hard, take care.

### TLDR: Lessons for Consideration

Some things to keep in mind:

- Our enemies blends in. On a college campus, it was difficult to tell who was there as a protester, a Milo fan, or a passive onlooker. The crowd was close, the ranks intermingled. There was no clear separation. It was only possible to identify one's

accomplices by who was masked up or who was chanting with which side. Here in Seattle, we have become accustomed to primarily fighting the police. For better and for worse, the cops and the anarchists have a mutual familiarity with one another's appearances, tactics, and available weapons. White nationalists and fascists are less obvious. Familiarize yourself with the symbols, dress, and language of the far right.

- The police will always be our enemy. On Saturday morning, the shooter and another individual turned themselves into the campus police. Both were subsequently released without charges, "Pending further investigation." While the police have a long history of shooting the unarmed and marginalized, in protest situations this has become rare. To what the extent the police will allow fascists to carry guns and shoot us at rallies and protests may indeed be decided in the next days and weeks. We must be ready to defend ourselves and support each other regardless, as we have always done, but it is important to note the changing landscape upon us, and orient ourselves and tactics accordingly.
- Furthermore, the police were actively targeting medics, searching bags, and confiscating any unknown substances or items that could be used as a weapon. This happened yesterday at UW and at Westlake, up until these blocs held enough numbers to resist the police. Even when we are not directly facing off with the cops, we can expect them to be against us, attempting to antagonize and block us at every turn. Be intentional about what you bring with you, how you carry items, where to meet and how. Learn how to de-arrest your friends. Know that if you are carrying a bag you may be targeted.
- Information helps us stay safe. Accurate information. After the comrade was shot on Red Square, many anti-fascist protesters had no idea that a shooting had occurred. Even those only 10 or 15 feet away had enough people between them and the events to have missed it completely, misinterpreting a gunshot as a flashbang or firework. Stay informed. Use a buddy system. Learn about and use secure communication techniques. Be ready. Check in with people around you. What have they heard? What have they seen? Are they ok? Are you ok?
- To quote another reportback from J20 in Seattle:



*Guns are here, and the risk of gun violence – or stabbing – from white supremacists is real. We have to prepare for these risks but we also know that specialized, armed militancy will lead toward isolation and increased risk. Our strength lies in the streets – in creating situations that are ungovernable, in making space for others to experiment with autonomy and direct action, and in preventing fascists from organizing. WE are very aware of the threat of armed fascists, but are also certain that symmetrical warfare will end poorly for us – and for anarchism. There have certainly been historical moments when it made sense for anarchists to take up arms and go to the mountains – and perhaps people should prepare those skills, in case those times come again – but more often than not we see guns and specialized violence leading to marginalization and increased vulnerability to attacks by fascists and police alike.*

<https://itsgoingdown.org/j20-seattle-full-report-back-milo-event-disruption/>

## **J20 in Olympia, WA: Youth Take the Streets!**

**Originally Posted 1/24/2017 at ItsGoingDown.org**

Many have planned, speculated and awaited what J20 would look like this upcoming election cycle. In Olympia, a predominantly liberal capital city, we knew that there were going to be popular demonstrations consisting of the permitted marches and the “Not My President” chants. There were several major facebook events about actions at the capital; one even calling for an overnight occupation inside its main building (which was removed a couple of days before the event). The front steps of the capital by mid morning on January 20th consisted largely of teenagers bussed in from city schools in the surrounding area. Arriving a little later in the morning and facing up the steps towards the young demonstrators were groups associated with Radicals/Anarchists (largely dressed in bloc), Olympia IWW, and a group largely consisting of POC that stood behind where speakers had microphone access.

Many of the high schooler’s showed their version of dissent in the liberal manner of holding signs like “waiting for the punch line.” Some radicals had banners in which they expressed their own disgust with Trump and Capitalism on different terms. Banners were held to face the crowded staircases with more radical messages like,

“No More Presidents”, and “No War but Class War.” Some of the students attempted to start chants of “all lives matter” and were shut down almost immediately with explanations of how that sort of discourse erases Black struggles against a racist system and racist police murders.

At the capitol steps, there were certain white men who seemed sketchy, recording black bloc and POC and refusing to stop when asked. The explanations of why they were recording people and asking them to take off their masks and tell their names to the camera went along the lines of, “I have the right to record you in a public place.” On two separate occasions, white men were recording bloc and their phones ended up on the ground. One of them went to the police and filed a report, while the second was pulled away by police before the situation could escalate. This was an issue for many there because some folk cheered when the cops intervened, and some people there thought it would have been better if the community handled it themselves. We don’t need police to protect us; we need to learn how to protect each other and ourselves. Be vigilant about those who want to record you. Information about leftists and People of Color has been released to police, neonazis, and white supremacist groups in the past. We can expect that to continue to happen.

After an hour and a half of speeches it was apparent that some people there wanted to march downtown. A small group led the crowd off the stairs, and most of the rally followed. Around 200 people joined the march, with about 25 folk in black bloc while others just wore masks. Many did not cover their face at all. Signs and banners were collected, as well as a good amount of american flags allegedly stolen from the capitol. Many in the groups that were facing the stairs blended with the young marchers. A consistent issue through the march was the usual carelessness (which is a recurring experience at Olympia marches) of people in the front walking far too fast for the group as a whole, leaving behind those that were unable to keep up. Several people had walkers and wheelchairs; many of those left behind were also a part of severely marginalized demographics, and they should have been more welcomed to gain ground towards the front if they chose to do so. Multiple times people shouted, “Disabled people to the front,” which in itself was an issue seeing as not everyone wanted the attention brought to themselves. The march advanced to hold down several intersections with a couple of flag

burning demonstrations. There was some directional confusion during the course of the march as many expressed their intention to move towards the port. Upon arriving at the port ally the people at the front steered the march away, leaving many baffled by the group's direction. And yes, there were some authoritarian white libbies looking for their 15 minutes of activism, screaming chants and orders into megaphones, and attempting to play peace police.

The march returned to the capitol and folks in black bloc broke out into a chorus of "Bella Ciao," in order to combat some liberals who were singing the national anthem. Another march ensued briefly after that towards downtown once again. The people in the march circled up and held an intersection on capitol way, blocking traffic rather unsuccessfully since the police had already cleared out most of the streets. There were a few altercations with drivers of vehicles who were irritated that the streets were being blocked, and police stepped in a few times (once again) to de-escalate. Police should be unwelcome at any point in a march through Olympia, as well as anywhere else.

Four or more flags were burned in the streets on January 20th. At one point, while folks were holding an intersection, flags were put in a pile and set on fire while a speaker system blasted "Fuck Donald Trump" by Nipsy. Flags were spit on, danced on, and



torn up by those in the streets that day. Some people spoke about the dangers of the Trump administration regarding Muslim folk, People of Color, Queer community members, and undocumented community members. Very real threats are poised to take hold of our communities if we don't combat them now. Trump is a definitely a threat, but there have always been these threats to marginalized people; capitalism cannot exist without racism, cissexism, and state terrorism. Your neighbors are in danger, your

communities are in danger. In order to combat the fear tactics of the state, you may very well have to put yourself in danger.

The march came to an end as people held the train tracks in downtown Olympia, where only two months before, the tracks had been blockaded by those protesting the shipment of fracking proppants through the Olympia Port to the Bakken Oil Fields. Police threatened to arrest the group that held the tracks, which had shrunk down to around thirty or forty people, and then the pigs disappeared and did not return for upwards of half an hour. Eventually the group broke up and hung around downtown to make sure a train did not come through. Any blockage of capital, whether it be the proppant train or a train with corn, would have been an accomplishment in the face of a city that refuses to sacrifice profit regardless of what the community says.

Here in Olympia we are facing gentrification, state brutality through the police and prison systems, displacement of our houseless community members, racist systemic abuses, and many other forms of violence. The Port of Olympia continues to ignore the voices of those living here, Indigenous as well as non-Indigenous. White Olympians: you have a responsibility to address concerns about racist environmental destruction, displacement of poor folks, and corporate interest in this town. City council continues to ignore the people and pass resolutions that have been "peacefully" opposed. It's time to pick up a hammer and get to work.

It was the hope for many that the young crowd of protesters (who are currently enrolled in institutions that function as a manipulative tool by the state to perpetuate colonial, racist, white-washed history, and nullify and mute the screams of the youth) had the opportunity to be exposed to expressions of resistance that challenge, on a more fundamental level, our current power structures. Many of them took an increased liking and comfortability to the radical chants that were spreading through the mass.

The radical community in Olympia can only hope that the youth continue to take a stand, to learn about and deconstruct the systems that continue to oppress and brutalize them as well as people in their communities and around the world. YOUNG PEOPLE! We see you! We love you! Join in the struggle!

Against Police, Against Capitalism, Against Trump, Against Colonialism, Against Imperialism!

We are for the liberation of humans, and we need to fight beside and for the people who have been silenced. Radicalize your friends, your parents, your workplace. Take a stand. There is no more time to be on the fence.

Fuck Donald Trump.

<https://itsgoingdown.org/j20-olympia-wa-youth-take-streets/>

## We Don't Forget J20: Action Report Back from the Greater Seattle IWW General Defense Committee

Originally Posted 1/22/2018 at [ItsGoingDown.org](http://ItsGoingDown.org)

*This report back from the Seattle General Defense Committee (GDC) of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), details a rally that took place to commemorate a GDC member being shot by two Trump and Milo Yiannopoulos supporters a year before.*

January 20th, 2017 is a day that many of us remember as tumultuous, repressive, and traumatizing – a day that pointed towards an uncertain future full of certain struggle. It was on this day that neoliberal state actors both facilitated and supported the procedures and policies that allowed a molesting bigot on a populist fascistic platform take office in what is arguably the most highly-regarded seat of violently concentrated political power on Earth. It was a day that the protests against such a revolting spectacle led to the indiscriminate arrest of 188 protesters and journalists in Washington D.C. during the inauguration – a third of which still have charges that could result in decades behind bars hanging over their heads.

January 20th, 2017 was also a day of agony for the Greater Seattle IWW General Defense Committee as one of our own was nearly taken from us in an attempted murder by a supporter of bigot and former *Breitbart* editor, Milo Yiannopoulos, who was given a platform by the University of Washington to spew his vitriol in Kane Hall on campus that night. As he was attempting to deescalate a conflict during the protest, the gunshot that nearly killed our fellow worker and defender rang through the square that night, it tore into his partner, his family, his friends, and his

community, which has left wounds that may never heal and abundant scars to show for it.

A year later, members of the Greater Seattle General Defense Committee, the Seattle Industrial Workers of the World, and many more sympathetic leftist and radical hearts and minds, gathered to commemorate the events of that day one year ago, in both remembrance of what happened here in Seattle as well as across Turtle Island, to create catharsis as well as produce a resounding statement that made it clear that we don't forget. That we know and understand the threats we work around and within. That together, we are yet unafraid and that we do persevere stronger than ever.

The day's rally began at the very spot our fellow defender was shot. Revolution Staging amped the crowd up with a poignant playlist played over their loudspeakers. Speeches were made by many friends and comrades who were there that very day a year ago, letting loose against the UW administration, UWPD, the SPD pigs,



who murdered pregnant black mother Charleena Lyles last year, and the College Republicans – who quite intentionally set up a propaganda booth right across from the rally. What likely was thought by them as a coy chance to provocatively push their poison inevitably turned into an amplified and merciless roast of them and every form of oppressive ideal that they complicitly stand for and with. It is worth noting that standing with them that day was none other than Cascade Legion neo-Nazi leader, Christopher Robertson.

Despite the amusingly muted jeers and ignored attempts for pointless debate from the College Republicans, local musicians performed and the DJ blasted songs throughout the square. Not much later began a rousing march through the campus and down the University Avenue main thoroughfare. There was no shortage of visibility in a beautiful display of solidarity, strength, and life-giving disruption in an otherwise bleak world of manufactured order. The contingent returned to Red Square to disperse, marshals offered escorts to those leaving, all were accounted for, everyone safe this time – all had gone without a hitch, undoubtedly much to everyone's relief.

We hope to see in this coming year a defiant retort to any and all repression. That we cannot be held back, whether that's at the end of a gun or under a judge's gavel. We must work to produce truly liberatory avenues on which we can find solace from a world built on hierarchies, exploitation, and bigotry. We most certainly and most importantly must not forget.

<https://itsgoingdown.org/dont-forget-j20-action-report-back-greater-seattle-iww-general-defense-committee/>