

NEWS

200 protest Trump presidency in Lowell (SLIDESHOW)

By **BRENDAN LEWIS**UPDATED: July 11, 2019 at 12:00 AM EDT

LOWELL — In 1850, city residents were told to turn in escaped slaves or face arrest, but St. Anne's Church continued acting as a major stop on the Underground Railroad, using a “sub” sub-basement to hide fleeing slaves. UMass Lowell history professor Bob Farrant said residents called it out for what it was and resisted.

“The people of Lowell stood up and said nobody’s getting snatched in Lowell,” Farrant said from the front steps of City Hall. “And nobody got snatched.”

Just hours after the inauguration of 45th President of the United States, Donald Trump, more than 200 area residents gathered at outside City Hall to show the government that they are ready to resist once again.

The anti-Trump rally was organized by a young Facebook group called Solidarity of Lowell, which held a similar event in late November. Organizers say the group is serving as a sounding board for those that want to bring attention to the freedoms they feel will be curtailed under the Trump administration.

After several speakers finished at City Hall, the group, down to roughly 100, marched down Merrimack Street chanting anti-Trump messages such as, “Not my president!” or “No Trump, no KKK, no fascist USA,” drawing out car horns from every other passing vehicle.

Solidarity of Lowell organizer Danny Keating, of Nashua, said he hopes the rally will be a jumping off point for area residents who oppose President Trump but may not have gotten involved otherwise.

“We want people to know that there’s actually something to get involved in and we’re building a mass movement; not just people on the Internet complaining from home,” said Keating.

Tess George, communications director for the adjunct professors’ union at UMass Lowell, carried along a similar message when speaking before the crowd.

“Trump was inaugurated today,” said George. “We’re gonna stand up and we’re gonna fight. We’re gonna fight for democracy. We’re gonna fight for our community. We’re gonna fight for our children. We’re gonna fight for our country. We are going to stand up and resist, resist, resist.”

Lowell resident Aaron Tavares marched down Merrimack Street with the group and said he was there to show his will to fight the new president, especially on the issue of health care.

Tavares said Trump’s health-care plan will not be an improvement on Obamacare and will leave many Republicans, especially, with a bad taste in their mouth.

“People that voted Republican are just now waking up and realizing that their health care will be taken away. Red staters, that have been faithful to the party, are now feeling betrayed by the party,” said Tavares. “Freedoms are taken away more than they are given and we have seen that throughout history. The only way to stop it is to fight back.”

Most importantly, Keating said it’s crucial that area residents know that the rally was merely a beginning.

“This doesn’t end today. We exist and we are fully prepared to resist any and all attacks that we know will come down from this administration, whether they’re acting against immigrants or refugees, women’s rights or standards of living,” said Keating.

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2017 > January > 21