



WSLC's Johnson: We will heal by building a stronger movement

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(Nov. 9, 2016) — Jeff Johnson, President of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, issued the following statement this morning regarding the presidential election results:

Last night's election results have stunned the world. What has mostly seemed unbelievable over the past 18 months has happened. Our next president is a self-proclaimed misogynist, racist, and xenophobe who claims to be beyond public reproach.

While sinking into deep despair was probably the easiest thing to do while watching the election returns, two phone calls snapped me out of it. Both of my daughters called last night asking whether it is was really possible that we could elect a president who holds women and people of color in such low regard. They wanted to know what, if anything, we could do? Shaking off my own despair I complemented them both for having such strong values and for caring so much. I told them that now is the time to double-down on organizing for progressive social change. We will heal through building a movement for change that Bernie Sanders talks about and that Black Lives Matter talks about. To do anything less, is to give up on America and to give up on ourselves. I so wished that I could have been with them to give them a hug.



Jeff Johnson

As a labor movement, we are accustomed to political losses. More importantly we are used to struggling for everything that we have. Our history has been one of class struggle. For decades many working class voters and non-voters feel like they have been left behind. This is something that both Bernie and Trump tapped into, but offered different solutions — Bernie wanting to build a movement for change and Trump offering a strongman's cult of one.

Now, more than ever before, labor and community need to speak with one voice and act together. We need to stand up for union rights, for a woman's right to control her health decisions, for an end to gender inequality, for an end to police brutality and mass incarceration, for an end to systemic racism, for a fair share in the prosperity that workers create, and for climate justice that doesn't leave front-line workers and communities of color behind in the transition to a clean alternative energy economy.



We are being given an historic opportunity to pull together the various movements in our society. This is an opportunity we must take at the national, state and local levels. Everything is at stake and worth fighting for.