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Reflections on Morristown

Posted by [Amy Gottlieb](#) July 29, 2007 5:10PM

Yesterday I went to Morristown to participate in a silent vigil across the street from Town Hall.

At Town Hall were the protesters who had joined a rally organized by the Pro America Society in order to express support for local enforcement of immigration laws. Mayor Donald Cresitello, in the news recently for his proposal to deputize the Morristown police force to arrest immigrants, was one of the featured speakers.

I am not an inexperienced protester, but this is the first protest I have attended that was opposed to a group of people, rather than to a policy or political decision. The organizers state that they are not opposed to people; they are only supporting enforcement of existing laws.

That may be true. But why, then, were the speeches so incendiary, so angry? Why were the comments focused at Latino immigrants? Why did the protesters wave signs saying "Deport them all?"

I kept asking myself where the anger was coming from. What makes one person so angry at others? Why is it so hard to recognize the reasons that lead people to risk their lives crossing dangerous borders in order to provide for their families, or to understand that there is no legal way for people to get here?

At the vigil we wore white T-shirts spelling out the phrase "No Human Being is Illegal." As I listened to the speakers incite the crowd by talking about "illegal aliens" as rapists and murderers, I appreciated the power of being part of a human chain that silently disputed the claims

Holding hands with people who believe in humanity and the goodness of people helped me deal with my own anger that the state of the immigration debate has plunged to these unfortunate depths.