

Trump and Democratic governors, mayors ready National Guard and police for election night protests

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With four days until the November 3 election, state governors, local mayors and President Donald Trump are preparing for massive demonstrations by activating emergency operations centers, readying police forces at polling sites, and mobilizing National Guard soldiers and federal paramilitaries.

Trump's mobilization of thousands of soldiers and federal agents, including an unspecified number of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in Washington DC, is without precedent.

It is widely accepted that the official presidential victor will not be declared the night of the election, given that millions are voting by mail. However, Trump has repeatedly declared he believes the election should be decided on election night. This is to prevent the counting of mail-in ballots, which favor Democrats, and which Trump has baselessly attacked as fraudulent. To support this strategy, he may well invoke the Insurrection Act, deploy federal troops and mobilize fascist militias.

But Democratic leaders are also mobilizing forces for election night, not to challenge Trump, but to suppress demonstrations called in opposition to any attempted coup by Trump. This only strengthens Trump's hand.

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf called up hundreds of National Guard soldiers, ostensibly to quell protests against the police murder of 27-year-old Walter Wallace, Jr. on Monday. However, with the protests mostly subsided for now, the troops are not leaving. On Friday, the soldiers arrived and began to deploy in the city of Philadelphia as Democratic Mayor Jim Kenney imposed another 15-hour curfew, beginning at 9 p.m. Friday and lasting until 6 a.m. Saturday. As of this writing, Humvees, M-35 series 2.5-ton troop carriers

and uniformed soldiers carrying M-4 assault rifles are posted outside of City Hall and throughout downtown Philadelphia.

In an interview with CBS, Kenney stated that he hoped the presence of hundreds of soldiers would "provide calm and allow the police to go out and fight crime and arrest these people who are looting and destroying property." Neither the mayor nor Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Adam Thiel could say for certain how long the troops would be stationed in the city.

"That is going to be a flexible, also day-by-day deployment, solely to provide safety to our neighborhoods," Thiel said.

Roughly 300 soldiers with the Washington (state) National Guard have recently received "Military Assistance for Civil Disturbance Training." While Democratic Governor Jay Inslee has not yet officially activated the soldiers for the election, in a recent press conference he said, "We are considering a variety of ways, measures to make sure that we provide security, and I think we've got a good handle on that."

In Chicago, Democratic Mayor Lori Lightfoot announced on Friday that she had activated the city's emergency operations center for 10 days in preparation for the election. Lightfoot said that between 60 and 300 garbage trucks, salt spreaders, snowplows and water trucks were ready to be deployed to protect "commercial districts." While stating that there were no "credible threats" to the city and that Trump "is absolutely not going" to be allowed to deploy federal troops to the city, Lightfoot warned, "if we need to take more aggressive measures to protect the city... we will take those actions."

Republican, pro-Trump state governments are also preparing crackdowns. Earlier this week, a spokesperson for the Texas National Guard publicized that up to 1,000 soldiers would be deployed in as many as five cities beginning this weekend. Texas Governor Greg Abbott refused to disclose specifics as to why and where the soldiers were being deployed, stating during a Wednesday press conference, “Our job is to make sure that cities are going to be safe and along those lines we want to make sure that in the event that there are any protests after the elections are concluded, that we will have adequate personnel in place to make sure that we will be able to address any protests that could turn into riots.”

In Delaware, Iowa and Washington, an unspecified number of Guard soldiers will be tasked with providing “cybersecurity assistance.” During a Thursday news conference, Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate, flanked by representatives from the Department of Homeland Security, the Iowa National Guard and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, warned that “bad agents... sitting in Moscow or Beijing” were attempting to “create doubt in the minds of our voters and our citizens.”

Meanwhile, in Washington DC, where protests are ongoing following the death of Karon Hylton-Brown as a result of a police chase, two anonymous Department of Homeland Security officials confirmed with NBC that agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Federal Protective Services, and Customs and Border Protection (CPB) have been told to prepare to “protect federal property” in DC. These agents are part of the recently created Trump paramilitary force dubbed the “Protecting American Communities Task Force.”

Created via executive order in June in response to “anarchist and left-wing extremists,” the task force, which includes BORTAC thugs, was sent to Portland over the summer to kidnap and beat protesters outside the federal courthouse. Speaking to NBC, Chase Jennings, a DHS spokesperson, said the agency is “fully prepared regarding election night safety and security.”

Meanwhile, the ultra-wealthy in New York are preparing for election day by hiring off-duty police equipped with “submachine guns” to guard their multi-million-dollar penthouses and condos. According to a

source speaking with the *New York Post*, building managers, working in conjunction with the New York Police Department and DHS, are providing “officers with submachine guns.” The source added, “We’ve always had immense security, but there will be more. We’ll have extra patrols.”



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