

As millions prepare to demonstrate across the US against Trump's coup

## Marines are mobilized on LA streets, Florida Sheriff threatens to kill protesters

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13 June 2025

On the eve of nationwide protests on Saturday against the Trump administration's dictatorial measures, US Marines have been deployed against the residents of Los Angeles, joining National Guard troops. And as thousands of troops and scores of tanks and military helicopters are readied for Trump's birthday parade in Washington D.C., a law enforcement official in Florida has issued a deadly threat to anti-coup demonstrators.

These developments underscore the depth of the political crisis engulfing the US, as the Trump administration moves to suppress opposition to its drive to war and its anti-immigrant policies and assault on fundamental democratic rights.

Approximately 200 active-duty US Marines were deployed to Los Angeles on Friday and tasked with supporting local police and protecting federal facilities amid protests against Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids on workplaces and the detention of immigrant workers.

The Marines were stationed at the Wilshire Federal Building in downtown LA, a flashpoint for demonstrations for more than a week in solidarity with immigrants who are being detained by ICE.

The militarization of the city reached a new level when Marines carried out their first known detention of a civilian at the federal building on Friday afternoon. The US military confirmed the incident after Reuters published images of Marines apprehending a man, restraining his hands with zip ties and then handing him over to civilians from the Department of Homeland Security.

President Trump's decision to deploy both the National Guard and active-duty Marines to Los Angeles is unprecedented. The standard for deploying the military domestically is strictly limited by law. The president may only federalize the National Guard or deploy active-duty troops under specific circumstances, such as insurrection, rebellion, or the inability of local authorities to enforce the law—none of which exist in California, or anywhere else in the US.

California Governor Gavin Newsom filed a lawsuit challenging Trump's unilateral mobilization of the National Guard, arguing that the president had overstepped his authority and violated the Tenth Amendment by bypassing the state's consent. On Thursday, a federal judge ruled in favor of Newsom, ordering Trump to relinquish control of California's National Guard.

However, this judicial victory was short-lived. A three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals quickly blocked the order, allowing the deployment to continue pending further hearings. The

court's temporary ruling means that, for now, the National Guard and Marines remain on the streets of Los Angeles.

In any event, the Trump administration was unlikely to obey an unfavorable court order. In testimony before Congress, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth declared that local federal courts had no right to alter the government's "defense" or "national security" policy. He and other Trump officials have said they are prepared to deploy the military against anti-ICE protesters in other cities as well as Los Angeles.

While the administration claims it is acting to protect federal property, the use of active-duty troops for law enforcement functions—such as detaining civilians—violates longstanding legal prohibitions, including the Posse Comitatus Act, which bars the use of the military for domestic law enforcement.

Meanwhile, during a press conference on June 12, Brevard County, Florida Sheriff Wayne Ivey warned that his deputies would respond with lethal force to any perceived violence by demonstrators. He said:

If you hurl a brick, ignite a firebomb, or aim a firearm at one of our deputies, we will inform your family where to retrieve your remains, we will kill you, dead. We're not going to take any chances.

These remarks, which came as Florida officials were preparing for the mass protests on June 14, were condemned by the ACLU of Florida. The civil liberties organization denounced Ivey's "aggressive and inflammatory" statements as "profoundly un-American and unbecoming of an elected official tasked with public safety," warning that sheriffs could face substantial financial liability for excessive force against demonstrators.

Florida's Republican leadership has made clear its intention to support federal immigration enforcement and crack down on protests, with Governor Ron DeSantis touting the state's "anti-riot" law and vowing to prevent Florida from becoming "another California."

The *Wall Street Journal* on Friday reported that far-right militia groups aligned with Trump have been posting items on social media calling for deadly violence against protesters on Saturday. The *Journal* wrote:

“Shoot a couple, the rest will go home,” said a meme circulating on Telegram channels of groups affiliated with the far-right Proud Boys. “You just have to impale a few of them...” another local chapter posted. One disseminated an online gun tutorial, illustrating optimal shooting techniques with the caption: “Riot season again!”

The article continued:

One meme on Telegram this week, from a Proud Boy-affiliated group, depicts four armed men with shiny blue eyes wielding military weapons before an American flag. The meme declared, “HANG THE TRAITORS, EXPEL THE INVADERS.”

Trump pardoned leaders of fascist militia outfits such as the Proud Boys for their crimes related his January 6, 2021 attempted coup to overturn his election loss to Joe Biden. Earlier this week he said that any protesters at his Washington D.C. parade would be “met with very heavy force.”

Protesters who have taken to the streets to defend the constitutional rights of immigrants and oppose the administration’s authoritarian measures are now facing the full force of the repressive apparatus of the state.

All of this is unfolding on the eve of what is expected to be the largest wave of protests in the United States in decades. Under the banner “No Kings,” demonstrations have been called in over 2,000 cities and towns across the country for Saturday, coinciding with Trump’s 79th birthday and the massive military parade in Washington, D.C., nominally called to mark the 250th anniversary of the US Army.

The military parade in Washington will feature thousands of active-duty troops, including Army, Marine and National Guard units. Scores of tanks and armored vehicles will roll down Constitution Avenue, accompanied by multiple flyovers of military aircraft and the firing of artillery salutes.

The event, which Trump has billed as a celebration of American “strength,” is widely seen as an attempt to intimidate the population and demonstrate that the military is loyal to the would-be Führer Donald Trump above everything else, including the US Constitution.

In response to these developments, the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) has issued a statement to all those attending the June 14 protests, titled “Mobilize the working class against Trump’s dictatorship.”

The statement denounces the Democrats’ refusal to mount any serious opposition to Trump’s coup, highlighting their complicity in the attacks on immigrants and protesters. It specifically references the attack on Democratic Senator Alex Padilla, who was pushed to the floor and handcuffed by federal police while attempting to question Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem during a press conference in Los Angeles—a clear demonstration of the administration’s contempt for constitutional norms and the rule of law.

While Democrats have issued tearful complaints, they have avoided any call for Trump’s resignation or for mass action by working people to stop his coup against the Constitution and democratic rights.

The SEP statement draws a direct connection between the repression

of immigrants and protesters at home and the administration’s drive toward war abroad, particularly the military campaign by Israel against Iran, which has been openly supported by Trump. “The attack on immigrants and the suppression of protest are inseparable from the preparations for a wider war in the Middle East,” the statement declares. “The working class must unite across national lines to stop this descent into dictatorship and militarism.”

On Friday, protests erupted outside the ICE detention facility at Delaney Hall in Newark, New Jersey, where demonstrators surrounded the building in solidarity with detainees. Amid the chaos, two inmates managed to escape, citing the deplorable conditions inside the facility as their motivation.

Delaney Hall, operated by a private security company under contract with the Department of Homeland Security, has been repeatedly criticized for overcrowding, lack of medical care, and abusive treatment of detainees. The escape has further fueled demands for the closure of ICE detention centers and an end to the administration’s mass deportation campaign.

The events of the past week demonstrate that the US has moved into its most serious political crisis since the Civil War. The Trump administration’s resort to military force, its open defiance of judicial authority, and its campaign of repression against immigrants and protesters are the outcome of a protracted crisis of American democracy.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* has consistently analyzed, the emergence of a financial oligarchy whose staggering wealth and power are incompatible with democratic rights is driving the realignment of political relations in the United States. The vast inequality that defines capitalist society finds its political expression in the turn to dictatorship.

The Socialist Equality Party calls for the immediate withdrawal of all military and police forces from the streets, the release of all detained protesters and immigrants, the abolition of ICE, and the prosecution of those responsible for the illegal use of military force against civilians. The SEP insists that only the independent mobilization of the working class, uniting all sections of the population—native-born and immigrant, black, white, and Latino—can stop the Trump dictatorship and defend democratic rights.

The SEP urges all readers to sign up for and attend the online meeting on Sunday, June 15, at 4 p.m., “Trump’s Coup and How to Stop It,” to discuss the urgent steps required to stop Trump’s coup and defend democratic rights.



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