

# Military operation in Los Angeles signals escalation of fascist methods

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On Monday, 90 National Guard troops and dozens of federal agents descended on MacArthur Park in Los Angeles in a military-style operation that marks a turning point in the use of armed force against the American working class.

Codenamed Operation Excalibur, the assault was a coordinated and rehearsed domestic military deployment. Internal Army documents, leaked and published by journalist Ken Klippenstein, expose the federal government's growing use of militarized force to intimidate and suppress immigrant and working class communities under the pretense of "security" and "law enforcement." The leaked documents included an assessment of collateral damage, given the high population density of the area.

Video taken by witnesses and outraged community members showed heavily armed federal agents, with police assistance, blocking off streets around the park as masked, militarized immigration squads marched through, sending children and caregivers fleeing in panic. Soldiers with the California National Guard's 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment were seen on foot, horseback and in military vehicles.

According to the leaked documents, at least 11 different federal and state agencies participated in the operation, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); Customs and Border Protection (CBP); Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), including Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO); the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); the Federal Protective Service (FPS); Homeland Security Investigations (HSI); the U.S. Marshals Service; the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD); and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD).

Developments in Los Angeles represent a critical front in a nationwide operation. The systematic conspiracy to establish a presidential dictatorship in the United States is rapidly advancing, with Trump using federal security forces to reshape the political landscape.

What is unfolding is a calculated and ongoing coup d'état, an attempt to replace the existing constitutional order with an authoritarian framework of class rule, enforced through repression, fear, and the normalization of military intervention

in civilian life.

MacArthur Park—often likened to a West Coast Ellis Island—is a symbol of immigrant life and survival in Los Angeles. The area is home to thousands of workers, many undocumented, who fled the devastation wrought by US imperialist wars and CIA-backed counterinsurgency operations in Central America. It is no accident that this working class neighborhood, steeped in the legacy of US interventionism and mass migration, was chosen as the staging ground for a major federal security operation.

According to the leaked military briefings, the mission of the 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment was to "provide static interagency site protection, mounted mobile security, and Joint Force Land Component Command (JFLCC) Reserve support to Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and supporting federal agencies."

The stated goal was not enforcement of any specific law or the pursuit of a concrete threat, but simply to demonstrate "the capacity and freedom of maneuver of federal law enforcement within the Los Angeles Joint Operations Area (JOA)." In other words, this was a show of force, a warning, a rehearsal.

The Trump administration is working to undermine the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, the key law preventing military involvement in domestic policing without explicit constitutional or congressional approval. Intended to uphold civilian authority, the Act is being eroded as federal officials increasingly refer to protests in Los Angeles and other cities as an "insurrection," laying the ideological groundwork for military intervention—even as they have so far refrained from formally invoking the Insurrection Act of 1807.

Despite the media coverage framing the operation as a "botched raid" and giving undeserved credit to the intervention of Mayor Karen Bass in clearing the area, every element was militarily conceived and coordinated across nine federal agencies.

Troops in 5-ton trucks lined the park. Phase lines and communication protocols were established. A threat level of "HIGH" was issued, referencing the supposed presence of MS-13, which the documents described as considering the park its "home turf."

The role of imperialism in the emergence of MS-13 itself was

a determining factor. The gang was not born in El Salvador but in Los Angeles in the 1980s—particularly in the neighborhoods around MacArthur Park—as a response to gang violence targeting newly arrived Salvadoran immigrants.

These immigrants were fleeing a civil war funded and fueled by over \$1 billion in US military aid, including arms, training and political support for a blood-soaked military dictatorship.

Though Operation Excalibur was ultimately cut short—“We were on the objective for 24 minutes,” one Guardsman admitted—the fact remains that it unfolded as a fully choreographed military drill on domestic soil, despite some of the “phase lines” not being executed due to communication failures.

But the planning itself reflects a shift in the posture of the American state: from police raids to coordinated military operations within major cities. The architecture of military counterinsurgency used in Kabul, Baghdad or Gaza is now being prepared in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago.

Significantly, local authorities were given only two hours’ notice before the troops arrived. Even more revealing were the responses from the National Guard soldiers themselves. Many described the operation as “idiotic,” “shameful,” and “politically motivated.” They questioned orders, groaned at the suggestion of wearing ICE-style face masks, and pushed back against the idea of establishing a permanent “forward operating base” in the park—a proposal floated by military leadership in earlier briefings.

These comments should not be underestimated. They represent the first cracks in the state’s repressive machinery. As with the Russian Revolution of 1917, when soldiers began to break ranks with the tsarist regime and sided with the workers and peasants, today’s disaffection among American troops points to the potential for deeper ruptures. It reveals a system in decay, forced to use the military against its own population, and increasingly unable to count on the unquestioning obedience of the rank and file.

The role of the Democratic Party in this crisis must be bluntly stated. Governor Gavin Newsom commented: “I want folks to know that we have your back and do what we can to protect our diverse communities,” and “to push back against these cruelties.” Mayor Karen Bass made a show of rushing to the park to demand federal forces leave, declaring the operation “unacceptable.”

But both Newsom and Bass are complicit. They have both postured as defenders of immigrant rights while overseeing policies that criminalize immigrants and defund essential services. The latest California budget slashes billions from Medi-Cal, stripping undocumented adults of access to healthcare. The state’s so-called “sanctuary” laws are riddled with loopholes that allow continued cooperation with ICE. Their feigned outrage is a cynical attempt to preserve political credibility while remaining loyal servants of capital.

Monday’s sweep came just days after President Trump signed

a federal budget that pours billions into immigration enforcement and detention. Already, more than 1,600 immigrants have been arrested in Los Angeles alone between June 6 and June 22. These actions are part of a nationwide campaign of intimidation designed to terrorize immigrant workers and whip up fascistic layers of the population.

But resistance is already emerging, as evinced by the 11-million-strong “No Kings” protests on June 14. Moreover, on the morning of the operation, locals had advance warning and plastered flyers around the neighborhood alerting immigrant workers. Dozens of protesters trailed the troops, waving Mexican and Salvadoran flags. Their presence signaled not just opposition to ICE, but to the entire militarized regime now taking shape.

The defense of immigrant workers cannot be left to the political establishment, which has repeatedly proven its hostility to the working class. It must be taken up by the working class itself. The immigrant worker is not a “special interest” to be protected, but the brother and sister of every worker in the United States. Their repression is the testing ground for broader assaults on democratic rights, wages and conditions.

What is required now is not appeals to the Democratic Party and its pseudo-left hangers-on, or reliance on the courts, but the development of a conscious, independent political movement of the working class, based on socialist principles and international solidarity. The attack on immigrants is part of a global offensive by capitalist governments to offload the crisis of the system onto the backs of workers. From Los Angeles to Paris to Santiago to Johannesburg, the enemy is the same.

The first step must be the organization of rank-and-file committees in workplaces, neighborhoods, schools and hospitals to expose and oppose the repressive operations of the state. These committees must lay the groundwork for a nationwide general strike, uniting all sections of the working class—immigrants and citizens, union and non-union, public and private sector—in a collective struggle against austerity, war and authoritarianism.

Operation Excalibur is a warning. The question is not whether the ruling class is preparing for war against the working class. That preparation is already underway. The crucial question is how the working class will respond with the organization, consciousness and political leadership necessary to fight back.



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