

Armed National Guard troops to begin patrols in Washington, D.C.

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Mississippi became the fourth Republican-ruled state to send National Guard troops to Washington, D.C., with Republican Governor Tate Reeves ordering 200 soldiers of the Mississippi National Guard to head to the US capital in response to an appeal from President Donald Trump.

The military occupation of Washington has taken on an unheard-of partisan character, with troops under Republican control entering the city, with no Democratic-run states contributing soldiers. Mississippi joins South Carolina, West Virginia and Ohio in sending hundreds of troops apiece, bringing the total deployment to 900 out-of-state soldiers, together with 800 in the D.C. National Guard, which is under Trump's direct control as president.

Echoing Trump's lies about a runaway "crime wave" in Washington, Governor Reeves issued a statement justifying the Mississippi deployment, declaring, "Crime is out of control there, and it's clear something must be done to combat it ... Americans deserve a safe capital city that we can all be proud of."

Reeves was silent on the fact that Mississippi ranks 49th out of the 50 states in terms of violent crime, with only neighboring Louisiana worse. Both states are deeply impoverished, with education and other public services ranked among the worst in the country, all factors that, as in the poorest sections of the US capital, contribute to crime.

The political symbolism of Mississippi and South Carolina sending troops to Washington, D.C. is hard to miss. These two states were among the initiators of the slaveholders' revolt that led to secession and the establishment of the Confederate States of America in 1861. South Carolina was the first state to secede, while Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was named president of the Confederacy, holding that post

throughout the Civil War.

Given the restoration of Confederate names to US military bases across the South since Trump re-entered the White House in January, one could justify asking what flag the South Carolina and Mississippi troops were flying as they entered the capital of the United States.

The Mississippi deployment was followed by a statement from an unidentified Trump administration official that National Guard troops would begin carrying weapons, in addition to the body armor they have been wearing since they arrived in the city. "National Guard is not making arrests at this time," the official said, according to press reports, but they "may be armed, consistent with their mission and training, to protect federal assets, provide a safe environment for law enforcement officers to make arrests, and deter violent crime with a visible law enforcement presence."

Uniformed troops have been stationed at federal buildings, including the White House, the Capitol and the city's major monuments, as well as at federal properties like the Mall, but have not yet been sent into commercial or residential areas of Washington.

Agents mobilized by various federal departments, including the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security, began sweeps through residential neighborhoods over the weekend, including the deeply impoverished portion of the city east of the Anacostia River.

Attorney General Pam Bondi boasted in a social media posting, "Just this weekend, 137 arrests were made and 21 illegal firearms were seized. In total, there have been nearly 400 arrests—and we are not slowing down."

There have been frequent protests by local residents over police attacks, particularly those carried out by

masked federal agents in immigrant neighborhoods. According to Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 40 percent of the arrests made since Trump ordered the crackdown August 11 have been of undocumented immigrants. This underscores the “big lie” character of Trump’s claim that he is ridding the District of crime, since the main target is immigrant workers.

Reinforcing this characterization is the fact that Trump’s top fascist adviser, Deputy White House Chief of Staff Stephen Miller, was seen at D.C. police headquarters Friday, “surveying the department that President Donald Trump had declared to be under federal control,” the *Washington Post* reported.

The article continued: “Miller’s presence at D.C. police headquarters showed how rapidly the White House has become embedded in the machinery of local law enforcement in the nation’s capital. And it highlighted how much the first week of the federal takeover has focused on the topic he has directed most intensely: immigration enforcement.”

Miller appeared on Fox News on Saturday, bragging that federal officials had targeted more than 70 homeless encampments that “scarred and disfigured the public streets.” Homeless people and immigrants have been the two main targets of the initial police sweeps through the city.

Another *Post* report underscores the bullying character of these sweeps: “The federal show of force the past week was indeed at times overwhelming—as Trump had promised it would be. On Wednesday night, more than a dozen FBI agents rolled up to Washington Circle, flanked by more D.C. police, and roused a few homeless people from a tent who were already planning to clear out in a few days on city orders and were befuddled by all the fuss.”

It is worth recalling that two years ago, Trump was indicted by a federal grand jury comprised of Washington residents for conspiring to overturn his defeat in the 2020 presidential election with the assault by an armed mob of his supporters on the US Capitol on January 6, 2021. That remains the largest outbreak of violence in Washington, D.C. in more than 50 years. At the time, Trump vilified the city as “FILTHY, DIRTY, FALLING APART, & VERY UNSAFE,” and he clearly bears a continuing grudge against the city’s residents for that indictment.

The intensification of the police-military mobilization

continued as the leaders of many European governments arrived in Washington Monday for a series of meetings with Trump at the White House. Trump, Miller & Co. clearly relish welcoming their guests to a capital city where troops and armored vehicles are on display, visible through the windows of the White House.

The Democratic Party has done little or nothing to oppose the show of force in Washington. Mayor Muriel Bowser has instructed the city’s police department to cooperate with its new masters, even meeting with Attorney General Bondi to work out the details. Democratic state governors have not sent troops, but congressional Democrats have confined themselves to brief statements that convey impotence and resignation rather than genuine opposition.

There have been no calls from either leading Democrats or the trade unions for popular protests, and certainly not for strike action that could quickly disable federal operations in Washington and challenge the Trump administration’s increasingly open erection of a police state.



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