

Trump orders military paychecks as troops move into cities

Patrick Martin
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The White House announced Sunday that all US soldiers will receive their full paychecks on October 15 despite the federal shutdown, after President Trump instructed Secretary of War Pete Hegseth to shift funds within the Pentagon budget.

All other employees of the federal government are either furloughed or working without pay because of the partial shutdown after the new fiscal year began October 1 without congressional passage of a budget.

Trump's action has two, interrelated and deeply sinister purposes. He wishes to insure against any discontent within the ranks of the military as he deploys thousands of soldiers into American cities in a step-by-step coup. And he wants the paychecks delivered before the October 18 "No Kings" protests, widely expected to be the largest-ever demonstrations against his drive to establish a presidential dictatorship.

According to the White House Office of Management and Budget, which is spearheading the permanent layoff of thousands of federal workers, the money is coming from \$8 billion in unspent Pentagon funds for research and development.

In a social media post Saturday, Trump said he would use his "authority, as Commander in Chief, to direct our Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, to use all available funds to get our Troops PAID on October 15th." He later posted, "We have identified funds to do this, and Secretary Hegseth will use them to PAY OUR TROOPS."

The Pentagon funds will be shifted if the partial federal shutdown continues through Wednesday, as is expected. In that case, 2 million civilian federal workers will receive no pay, while 1.3 million uniformed military will receive their full pay.

The Republican-controlled House of Representatives has passed a continuing resolution that would extend

the budget deadline from October 1 to November 22, but Senate Democrats blocked the bill's passage through a filibuster, demanding that Trump and the Republicans agree to restore health insurance premium subsidies for millions of people enrolled under the Affordable Care Act.

While neither the White House nor the Pentagon acknowledged this explicitly, the full paychecks for soldiers will also apply to National Guard troops who have been federalized for deployment in Washington D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles and Portland, Oregon, including troops from Illinois and Texas who are now at a training facility outside Chicago. All federalized National Guard troops are paid out of the Pentagon budget, not the budget of the state from where they come.

The decision to pay the troops on time comes amid increasingly hysterical denunciations of the upcoming October 18 "No Kings" protests by Republican congressional leaders and state governors, with demands that the National Guard be mobilized against the protesters in Washington D.C. and in other cities.

On Friday, Speaker Mike Johnson and House Majority Leader Steve Scalise smeared the demonstrators as "Hamas supporters" and "terrorists" who were carrying out the wishes of Antifa. House Majority Whip Tom Emmer called October 18 a "Hate America" rally, although the previous "No Kings" protests, on June 14, brought an estimated 5 to 11 million people onto the streets in a massive but entirely peaceful show of opposition to Trump.

The response from leading Democrats was tepid at best. Senator Bernie Sanders, who is scheduled to be a speaker at an October 18 rally, issued a brief statement on Facebook declaring that the protests would be "Love America" rallies. But he did acknowledge that those

who participated were opposed to Trump's drive to "turn this country into an authoritarian society."

As in his other statements on this subject, however, Sanders proposed no action outside of verbal protest. He did not suggest that Trump and Vice President Vance should be impeached and removed from office, let alone any action by working people, leading up to and culminating in a general strike. Like all the Democrats, Sanders is committed to the defense of the profit system and the capitalist state machine that upholds the interests of the financial oligarchy.

While National Guard troops are on the streets of Washington D.C. and in Memphis, Tennessee, where the state's Republican Governor Bill Lee deployed nearly 200 soldiers at Trump's request, the troop deployments in Portland and Chicago have been delayed by court orders.

A federal appeals court allowed Trump to federalize 200 Oregon National Guard soldiers but barred him from deploying them in Portland, declaring that the president's repeated claims that the city is being burned down by antifa terrorists was "untethered to the facts."

Trump has made use of videos generated by fascist provocateurs masquerading as "journalists," who pick fights with protesters peacefully demonstrating outside the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facility in Portland. On Wednesday, Trump invited several of these fascists to the White House for his "summit" meeting on the supposed threat of antifa, which does not even exist as an organization.

In Chicago, a federal appeals court issued a ruling similar to that in Oregon, allowing 200 troops from the Texas National Guard, as well as 300 federalized Illinois National Guard troops, to remain at a training facility outside the city, but barring their deployment on the streets. The court cited the likelihood that the presence of the troops would be inflammatory.

The appeals court effectively rebuffed the Trump administration's claim that a lower court judge had "impermissibly second-guessed the Commander in Chief's military judgments." But it allowed the Texas troops to stay in Illinois, declaring, "Members of the National Guard do not need to return to their home states unless further ordered by a court to do so."

A representative of the US Northern Command, which controls all federal military operations within the borders of the United States, said the troops sent to

Portland and Chicago are "not conducting any operational activities at this time."

Trump has also proposed to send troops to New Orleans, as well as to other cities in California besides Los Angeles. Significantly, billionaire Democrat Marc Benioff, co-founder of Salesforce.com and owner of *Time* magazine, issued an appeal for Trump to send troops to San Francisco, claiming the police department was too understaffed to preserve "law and order."

Under the Posse Comitatus Act, however, the US military cannot be used as a substitute or supplement for local police. The only exception is when the president invokes the Insurrection Act of 1807, based on a total breakdown of local and state authorities, which Trump has openly threatened to do over the past two weeks.

At a meeting with his Cabinet of fascist flatterers on Thursday, Trump repeated the lies that he has voiced with increasing frequency to justify invoking the Insurrection Act. "We're directly confronting the sinister threat of left-wing domestic terrorism or violence," he said. "Antifa is out of control in Portland and other places."

In an appearance Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press," Vice President JD Vance said that Trump was "still considering" whether to invoke the Insurrection Act, clearly holding it over the heads of Democratic mayors and governors to demand further collaboration with Trump's drive to military rule.



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