



Protesters walk down the Ben Franklin Parkway after the “No Kings” protest on Saturday in Philadelphia. YONG KIM The Philadelphia Inquirer/TNS

Trump marks Army’s founding; his critics take to the streets

BY DAVID E. SANGER
NYT News Service/Syndicate Stories

President Donald Trump presided over a show of American military might in the nation’s capital Saturday evening, a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Army that became a test of wills and competing imagery, with demonstrators around the country decrying his expansion of executive power.

Trump sat in a reviewing stand on Constitution Avenue as armored vehicles dating from two world wars and overflights of 80-year-old bombers and modern helicopters shook downtown Washington. The city was locked down, divided by a wall of tall, black crowd-control fences designed to assure that the parade, the first of its kind since U.S. troops returned from the Gulf War in 1991, was an uninterrupted demonstration of history and American power.

It went off without a hitch, but also without even a nod to the current moment. When Trump left his seat between his wife, Melania Trump, and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, it was to swear in new soldiers – “Have a great life,” he told them after the brief ceremony – and then, at sundown, to recall the Army’s greatest moments.

He invoked George Washington and recalled Gettysburg. Yet he spoke more to the Army’s power than to its purpose. “Time and again, America’s enemies have learned that you threaten the American people, soldiers are coming for you. Your defeat will be certain, your demise will be final, and your downfall will be total and complete.”

Hours before he left the White House, the day had already encapsulated the sharpness of America’s divide over immigration, free speech and Trump’s determination to reshape the government, universities and cultural institutions to adopt his worldview.

By design, military parades are part national celebration and part international intimidation, and Trump has wanted one in Washington since he attended a Bastille Day parade in Paris in 2017. Formally, the parade cele-



President Donald Trump salutes the troops marching past during the U.S. Army's 250th Anniversary Parade along the National Mall in Washington on Saturday. DOUG MILLS NYT

brates the decision by the 2nd Continental Congress on June 14, 1775, to raise a unified, lightly armed force of colonialists after the shock of the battles with British forces at Lexington and Concord. That army, which George Washington took command of a month later, ultimately expelled the far larger, better armed colonial force.

But no celebration of history takes place in a political vacuum. And protesters in large cities and small towns from Seattle to Key West, Florida, showed up in overwhelmingly peaceful demonstrations against how Trump was making use of the modern force. His decisions over the past week to federalize the National Guard and call Marines into the streets of Los Angeles, in support of his immigration roundups, have supercharged a debate about whether he is abusing the powers of the commander in chief.

It was a split-screen show of force. Roughly 2,000 protests, under the slogan “No Kings,” pushed back against what the crowds decried as authoritarian overreach. While big-city rallies attracted the attention and the cameras, smaller events were organized in rural areas, including three dozen in Indiana, a state Trump won last November by 19 points.

In Dallas, another stronghold of Trump’s support, crowds of protesters stretched across a wide street for at least five blocks. The Houston protest looked more like a block party, with dances to Mexican music and cool-offs in a fountain.

But in Los Angeles, which has seen a week of demonstrations, car-burnings and episodic violence,

a large crowd gathered downtown, spreading over several city blocks. As the evening wore on and an 8 p.m. curfew approached, tensions rose, with police using chemical irritants in an attempt to disperse some protesters from a complex of federal buildings and officers on horseback charging toward groups of others and swinging their batons to break them up.

Back in Washington, organizers of the America250 events, for which this is the first big production, sold a “dedicated VIP experience” to large donors, and red MAGA hats to the president’s supporters. It is also Trump’s 79th birthday, though he has insisted the celebration was about the Army, not him. Organizers expected veterans of the Korea and Vietnam conflicts to turn out, along with those who fought in Afghanistan and Iraq, two wars that Trump – and many Democrats – have declared were wastes of lives and money.

Trump has defended the spending of as much as \$45 million – including the cost of repairing Washington’s streets from the damage expected from rolling 60-ton tanks down Constitution Avenue – as a small price to pay to stoke national pride and to remind the world of America’s hard power. He told an interviewer on NBC last month that the price tag was “peanuts compared to the value of doing it.”

“We have the greatest missiles in the world,” he continued. “We have the greatest submarines in the world. We have the greatest Army tanks in the world. We have the greatest weapons in the world. And we’re going to celebrate it.”

To some of Trump’s

critics, it was conduct unbecoming a superpower. In the first Trump term, that view was shared by military leaders who dissuaded him from replicating the French show of force. They have since been ousted, replaced by true believers like Hegseth.

Every minute was broadcast on Fox News and other conservative networks and streaming services, while the legacy cable networks kept to their ordinary programming. One Fox broadcaster declared the parade showed that “America means business,” and another argued that the show of force rolling alongside the Mall would provide “succor to our allies” and “strike a little bit of fear and a little bit of deterrence” into U.S. enemies.

But in the run-up to the parade, Trump’s critics argued that such a display could do just the opposite, making the country look as if it were yearning for past glories while ignoring the risks of treating allies as if they are a burden.

Trump’s political advisers bet that half the country or more would enjoy watching the display of Army history, from the World War I tanks to the twin-prop B-25 Mitchells that swept over neighborhoods in northwest Washington on their way to the flyover, as much as Trump’s ever-evolving definition of what “America First” means to his presidency. Parades are pure showmanship, and Trump is the master showman.

Yet a military parade is also an unvarnished celebration of America’s hard power, even if this one was dominated by huge equipment, like the M-1 Abrams tank, that seems antiquated in an age of drones and cyberweapons. (Of the 31 Abrams tanks given to Ukraine over the past two years, only a handful remain operational; most were taken out by the Russians or sidelined by breakdowns.)

And it comes at a moment the administration has been ridiculing as wasteful such efforts as providing global aid, battling HIV or backing basic research at universities that Trump has gone to war against. The parade’s estimated cost will amount to about one-fifth of the annual budget of the Voice of America, which had millions of listeners around the world until Trump took it off the air this spring.

The protests, which organizers deliberately kept outside Washington to avoid focusing more attention on the military celebration, had been planned for many weeks as opposition to the administration’s efforts to dismiss expert opinion, oust the “deep state” and silence critics have mounted.

Trump’s decision to move 4,000 National Guard troops and 700 Marines into Los Angeles asserted a role for the military at home, which was exactly what had given the Continental Congress pause about creating a colonial army at all. That same concern, 250 years later, was expected to give the weekend protests mass and weight. They were further fueled by Trump’s speech at Fort Bragg in North Carolina last week, when he lumped peaceful protesters with “troublemakers, agitators, insurrectionists” and later said anyone protesting in Washington would be met with “very big force.”



Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy speaks to the media during a press briefing in Kyiv, Ukraine, on June 4, amid the Russian invasion in Ukraine. TETIANA DZHAFAROVA AFP/TNS

Zelenskyy says US ‘decisiveness’ key to pressuring Putin

BY DARYNA KRASNOLUTSKA AND KATERYNA CHURSINA
Bloomberg News

Ukraine needs clarity from the U.S. about steps to put pressure on Russia toward a ceasefire, since European support hinges on it, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said ahead of the G7 meeting in Canada, where he hopes to meet President Donald Trump.

The Ukrainian leader spoke before another swap of prisoners with Russia, the main tangible outcome of recent bilateral talks in Turkey.

“I very much want Trump to take strong steps,” Zelenskyy told reporters in Kyiv late Friday. “It’s important for us that Trump stops Putin with sanctions and other steps. This will give a signal to all of Europe, everyone will unite, and we will have this chance.”

Absent sanctions or other steps by the U.S., “it will be very difficult for us,” Zelenskyy said. “American decisiveness” is the key to ending Russia’s war in Ukraine, now well into its fourth year, he added.

European allies haven’t decided whether they can fully support Ukraine without a backstop from the U.S., Zelenskyy said.

The sense that Washington is wavering on its commitment to push for a peace plan has, in turn, slowed down the work of Europe’s Coalition of the Willing allied nations, he said.

“When Europe thinks for a long time, they talk a lot between themselves and doubts appear,” the Ukrainian leader said.

U.S. and Ukrainian teams are working to set up a meeting with Trump at G7 summit in the Canadian Rockies, Zelenskyy said. He hopes to discuss weapon purchases, peace talks, sanctions and economic cooperation between Ukraine and the U.S.

The annual gathering of world leaders started Sunday night and runs through Tuesday.

Kyiv is also talking to U.S. weapons producers directly about purchases, he said.

Ukraine wants to have the commitment of a foreign security contingent on site after any ceasefire with Moscow, saying it will strengthen Kyiv’s negotiating hand.

Looking ahead to potential talks with Russia, Zelenskyy said Ukraine doesn’t have the resources to restore its 1991 borders – and that is its compromise.

He reiterated the idea that if a temporary ceasefire is in place, all disputes can be settled via negotiations. But without foreign security in Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin will continue with maximalist demands, he said.

Zelenskyy expects the current round of prisoner swaps with Russia to be completed around June 20 or June 21.

Ukrainian ground forces continue to face expanding pressure, Zelenskyy said, with Sumy in the north and the Kremlin push toward central Dnipropetrovsk region Russia’s current priority.

Russia has stationed some 53,000 servicemen near the Sumy region, making incursions of as much as 7 kilometers (4 miles) into Ukrainian territory, he said.

Regarding potential threats when Russia starts joint military drills in Belarus in September, Zelenskyy cited Ukrainian intelligence implying that Belarus and Russia will try to avoid border proximity in the first instance.

Zelenskyy hopes to raise the issue of price caps on Russian oil and broader sanctions on Russian energy with Trump, especially after this week’s exchange of air strikes between Israel and Iran pushed oil prices up sharply.

BIRTHDAYS: JUNE 16



Britannica

Biographical information from June 16 is from Encyclopaedia Britannica. Explore more at [britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com).

- Tupac Shakur**, American rapper and actor (b. 1971).
- Roberto Durán**, Panamanian boxer (b. 1951).
- Joyce Carol Oates**, American author (b. 1938).
- Jack Albertson**, American actor (b. 1907).
- Stan Laurel**, actor and comedian (b. 1890).

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