

5,500 National Guard Troops Deployed in 32 States Over Coronavirus Outbreak



US: The deployment of 5,500 National Guard is said to help clean and disinfect public spaces, assist at medical testing facilities, support Emergency Operations Centers, provide logistic support and personal protective equipment training, and sample collection. Unspoken is the obvious fact that the soldiers also can be used to enforce quarantines and, if necessary, martial law. -GEG

Nearly 5,500 Air and Army National Guard troops have been deployed in 32 states because of the coronavirus outbreak.

The deployment is said to be to help clean and disinfect public spaces, assist at medical testing facilities, support Emergency Operations Centers, provide logistic support and personal protective equipment training and sample collection.

“National Guard members work and live in every community across the nation and have a proven track record of success supporting civilian authorities after homeland emergencies,” spokesperson for the National Guard told *The Hill*.

The Hill reports that when asked if the White House could federalize the Guard to respond to the illness, National Guard

Bureau Chief Gen. Joseph Lengyel told reporters that President Trump could do so if desired, but that such a move “would not make sense in this situation.”

“Every state has a different way to deal with disasters. If you were to federalize [the Guard], you would lose that ability,” he said.

The US now has an emergency declaration in every state, territory and the District of Columbia.

In California, Gov. Gavin Newsom has deployed the state’s National Guard to assist at food banks. He has said that he will be using them for both humanitarian and public safety needs.

Mississippi is using their National Guard to distribute supplies and possibly helping to set up and support drive-thru COVID-19 screening facilities.

General Joseph Lengyel, Chief of the National Guard, took to social media to combat rumors of martial law or a nationwide lockdown, tweeting “I hear unfounded rumors about #NationalGuard troops supporting a nationwide quarantine. Let me be clear: There has been no such discussion.”

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