

Part 1 – Democratic governance at stake

- Trump declared a state of emergency in Washington despite crime having recently declined (Student 3, CNN, Aug.12, 2025).
 - He federalized the DC police and deployed troops, bypassing the 1973 Home Rule Act (Student 4, NPR, Aug.20, 2025).
 - Cartoon: “To Serve and Distract” slogan highlights misuse of power for political distraction.
 - White House post: frames the intervention as heroic law-and-order leadership.
 - At stake: whether federal authority protects democracy or erodes it under the guise of strength.
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Part 2 – Civil liberties and community trust endangered

- Residents in poorer neighborhoods report feeling “under siege” from checkpoints, raids, and stop-and-frisk (Student 2, ABC, Sept.2, 2025).
 - Immigrants especially vulnerable: ICE arrests in schools and churches (Student 2, ABC, Sept.2, 2025).
 - Short-term drop in crime acknowledged by mayor, but civil rights sacrificed.
 - Cartoon: “Epstein files” left scattered—symbol of ignored justice while heavy policing dominates.
 - White House post: celebrates visible crackdowns as success, masking real costs to rights and trust.
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Part 3 – America’s political future being tested

- Trump portrays DC as crisis zone to appeal to his base and distract from failures (Student 3, CNN, Aug.12, 2025).
- Military vehicles at the Washington Monument symbolize authoritarian performance (Student 1, CNN, Aug.13, 2025).
- Cartoon: crackdown as deliberate distraction, diverting attention from scandals.
- White House post: turns distraction into spectacle of strength.
- At stake: not just democracy and civil liberties, but the survival of truth against politics of showmanship.