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L.A. is Burning



Image by Ted Griswold.

Isn't this what many of us have been waiting for? It is indeed. Coordinated protests against Trump, ICE, and the war that has targeted immigrants who have kept the economy going and kept themselves alive in the belly of the beast.

L.A. was on fire and burning earlier this year. Neighborhoods were destroyed. It's on fire and burning again. And so are cities around the country, from San Francisco to New York and from Chicago to Atlanta. America is burning. The United States is on fire. Wherever there are

undocumented workers and wherever there are citizens opposed to tyranny and the assault on civil rights and civil liberties, there has been civil unrest.

The only real violence has been the violence of law enforcement officers who have confronted the crowds of largely peaceful protestors. It isn't the civil war that has been predicted for years, but it sure feels like it's another step toward civil war. It's what Trump has wanted and still wants.

No matter what happens in the streets of America in the days and weeks ahead, he will pursue his goal of imposing absolute authority over the citizens of this nation. And no matter how many police officers and soldiers are in the streets and no matter how many people are arrested, it seems likely that protests will go on.

No one from outside our borders will come to our aid, though citizens from Paris to Hong Kong, and from Mexico City to Gaza and Ukraine, will add their voices to ours. Yes, L.A. is burning. Fires have been lit. They may smolder, but they will not be extinguished. Repression leads to intimidation and incarceration, but it also leads to resistance and insurrection. That's a lesson of history we might remember now.

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Jonah Raskin is the author of *Beat Blues*, San Francisco, 1955.