



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on November 19, 2025

Far-left Democrats Tell Military Members They “Must Refuse Illegal Orders”

Six far-left Democrats are encouraging members of the U.S. military to disobey orders if they, the service members, deem them illegal.

That’s risky business for rank-and-file military personnel. That aside, White House aide Stephen Miller and other Republicans have accused the half-dozen Democrats, one a former CIA agent and the rest former military, of encouraging rebellion and insurrection, a federal crime.

In their 90-second video, the Democrats claim (without naming him) that President Donald Trump threatens the Constitution and that military personnel must disobey illegal orders.



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The Subversive Message

The subversive half-dozen includes two senators, Navy veteran Mark Kelly of Arizona and former CIA analyst [Elissa Slotkin](#) of Michigan; and four House members: Jason Crow of Colorado, a former Army Ranger; Chrissy Houlahan of Pennsylvania, former Air Force; and Chris Deluzio of Pennsylvania and Maggie Goodlander of New Hampshire, both former Navy.



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The ad, which features somber, patriotic-sounding music in the background, opens with Slotkin.

“We want to speak directly to members of the military and the intelligence community,” they begin. “We know you are under enormous stress and pressure right now.”

Claiming that the “trust” Americans have for the military “is at risk,” the gang of six claims that “this administration is pitting our uniformed military and intelligence community professionals against American citizens.”

They followed that dubious claim with this:

You all swore an oath to protect and defend this Constitution. Right now, the threats to our Constitution aren’t just coming from abroad, but from right here at home. Our laws are clear. You can refuse illegal orders. You can refuse illegal orders. You *must* refuse illegal orders. No one has to carry out orders that violate the law or our Constitution.

“Don’t give up the ship,” they say, reprising the video’s title.

Strangely, Democrats didn’t tell anyone to disobey illegal orders from President Joe Biden [to aid and abet](#) an invasion of illegal aliens.

Illegal Orders

Deciding that an order is “illegal” isn’t just tricky business. It’s risky business, particularly for young enlisted soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines. That suggests that the gang was speaking to senior officers and, in Slotkin’s case, senior intelligence personnel.

The problem: a possible prison sentence at Leavenworth.

“An unlawful order is one that requires the commission of a criminal act or violates the Constitution, U.S. federal law, or applicable international law,” [a military defense law firm explains](#).

Examples of unlawful orders include torturing prisoners, targeting civilians, falsifying records, and participating in “unauthorized political or domestic law enforcement actions.”

That list is followed by this “important note”:

Important Note: All military orders are presumed lawful. The burden falls on the service member to establish that an order is manifestly unlawful. This is a high standard, and hesitation or refusal can carry serious consequences — even if ultimately justified.

Because of this legal complexity, service members should consult with legal counsel as soon as they suspect an order may be unlawful. Do not disobey an order without first seeking guidance from a qualified military attorney, unless the order is clearly illegal on its face (e.g., ordering you to shoot unarmed civilians).

Reaction

Top Republicans answered the sly call for military insurrection quickly.

“Ten years after the Deep State Russia Hoax, top Democrats openly appeal to CIA and military officials to engage in rebellion against their Commander-in-Chief,” [Miller wrote](#). “Do not underestimate how dangerously radicalized the Democrat party has become.”



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Representative Andy Biggs [attacked](#) fellow Arizonan Kelly:

Arizona's @SenMarkKelly is encouraging active duty military to disobey direct orders.

This is incredibly concerning and disgusting.

Disagreeing with the current administration does [not] give Mark an excuse to encourage a military coup.

"At the end of the day, they're mad the American people chose Trump and now they're calling on the Military and Intelligence Community to intervene," Senator Eric Schmitt of Missouri [wrote](#). "Sounds a little 'subversive to democracy'-ish."

Why the Video

The video is, apparently, a response to the administration's decision to strike drug boats in the Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea, the latest being on November 15. At least 21 boats have been destroyed.

[Critics claim](#) that the administration has no proof that the boats carry drugs.

"Lawmakers have pressed the Trump administration on whether servicemembers involved could be held legally responsible for deaths that may be found unlawful," [The Hill reported](#):

The military strikes have killed at least 83 people, and while the Trump administration has accused the boats of ferrying drugs, they have blown them up in deadly strikes rather than the typical practice of interdicting the boats.

The Washington Post reported that the Justice Department had concluded that the strikes are lawful by U.S. and international law.

"Current operations in the Caribbean are lawful under both U.S. and international law," and in "complete compliance with the law of armed conflict," [Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell told](#) the *Post*:

"Lawyers up and down the chain of command have been thoroughly involved in reviewing these operations prior to execution," he said, adding that personnel have "the opportunity to disagree." Despite that, Parnell said, "no lawyer involved has questioned the legality of the Caribbean strikes and instead advised subordinate commanders and [Defense] Secretary [Pete] Hegseth that the proposed actions were permissible before they commenced."

GOP Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky [opposes](#) the boat strikes:

The U.S. should not be blowing up boats without even knowing who's on them.

There's no due process in that — no names, no evidence, no oversight.

All that regardless, military personnel risk their careers and a possible prison sentence if they decide, without sound legal counsel, to disobey an order that is not blatantly illegal.

Sound legal counsel does not include viewing a 1-minute, 30-second video posted to X by six hate-Trump Democrats.



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