



Trump Expands Federal Powers Under “Domestic Terrorism” Directive

Last Thursday, President Donald Trump [issued](#) National Security Presidential Memorandum 7 (NSPM-7), titled “Countering Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political Violence.”

The directive orders federal agencies to build a far-reaching law enforcement strategy to investigate and dismantle what it calls “sophisticated, organized campaigns of targeted intimidation, radicalization, threats, and violence.”

“Heinous assassinations and other acts of political violence in the United States have dramatically increased in recent years,” the memorandum states. It cites the assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk, attacks on a healthcare executive and Justice Brett Kavanaugh, riots that caused “over \$2 billion in property damage nationwide,” and shootings at an ICE facility in Texas.



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Trump’s Homeland Security Advisor Stephen Miller [suggested](#) the new policy was epochal:

This is the first time in American history that there is an all-of-government effort to dismantle left-wing terrorism.

Yet, much like every such directive since 9/11, NSPM-7 is not just about punishing crimes already committed. It is about anticipating them, identifying “predicate actions,” and intervening before political violence occurs. That is the logic of pre-crime.

Expanding the Net

The heart of the memo is Section 2. It directs the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) to investigate not only violent acts, but also “potential Federal crimes relating to acts of recruiting or radicalizing persons.”

The JTTFs are told to probe “institutional and individual funders, and officers and employees of organizations” that may aid suspects. Even tax-exempt nonprofits are included. The IRS is instructed to “ensure that no tax-exempt entities are directly or indirectly financing political violence.”

Financial surveillance is another pillar. The Treasury Department is ordered to “trace illicit funding streams” and push banks to file Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs). This places vast discretion in the



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on September 29, 2025

hands of bureaucrats and financial institutions.

In short, the net is wide. It covers individuals, groups, nonprofits, funders, financial flows, and even Americans abroad who may be linked — however loosely — to “organized political violence.”

Thought Crimes

The memorandum singles out “anti-fascism” as the umbrella threat with pronounced features:

Common threads animating this violent conduct include anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism, and anti-Christianity; support for the overthrow of the United States Government; extremism on migration, race, and gender; and hostility towards those who hold traditional American views on family, religion, and morality.

Obviously, none of these are crimes. They are opinions, criticisms, or cultural attitudes — protected expressions in a free society. Yet under NSPM-7, they will be viewed as “indicia” (indicators) signaling violence.

The result is a framework that conflates dissent with danger, turns ideology into evidence, and leaves legitimate political opposition vulnerable to surveillance and prosecution. The approach mirrors that of the previous administration, which cast “ultra-MAGA Republicans” as a threat. Joe Biden’s Justice Department (DOJ) labeled school-board protests as potential domestic terrorism, deployed counterterrorism tools against parents, and pursued harsh sentences for January 6 defendants while largely overlooking the BLM riots of 2020.

From Law to Pre-crime

The document reads less like a criminal justice framework and more like an intelligence playbook. It speaks of dismantling “entire networks” and designating groups as “domestic terrorist organizations.” It directs law enforcement to interrogate suspects about “entities or individuals organizing such actions” before adjudication or plea deals.

Most chilling is the call for a “national strategy to investigate and disrupt networks ... so that law enforcement can intervene in criminal conspiracies before they result in violent political acts.”

That echoes the logic of pre-crime — intervene before an act occurs, based on suspicion, association, or ideology.

Legal Framework

The U.S. already has extensive laws to punish terrorism and political violence: conspiracy against rights ([18 U.S.C. § 241](#)), solicitation of violent crime ([18 U.S.C. § 373](#)), assaults on federal officers ([18 U.S.C. § 111](#)), material support for terrorism ([18 U.S.C. §§ 2339A-2339D](#)), money laundering ([18 U.S.C. § 1956](#)), and the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act ([RICO](#)) to dismantle networks. Arson, fraud, and homicide are already punished under federal and state law.

What the DOJ lacks is not authority, but restraint. NSPM-7 creates a mandate to treat ideas and associations as evidence of terrorism.

The constitutional risks are obvious. The memorandum itself concedes it “does not create any right or benefit ... enforceable at law or in equity.” Citizens swept into its dragnet will have no recourse. That



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would effectively undermine constitutional safeguards: the First Amendment, which protects speech and assembly; the Fourth, which guards against unreasonable searches; and the Fifth, which guarantees due process.

Mirror on the Right

The memo's framing is selective. It casts dissent on the Left as extremism while ignoring violence elsewhere.

No doubt, left-wing violence is real. [Antifa](#)-branded groups, though amorphous and decentralized, have been involved in riots and assaults. Some are manipulated by nefarious actors who profit from chaos. Their violence deserves prosecution.

But it is wrong to frame political violence as the domain of the Left alone. Just last week, an Iraq War veteran opened fire in a Mormon church, [killing](#) four people. Veterans of America's wars, hardened by combat and discarded without reintegration, appear in a [disproportionate share](#) of extremist incidents at home. Evidently, endless wars abroad continue to radicalize long after deployments end.

Far-right violence is also alive. In recent years, a [series](#) of attacks has targeted high-profile Democrats, adding to a long record. In fact, a DOJ study — [removed](#) from its website days after Kirk's assassination — warned that "militant, nationalistic, white supremacist violent extremism has increased in the United States." It documented 227 far-right attacks since 1990 that killed over 520 people, as opposed to 42 far-left attacks that killed 78.

These facts should give us pause. Violence is not the monopoly of one camp. The real challenge, then, is not to count which extremists kill a greater number of people. It is to answer why Americans radicalize at all.

Who's a Threat?

The deeper question is why citizens who know something is wrong so rarely direct their fury at the true cause of their troubles — the state that has grown far beyond any reasonable proportions.

People watch jobs vanish, prices climb, and freedoms shrink. They see the environment poisoned, children dulled by public schools, communities hollowed by drugs, culture cheapened, savings eroded, and privacy stripped away. Yet the official narrative never points upward, but always sideways. The blue-haired activist is told the flag-waving patriot is to blame, and vice versa. But the fact is that both live under the same pressures. Both are squeezed by the same machine, and both are propagandized to excuse whatever new controls their leaders impose. No wonder both parties keep expanding surveillance and domestic policing.

Radicalization festers not because America lacks laws to punish violence, but because its citizens live under what is no longer a republic, but a structure the Founders would have feared. It treats them at once as resource and as threat. For the elites, the people have always been useful when compliant, dangerous when independent. Thomas Jefferson warned that "the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants." His words capture the deeper truth: The struggle has never been neighbor against neighbor, but the governed against those who would rule them.

Radicalization — at its core — is the natural response to a lived reality of an intrusive state fused with corporations that profit from debt, dependence, and war. The bigger this corporate-state power grows, the more radicals it breeds, and the more power it claims in response. The cycle feeds itself. The only



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question is how long people can endure it before they remember where the real fault line lies.



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