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USA

Trump Fires Top Officials, Seizes Control of American Cities

- IV Online magazine - 2025 - IVP608 - September 2025 -

Publication date: Monday 1 September 2025

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Many of us were on vacation last month, but President Donald Trump was hard at work, dismantling American democracy and creating a reactionary authoritarian state. Trump, in an attempt to take personal and absolute control of the federal government in unprecedented moves of dubious legality, terminated three top level government officials.

First, he fired Bureau of Labor Statistics Commissioner Erika McEntarfer, claiming she had “faked” jobs numbers to make it look like Trump’s economic policies were failing; then he fired Lisa D. Cook, a governor of the Federal Reserve Bank, the U.S. central bank, accusing her of mortgage fraud; and finally, he fired Susan Monarez, the director of the Centers for Disease Control because she resisted Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy’s anti-scientific and dangerous health policies. No other president has carried out such firings of the heads of what have been virtually sacrosanct institutions that regulate our economy and protect public health.

While carrying out such political assassinations at the highest level of government, Trump has also asserted his power on the streets of American cities. When Angelinos protested against Trump’s immigration raids and round ups, leading to confrontations between protestors and L.A. police, Trump federalized the National Guard, sending two thousand guardsmen to L.A. as well as 700 U.S. Marines, and many ICE agents in June. Both L.A. Mayor Karen Bass and California Governor Gavin Newsom called the military occupation of part of the city unnecessary and authoritarian.

In mid-August, Trump declared a “crime emergency” in the nation’s capital and took control of the Washington, D.C. National Guard and the city police department. On August 8, Trump sent hundreds of Federal officials from other agencies, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), to begin patrolling the streets of Washington. While Washington has areas with high crime rates, in fact murder and other violent crime rates have been falling. Since Washington, D.C. is a federal district and not a state, he is constitutionally empowered to take control of the city. But he has also promised to send Federal agencies and troops into other cities: Chicago, New York, Baltimore, and Oakland, all governed by Democrats.

As Trump announced that he would be sending National Guard troops and federal agents to California, the state’s governor, Gavin Newsome brought suit in federal court and won a temporary restraining order. He said, “The President’s action to turn the military against its own citizens threatened our democracy and moved us dangerously close to authoritarianism. We will continue to stand up for our democracy and the rights of all Americans.”

In Illinois, both governor J.B. Pritzker and Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson condemned Trump’s plan to send U.S. troops, saying it was unnecessary and a threat to American democracy. Some 19 Democratic Party governors have also asserted that they don’t want Trump sending soldiers and federal police to their states. Trump’s troops and agents make little contribution to policing, but they lay the basis for a future military coup.

“No Kings Day,” the peaceful protest across the United States, on June 14, 2025, was the largest protest on one day in U.S. history, but in August protests abated.

The Democratic Socialist of America (DSA), the country’s largest socialist organization with 80,000 members, held its convention in Chicago last month. DSA’s many caucuses—left, right, and center—wrangled over procedures and passed a resolution in support of Palestine, but there was little to no discussion of American politics and the question of how to stop Trump.

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But fall is now almost here and we can expect larger protests as students go back to their campuses and people go back to work. We will be in the streets with millions of others.

31 August 2025

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