



**Military
Deployment on
American Soil –
Risks to Our
Rights and
Democracy**

September 2025

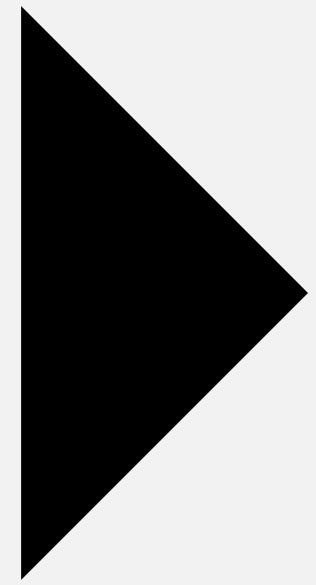
Key Points

Normalizing American military deployment on American soil – against American communities – is a danger to our democracy

● Separation between the military and civilian government—and in particular, civilian law enforcement—is a foundational American tradition and principle reflected in the U.S. Constitution and our laws.

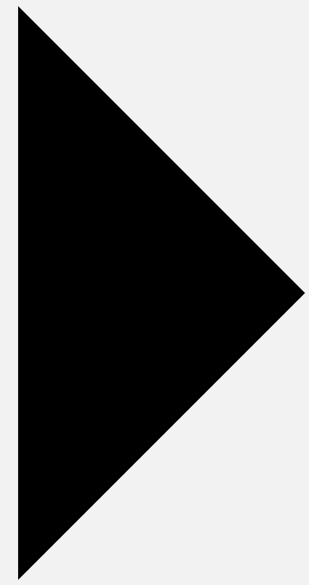
● Deployment of military troops to police civilians puts our rights and liberties at risk.

● We must guard against the use of the military as a tool of oppression or to suppress political opponents – recognizing the risk to all our liberties and our democracy.



“President Trump and Secretary Hegseth have stated their intention to call National Guard troops into federal service in other cities...creating a national police force with the President as its chief”

Judge Charles Breyer, *Newsom v. Trump*, Sept. 2, 2025



“Our founders did not consider civilian protests as rebellion and never wanted our armed forces policing our streets. In fact, it was the use of the military by the British monarchy to quell dissent that sparked the American Revolution and why our founders feared a standing Army.”

Dan Maurer, Associate Professor of Law and Lt Col (retired)
US Army JAG Corps

Congress passed the Posse Comitatus Act in 1878

Embodies the American history
and tradition of limiting military
involvement in civilian affairs

Makes it a federal crime to
“willfully” use U.S. military
forces to “execute the law”

In practice, prohibits “direct”
assistance to civilian law
enforcement (subject to
statutory exceptions)



“[M]ilitary enforcement of the civil law **leaves the protection of vital Fourth and Fifth Amendment rights in the hands of persons who are not trained to uphold these rights.**

It may also **chill the exercise of fundamental rights**, such as the rights to speak freely and to vote, and create the atmosphere of fear and hostility which exists in territories occupied by enemy forces.”

Bissonette v. Haig, 776 F.2d 1384, 1387 (8th Cir. 1985)

“Our constitutional system is fundamentally designed to separate military and civilian roles, reserving police powers for law enforcement agencies, and endowing the military with the superior weaponry and firepower necessary to fight and win the nations’ wars.

When we allow the military to be used in the routine exercise of the police power, the nation teeters on the brink of autocracy and military rule.

One need not be a student of history to see how easily this backsliding can occur. It is all around us in the world today.”

Senator Jack Reed, Ranking Member of Senate Armed Services Committee
May 8, 2025 floor speech

OPINION

I led National Guard and regular Army units. Using the military to intimidate Americans is 100% wrong

President's decision to send Marines draws criticism from Army and National Guard veteran concerned about implications

By Major General Randy Manner, (ret) **OPINION** Fox News

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Best of Opinion

It doesn't matter if it's a blue state or a red state, an American president should not send in the military to suppress political opposition at home. By acting like this, the government risks breaking the trust between our military members and our communities.

Let's be crystal clear: those who commit violence must be held accountable. But at the same time, the right to peaceful demonstration and free speech must be protected.

No matter what your views, we're proud to live in a country where people have constitutional rights – such as the rights to free speech and due process under law. Matter of fact: it's why many of us sign up to serve.

My own family is proud to have served to defend these exact rights. My grandfather served in the Navy in World War II, my father in the Army in Vietnam, and my son in the Air Force in Afghanistan, flying search and rescue missions. The president is taking actions that we and millions of other veterans have stood against, and it's abundantly clear that his attempts to use the military to intimidate Americans is wrong, and it must end.



What Can Lawmakers Do

**PROHIBIT
ASSISTANCE
UNLESS REQUIRED
BY LAW**

**CONDUCT
OVERSIGHT**

On-the-ground
monitoring of
troops and federal
law enforcement

**AVOID
NORMALIZATION**