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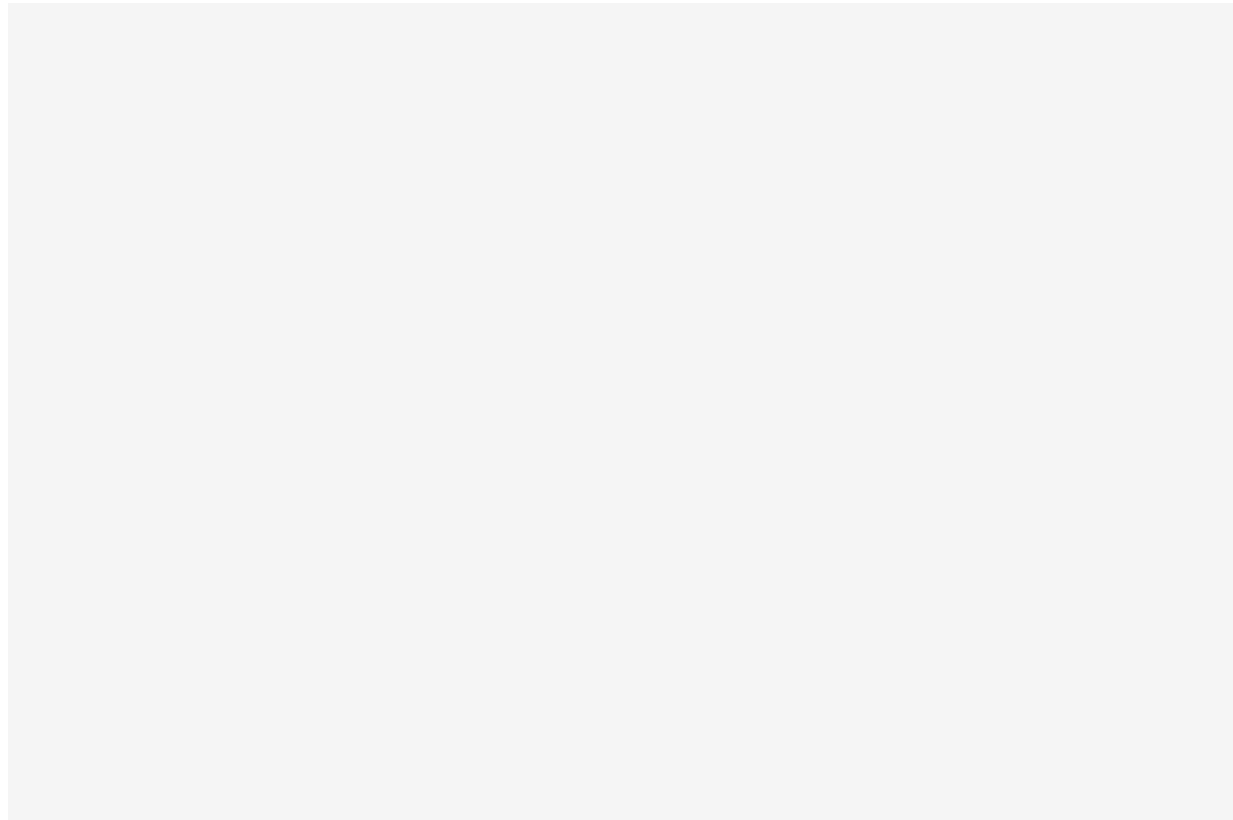
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February 17, 2025/4:58 p.m. ET
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Trump Uses Supreme Court Immunity Ruling to Claim “Unrestricted Power”

Donald Trump says the Supreme Court already gave him the power to purge the federal government.



Aaron Schwartz/CNP/Bloomberg/Getty Images

Donald Trump is arguing to the Supreme Court that they have already given him “unrestricted power” to fire people.

The White House’s acting solicitor general, Sarah M. Harris, cited the Supreme Court’s July decision giving the president [near-total immunity](#) in an appeal Sunday asking the [high court](#) to overturn a lower court order blocking Trump’s decision to fire the head of the Office of Special Counsel, Hampton Dellinger. The office is an independent agency whose [mission](#) is to safeguard whistleblowers in the government and to enforce some ethics laws.

In July, the Supreme Court ruled that “the President’s management of the executive branch requires him to have unrestricted power to remove them [agency heads] in their most important duties,” Harris said in [her filing](#), arguing that the lower court’s order was “an unprecedented assault on the separation of powers that warrant[ed] immediate relief.”

“This court should not allow lower courts to seize executive power by dictating to the president how long he must continue employing an agency head against his will,” the filing [states](#).

Was the president having “unrestricted power” the intention of the 6-3 Supreme Court majority when it ruled in Trump’s favor on presidential immunity last year? At the time, Trump was trying to skirt federal charges for allegedly mishandling [classified documents](#) and attempting to overturn the [2020 election results](#), an effort that ultimately paid off.

Now, this legal filing not only seeks to cement unlimited presidential power in firing employees, but also challenges Congress’s authority to limit the president’s mass purges. Trump’s efforts to overhaul the federal government would get a big boost if he gets a favorable ruling from his conservative friends on the Supreme Court. The question is whether they think a president should have those powers, or if they think the presidency needs some guardrails.

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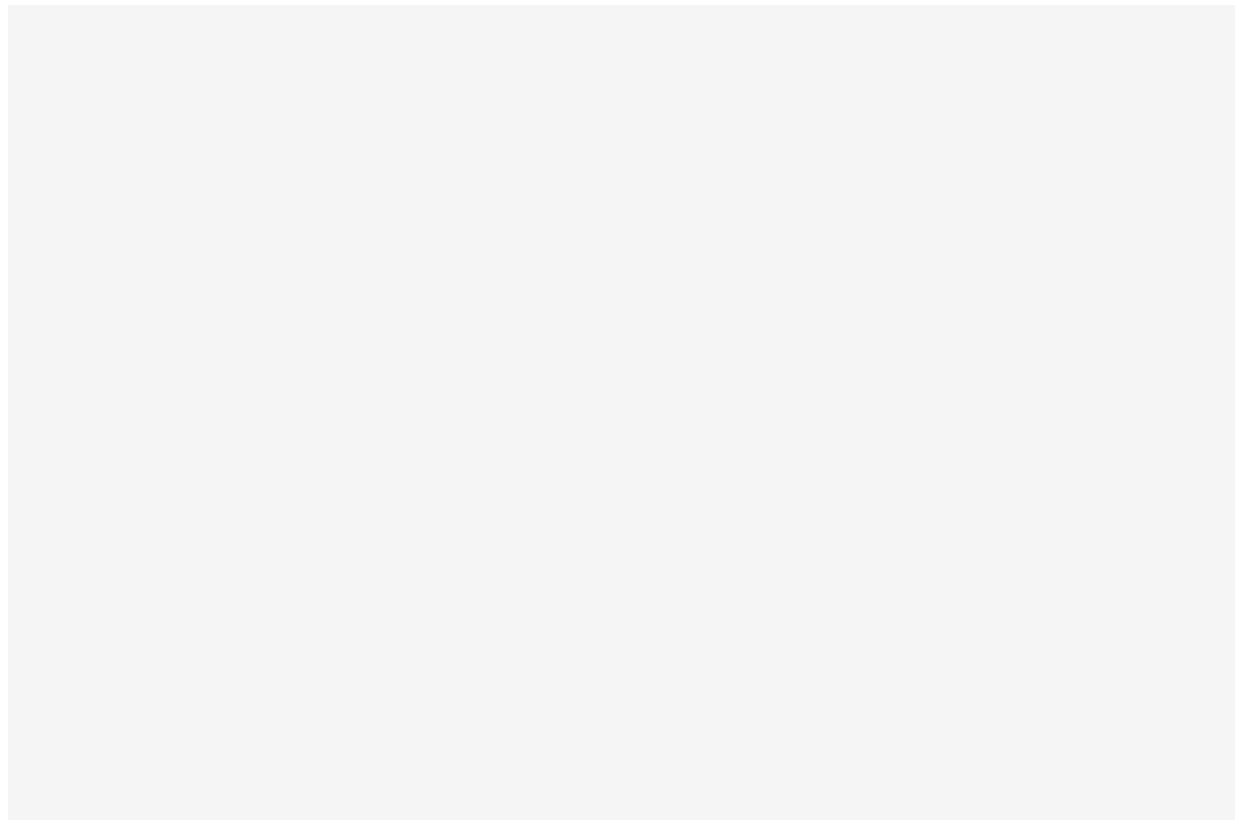
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Anti-Trump 50501 Protests Break Out Across the Country

Protests against Donald Trump and Elon Musk took place nationwide on President's Day.



Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

Thousands of protesters gathered at different cities across the country Monday to declare President's Day as "No Kings Day," in protest of the unlawful actions of President Donald Trump and Elon Musk to upend the federal government.

The swath of protests were organized by the [50501 Movement](#), a name which refers to 50 protests in 50 states on one day. The group, which originated on social media, previously [planned](#) a series of demonstrations that took place earlier this month in response to Musk and Trump's early efforts to overhaul the federal government.

Since then, the fascist duo have only continued their plot to cut [popular federal programs](#) and launch [mass firings of federal employees](#).

In Washington, D.C., thousands of people gathered around the reflecting pool beside the U.S. Capitol building. “Hey Congress, grow a spine!” they shouted, [according](#) to independent journalist Alejandro Alvarez.

Big, growing crowd just west of the U.S. Capitol protesting Trump, Musk and DOGE on President’s Day. “Hey Congress, grow a spine,” they shout, gathering for a rally around the reflecting pool.

[\[image or embed\]](#)

— Alejandro Alvarez ([@alvarezreports.bsky.social](#)) [February 17, 2025 at 12:19 PM](#)

Alvarez [wrote](#) that it was likely the largest demonstration to take place in the capital city since Trump was inaugurated last month.

Other protests took place across the country, from [Augusta, Maine](#), to [Portland, Oregon](#), to [Sante Fe, New Mexico](#), to [Orlando, Florida](#).

In New York City, a video from Freedom News TV showed thousands of protesters [marching](#) through lower Manhattan, cheering to “Stop the Coup!”

NOW: "Stop the GOP Coup" reads banner as Thousands March against President Trump, DOGE and Musk in NYC on President's Day.

Video by [@yyecaaahhhboiii2](#) [@FreedomNTV](#) Desk@freedomnews.tv to license [pic.twitter.com/J8cg9aL3uk](#)

— Oliya Scootercaster [□](#) ([@ScooterCasterNY](#)) [February 17, 2025](#)

In Boston, Massachusetts, nearly 1,000 people [marched](#) through the below freezing temperatures shouting, “No Kings on President’s Day!”

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Meanwhile:

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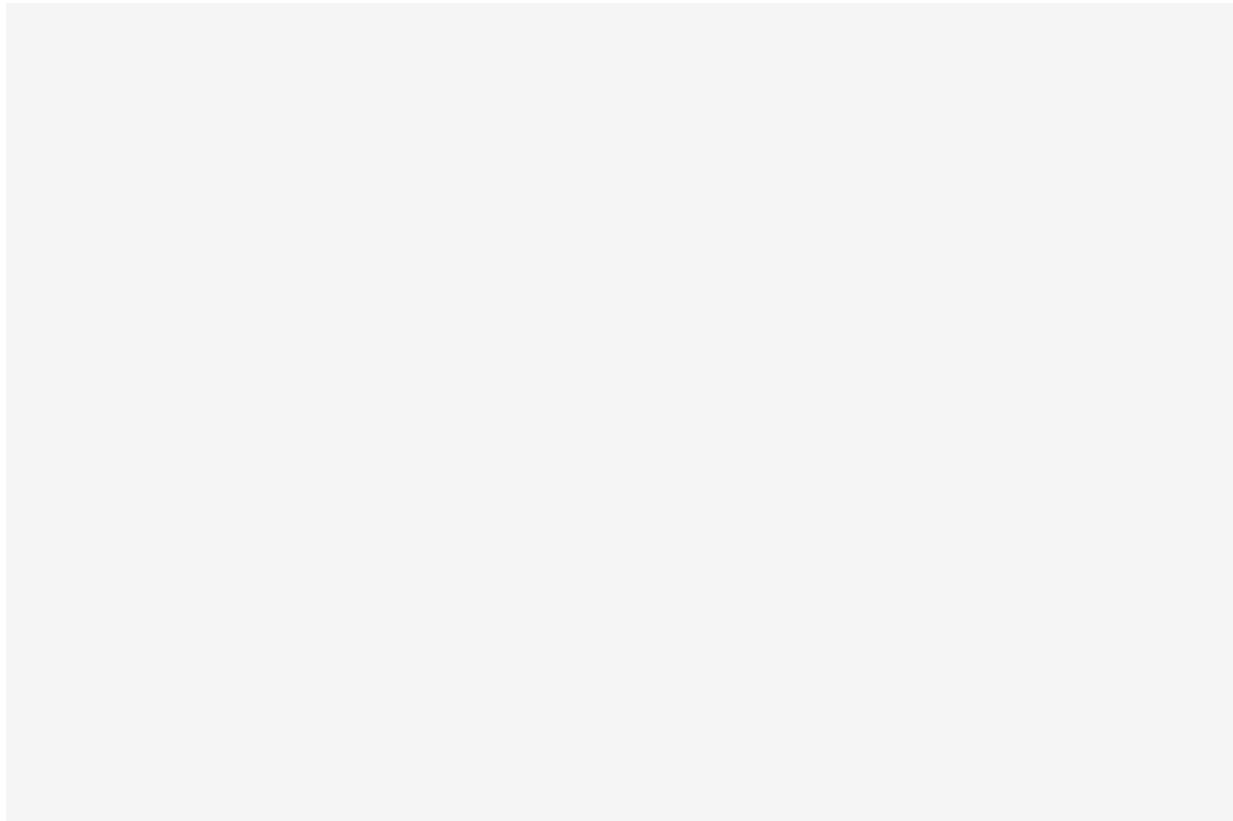
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Trump Supporters Have Second Thoughts as He Takes Over Government

The president's early actions are rubbing some of his swing voters the wrong way.



Jim Vondruska/Getty Images

Some of the MAGA faithful are having [second thoughts](#) after Trump's all-out assault on the federal government in the early days of his administration.

Last month, *The Wall Street Journal* released a [poll](#) indicating that a sizeable chunk of Trump voters were looking for "MAGA lite" policies from the president. While 53 percent want significant changes to how the government is run, 60 percent are staunchly against his plan to purge the federal government of long-tenured bureaucrats with MAGA loyalists, 60 percent are against eliminating the [Department of Education](#) (one of Trump's [major promises](#)), and a measly 18 percent actually want Trump to overrule Congress to give himself unlimited spending power.

These numbers suggest that even some of Trump's staunchest supporters wanted more measured approaches to his campaign platform. Now, some of those same voters are feeling worried and disillusioned by the administration actually doing what it said it would do, according to the [Journal](#).

"When we said safer borders, I thought he was thinking 'let's stop the drugs from coming into the country,'" Trump voter Staci White said. "I didn't know he was going to start raiding places. Now I'm like: 'Dang, why didn't I just pick Kamala?'"

Emily Anderson called voting for Trump the "biggest mistake of my life," as she was appalled by his implementation of [Guantanamo Bay](#) as a holding facility in his immigration crackdown.

"I feel so stupid, guilty, regretful—embarrassed is a huge one. I am absolutely embarrassed that I voted for Trump," she said.

"He's doing 80 miles an hour. I wouldn't mind if he went around 55," Trump supporter Gary Dixon told the [Journal](#).

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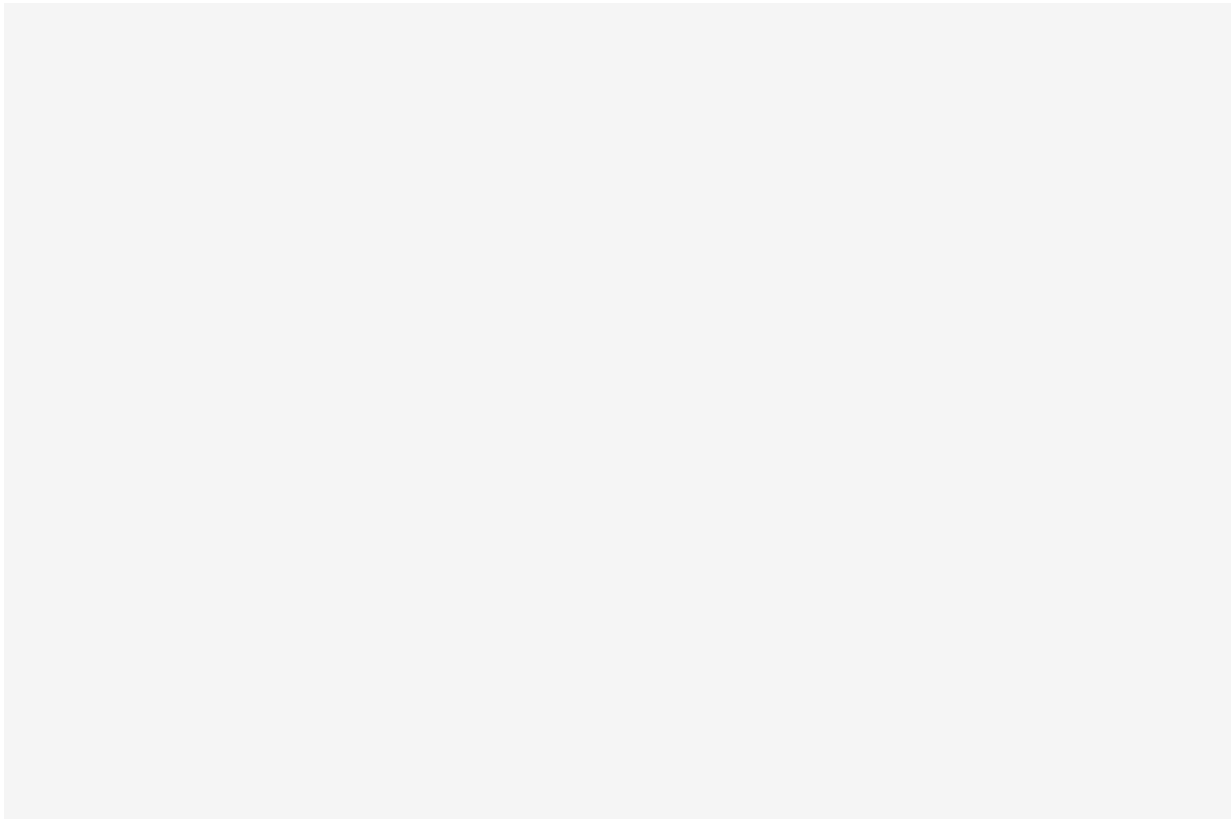
[Malcolm Ferguson/](#)

February 17, 2025/3:03 p.m. ET



January 6 Insurrectionists Take Trump Pardons to Horrifying Level

January 6 rioters are using Trump’s pardon logic to argue that they can’t be charged for some other heinous crimes.



Victor J. Blue/Bloomberg/Getty Images

Recently released January 6, 2021 insurrectionists are trying to argue that their [presidential pardons](#) should apply to separate crimes they were charged with while they were being investigated for storming the Capitol, [The Wall Street Journal](#) reports.

Edward Kelley, who was pardoned after assaulting police at the Capitol, is also hoping to overturn a conviction for conspiring to murder FBI agents who investigated him, forming a “kill list.” He allegedly planned to use drones to bomb the FBI’s Knoxville, Tennessee, branch, and thinks that conviction should be thrown out.

“In this instance, there can be no dispute that Kelley’s case in this court is related to the events of January 6th and is covered by the President’s executive action,” his lawyer Mark Brown wrote in a motion on January 27.

Fellow rioter Andrew Taake, who served six months in prison for spraying officers at the Capitol with bear spray, was released from prison on January 27 even though he still had outstanding charges for solicitation of a minor in 2016. It took Houston police more than a week to track him down.

The lawyer for David Daniel, who is facing child pornography charges, stated that “pretty much all” of the evidence of his client’s pornography crimes stemmed from Daniel’s house being raided due to his January 6 involvement, which, the attorney argues, means those charges should be null and void since he was pardoned for his actions on January 6 four years ago.

“Anything that flowed from that case, given the pardon, should be excluded and inadmissible at trial,” Daniel’s lawyer William Terpening told the [Journal](#).

This is a frightening line of argument—a literal get-out-of-jail-free card for dangerous, vindictive people who already got one from President Trump. Time will only tell how their unearned reintegration into society will impact the country if their requests are granted

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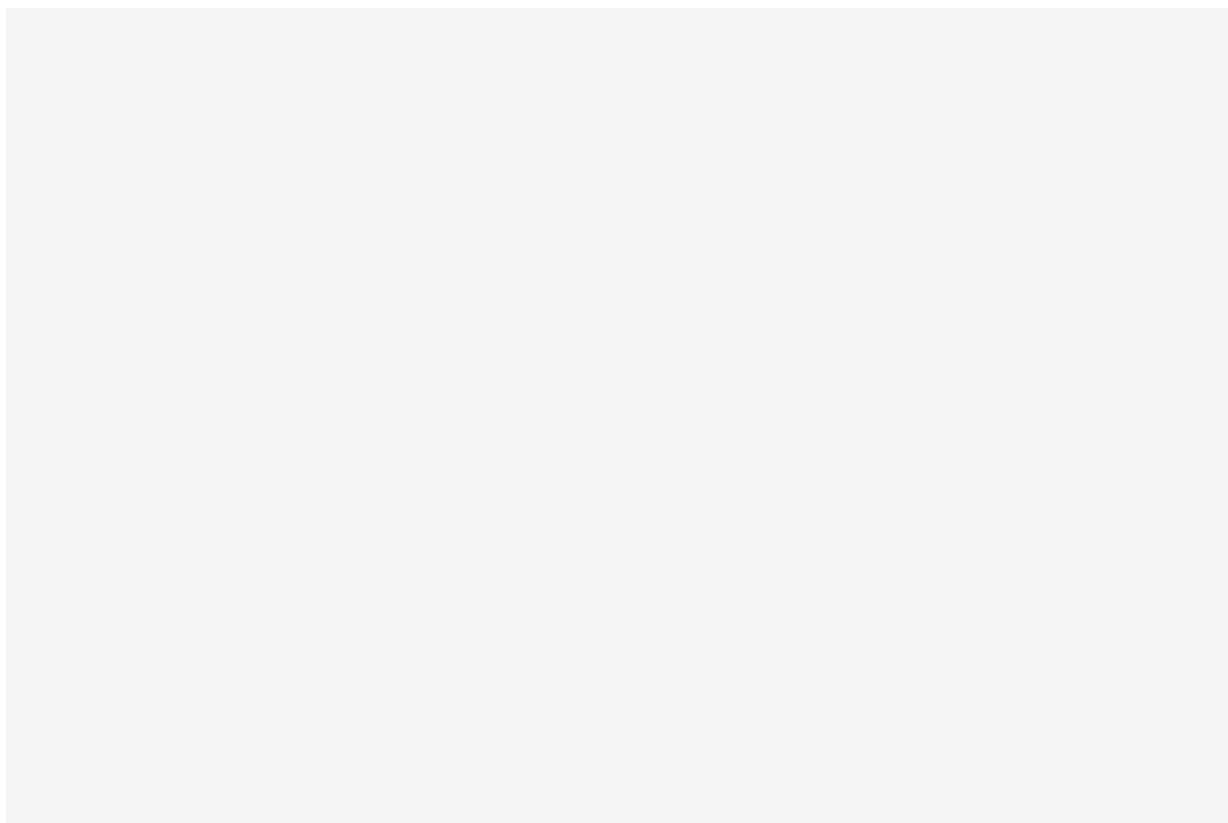
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Trump’s Border Czar Takes War on AOC to the Justice Department

Tom Homan is escalating his fight against Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez after she shared info on a “Know Your Rights” campaign.



Getty x2

Donald Trump’s border czar Tom Homan is desperate for the Department of Justice to scrape up some reason he can go after Representative

Donald Trump's border czar Tom Homan is desperate for the Department of Justice to scrape up some reason he can go after Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez for making people aware of their rights.

During an appearance on Fox News last week, Homan suggested that Ocasio-Cortez might be in trouble over a webinar she'd held about [immigrants' legal rights](#) when dealing with ICE.

"At what level is that impedement? Is that impedement? I'm not an attorney, I'm not a prosecutor. Is that impedement?" Homan [asked](#), sounding increasingly untethered.

"Is that impeding our law enforcement efforts? And if so, what are we going to do about it? Is she crossing the line? So, I'm working with the Department of Justice and finding out. Where is that line that they cross? So, maybe AOC's gonna be in trouble now," Homan said.

Ocasio-Cortez dismissed Homan's prattling. "MaYbe shE's goiNg to be in TroUble nOw," she [wrote](#) in a post mocking him on X. "Maybe he can learn to read. The Constitution would be a good place to start."

In a statement, Homan [insisted](#) he had actually read the U.S. Constitution, in which case, he must be simply choosing to ignore it.

There is no legal problem with informing individuals of their rights, like the Fifth Amendment right to remain silent, or the right to refuse ICE entry without a warrant signed by a judge. Still, the border czar [doubled down](#) on his comments when pressed on his threats against the New York congresswoman during CNN's State of the Union on Sunday.

"Are you suggesting that she should be prosecuted?" asked CNN host Dana Bash.

"I'm suggesting that I would ask the Department of Justice, where's that line on impediment, right? That's a broad statute. So I know impeding, or someone stopping in front of me and putting their hands on my chest that you're not coming in here to arrest that guy, that's clearly impeding. But at what line—where's the line on impeding?" Homan said.

"I'm asking the Department of Justice, who are the prosecutors and decide who they prosecute, and what the standards of that prosecution is. I simply says [sic], at what point is that impeding? Because you can call it 'Know Your Rights' all you want. We all know the bottom line is, the bottom line is how they evade law enforcement. Don't open your door. Don't answer questions."

Unfortunately for Homan, and his plan to enact inhumane mass deportations, both of those methods are entirely legal.

During another [appearance](#) on Fox News Monday, Homan repeated his assertion that Ocasio-Cortez was trying to teach undocumented immigrants to "evade" ICE, and said that he'd request the DOJ let him know whether she'd crossed the "line." Rather than requesting that she be investigated, it seemed that Homan was desperate for them to conjure some evidence that she had violated the law. Spoiler alert: She hadn't.

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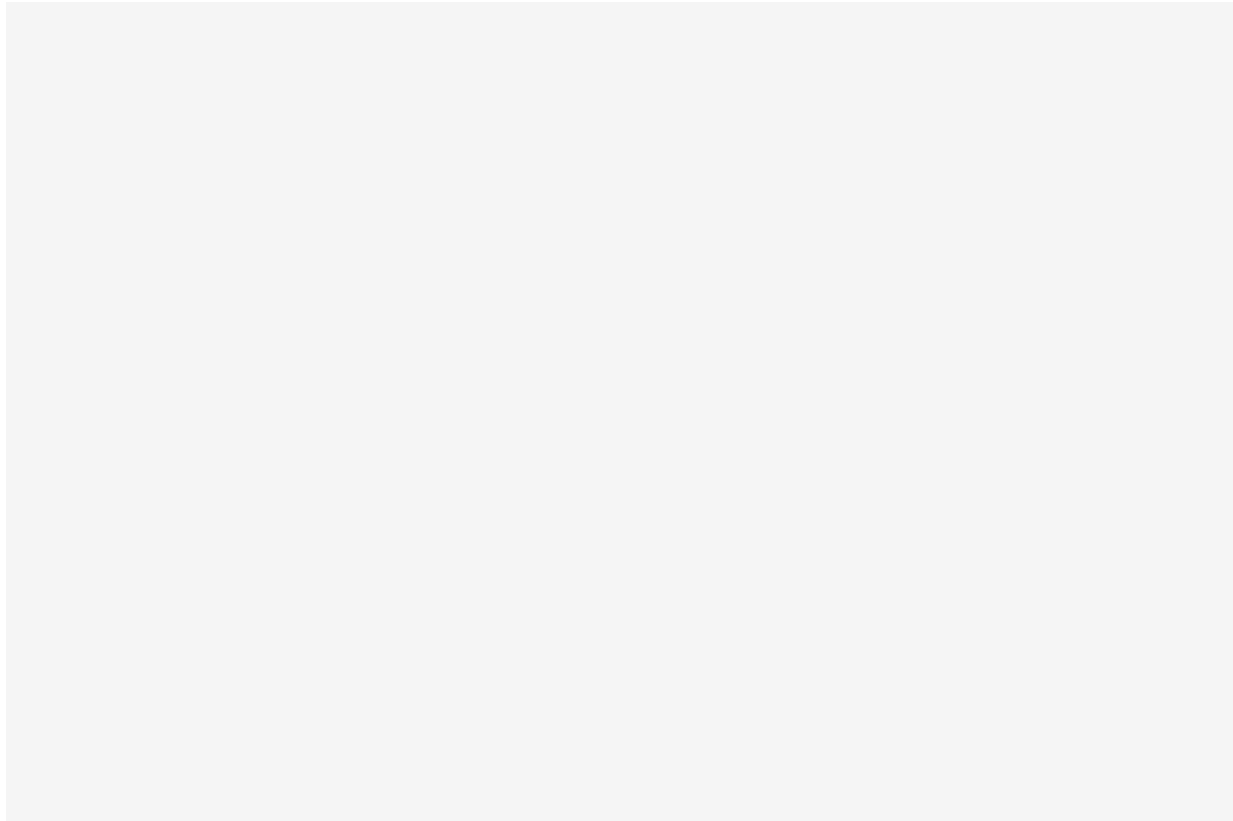
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[Trump-Musk Scandal at USAID Takes Unnerving Turn With Vile Leaked Memo](#)

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Republican Introduces Pathetic Bill to Create Trump National Holiday

As Donald Trump allows Elon Musk to take over the government, and inflation is spiraling, Republicans in Congress are introducing the most meaningless pieces of legislation.



Andrew Harnik/Getty Images

In a rather pointless, sycophantic move, a New York member of Congress wants to make Donald Trump's birthday a national holiday.

Republican Representative Claudia Tenney [introduced](#) the "Trump's Birthday and Flag Day Holiday Establishment Act" Friday, hoping to designate the president's June 14 birthday as a new federal holiday.

"Just as George Washington's Birthday is codified as a federal holiday, this bill will add Trump's Birthday to this list, recognizing him as the founder of America's Golden Age," Tenney said in a [press release](#).

"By designating Trump's Birthday and Flag Day as a federal holiday, we can ensure President Trump's contributions to American greatness and the importance of the American Flag are forever enshrined into law," the release states.

June 14 is already commemorated as [Flag Day](#) in the United States, signifying the date in 1777 when the Continental Congress decided how the country's flag would look. But, it is not an official federal holiday, and Tenney seems to see an opportunity to curry favor with the present based on the fact that it coincides with [Trump's day of birth](#) in 1946. (Trump's birthday is also five days before Juneteenth, which commemorates the official end of slavery and which Biden made a [federal holiday](#) in 2021.)

Why is Tenney prioritizing this blatant attempt of brown-nosery instead of more pressing issues for her constituents, such as [Trump's game of chicken](#) with Canada? Her upstate New York district includes areas right on the Canadian border, and tariffs could have [drastic effects](#) on those regions and on the state overall. Not to mention the lack of [congressional oversight](#) over Trump and Elon Musk's overhaul of the federal government.

Congress hasn't passed much legislation since Trump was sworn in as president last month, aside from an [extreme immigration bill](#), even though Republicans control both the Senate and the House, and they are currently struggling through agreeing on a [budget bill](#). Will passing vapid bills such as Tenney's be what constitutes actual business for Republicans in Congress?

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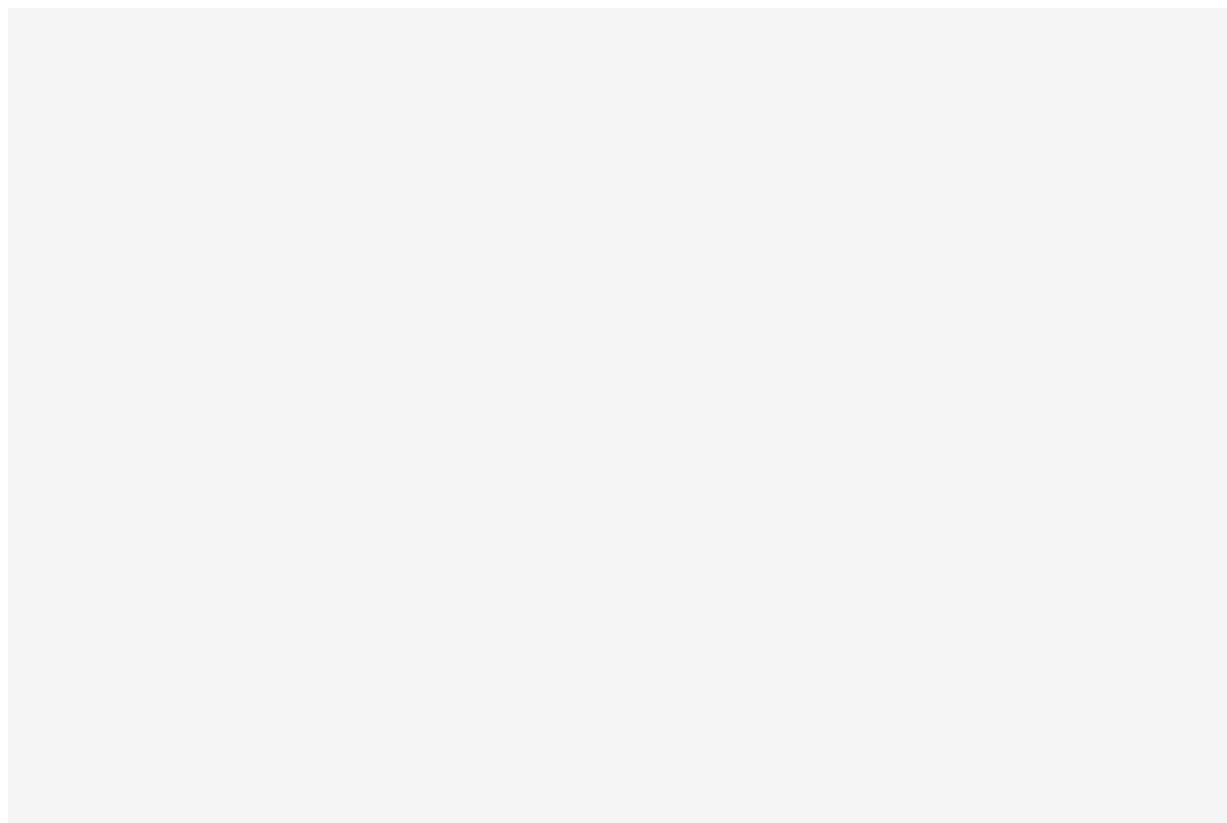
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Why is Elon Musk Throttling the Signal App?

Links to a popular encrypted messaging app used by federal workers are being blocked on X.



Matthias Balk/picture alliance via Getty Images

Self-professed [free speech](#) crusader Elon Musk seems to be trying to censor users on his own platform.

Matt Binder of Disruptionist [reports](#) that the billionaire DOGE head has blocked Signal links from appearing on X, citing researchers from cybersecurity company [Mysk](#), who noticed the issue on Sunday and reached out to Binder through direct messages. Signal is a popular messaging app that encrypts texts between users, often allowing them to talk about sensitive topics that could otherwise be surveilled or intercepted.

“Elon Musk’s X appears to be blocking links to directly contact users on Signal,” Binder [wrote on X](#). “Signal, the encrypted messaging app, has recently become a major tool for government workers looking to blow the whistle on DOGE.” Journalists are also using Signal to solicit tips from unhappy federal workers.

If a user on X tries to access a previously posted Signal link, they are shown a page warning them that they are visiting an unsafe link, but can choose to ignore the warning and click a link on the page to proceed to the Signal web address.

This move appears to be further confirmation that the free speech Musk seems to be so chiefly concerned with only applies to online right wing edgelords and neo-Nazis. People that draw his ire, such as journalists and embattled federal workers, don’t enjoy the same privileges.

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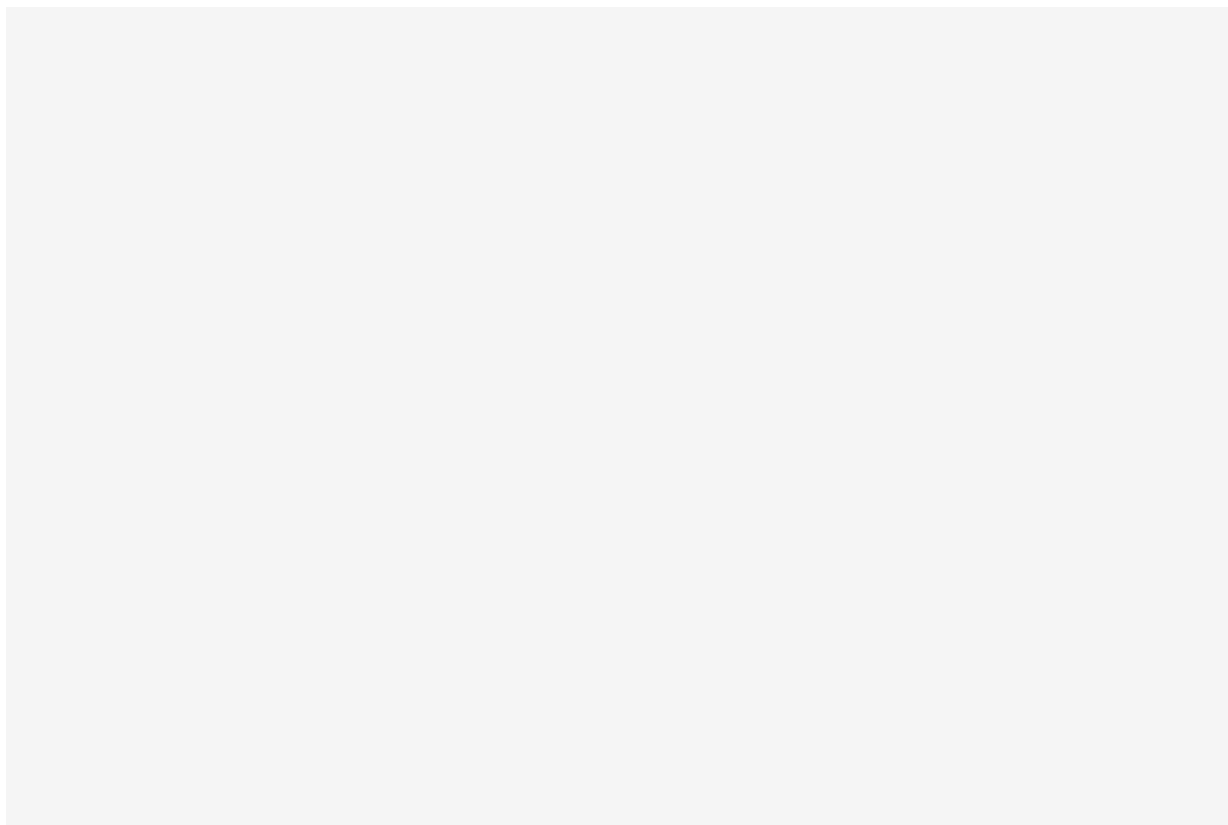
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Trump Pressures Romania on Andrew Tate in Stunning New Low

The Trump administration is harassing Romania about easing up on the far-right misogynist accused of sex trafficking.



DANIEL MIHAILESCU/AFP/Getty Images

Donald Trump is urging a foreign government to relax restrictions on a right-wing influencer charged with human trafficking and rape.

Andrew Tate, the former kickboxer and self-described “misogynist” influencer, and his brother Tristan, have been the subject of a protracted legal

battle in Romania after they were arrested in 2022 on charges of human trafficking, sexual misconduct, money laundering, and organized crime, all of which they have denied.

The brothers were able to block their indictment in Romania for now, and they were freed from house arrest last month. They are still not allowed to leave the country as investigations continue, however, according to a [court order](#). A Romanian court also ruled last year that after the court proceedings finish, the brothers can be extradited to the U.K., to face [additional charges](#) of sex crimes.

Tate's name was first floated by a U.S. official during a phone call with the Romanian government last week, and then revisited by Trump's special envoy Richard Grenell, who spoke with Romanian Foreign Minister Emil Hurezeanu when he traveled to Munich last week, three people familiar with the matter told the [Financial Times](#).

Another person said that a request was made for the brothers' passports to be returned to them, and that they be allowed to travel while they wait for the court proceedings to conclude.

Hurezeanu declined to comment on his interaction with Grenell, but his spokesperson confirmed that a conversation took place. "Romanian courts are independent and operate based on the law, there is due process," the spokesperson said, without getting into specifics.

The spokesperson said that Hurezeanu had initiated the conversation with Grenell, who he'd known since working together in Berlin during Trump's first term.

Meanwhile, Grenell denied knowing Hurezeanu at all. He "saw me in the hallway" in Munich and "asked for a meeting", Grenell said, adding that the two had "no substantive conversation," according to the [Financial Times](#).

"I support the Tate brothers as evident by my publicly available tweets," Grenell added.

Grenell had [posted](#) on X earlier this month claiming that programs funded by USAID had been "weaponized against people and politicians who weren't woke," adding that "Romania is the latest example."

Tate is a central figure in the [manosphere](#) of contemptible internet chauvinists, a group of right-wing shills Trump was able to utilize in his run for the presidency. A [2023 study](#) by Equimundo on the state of American men found that more of the youngest men trusted Tate than President Joe Biden.

Last month, Elon Musk expressed [support](#) for Tate's [strange bid](#) to become prime minister of the UK. It's possible that he thinks entering office could shield him from prosecution. Where have we seen that before?

Now, Trump seems to be searching for ways to pay back his staunch supporters—no matter how grotesque the accusations against them.

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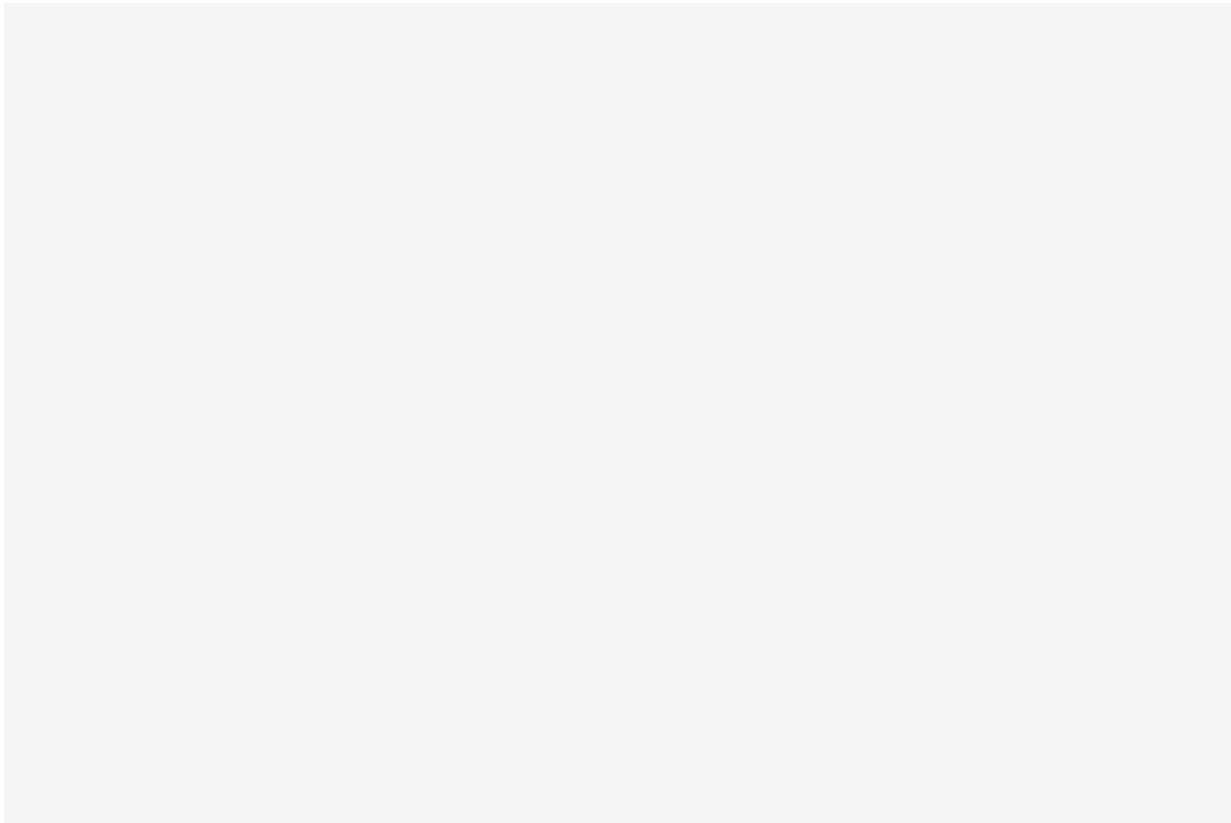
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Elon Musk's DOGE Wants to Seize Your Private Tax Data

The Internal Revenue Service is the next agency in the tech mogul's crosshairs.



Samuel Corum/Getty Images

Elon Musk and DOGE are trying to get their hands on some of the most sensitive information the Internal Revenue Service has to offer: data on every single taxpayer, business, and nonprofit, according to [The Washington Post](#). The request has put IRS officials on high alert.

The Trump administration sent the IRS a memorandum of understanding that would allow DOGE employees to infiltrate IRS programs like the Integrated Data Retrieval System, or IRDS, which gives IRS employees access to bank information and personal identification numbers. DOGE also plans to send its own software engineer, Gavin Klinger, to the IRS for 120 days to “provide engineering assistance and IT modernization consulting.”

The memo requires Klinger to keep tax return information confidential and to destroy the information he collects once his 120 days are up. He is expected to be given access “[imminently](#),” an unnamed source told CNN.

“The information that the IRS has is incredibly personal,” former internal IRS watchdog Nina Olson told the *Post*. “Someone with access to it could use it and make it public in a way, or do something with it, or share it with someone else who shares it with someone else, and your rights get violated.”

While the IRS’s systems could certainly use upgrades, allowing private citizens full-fledged access to millions of Americans’ sensitive financial information does not seem like the safest or most ethical way of going about it, especially without congressional authorization.

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[Elon Musk Leads America's Top Tax-Dodging CEOs](#)

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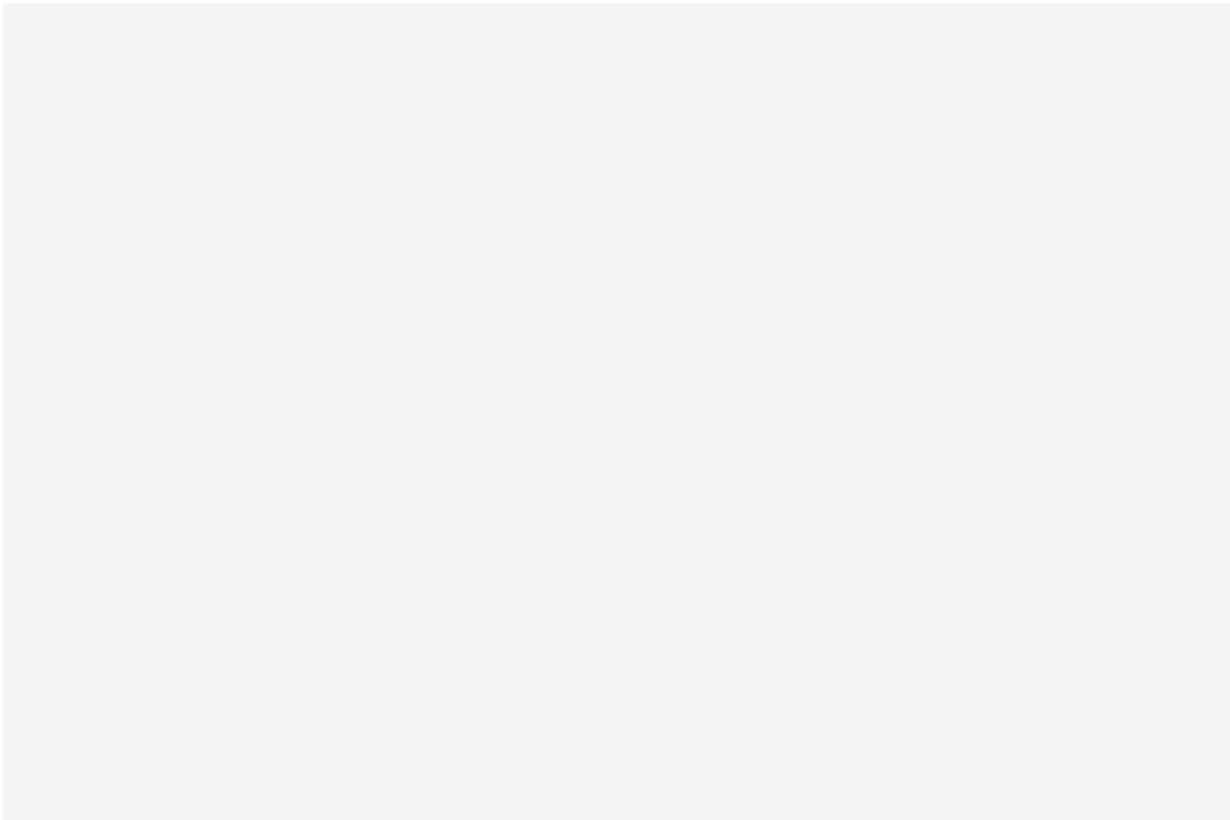
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Elon Musk Threatens to Imprison Entire News Agency

President Elon Musk has set his sights on a new target.



Slaven Vasic/Getty Images/The New York Times

Elon Musk is pushing for a massive crackdown on free speech, by taking up the rusty rapier that is Donald Trump’s pitiable crusade against CBS’s *60 Minutes*.

The president has been [fuming](#) about Kamala Harris’s interview on CBS’s *60 Minutes* since it first aired in September, and claimed that the show had “defrauded the public” by airing different portions of Harris’s answer to a question about Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on different days. A transcript of the original interview [released](#) by the Federal Communications Commission earlier this month found that both answers were part of the same extended response.

“60 Minutes are the biggest liars in the world!” Musk [wrote](#) in a post on X Sunday. “They engaged in deliberate deception to interfere with the last election. They deserve a long prison sentence.”

Musk’s fascist threat to imprison journalists was a deflection written in response to a post from *60 Minutes* that criticized his efforts to gut USAID.

“President Trump says USAID is rife with fraud. But Andrew Natsios, a Republican former administrator of USAID, calls that ‘utter nonsense.’ Natsios says USAID is ‘the most accountable aid agency in the world,’” [read](#) the post from *60 Minutes*.

Musk’s outrageous threat feels all the more prescient after the Trump administration last week moved to [indefinitely ban](#) the Associated Press from the White House and Air Force One, over its refusal to use the fake name Trump came up with for the Gulf of Mexico.

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