

PART ONE – Culture wars

Definition:

“A culture war is a conflict between groups that have different cultural ideals and beliefs, especially conservative groups opposed to social change on the one hand, and liberal groups with progressive ideas on the other hand. It’s called a war because the two sides are focused on attacking and scoring points off each other, not on understanding each other’s perspectives. There is no dialogue. The term was coined in 1991 by James Davison Hunter, an American sociologist, in his book *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*. He described what he saw as a fundamental conflict between totally different systems of understanding what is ‘right and wrong about the world we live in’.”

Source: Diana Lea, [learningenglishwithoxford.com](https://www.learningenglishwithoxford.com), Oxford University Press, 23 March 2023.

DOCUMENT 1 · 📺 · PBS, “Library book ban attempts reach high point as librarians fight back”, 11 April 2024.
↳ link: <https://youtu.be/drJWEgYtHhY> (4 minutes: from 0:00 to 4:12)

DOCUMENT 2

New State Laws Are Fueling a Surge in Book Bans

Elizabeth A. Harris, *The New York Times*, September 23, 2024

States and local governments are banning books at rates far higher than before the pandemic, according to preliminary data released by two advocacy groups on Monday.

Books have been challenged and removed from schools and libraries for decades, but around 2021, these instances began to skyrocket, fanned by a network of conservative groups and the spread on social media of lists of titles some considered objectionable.

Free speech advocates who track this issue say that in the past year, newly implemented state legislation has been a significant driver of challenges.

PEN America, a free speech group that gathers information on banning from school board meetings, school districts, local media reports and other sources, said that over 10,000 books were removed, at least temporarily, from public schools in the 2023-24 school year. That’s almost three times as many removals as during the school year before.

About 8,000 of those bans came just from Florida and Iowa, where newly implemented state laws led to large numbers of books being removed from the shelves while they were assessed.

Lawmakers and those who describe themselves as parental rights advocates favor restricting access to certain books because they don’t believe children should stumble upon sensitive topics while alone in the library, or without guidance from their parents. Many think that some books that have traditionally been embraced in school libraries are inappropriate for minors, including, for example, “The Bluest Eye,” by Toni Morrison, which includes references to rape and incest.

The law in Iowa, which went into effect in 2023, prohibits any material that depicts sexual acts from all K-12 schools, with the exception of religious texts. It also limits instruction about gender and sexual orientation until seventh grade. In Florida, a law that took effect before the 2023-24 school year said that any

book challenged for “sexual conduct” must be removed while it is reviewed.

PEN considers any book that has been removed from access to have been banned, even if the book is eventually put back. Kasey Meehan, the Freedom to Read program director at PEN America, said that while the numbers in Florida and Iowa were high, the issue is widespread.

“We see this happening nationwide,” she said, “in school districts everywhere.”

The American Library Association also released a report on Monday based on preliminary data. The group gathers its own information, and relies on a different definition of what constitutes a book ban. For the library association, a book must be removed — not just temporarily, while it is reviewed — to count as being banned.

The library association found that, according to that definition, the instances of book banning were down somewhat from the year before, with 414 challenges to library materials, involving 1,128 unique titles, from Jan. 1 to Aug. 31, 2024. During the same period the year before, it found 695 challenges involving 1,915 titles. (The group plans to release a report in early 2025 covering the entirety of 2024.)

Deborah Caldwell-Stone, director of the American Library Association’s Office of Intellectual Freedom, said the drop may be due, in part, to the fact that the library association itself has become a target. Much of its data is based on confidential reporting by its members and other library professionals, she said, but in various parts of the country librarians have been pressured to sever ties with the organization, which has been vocal in demanding that books be returned to circulation.

Caldwell-Stone said that the library association’s data found that, even with a dip, the instances of book banning so far in 2024 were far higher than they were before 2020.

The library association and PEN America both emphasized that these numbers were almost certainly an undercount. Both groups rely on information from local news reports, but in many districts across the country, there is no education reporter keeping tabs.

Comprehension questions on Document 2:

- According to the article, why has the number of banned books increased in the US?
- According to the article, how has the scale of book bans in the US evolved?

Document 3

AUDIO- Why Book Bans are so hard to stop

All Things Considered, NPR, September 27, 2024

<https://www.npr.org/2024/09/27/nx-s1-5114238/why-book-bans-have-been-so-hard-to-stop>

See also

- Culture Wars: Why book bans are trending in the US | DW News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6S6-KsmG4I>

- THE LIBRARIANS | Official Trailer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ykll4MWltsQ>

DOCUMENT 4

Maga’s plan to give liberal Hollywood a ‘punch in the face’

James Warrington, *The Telegraph*, 26 July 2025 (abridged)

In her 1957 novel *Atlas Shrugged*, Ayn Rand expounds her individualist philosophy by portraying a dystopian society in which titans of industry fight back against burdensome bureaucracy.

Though widely panned by critics, the book has remained a cult favourite of the libertarian Right. Paul Ryan, the former Republican speaker of the House of Representatives, gave out copies to staff members as

5 Christmas presents. Donald Trump, not widely known as a reader, has named Rand as his favourite author.

It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that an adaptation of *Atlas Shrugged* is among a handful of projects proposed by Founders Films, a new Right-wing production company aimed at restoring patriotism to Hollywood.

The planned venture, which is being pitched to potential investors, comes amid a broader shift to the Right across the US media industry as the return of Trumpian politics triggers a war on “woke”.

10 “[Founders Films] goes against everything that we know about Hollywood, which is that traditionally it is quite Left-liberal, it is quite compassionate, it is rarely associated with blood and thunder narratives,” says media analyst Alex DeGroot.

“It’s a real punch in the face for woke.”

Founders Films is being launched by a handful of figures linked to the Silicon Valley data giant Palantir, including chief technology officer Shyam Sankar, early employee Ryan Podolsky and investor Christian Garrett.

15 The company’s name is a play on Founders Fund, the tech-focused venture capital fund launched by Palantir founder Peter Thiel.

Documents seen by the US news website Semafor outline the tech executives’ vision for the project, with the ethos described as: “Say yes to projects about American exceptionalism, name America’s enemies, back artists unconditionally, take risk on novel IP [intellectual property].”

20 In a post on Substack late last year, Sankar wrote nostalgically about all-American blockbusters of yesteryear including *Red Dawn*, *Top Gun*, *Rocky IV*, and *The Hunt for Red October*.

He argued that the US had lost the ability to leverage its film industry as soft power and called for the resurrection of the “American Cinematic Universe” largely, it seems, by portraying Chinese communists as baddies on screen.

25 “Breaking out of our cultural malaise will require the studios to wake up and choose America,” he added. In many ways, it is a rekindling of cinema as cultural warfare in a way not seen since the Cold War.

Alongside *Atlas Shrugged*, other slated projects include films about the evacuation of the World Trade Center on 9/11 and the assassination of Iran’s Gen Qasem Soleimani, as well as *The Greatest Game*, a thriller spy series that “lays bare China’s plans to replace the United States as the dominant global power”.

30 Sankar points to examples of Chinese-ordered censorship and the fact that Disney’s *Mulan* was filmed in Xinjiang as evidence of Beijing’s growing sway over Hollywood.

“The statement is that Hollywood’s been captured by a foreign adversary and there’s some good evidence there,” says Dr Dominic Lees, associate professor of film-making at Reading University.

35 Another strain of the Founders Films philosophy is rooted in the culture wars. The new studio wants to bring an injection of unashamedly conservative thinking to an industry that has long been dominated by liberals.

“What they are taking a punt on is that there is a movie-going market for films that counter what they’re calling a Left-wing agenda,” adds Lees.

It builds on growing criticism of Hollywood from the Right, with criticism levelled at studios for introducing heavy-handed progressive politics into films or removing anything deemed offensive.

40 Disney has found itself at the centre of this controversy, with critics blaming the House of Mouse’s political leanings for a string of recent flops, including this year’s live-action reboot of *Snow White*, starring Rachel Zegler.

Disney itself has admitted that there might be a potential “misalignment” between the films it is making and what consumers want after splurging almost \$1bn (£740m) on a string of box office failures in 2023. [...]

45 There are already signs that conservative ideology is gaining commercial traction in Hollywood.

Am I Racist?, a Borat-style mockumentary lampooning the diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) movement, became the highest-grossing documentary of 2024 after pulling in more than \$12m at the box office on a budget of just \$3m. *Reagan*, a biopic starring Dennis Quaid as the former US president, grossed \$30m last year despite scathing reviews from critics.

50 The streaming era has also opened up an opportunity for what once would have been niche sub-genres

to break out and find their audience.

Christian cinema, for example, has made something of a resurgence at the US box office in recent years thanks to hits such as *The King of Kings* and *The Chosen*, a multi-series drama about the life of Jesus. In one week earlier this year, three of the top 10 US box office spots were faith-based titles.

55 Tinsel Town's rightward shift is just one part of a broader assault on the US media heralded by Trump, who earlier this year appointed Sylvester Stallone, Mel Gibson and Jon Voight as "special ambassadors" to Hollywood, tasked with reversing what he deems to have been a period of decline. [...]

DOCUMENT 5

Trump's Attempt to Make Museums Submit Feels Familiar

The New York Times, Aug. 15, 2025, By Michelle Goldberg, Opinion Columnist (abridged)

Before Poland's illiberal Law and Justice party came to power in 2015, the country had been deep in a reckoning over its role in the Holocaust. In 2000, the historian Jan Gross published an explosive book, "Neighbors," about a 1941 massacre in the Nazi-occupied Polish town of Jedwabne, where Poles enthusiastically tortured and murdered up to 1,600 Jews. The book punctured a national myth in which Poles were only either heroes or victims in World 5 War II.

After "Neighbors" came out, Poland's president, Aleksander Kwasniewski, went to Jedwabne for a ceremony broadcast on Polish television. "For this crime, we should beg the souls of the dead and their families for forgiveness," he said.

The notion of Polish historical guilt made many conservative Poles furious. Law and Justice capitalized on their 10 anger, running against what its leader called the "pedagogy of shame." After the party's 2015 victory, one of its first targets was the Museum of the Second World War, then being built in Gdansk.

The museum was supposed to explore the war's global context and to emphasize the toll it took on civilians. Among its collection were keys to the homes of Jews murdered in Jedwabne. Before it ever opened, Law and Justice wanted to shut it down for being insufficiently patriotic.

15 Today in America, this history has an eerie familiarity. Five years ago, many institutions in the United States tried, with varying degrees of seriousness and skill, to come to terms with our country's legacy of racism. A backlash to this reckoning helped propel Donald Trump back into the White House, where he has taken a whole-of-government approach to wiping out the idea that America has anything to apologize for. As part of this campaign, the administration seeks to force our national museums to conform to its triumphalist version of history.

20 In March, Trump **signed an executive order, "Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History,"*** criticizing versions of history that foster "a sense of national shame." Museums and monuments, it said, should celebrate America's "extraordinary heritage" and inculcate national pride. This week, the administration announced that it was reviewing displays at eight national museums — including the Museum of American History, the National Museum of African American History and Culture and the Smithsonian American Art Museum — and giving them 25 120 days to bring their content in line with Trump's vision.

We're already seeing glimpses of what that looks like. Last month, the National Museum of American History removed references to Trump's impeachments from an exhibit on the American presidency. Those references were restored last week, but with changes: The exhibit no longer says that Trump made "false statements" about the 2020 election or that he encouraged the mob on Jan. 6.

30 Amy Serrano, the artist who painted Michelle Obama's official portrait, canceled an upcoming solo show at the National Portrait Gallery after being told the museum was considering removing her painting of a transgender Statue of Liberty to avoid angering Trump.

The National Portrait Gallery denied this, but the Trump administration declared victory. "The Statue of Liberty is not an abstract canvas for political expression — it is a revered and solemn symbol of freedom, inspiration and 35 national unity that defines the American spirit," said Lindsey Halligan, a Trump lawyer who is now in charge of getting museums to reflect the administration's ideology. What Trump and his allies seem to want from our museums is self-glorifying kitsch, the aesthetic lingua franca of all authoritarians.

For Pawel Machcewicz, founding director of the Museum of the Second World War, it's been unsettling to see American museums subject to the sort of political intimidation he experienced in Poland. "I believed that American
40 democracy had somehow stronger rules," he told me by phone this week. "It's older than Polish democracy. I thought the autonomy of research, the autonomy of museums, would be something sacred in the U.S. It turns out that it can also be subverted. So this is a very pessimistic lesson for us." (...)

DOCUMENT 6 ·

· PBS, "A look at what's behind the efforts to reshape how American history is taught", 2 July 2025.

↳ link: https://youtu.be/QZgM_o0hYfY (9 minutes)

DOCUMENT 7



Edward Colston's toppled statue in a museum of the city of Bristol, U.K.

N.B.: Covered in graffiti, the toppled statue of British politician Edward Colston, who enslaved tens of thousands of people, now lies in a museum in the city of Bristol, where visitors are being asked what should be done next with the divisive monument and its empty plinth. It was toppled during a BLM protest on 7 June 2020.

Jeu de rôle (oral Mines-Télécom):

The mayor of your city refuses to remove a controversial statue. Ask questions to find out more.

PART TWO – Civil rights protests

DOCUMENT 8



A mural by artist Banksy on the Royal Courts of Justice in London on 9 September 2025.

Essay questions:

- Are protests an efficient way to change things in a democracy? (Agro-Véto 2025)
- Do radical protest movements do more harm than good? (Ecricome 2020 LVA)

DOCUMENT 9

Just Stop Oil to end disruptive protests with final demonstration date announced

Rebecca Whittaker, *The Independent*, 27 March 2025 (abridged)

Environmental campaign group Just Stop Oil announced it will cease disruptive action, following a final protest in Parliament Square on 26 April.

The campaign group revealed it would be “the end of soup on Van Goghs, cornstarch on Stonehenge and slow marching in the streets” as the group plans to “hang up the hi vis” and stop direct action.

5 Just Stop Oil’s initial demand was to end new oil and gas, which is now a government policy. The campaign group claimed it has kept more than 4.4 billion barrels of oil in the ground, and the courts have ruled new oil and gas licences unlawful.

Although it will no longer be taking direct action, it will continue to speak in court for what it calls its “political prisoners” and call out anti-protest laws in the UK.

10 The announcement comes after new laws have made it increasingly difficult to carry out disruptive protests.

In particular, new offences of interfering with key national infrastructure, including “locking on” and a revision of the law around causing a public nuisance, have seen climate activists given long jail terms.

Just Stop Oil said in a statement: "This is not the end of civil resistance. Governments everywhere are retreating from doing what is needed to protect us from the consequences of unchecked fossil fuel burning.

15 "As we head towards 2C of global heating by the 2030s, the science is clear: billions of people will have to move or die – and the global economy is going to collapse. This is unavoidable. We have been betrayed by a morally bankrupt political class."

The environmentalists said they need to take a different approach and are creating a new strategy that does not involve direct action.

20 The group added: "As corporations and billionaires corrupt political systems across the world, we need a different approach. We are creating a new strategy to face this reality and to carry our responsibilities at this time. Nothing short of a revolution is going to protect us from the coming storms."

In the past three years, Just Stop Oil activists have been arrested for numerous direct action protests, including disrupting a West End performance of *The Tempest*, blocking roads, pouring paint on a robot at a

25 Tesla shop and spraying orange powder on Stonehenge.

Will McCallum, co-executive director of Greenpeace UK, said: "Just Stop Oil paid a heavy price for raising their voices at a time when politicians and corporations are trying to silence peaceful protesters – in the streets and in the courts.

"We must not allow our hard-won right to protest to be stripped away because it is the right that all

30 other rights depend upon. Greenpeace and many others will continue to defend this proud tradition of taking action on issues that matter to make change possible."

DOCUMENT 10

We criminalise the political stunt at our peril. It is a crucial art form that is impossible to ignore

Mark Borkowski, *The Guardian*, 20 August 2025 (abridged)

We must ask ourselves: how would the heroic suffragettes or the remarkable Greenham Common women be regarded if active today? The answer is simple: they would be locked up. Just as they were locked up then. A century ago, women chained themselves to railings, set fires, endured prison and changed the world, and we celebrate their victories without thinking too hard about their methods. Yet today's laws would criminalise

5 them on sight.

Last month, the home secretary, Yvette Cooper, wore a commemorative sash celebrating the suffragette struggle. Yet this is the same Yvette Cooper presiding over an age of repressive laws and mass arrests. It's a paradox: we laud the rebels of the past while shackling the rebels of the present.

I have been retracing these acts of protest for a new BBC Radio 4 documentary, *Outrage Inc.* I wanted to

10 understand not just the anger, but the creative genius and conviction behind the stunt. Because at its best, a stunt isn't chaos. It's an art form – theatre with consequences. It's designed to provoke, timed to perfection and impossible to ignore. Those who stage them aren't amateurs: they storyboard, construct narrative, marshal resources. They are producers of disruption. [...]

This is the lesson we keep forgetting. Protest isn't just confrontation, it's an imagination weaponised. A

15 stunt is a mind bomb that plants itself in the national conversation. These acts of theatre marry humour and symbolism to conviction, creating ripples that travel long after the news cameras have moved on.

Yet the cycle is always the same. At the time, protests are demonised, particularly by the right, who instinctively oppose change. Later, the very same acts are reappraised, rehabilitated or even lauded. The suffragettes, once branded terrorists, are now national heroines. The Greenham women, once derided as

20 cranks in cardigans, are now honoured for their foresight. Time transforms outrage into heritage.

Today, with Palestine Action banned and Extinction Rebellion dismissed as a nuisance, we're told that only "lawful protest" is legitimate. But the suffragettes would fail that test, and so would Greenham. Their legacies endure because they didn't seek permission, they sought change. Their power lay in creativity, conviction and the audacity to place truth before power and performance before permission.

25 Having examined the BBC archives for Outrage Inc, I believe we are at a crossroads. We can allow protest to be neutered into stage-managed civility, or we can acknowledge that it has always been outrageous, risky and profoundly creative. This is not a rallying cry for lawlessness. But we should reflect on the red-hot battles that forged our society. We call them stunts, but the word feels too trivial for acts that pushed the envelope and forced us to confront inequality and injustice.

30 Because history shows this: the stunt is never a sideshow. It is the main act of change.

Document 11

Qu'est-ce que Palestine Action, le mouvement pro-palestinien interdit au Royaume-Uni ?

Fondé en 2020, le groupe pro-palestinien Palestine Action a été classé début juillet comme "organisation terroriste" par le Royaume-Uni après une série d'actes de désobéissance civile. Depuis, plus de 700 personnes ont été arrêtées pour avoir affiché leur soutien au mouvement.

France 24 - 21/08/2025 -Par Cyrielle CABOT

"Je soutiens Palestine Action. Et si cette décision fait de moi un soutien du terrorisme, selon les lois britanniques, alors tant pis." L'autrice irlandaise Sally Rooney, connue notamment pour son roman à succès "Normal People", a annoncé, samedi 16 août, qu'elle allait reverser une partie de ses revenus au groupe pro-palestinien Palestine Action.

10 "J'ai l'intention d'utiliser ces revenus issus de mon travail, et ma notoriété de manière plus large, pour soutenir Palestine Action", écrit la romancière de 34 ans dans une tribune publiée dans The Irish Times. Dans le détail, la militante de gauche, qui a déjà affiché à plusieurs reprises son soutien à la cause 15 palestinienne, compte consacrer tous les "royalties" issus des adaptations télévisées de ses romans - notamment les droits d'auteur de la BBC pour la série "Normal People" (2020) et pour la série "Conversations entre amis" (2022) - au financement 20 du mouvement.

Mais cet engagement pourrait lui coûter cher. Depuis début juillet, Palestine Action est interdit au Royaume-Uni et classé comme une "organisation terroriste". Quiconque y apporte son soutien, a 25 fortiori financier, risque désormais une peine allant jusqu'à 14 ans de prison.

Destructions de bien, occupation, peinture rouge... Palestine Action a été fondée en 2020 par une militante pro-palestinienne, Huda Ammori. Née près 30 de Manchester, d'un père palestinien et d'une mère irakienne, cette trentenaire a d'abord fait ses armes auprès de la Palestine Solidarity Campaign, le plus grand groupe britannique dédié à la cause palestinienne, en participant à des campagnes de

35 boycott et de lobbying auprès de députés britanniques.

Mais, en 2020, frustrée de "l'inefficacité des campagnes traditionnelles", elle décide de quitter son emploi et s'allie avec Richard Barnard, un activiste de 40 longue date du mouvement de défense du climat Extinction Rebellion. Ensemble, ils fondent Palestine Action avec un objectif affiché : dénoncer "la complicité britannique" avec l'État d'Israël, en particulier sur la question des ventes d'armes.

45 Pour faire entendre son combat, le mouvement suit la méthode forte d'Extinction Rébellion et opte pour la désobéissance civile. Effractions, occupations de bâtiments, façades aspergées de peinture rouge, destructions de matériels, militants qui s'enchaînent à 50 des portes d'usines... Le groupe privilégie l'action directe et multiplie les actes de vandalisme.

Au départ, il cible principalement les filiales sur le territoire britannique d'Elbit Systems, le plus grand fabricant d'armes d'Israël. Dès septembre 2020, des 55 militants occupent une de ses usines à Shenstone, dans le centre du pays. Mais progressivement, le mouvement élargit ses activités et commence à viser des banques, des universités, des compagnies d'assurance ou encore des bâtiments 60 gouvernementaux, épingleant à chaque fois une proximité avec l'État hébreu.

En 2022, des militants s'emparent, cette fois, à coups de fumigène et de banderole, d'un site du groupe de défense français Thalès, à Glasgow, en 65 Écosse. Quelques semaines plus tard - peu après que des militants pour le climat ont jeté de la soupe à la tomate sur un tableau de Van Gogh - deux autres aspergent de ketchup une statue de l'ancien Premier

ministre Balfour, connu pour avoir signé en 1917 un document soutenant la création d'un "foyer national pour le peuple juif" en Palestine.

Puis tout s'accélère après le déclenchement de la guerre à Gaza en octobre 2023. Alors que plus de 60 000 Palestiniens, dont une vaste majorité de civils et de nombreux enfants, ont été tués dans des bombardements israéliens, la mobilisation en soutien à la cause palestinienne prend de l'ampleur ainsi que Palestine Action... Et les actions se multiplient. Selon un décompte effectué par The Sunday Times, Palestine Action comptabilisait ainsi 17 actions en 2020 contre 170 en 2024.

En quelques mois, des militants recouvrent de peinture des locaux de la BBC et le ministère des Affaires étrangères et bloquent des dizaines d'entreprises. En mars 2025, Palestine Action fait la une des médias pour s'en être pris à un golfe appartenant au président américain, Donald Trump, dans le sud-ouest de l'Écosse. Entrés par effraction, des militants y ont écrit "Gaza is not for sale" ("Gaza n'est pas à vendre") en lettres majuscules sur le gazon. Une référence au projet du milliardaire de transformer l'enclave palestinienne en "Côte d'Azur du Moyen-Orient", dénoncé par le chef de l'ONU comme un soutien au nettoyage ethnique.

Mais c'est une action organisée le 20 juin qui finit de mettre le feu aux poudres. Ce jour-là, plusieurs militants de l'organisation s'infiltrèrent dans la plus importante base de l'armée de l'air du Royaume-Uni, à Brize Norton, et dégradent deux avions militaires. Les dégâts sont évalués à 7 millions de livres (8 millions d'euros) par la police.

Immédiatement, le Premier ministre, Keir Starmer, réclame l'interdiction de Palestine Action. Sa requête est acceptée quelques jours plus tard par le parlement britannique, qui inscrit le groupe sur la liste des "organisations terroristes". Son nom apparaît désormais aux côtés du mouvement islamiste palestinien Hamas, d'Al-Qaïda, du groupe paramilitaire russe Wagner et de certains groupes néonazis. La décision est lourde de conséquences : il est désormais interdit d'afficher un quelconque soutien, pas même un T-shirt arborant le logo du groupe, ou d'être membre de l'organisation.

"Depuis sa création, Palestine Action a orchestré une campagne nationale d'actions criminelles contre des entreprises et des institutions, notamment des infrastructures nationales majeures et des entreprises de défense", a expliqué la ministre de l'Intérieur, Yvette Cooper, à la Chambre des communes. Et "ses activités ont augmenté en fréquence et en gravité depuis le début de l'année 2024 et ses méthodes sont

devenues plus agressives, ses membres se montrant prêts à recourir à la violence", a-t-elle assuré.

Plus de 700 arrestations

Mais cela n'a pas découragé les militants de la cause palestinienne, bien au contraire. Depuis l'interdiction de Palestine Action, des manifestations de soutien sont régulièrement organisées à travers le pays, durant lesquelles des dizaines de personnes sont interpellées.

Au total, en vertu de la loi, plus de 700 personnes ont déjà été arrêtées et une soixantaine vont être poursuivies, uniquement pour avoir apporté leur soutien à Palestine Action, notamment en brandissant des pancartes lors de ces rassemblements pacifiques. Parmi eux, plusieurs personnalités comme la poétesse primée Alice Oswald, des jeunes, mais aussi de nombreuses personnes âgées. Selon la Metropolitan Police, la moitié des personnes arrêtées lors d'une manifestation organisée début août avaient ainsi plus de 60 ans.

Et ces images de personnes arrêtées manu militari simplement pour avoir tenu des pancartes affichant "Je m'oppose au génocide, je soutiens Palestine Action", relayées sur les réseaux sociaux, ont participé à déclencher une véritable levée de boucliers dans le pays. De nombreuses voix s'élèvent dénonçant une décision "disproportionnée" et une "atteinte à la liberté d'expression et de manifester".

"Des centaines de personnes risquent des peines de prison pour s'être assises tranquillement en brandissant des pancartes. Il n'est pas difficile de comprendre pourquoi cette décision pourrait entraîner une restriction disproportionnée de la liberté d'expression des citoyens", note Areeba Hamid, codirectrice exécutive de Greenpeace UK.

Un "amalgame entre protestation et terrorisme"

Dans une lettre ouverte publiée mercredi 6 août dans le média britannique The Guardian, 52 universitaires et écrivains, dont les philosophes Judith Butler et Angela Davis, appellent ainsi le gouvernement à faire marche arrière. Cette décision est "une attaque à la fois contre l'ensemble du mouvement pro-palestinien et contre les libertés fondamentales d'expression, d'association, de réunion et de manifestation", dénoncent-ils.

De leur côté, deux organisations d'avocats alertent, eux aussi dans The Guardian, contre le risque de créer un "grave précédent". "L'interdiction d'un groupe menant des actions directes est une mesure sans précédent et marque un fort retour en arrière pour les libertés civiles", écrivent 266 avocats. "L'amalgame entre protestation et terrorisme est la marque distinctive des régimes autoritaires. Notre gouvernement a déclaré qu'il s'engageait à respecter

l'État de droit : cela doit inclure le droit de manifester."

"Recourir à la loi antiterroriste pour interdire à Palestine Action de mener ses actions est un usage abusif de cette législation et une atteinte au droit de manifester créant un dangereux précédent", résumant-ils.

Au-delà des frontières britanniques, la décision interroge jusqu'aux arcanes des Nations unies. Selon le Haut-Commissaire aux droits humains à l'ONU, Volker Turk, l'interdiction soulève des "préoccupations sérieuses quant à l'application des lois antiterroristes à des actes qui ne relèvent pas du

terrorisme", rappelant que, selon les normes internationales, les actes terroristes devraient se limiter à des infractions criminelles visant à causer la mort ou des blessures graves, ou à la prise d'otages, dans le but d'intimider une population ou de contraindre un gouvernement. Jusqu'à présent, les militants de Palestine Action n'ont jamais fait de blessés.

L'interdiction de Palestine action avait immédiatement été contestée en justice par la cofondatrice du groupe, Huda Ammori. L'examen de son recours est prévu en novembre.

Document 11 bis - What is Palestine Action, the protest movement banned under UK terror act? ANALYSIS

Founded in 2020, the British pro-Palestinian group Palestine Action was branded a "terrorist organisation" and banned by the UK government on July 5. Since then, more than 700 people have been arrested for showing their support for the group. Critics say the ban is an abuse of anti-terrorism law and an attack on civil liberties.

The award-winning Irish novelist Sally Rooney says she will continue to support the pro-Palestinian group Palestine Action despite the recent UK law banning the group as a terrorist organisation.

In an August 16 opinion column in the Irish Times, Rooney, 34, said: "I too support Palestine Action. If this makes me a 'supporter of terror' under UK law, so be it."

Author of the bestsellers "Normal People", and "Intermezzo", Rooney says that she will use income derived from BBC television adaptations of her novels to fund the movement.

"I intend to use these proceeds from my work, as well as my public platform generally, to go on supporting Palestine Action and direct action against genocide in whatever way I can," she wrote.

But this commitment could cost her dearly. Since July 5, being a member of the group or supporting it – especially financially – are now criminal offences punishable by up to 14 years in prison.

25 Destruction of property, occupation, red paint...

Palestine Action was launched in 2020 by activist Huda Ammori. Born near Manchester to a Palestinian father and Iraqi mother, the 30-year-old initially campaigned with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, the largest British pro-Palestinian group, promoting boycotts against Israel and lobbying British MPs.

But in 2020, frustrated by the "ineffectiveness of traditional campaigns", she decided to quit her job and join forces with Richard Barnard, a long-time activist with the climate action group Extinction Rebellion. Together, they founded Palestine Action with the goal to denounce "British complicity" with the State of Israel, particularly on the issue of arms sales.

Palestine Action follows Extinction Rebellion's tactics of civil disobedience – occupying company premises, spray-painting buildings with red paint, destroying equipment or having activists chain themselves to factory gates. The group favours direct action and increasingly resorts to acts of vandalism.

Initially, the group mainly targeted the British subsidiaries of Elbit Systems, Israel's largest arms manufacturer. In September 2020, activists occupied one of Elbit's factories in Shenstone, north of Birmingham. But gradually, Palestine Action expanded its activities and began targeting banks, universities, insurance companies and government offices, as a way to highlight links to Israel it finds objectionable.

In 2022, members of the group stormed a site belonging to French defence contractor Thales in Glasgow, armed with smoke bombs and banners. In March 2024, its activists damaged a portrait of former UK Prime Minister Arthur Balfour, co-author of the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which supported a "home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.



An activist sprays red paint and then slashes a portrait of Lord Arthur James Balfour at Trinity College, Cambridge. © AFP

The group has stepped up its campaign of civil disobedience since the start of the war in Gaza, in which more than 60,000 Gazans have been killed, the vast majority of them civilians, according to health officials in the Palestinian territory.

65 According to The Sunday Times, Palestine Action carried out 170 acts of protest in 2024, up from 17 in 2020. Its actions included vandalising the BBC and Foreign Office buildings with paint and blocking dozens of businesses.

In March 2025, Palestine Action made headlines for targeting 70 a golf course owned by US President Donald Trump in Turnberry, Scotland. After daubing paint on one of the buildings, activists wrote “Gaza is not for sale” in capital letters on one of the greens. This was a reference to Trump’s plan to transform the Gaza Strip into the “Riviera of the 75 Middle East”, a plan denounced by the UN chief as support for ethnic cleansing.

Things came to a head on June 20, when several Palestine Action members infiltrated the UK’s largest air force base at Brize Norton and damaged two military aircraft. The damage 80 was estimated at £7 million (€8 million). Prime Minister Keir Starmer’s government quickly introduced legislation to ban Palestine Action. The bill was passed a few days later by Parliament, which added the group to its list of “terrorist organisations”. Its name now appears alongside those of other 85 proscribed groups like Hamas, al Qaeda, the Russian paramilitary group Wagner and certain neo-Nazi groups.

The ban means it is now illegal to be a member of Palestine Action or to show support for the group – even wearing a T-shirt bearing its logo.

90 Home Secretary Yvette Cooper justified the ban in a statement to the House of Commons on June 23: “Since its inception in 2020, Palestine Action has orchestrated a nationwide campaign of direct criminal action against businesses and institutions, including key national 95 infrastructure and defence firms,” she said. “Its activity has increased in frequency and severity since the start of 2024 and its methods have become more aggressive, with its members demonstrating a willingness to use violence.”

More than 700 arrests

100 But the ban has not discouraged activists supporting the Palestinian cause, quite the contrary. Since Palestine Action was banned, demonstrations of support for the group have taken place across the country.

More than 700 people have been arrested for defying the ban 105 and around 60 are facing prosecution, solely for supporting Palestine Action, notably by holding up placards during non-violent protests.

Among those arrested were the award-winning poet Alice Oswald and many ordinary citizens – both young and not so 110 young. According to the Metropolitan Police, half of those

arrested during a demonstration organised in early August were over 60 years old.

The images of people arrested simply for holding up placards that say, “I oppose genocide, I support Palestine Action”, 115 shared on social media, helped spark a public outcry in the country. Many people have denounced a “disproportionate” decision and an “attack on freedom of expression and the right to protest”.

“Hundreds of people are facing potential prison sentences for 120 sitting quietly holding placards. It isn’t difficult to see why this could be a disproportionate restriction on people’s freedom of expression,” notes Areeba Hamid, co-executive director of Greenpeace UK.

A ‘confusion between protest and terrorism’

125 In an open letter published on August 6 in The Guardian, 52 academics and writers, including philosophers Judith Butler and Angela Davis, called on the government to reverse its decision. They denounced the ban as “an attack both on the entire pro-Palestine movement and on fundamental freedoms 130 of expression, association, assembly and protest”.

Lawyers’ organisations including the Network for Police Monitoring (Netpol) have sent letters to Cooper deploring the ban.

Netpol’s letter says that “proscription of a direct-action 135 protest group is an unprecedented and extremely regressive step for civil liberties”.

“The conflation of protest and terrorism is the hallmark of authoritarian regimes. Our government has stated that it is committed to respecting the rule of law: this must include the 140 right to protest,” the group says.

“To use the Terrorism Act to ban Palestine Action from direct action would be an abuse of this legislation and an interference with the right to protest” – and “a terrifying blow to our civil liberties”, Netpol adds.

145 Internationally, the proscription raises questions even at the highest levels of the United Nations.

According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, the ban “raises serious concerns that counter-terrorism laws are being applied to conduct that is not terrorist 150 in nature”.

Türk points out that “according to international standards, terrorist acts should be confined to criminal acts intended to cause death or serious injury or to the taking of hostages, for purpose of intimidating a population or to compel a 155 government to take a certain action or not”.

To date, no one has been injured by the actions of Palestine Action.

The ban on Palestine Action was immediately challenged in court by the group’s co-founder Ammori. Her appeal is 160 scheduled to be heard in November.

See also: European rights body urges UK ministers to review protest laws [www.bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4pl4pzg87o), October 14, 2025

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4pl4pzg87o>

No More Trump!': Protesters Denouncing the President Unite Across the Country

Corina Knoll, *The New York Times*, October 18, 2025 (abridged)

They were teachers and lawyers, military veterans and fired government employees. Children and grandmothers, students and retirees.

Arriving in droves across the country in major cities and small towns, they appeared in costumes, blared music, brandished signs, hoisted American flags and cheered at the honks of passing cars.

5 The vibe in most places was irreverent but peaceful and family-friendly. The purpose, however, was focused. Each crowd, everywhere, shared the same mantra: No kings.

Collectively, the daylong mass demonstration against the Trump administration on Saturday, held in thousands of locations, condemned a president that the protesters view as acting like a monarch.

10 Many had attended a similar event in June, but the months since had seen President Trump make a dizzying array of changes in quick succession.

This time, the crowds included a new round of protesters, those who said they were outraged over immigration raids, the deployment of federal troops in cities, government layoffs, steep budget cuts, the chipping away of voting rights, the rollback of vaccine requirements, the reversal on treaties with tribes and the so-called One Big Beautiful Bill.

15 Many were also united in saying the administration needed to show basic humanity. [...]

Known as No Kings Day, a follow-up to a demonstration in June, the events were scheduled at roughly 2,600 sites across all 50 states. They were organized by national and local groups and well-known progressive coalitions including Indivisible, 50501 and MoveOn.

20 The rallies came even as Mr. Trump's approval ratings at the polls have not changed significantly. Republican leaders denounced the protests, blaming them for prolonging the government shutdown and calling the event the "hate America rally." [...]

25 Around the country, strangers met and swapped their long lists of grievances with one another: the government shutdown, the tariffs, Mr. Trump's attacks on higher education, the pressure he has placed on the Justice Department to prosecute political enemies, the erosion of women's rights, and the disbanding of D.E.I. programs.

Although some rallies saw small groups of counter protesters and a police presence, the mood at most was upbeat and festive. At a demonstration in Washington, children and families were prominent. (Hours after a large rally ended in Los Angeles, about 100 protesters occupied an intersection before police officers in riot gear dispersed the crowd, the police said.) [...]

30 In a show of solidarity, protesters around the world held demonstrations outside U.S. embassies, consulates or at town squares, including in Prague, Vienna and Malmo, Sweden.

In Paris, protesters raised placards denouncing Mr. Trump. In Germany, rallies were planned in four different cities, including one outside the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. In countries with long-established monarchies, like Britain and Spain, protesters gathered under the slogan "No Tyrants." In San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, many carried colorful signs rebuking ICE.

35 The forcefulness of Mr. Trump's second term may have galvanized protesters, said Jeremy Pressman, a political science professor who co-directs the Crowd Counting Consortium, a joint project of the Harvard Kennedy School and the University of Connecticut. [...]

PART THREE – Racial Justice

DOCUMENT 13

Five Years After Floyd

We look at what has changed since George Floyd's murder.

Five years ago this Sunday, Minneapolis police officers killed George Floyd. His murder set off protests and riots across the country. Demonstrators called for sweeping changes to policing and remedies for what they described as systemic racism in law enforcement.

How much has changed? Nationwide, surprisingly little. States and cities enacted new policies aimed at improving policing, but the data suggests that these changes have had little impact on accountability or the number of killings by police officers.

After Floyd's murder, states and police departments banned chokeholds and no-knock warrants. They mandated body cameras. They rewrote guidelines about how to de-escalate a confrontation with a suspect. They educated officers about racial profiling. And more. The changes weren't universal, and some places did more than others. But every state passed at least some changes.

In a few cities, the federal government intervened. It investigated and publicized police abuses, pressuring local governments into court-enforced consent decrees. These pacts forced police departments to make specific changes and let federal officials and court monitors track how the policies worked over time. Freddie Gray died in 2015 after a "rough ride" while in the custody of the Baltimore Police Department; a consent decree mandated that the city's police drivers follow the speed limit and provide functioning seatbelts when transporting detainees.

At least, that's how consent decrees used to function. This week, the Trump administration dropped efforts to investigate or oversee nearly two dozen police departments.

Meanwhile, killings by police officers rose from just over 1,000 in 2019 to around 1,200 in 2024.

Officers killed Black Americans at nearly three times the rate that they killed white Americans, roughly the same proportion as before.

And the number of prosecutions for police shootings has not changed since Floyd's death, said Philip Stinson, a criminologist who tracks such cases. In 2015, prosecutors charged 18 officers with murder or manslaughter after an on-duty shooting. Last year, they charged 16 officers. In both years, less than 2 percent of fatal police shootings led to indictments.

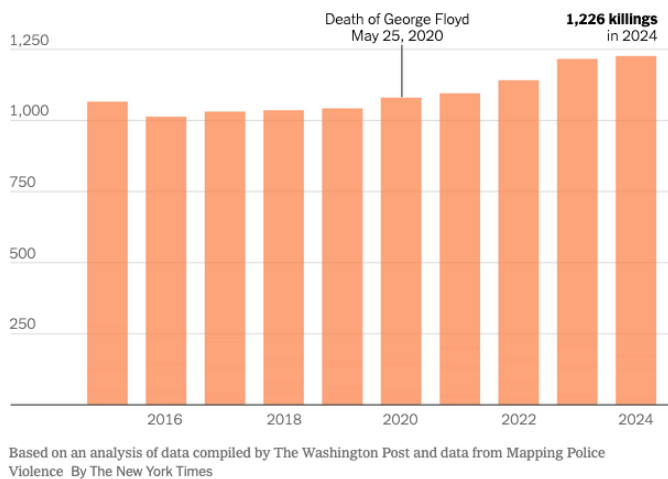
So why didn't much change? Experts cite two reasons.

First, lawmakers did not embrace all the proposed changes. Ohio, Minnesota and Missouri, for example, rejected more than 98 percent of the proposals that came before their legislatures, according to the Brookings Institution. A bipartisan effort in Congress also collapsed. Then the murder rate rose in 2020 and 2021, and public sentiment shifted. Voters wanted the police to focus on crime. Attention to reform faded.

Some experts point to deeper problems. Racial disparities in police killings are partly caused by officers' the changes didn't go far enough to transform the nature of American policing. Addressing those levels of crime and its root causes, such as poverty, will require more than tweaking department guidelines and training.

German Lopez, *The New York Times*, May 23, 2025

People killed by the police from 2015 through 2024



DOCUMENT 14, "Why DC is removing its 'Black Lives Matter' street mural", March 11, 2025.

↳ link: <https://youtu.be/a-BVf4c5sfU> (3 minutes)

Document 15

Explainer: what powers does Trump actually have to deploy the military to US cities?

The Conversation, October 10, 2025

[John Hart](#), Emeritus Faculty, US government and politics specialist, Australian National University

US President Donald Trump's efforts to deploy the military for law enforcement duties in selected American cities is likely to end up before the US Supreme Court.

If it does, the nine justices will be faced with sorting out a 5 dog's breakfast of constitutional and statutory laws full of contradictions and ambiguities.

Given the propensity of the current Supreme Court to support and even extend the scope of presidential authority, it could very well rule in Trump's favour. And 10 this would have far-reaching implications for civil liberties and democracy in the United States.

How did we get to this point, and what does the law actually say about using the National Guard in US cities?

What is Trump attempting to do?

15 The National Guard is made up of part-time reservists assigned to units in each state. These soldiers are typically called into service by the governors of the states where they serve to respond to disasters or large protests.

In certain circumstances, presidents can also "federalise" 20 National Guard troops, though it rarely happens against a governor's wishes. Before this year, the last time this happened was in Selma, Alabama, in 1965, to protect civil rights protesters.

Plus de 15 000 lecteurs nous ont déjà soutenus.

25 **Pourquoi pas vous ?**

Faire un don

In recent months, Trump has attempted to "federalise" the National Guard units belonging to several states and dispatch them to cities (Los Angeles, Memphis,

30 Washington DC, Portland and Chicago) that he claims are out of control.

The troop deployments have been opposed by the Democratic governors in some of these states, then blocked or restricted by temporary restraining orders 35 issued by federal district court judges. (The order in California was subsequently stayed by the US Court of Appeals, pending a further appeal).

There are several issues being contested:

- the conditions under which the National Guard can be mobilised by the federal government
- the degree of collaboration between federal and state governments in issuing orders to the National Guard, and
- the prohibition on the military being used for domestic law enforcement purposes.

45 Trump's moves are testing the uncertain boundaries of all these constraints on executive power. But, more significantly, he is also challenging the long-standing American tradition of keeping the military out of domestic 50 politics.

What are the legal issues at play?

The constitutional authority to deploy the National Guard is actually assigned to Congress, not the president. Article 1, Section 8 of the US Constitution gives Congress the 55 power to "provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions". Militias have been interpreted to include the National Guard.

However, the Constitution also charges the president with two very significant duties. The first is to “preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States”; the second is to “take care that the laws be faithfully executed”. These two duties can amount to a significant grant of power in times of crisis.

The Trump administration will almost certainly argue he is deploying the National Guard in these US cities to carry out these duties.

There’s a bigger issue for Trump, though. Another law, the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, makes it illegal for federal troops to engage in civilian law enforcement unless expressly authorised by the Constitution or the law.

Trump is currently acting without this explicit legal authorisation. However, as the Brennan Center for Justice has recently pointed out, there are 26 different laws that allow for the military to execute the law in specific situations. These exceptions undermine the purpose of the Posse Comitatus Act, making the case for urgent reform of the law.

What about the Insurrection Act?

One of these exceptions is the Insurrection Act of 1807, which gives the president the power to use the military or federalise National Guard troops to put down domestic uprisings. Since the civil rights movement in the 1960s, the act has seldom been used.

Trump said this week he would consider invoking the act to “get around” any court decisions blocking his move to deploy National Guard troops in US cities.

He also claimed the demonstrations against the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) building in Portland amounted to a “criminal insurrection”.

Trump then ramped up the rhetoric and the hyperbole even further by calling for the jailing of Illinois Governor JB

Pritzker and Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson for failing to protect ICE agents in that city.



Police and federal officers throw gas canisters to disperse protesters near a US Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in Portland, Oregon, this week. Ethan Swope/AP

The demonstrations against Trump’s immigration policies in Los Angeles, Portland, and Chicago are nowhere near meeting the definition of insurrection.

But, as the president told the meeting of military generals in Virginia last week, he is keen to push the bounds on using the military in domestic affairs. Or, as he put it, to use these cities as “training grounds” for the armed forces.

If the Supreme Court rules in Trump’s favour on this issue, it would be tantamount to saying the president is the only arbiter on whether a political protest amounts to an insurrection and when it’s necessary to use the military to quell it.

It would also expand the scope for Trump to use the military in other areas of domestic politics.

The president has already deployed the military for border protection, so patrolling universities or even the lines outside polling stations on election day could be next.

Thème

« La répression n’a cessé de s’amplifier. Vous n’êtes pas le seul avoir connu la prison. Ils en ont arrêté beaucoup, des anciens journalistes, des écrivains, des cinéastes, des musiciens, des professeurs jugés trop libéraux, des chercheurs jugés trop en avance sur leur temps, des étudiants, jusqu’à des femmes accusées d’avoir avorté après qu’ils l’ont eu interdit. C’était devenu invivable, tout le monde était terrorisé et la résignation ne suffisait plus. L’an dernier, l’économie s’est effondrée, la colère s’est amplifiée, un mouvement de protestation est né. Discret au début, jusqu’au jour où un scandale a éclaté. Le gouverneur avait invité en grande pompe une délégation d’oligarques auquel il avait promis de supprimer les dernières réglementations environnementales en échange de quelques millions versés dans les poches de son parti. Rien de très nouveau en matière de corruption, sinon que ce auxquels ces concessions était faites dirigeaient un consortium pétrolier étranger. De quoi museler les derniers partisans du régime. Les gens sont descendus dans la rue, ils ont tout bloqué, et cette fois la police n’a rien pu faire pour les déloger. La popularité du gouverneur était devenue telle que son entourage a pris peur et l’a forcé à organiser des élections.