

# Funding the Future

Article URL

Published: January 12, 2026, 7:06 pm

---

As [the FT notes](#) this morning:

*Donald Trump has threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act of 1807 to deploy troops to American cities, intensifying a stand-off with Democratic-led states resisting his use of the military on US soil.*

*The president sounded the warning as his efforts to send federal troops to quash protests in several cities have had mixed results in the courts, with one blocking the deployment of the military to Oregon and another allowing it in Illinois.*

The problem for Trump is that there is no insurrection. In Portland, Oregon, for example, around 20 people protest each night against the actions of ICE. That's it. The suggestion from Trump that it is a warzone is so far from the truth it is absurd. But absurdity has never stopped Trump or any other fascist determined to deliver what their playbook demands of them. And so he is considering using the Insurrection Act, passed in 1807 for a wholly different era.

The worrying possibility is that facts do not come into this. As [Robert Reich](#) has written on Substack overnight:

*Friends,*

*The direction we're going is either martial law or civil war.*

*Americans from so-called "red" states, with the backing of their Republican governors and legislatures, are on the brink of using lethal force against Americans in so-called "blue" states, whose Democratic governors and legislatures strongly oppose the moves.*

*I pray we don't come close to this, but Trump has now ordered the deployment of 400 members of the Texas National Guard to several states, including Oregon and Illinois — ostensibly to protect ICE agents and facilities from protesters. The first group of Texas Guard troops is expected to arrive in Chicago tomorrow.*

Having noted precisely why Trump is seeking to incite what he can call an insurrection, and then why we are nowhere near such a situation, he concluded:

*As I said, I hope we don't come near to this. I hope the federal courts, including the Supreme Court, stop Trump's plan. But I believe it is Trump's plan (the details of which have been worked out by the troika of Vance, Miller, and Vought), and they are implementing it as quickly as they can.*

*I don't want to unduly alarm you, but you need to be aware of this imminent danger. It's unfolding very rapidly.*

*I have little doubt he is right. The United States is nearing civil war, with its forces being turned on those on the left.*

*But then, so too are we, albeit a little behind the US, but nonetheless on the same path.*

*A [Guardian](#) newsletter this morning is based on a discussion with LSE-based human rights lawyer [Dr Richard Martin](#) and examines why new laws on protest are being put in place in the UK, and are targeted solely at the left, saying:*

*The government [put out an announcement](#) on Sunday, saying it would amend sections 12 and 14 of the Public Order Act 1986 to further impose conditions on public protests and assemblies.*

*The changes to the law would allow police officers to consider the cumulative impact of protest when deciding whether or not they are lawful, meaning they could potentially re-route or totally shut down protest they believe could cause serious disruption to local communities.*

*The term 'serious disruption' is, of course, totally subjective and open to any police officer to interpret. I have no doubt that this is deliberate.*

*And why is this targeted at the left? As the piece notes:*

*Do these new laws really represent a serious difference?*

*Martin thinks they do – but more as a vibe shift than anything else. “Crucially, the government is trying to send a signal to the police: to get tougher, less tolerant and to put more weight on the other side of the scales,” he said. “What happens next depends on how susceptible senior police officers are to the mood music.”*

*The police are, of course, notoriously right-wing.*

*Then this was noted:*

*I ask Martin why these same laws aren't being suggested to police far-right rallies, particularly given the government justification of wanting to make sure that communities feel protected and free from intimidation.*

*"I think we need to be upfront about what's prompted this," he said. "It's not far-right rallies. The target to begin with was Extinction Rebellion, and now it's [Palestine Action](#)." He thinks that it is the shared tactic of these two groups – which he defined as "a campaign of attrition where you keep protesting to effectively exhaust the police, to fill the custody suites" – that the government legislation is actually targeted at.*

*"Their approach ... will potentially be met by police gradually breaking that technique down," Martin explained. "It will mean there may be a greater number of arrests, the stakes for those arrested will be higher and we may well see less protest."*

The strategy is not as high profile as that Trump is using, but the aim is the same: it is to drive left wing protest against fascist abuse from the streets. And it is fascist abuse in Gaza that is prompting this action: that is what the ethnic cleansing of Palestinian people is, [as the vast majority of people in the UK agree](#). So, we have a government aligned against people who are protesting about something that most people in the UK think is wrong. All that differs between the UK and US is the timing of the trajectory of travel. The end point is likely to be the same. Call it a police state. As Robert Reich said:

*I don't want to unduly alarm you, but you need to be aware of this imminent danger. It's unfolding very rapidly.*