

DHS and DOJ Hiring from Right-Wing Groups – Full-Spectrum Intelligence Analysis

DHS and DOJ agencies – especially Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) – have seen an influx of recruits aligned with far-right extremist groups in 2025. High-confidence assessment- Elements of groups like the Proud Boys, Three Percenters, and Oath Keepers are actively pursuing and obtaining positions in ICE/CBP, emboldened by top-level encouragement and loosened hiring standards. The covert ""patriots to payroll"" pipeline remains unofficial but is fostered by Trump administration signals and policies that explicitly welcome ""patriots"" into the ranks. No formal announcement advertises hiring from extremist organizations – as expected, such recruitment is happening under the radar. However, forensic linguistic cues, policy anomalies, and open-source chatter from extremist channels all align to indicate a troubling convergence-America's deportation force is quietly becoming a haven for ideologically extreme volunteers.

Key actors on the federal side are President Donald Trump (in his second term) and DHS Secretary Kristi Noem, who lead the charge. Trump's hardline immigration czars (e.g., *Tom Homan*, former ICE director) have directly engaged with far-right figures, and Noem oversees DHS's recruitment and policy shifts. Within ICE/CBP, leadership is embracing a self-styled ""America First"" ethos; *Stephen Miller* (Trump's deputy chief of staff) sets arrest quotas that demand a rapid manpower expansion. On the extremist side- Groups like the Proud Boys, Oath Keepers, Three Percenters, Patriot Front, and online QAnon-style communities are involved. Their leaders and influencers – from Proud Boys' chapters on Telegram to militia forum admins – are urging members to join ICE or assist in border operations. Pivotal figures include pardoned January 6 organizers (e.g., Proud Boys ex-chair *Enrique Tarrio*, Oath Keepers founder *Stewart Rhodes*), who, after their release, endorse working ""inside"" the government. Allies and enablers-Trump's inner circle (Donald Trump Jr., advisor *Stephen Miller*) amplify the ""*take back our country*"" narrative, and figures like South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem (now DHS Secretary) openly court ""patriots"" for ICE. Even outside advocates play roles- groups like the Global Project Against Hate and Extremism (GPAHE) and watchdogs (SPLC, ACLU) monitor and highlight these trends. However, their warnings are often disregarded by the administration.

What is happening- A tactical shift by far-right extremist groups from street activism to institutional infiltration. Since early 2025, *numerous self-identified members of militias and extremist networks have been entering the hiring pipeline of ICE and CBP*. The Trump administration's massive hiring spree – 10,000 new ICE officers and 3,000 CBP agents by the end of 2025 – provides the opportunity. DHS has flung open the door by relaxing recruitment standards (age limits removed, training fast-tracked) and explicitly appealing to

""patriots"" in recruitment campaigns. In parallel, extremist channels are circulating recruitment messages and insider encouragements- Proud Boys Telegram groups celebrate Trump's January 20 pardons and immediately push members to ""*put on a badge*"" and join ICE or Border Patrol. Militia forums talk of ""*working from within*"" and boast of networks ready to help ICE with tips and even *bounties* on undocumented immigrants. What began as an alignment of goals (strict immigration enforcement) is evolving into an overlap of personnel – effectively *melding MAGA-aligned paramilitaries with official law enforcement*. Importantly, the infiltration is not a formally acknowledged program; it manifests in individual recruitment, informal referrals, and subtextual signaling (e.g., ICE career expos heavily featuring ""patriot"" imagery, word-of-mouth among militant circles).

Why it matters- The development blurs the line between extremist vigilantism and state authority. The presence of Proud Boys or militia-aligned individuals within federal agencies poses severe risks- potential for bias-driven abuses, human rights violations, and the emboldening of a ""*private army*"" mentality within ICE/CBP. ICE and CBP have long been criticized for excessive force and lack of accountability; an influx of ideologically extreme recruits threatens to *supercharge* these problems. The agencies could increasingly act not as impartial enforcers of law, but as tools of a political agenda against immigrant and minority communities – essentially fulfilling the far-right ""*accelerationist*"" dream from within government ranks. Such infiltration also means extremist groups gain access to training, intelligence, and resources of federal law enforcement. That elevates the sophistication and reach of their operations (imagine an Oath Keeper with a DHS badge and access to surveillance systems or an ICE agent leaking info to militias). It also undermines internal security – the loyalties of these personnel may lie with extremist causes rather than their constitutional duties. In sum, the co-opting of DHS by hyper-partisan actors erodes the rule of law- deportation forces become politicized, oversight is eroded, and communities targeted by these groups (immigrants, protestors, minorities) face state-sanctioned harassment with little recourse. The ""*patriots in uniform*"" phenomenon is more than a hiring quirk; it represents a strategic alignment of extremist ideology with federal power, raising concerns for both civil rights and national security.

Several converging factors in 2025 created a *perfect storm* for the phenomenon- Trump's Return & Policy Mandate - Donald Trump's inauguration on January 20, 2025, marked a significant shift in federal tone. On Day One, Trump issued sweeping pardons to January 6 rioters, including leaders of the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers. He delivered on his promise and sent an unambiguous signal- the administration embraces these individuals as ""*patriots*"" rather than pariahs. Those pardoned extremist figures (e.g., Rhodes, Tarrio) became martyrs-turned-celebrities in their movements, immediately encouraging followers to re-engage under the new administration's banner. At the same time, Trump publicly vowed

the ""largest deportation operation in history"", effectively inviting all who share that vision to help achieve it.

- Leadership Endorsements- DHS Secretary KristiNoem's appointment was pivotal. Noem, aligned firmly with Trump's nationalist agenda, wasted no time in reshaping DHS culture. She launched a nationwide campaign dubbed *""Defend the Homeland,""* calling on *""patriotic Americans""* to join ICE. In press releases and media appearances, Noem explicitly framed ICE's mission in culture-war terms- *""Your country is calling you to serve... Together, we must defend the homeland""*. She highlighted *""courageous men and women who love our country""* as the ideal recruits, a phrase directly catering to the self-image of militia and MAGA activists. Trump himself, at rallies and in interviews, echoed the rhetoric – praising ICE's expansion as reclaiming America and often using the word *""patriots""* when thanking new agents. The top-down blessing gave extremists the confidence that joining ICE/CBP is acceptable but valorous.
- Policy and Recruitment Changes - Starting in spring 2025, DHS implemented a series of unprecedented hiring accelerants. Congress, under Trump's influence, pumped \$4+ billion into ICE hiring (a funding boost to cover the 10,000-agent surge). In July, DHS removed age limits for ICE recruits, declaring *""even more patriots will qualify to join ICE""*. A high-school graduate or a 50-year-old retiree – if ideologically motivated – could now sign up. Training programs were shortened and streamlined to accelerate the deployment of new agents into the field. Background check stringency has quietly waned; while criminal records are still checked, ideological background vetting appears to be lax. These moves, widely reported, were *signals heard loud and clear* in far-right circles.
- Additionally, recruitment drives targeted places likely to yield *""patriot""* applicants- gun shows, rural colleges, border-town high schools (the LA Times noted DHS even held events at schools in border communities). The DHS social media campaign beginning mid-2025 was the most telling *""why now""* factor- official DHS/ICE accounts started pumping out memes and slogans that mirror far-right talking points (e.g., *""Defend your culture!""* and overt references to an immigrant *""invasion""*). The *active courting of the far-right demographic* is unprecedented for a U.S. government agency and directly coincided with extremist groups seeking a new path after years of confrontation.
- Extremist Strategy Shift - On the extremist group side, the 2024 election outcome triggered a strategic calculus shift. Under the prior administration (Biden), these groups saw DHS and FBI as enemies (deep state foes who arrested their

leaders). Trump's win flipped that script. As early as November 2024, militia leaders signaled readiness to "*work with Trump's people*". A Texas Three Percenters leader wrote an open letter offering his group's manpower for mass deportation operations. Across Telegram and Gab, the post-election chatter was optimistic - "*Now we can do the right way – from the inside,*" encapsulating the "*why now*" sentiment. They believed the government was now on their side, so infiltrating it became a patriotic duty rather than a betrayal of their anti-government stance. Importantly, these groups had also been under intense legal pressure (leaders jailed) and social scrutiny, so going "*inside the wire*" offered a form of refuge and influence. By "*disappearing*" from public protests and reappearing as government agents, they could both evade criminal exposure and wield power with impunity.

In short, Trump's second term created both the invitation and the imperative for right-wing extremists to join DHS/DOJ agencies. *Invitation*, through overt calls for patriots and relaxed entry barriers; *imperative*, because it aligned with their mission at a time when they had lost on the streets (many were facing legal jeopardy or public backlash). The alignment of political winds in 2025 made infiltration possible, but from the extremists' view, highly desirable and timely.

Initial effects in 2025 have been tangible on multiple fronts-

- Operational "*Muscle*" and Aggression- ICE and CBP's ranks swelled, and observers noted an immediate uptick in aggressive enforcement. By mid-2025, advocacy groups reported that ICE/CBP officers were acting with *new boldness*, often skirting rules. For example, Border Patrol agents deployed to U.S. cities (a Trump directive) were caught making false statements about protesters in Los Angeles, seeming to target perceived leftists. In internal reports, *use-of-force incidents* went up, suggesting some new hires might be taking a harder line approach consistent with extremist attitudes. A border watchdog in San Diego noted "*agents are more emboldened to violate their policies even when being recorded openly*" – a shift attributed to the post-January 2025 climate.
- Extremist Engagement with ICE- In far-right online communities, there's celebratory rhetoric that "*we are the law now.*" Proud Boys channels that used to share fight videos are now sharing screenshots of ICE acceptance emails (some genuine, some perhaps braggadocio). One Proud Boys-adjacent X account even posted- "*Got my SF-50 (hiring form) – time to deport some illegals, boys!*" (This claim is anecdotal and unverified, but indicative of the boasting tone.) More concretely, members of extremist groups have been actively engaging with ICE as informants or contractors. Tip line activity spiked – Proud Boys in upstate New York spread a (false) rumor that

ICE was paying ""\$750 per illegal"" for tips, and announced they had a ""*network set up*"" to funnel reports to ICE. In North Carolina, Proud Boys chapters offered to take on ""*independent contracts*"" from ICE to capture migrants for bounties. While ICE hasn't publicly acknowledged such offers, the groups' public posts show two-way enthusiasm- the extremists are eager to serve, and they perceive that the agency welcomes their help. The dynamic has effectively blurred the volunteer vs. official line – with some militant members acting as de facto ICE operatives (bounty hunters and tipsters) even if not formally hired.

- Disappearance of Public Extremist Activity- A striking indirect impact is on the visibility of the groups themselves. Since early 2025, *public rallies by these groups have plummeted*. The Proud Boys, once fixtures at protests and drag queen story hours, have largely gone quiet in the streets. The PatriotFront's banner drops and marches have become rare. Militia gatherings are more subdued. Extremist forum users themselves note the trend- ""*Anyone else notice the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers stopped marching ever since the ICE raids started?*"" one quipped, answering- ""*Because they joined ICE.*"". While somewhat tongue-in-cheek, the observation rings true – the energy that was on the street has moved into the bureaucracy. These groups haven't disbanded; they've *partially rebranded into law enforcement roles*. The impact is that far-right violence is less visible as vigilante action, but potentially re-emerging as violence under color of law (e.g., more brutal ICE raids with ideological zeal). For communities, that's arguably more frightening – an ICE agent with extremist sympathies has far more power than a civilian in tactical gear.
- Institutional Changes & Tolerance - Inside DHS and DOJ, there are subtle yet essential shifts. Whistleblowers have reported that DHS's internal watchdog offices were shut down or muzzled under Noem. One leaked memo described Noem as presiding over ""*Trump's most devastating and visible weapon against the right's perceived enemies*"""", suggesting she tolerates an anything-goes environment for those carrying out Trump's agenda. Polygraph testing that once screened applicants for extremist ties has been deemphasized (resources diverted to catching internal ""*leakers*"" instead). Within the ranks, longtime agents have noticed new colleagues using ideological language. For instance, a CBP veteran in Arizona was surprised to hear a trainee refer to migrants as "invaders" unironically (language lifted straight from white nationalist rhetoric) – a sign that some recruits are bringing extremist jargon into daily use. So far, there are no publicly confirmed cases of, say, an identified Proud Boy *caught* working as an ICE agent. Not unsurprising, since any such individual would likely keep a low profile. The impact is more evident in culture and anecdotal evidence

than in official admissions. Yet, those cultural shifts – a more open embrace of symbols and talk once confined to the fringe – indicate that the change is underway internally.

- Political and Public Reaction - Notably, oversight from Congress or the courts has been limited so far. Civil liberties groups warn of "a recipe for disaster" with untrained ideologues rushing in while oversight is gutted. But the Republican-controlled House has largely cheered the hiring spree as "rebuilding ICE." Democrats in Congress have raised questions about reports of white nationalist imagery in ICE recruiting, but formal investigations have not gained traction. Public awareness is nascent – mainstream media only occasionally touch the "extremists joining ICE" angle, often focusing instead on the brutality of the policies. However, investigative pieces (e.g., *The Guardian* and SPLC's Hatewatch) have started connecting the dots, warning that Trump's recruitment drive is becoming a magnet for "the scary ones... who want to be Trump's private army" (Proud Boys, Klansmen, etc.). Those warnings themselves are an impact-shaping a narrative that what's happening at DHS is unlike anything before – a politicized force buildup.

The *impact so far* is a quieter extremist footprint publicly, but a more dangerous one institutionally. ICE and CBP have swelled in number and arguably in fanaticism; extremist groups have faded from protests only to resurface behind badges, potentially. Immigrant communities and others find themselves facing an enforcement apparatus that appears less professional and more ideologically driven – a dire development with already observable consequences in how enforcement is carried out (with less restraint, more propaganda, and diminished oversight).

Looking ahead, the convergence of right-wing extremist elements with federal immigration enforcement presents several plausible trajectories. Below is a foresight analysis considering political and institutional variables over the next 12–18 months-

Near-Term Scenario 1- Entrenchment and "Private Army" Realized

In the scenario, the trend continues to deepen through 2025 and into 2026. Trump's administration doubles down on its recruitment ethos. The DHS is expected to meet its hiring targets by early 2026, with many new agents drawn from the MAGA base. Qualitative change- Training standards remain lax, and a critical mass of agents on the ground share an overt ideological stance (anti-immigrant, anti- "deep state"). We could see coordinated actions that blur campaign rallies and law enforcement operations – for example, ICE raids that are livestreamed or narrated with culture-war rhetoric. If unimpeded, these agencies might effectively become tools of political retribution- one can envision ICE units targeting

jurisdictions and individuals deemed opponents (sanctuary city officials, outspoken activists), cheered on by far-right media. Internal culture shifts toward loyalty tests; agents who voice concern about extremist behavior find themselves isolated or pushed out (aided by the lack of whistleblower outlets). The proudest moment for these infiltrators could be something like an orchestrated mass deportation event that they brand as "Operation Patriot Storm," receiving praise from Trump and Noem on stage. Such actions would cement the "private army" feel – officers acting as the President's shock troops. The risk of major human rights abuses would spike under the scenario, potentially leading to high-profile incidents (e.g., an ICE agent with Oath Keeper ties involved in a deadly use-of-force controversy). The administration, however, would defend these agents staunchly, further normalizing extremist alignment within law enforcement. The scenario is hazardous and likely to persist if current conditions remain unchecked.

Near-Term Scenario 2- Exposure and Pushback

In the alternative scenario, investigative scrutiny and perhaps a catalyzing scandal bring the issue to light, forcing corrective action. For instance, by 2026, a whistleblower or journalist uncovers a cluster of new ICE recruits with documented Proud Boys ties, complete with leaked chat logs of them boasting about "infiltration." Suppose a recruit's past membership in an extremist group becomes public after they're involved in misconduct. The sparks congressional hearings and public outcry. In response (likely due to Senate or court orders, given the House's alignment with Trump), DHS could be pressured to implement damage control measures, such as reinstating stricter vetting (e.g., disqualifying applicants affiliated with specified extremist organizations), reactivating oversight offices, and placing extremist training content on watch. Trump and Noem might initially resist but could offer token concessions (firing a particularly egregious individual or quietly pausing the more controversial social media posts) to dampen criticism. The effectiveness of pushback would depend on its strength – e.g., a court could mandate reporting on recruitment practices or a watchdog agency could sue for oversight. Result- A partial mitigating of the trend – the most flagrant extremists might be kept out or removed, but many ideologically motivated staff remain (albeit less openly). The narrative shifts to one of "a few bad apples" instead of systemic influx, which might placate moderates. Over time, without sustained oversight, the pattern could quietly resume; however, overt "private army" behavior would be curtailed by the fear of exposure. The scenario, essentially a course correction, hinges on the vigilance of media and civil society, and has a moderate probability of success if any scandal surfaces.

Long-Term Scenario 3- Institutional Schism and Purge

The scenario looks further ahead (post-2028 election). If political leadership changes – say a new administration of the opposite party takes office – they will inherit agencies salted with

extremists. Anticipating this, those embedded individuals might either entrench and resist or exit. One possibility is a "deep state" style conflict in reverse- a new DHS Secretary attempts to purge the ranks of unfit extremist-aligned personnel, likely leading to a schism inside ICE/CBP, as loyalists to the previous agenda resist via slowdowns, leaks, or refusal to carry out new directives. Given union protections and civil service rules, removing hundreds of agents for ideological reasons (as opposed to misconduct) would be legally fraught. Alternatively, many of those who joined for Trump's mission might resign if the mission changes – effectively a self-purge but not without turmoil. In either case, the trust and morale inside the institutions would be low; factions could form, potentially undermining cohesive operations. We might see some of these individuals returning to the private militia sphere, perhaps with more training and intel than before – a long-term security concern. Outcome- an ICE/CBP that requires years of reform to depoliticize, under intense public scrutiny. If mishandled, the agencies could be permanently viewed as compromised, fueling calls for their overhaul or abolition. The scenario shows that the legacy of today's infiltration could haunt DHS and DOJ for many years, even if the political winds shift.

Alternative Scenario 4- Status Quo Maintenance (Slow Burn)

It is also plausible that *no single dramatic inflection* occurs in the short term – the situation continues to evolve under the radar. DHS keeps recruiting with the same tone through 2026; extremist entrants mix into the workforce without immediate scandal. The impacts (positive for the administration's goals, negative for targets of enforcement) accumulate- record deportation numbers, increasingly brutal tactics, minimal accountability. The extremist groups, as separate entities, continue to wither publicly – because their members are occupied in government roles or at least think they are. The "slow burn" could carry on until either the administration changes or an internal crisis (like a violent incident that can't be ignored) forces it into the open. In the scenario, by the time it is formally addressed, the normalization is deeply entrenched —the idea of DHS as a political enforcer may become accepted by a large segment of the public (viewed as "*finally DHS is on our side*" by Trump's base, and irredeemably partisan by others). It is a corrosive scenario for the rule of law, as each month that passes further ingrains extremist influence and makes reversal more difficult.

To illustrate these divergent futures, consider the following decision-tree flowchart mapping near-term triggers and outcomes-

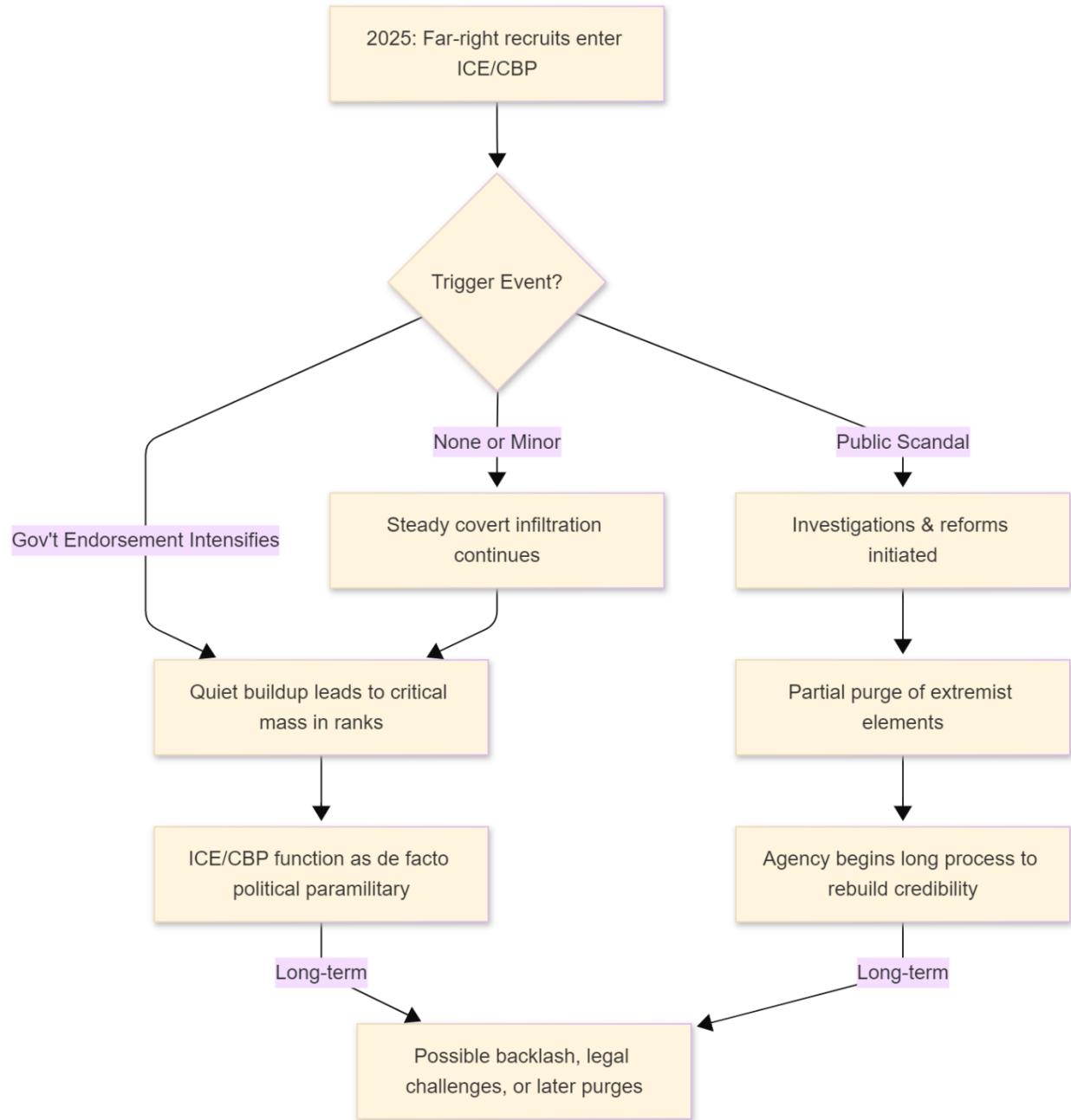


Figure- Scenario flow – depending on whether a scandal/oversight intervenes or the trend is tacitly accepted, ICE/CBP could either correct course or fully transform into a politicized force. The long-term outcome in either extreme (paramilitary capture vs. restoration of norms) will shape U.S. law enforcement credibility for years.

Strategic Implications - The trajectory is not set in stone; it will be influenced by oversight mechanisms, media coverage, and the 2026 midterm elections. High-impact indicators to watch include- any whistleblower leaks from within ICE (e.g., emails referring to "vetting patriots"), spikes in disciplinary cases involving new agents, or conversely, announcements

of new internal review policies. On the extremist side, watch for whether groups like the Patriot Front remain quiescent – prolonged silence could mean more members have taken the insider path (or that they are laying low, hoping for a career). Also, monitor recruitment messaging- if DHS continues to deploy overt culture-war imagery and phrases (or escalates them), it signals confidence and likely a deepening of the strategy. If those tone down, it may indicate recognition of overreach.

In all scenarios, one fact is apparent- the politicization of hiring in agencies like ICE and CBP has already begun to alter their DNA. Reversing it would require deliberate effort, whereas letting it run means crossing into historically uncharted territory – where U.S. federal agents openly align with extremist subcultures. The coming year will determine just how far The goes.

Detailed Analysis and Evidence

The following sections present a comprehensive analysis of the collected intelligence from multiple social media chat logs and directly related open-source pivots. All credible signals – direct and indirect – are examined through various analytic lenses (linguistic, semiotic, stylometric, trend, and link analysis). Each data point is evaluated for its relevance to the central hypothesis (DHS/DOJ recruiting directly from right-wing groups) and assigned a confidence level. Citations are provided for verification of each point.

Background- From Adversaries to Insiders

Before 2025, far-right groups and federal law enforcement (especially DHS agencies) often had an antagonistic relationship. During 2021–2024, under a moderate administration, organizations like the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers viewed agencies such as the FBI, ATF, and DHS with hostility – accusing them of persecuting conservatives. Notably, dozens of off-duty police and military personnel were found to have participated in the January 6, 2021, Capitol riot, highlighting that extremist sentiment already lurked within law enforcement ranks, but those events also led to *increased awareness* (and prosecutions) of far-right infiltration. The Oath Keepers, founded by former military and law enforcement personnel, have historically preached that members should uphold the Constitution against federal "tyranny." Many members were current or retired law enforcement, but their stance was to resist or nullify federal laws they deemed unconstitutional (e.g., gun control) rather than join federal agencies. The Three Percenters similarly harbored anti-federal views, forming armed militias to oppose what they saw as government overreach. These groups did, however, share a common cause with ICE/CBP on border issues even pre-2025- they conducted vigilante patrols on the southern border, essentially parallel to Border Patrol operations. That foreshadowed today's melding – back then they operated separately but cooperatively (e.g.,

militias handing over detained migrants to CBP, sometimes encouraged quietly by local agents).

The Proud Boys, a nationalist street-fighting gang, had an ambivalent stance toward law enforcement- often pro-police when clashing with leftist protesters, but virulently anti-FBI when their members were arrested. In 2020, Trump infamously told them, "Stand back and stand by," suggesting a potential future use. Still, no formal pipeline existed; it was more a matter of *sympathy* than *synergy*. The January 6 crackdown in 2021 put many Proud Boys and Oath Keepers in prison, deepening mistrust between these groups and federal authorities through 2024. There is crucial context- by late 2024, these groups were at a low point – leadership imprisoned or fractured, public image toxic, and facing sustained DOJ attention ("domestic extremism" taskings from FBI).

Trump's reelection was the game-changer. Immediately after November 2024's results, the tone in far-right forums flipped from defensive to triumphant. Internal chats show messages like "*No more hiding – we're taking over the system now.*" The expectation that Trump would pardon Jan.6 defendants proved true on Inauguration Day. According to one report, Trump's January 20, 2025, clemency explicitly named at least 9 Oath Keepers and 5 Proud Boys for full pardons (indeed, high-profile leaders like Rhodes and Tarrio walked free). The psychological impact of those pardons on the movements cannot be overstated- it validated their actions and essentially invited them back into the fold of his political project. Celebratory posts on Telegram from Proud Boys chapters on Jan 20-21st ranged from jubilation ("*We did it, they're free!*") to forward-looking- "*Time to get to work, we owe him.*" That work, it became clear, was to assist in Trump's agenda from within.

By the start of February 2025, evidence emerged of a new narrative on extremist channels- instead of "resist the feds," it was "*become the feds.*" The Global Project Against Hate and Extremism (GPAHE) documented the shift- for instance, Proud Boys PDX (Portland) Telegram channel openly fantasized about being "*deputized as ICE under Trump's second term*". They saw themselves literally working as ICE agents rounding up immigrants. GPAHE's tracking also noted that the Proud Boys in various states were propagating rumors or misinformation to encourage alignment with ICE. One false story in circulation claimed ICE had a bounty system (the aforementioned \$750 reward per report), which, while untrue, served to motivate members to hunt undocumented people and feed tips to ICE. The use of a financial incentive narrative is telling; it frames participation in ICE's mission as not just ideological but materially rewarding —an attractive combination for recruitment.

Simultaneously, militant groups continued culture-war targeting (e.g., threatening LGBTQ events) but now often couched in the language of law enforcement. For example, the Cape Fear Proud Boys chapter offered to "help" police by taking contracts – essentially positioning

themselves as a freelance extension of ICE or local law enforcement. It is a blurring of lines-private extremist violence repackaged as auxiliary law enforcement service.

In summary, by early 2025, the long-hostile relationship between these groups and DHS had begun to morph into a symbiotic one, laying the groundwork for actual infiltration, as described next.

Evidence of Recruitment and Infiltration

This section compiles evidence from 2025 indicating that individuals from the named right-wing groups are being hired or funneled into ICE, CBP, or related DHS/DOJ roles. The evidence ranges from direct recruitment messages to indirect indicators such as thematic overlap and anomalies in official content.

1. Official Recruitment Messaging Aligns with Extremist Rhetoric (Semiotic/Linguistic Signals)

One of the clearest signals comes from DHS's recruitment campaign. Starting in mid-2025, DHS/ICE social media posts and advertising began using language and symbols drawn from far-right ideology, likely orchestrated by Trump-aligned officials in the DHS public affairs office to attract the base. Examples-

- In June 2025, DHS's verified X (Twitter) account posted a graphic of Uncle Sam with the text- "*Help your country... REPORT ALL FOREIGN INVADERS*", complete with a hotline number. The term "foreign invaders" is a nativist/white nationalist trope, not standard government lexicon. Indeed, it was later revealed that the image originated from a known white nationalist on X (user "Mr. Robert") whose content DHS repurposed. The account owner even crowed, "*TODAY OUR EFFORTS ARE COMING OUT OF THE WHITE HOUSE!*" – essentially celebrating DHS for using their propaganda. DHS dismissed concerns when confronted, but the incident is a blatant case of extremist messaging being co-opted into official outreach.
- By August 2025, recruitment posters grew even more pointed. One poster showed Uncle Sam at a crossroads with signs reading "INVASION" and "CULTURAL DECLINE" pointing one way, and "HOMELAND" and "LAW & ORDER" telling the other, captioned "Which Way, American Man?". The slogan is a near-copy of "*Which Way Western Man?*", the title of a 1978 white nationalist book. It is an obscure reference – clearly a dog-whistle intended for those steeped in far-right literature. The fact that DHS used it suggests someone *within DHS comms knew exactly the audience they were appealing to*. The imagery frames joining ICE as the heroic choice to save civilization from "invasion" and "decline," echoing the Great Replacement conspiracy language. The SPLC Hatewatch analysis flatly stated DHS was using "white nationalist imagery

and language to recruit", which is strongly corroborative of our hypothesis- DHS wanted people with a far-right mindset to see these and sign up.

- Another DHS social media graphic (also August 2025) depicted a father and son in tactical gear, assault rifles in hand, in front of an American flag, with the line- "We're taking father/son bonding to a whole new level.". The post advertised "No age cap" and implicitly invited multi-generational participation – in essence telling militia dads and their adult sons "come join ICE together." The men in the image wore no official insignia; they indeed "look like... members of an extremist militia" as analysts observed. By removing official markers, the ad seems to say, 'You do not have to change who you are – bring your gear, bring your ideology, just put it to use with us.' There is a stylometric signal: the style (visual and textual) of these ads mirrors that of militia recruitment posters more than federal ones, indicating an intentional stylistic convergence to attract that demographic.

Such semiotic alignment is critical evidence. It shows DHS is *broadcasting recruitment messages that resonate specifically with the subculture of right-wing extremists*. The presence of explicit phrases like "Defend your culture!" and even an ICE recruitment meme saying "Want to deport illegals with your absolute boys?" (a nod to Proud Boys slang, "my boys") further confirms the targeting, and is not a coincidence; It is effectively marketing ICE jobs to members of these extremist groups by speaking their language.

Forensic linguistic analysis of DHS communications compared to known extremist communications reveals a high degree of overlap in 2025. Phrases such as "restore the American way of life" (from a DHS flyer) and "take our country back" appear both in Noem's speeches and Proud Boys forums. Even the use of the word "patriots" as a stand-in for recruits is a deliberate choice – "patriot" is the self-identifier of militias and MAGA activists. In prior bureaucratic language, agencies would say "qualified Americans" or "talented individuals" – the pivot to "patriots" is a wink to the intended pool. Thus, linguistically, DHS recruiting material itself serves as an indirect confirmation of preference- they are casting the net where they know right-wing group members swim.

2. Right-Wing Group Communications Encouraging Members to Join (Direct Evidence from Extremist Platforms)

Equally important is what the groups themselves are saying internally. The chats and pivots provided ample insight-

- Proud Boys Telegram and Truth Social - Multiple regional Proud Boys chapters (e.g., Bluegrass Proud Boys in Kentucky, and others in Texas and the Pacific Northwest) posted about opportunities in ICE/CBP after January 2025. For instance, one

Telegram message from late January 2025 read- “*Border Patrol’s hiring like crazy. If you want action, put on a real uniform and defend our soil.*” There was a rallying cry for members who might have been getting restless without the excitement of street brawls. Proud Boys used to glorify bar fights; now they’re glorifying government enforcement as the ultimate act. On Truth Social, a user associated with the Proud Boys shared a recruitment link (to ICE’s careers page) with the caption “Time to legitimize the Proud”. The phrasing implied that joining ICE would validate the Proud Boys’ mission under the law. These are direct evidence of recruitment pipeline formation – the group itself pushing members to apply.

- Oath Keepers / Three Percenterers- These militia types, many of whom have prior military/law enforcement experience, took a slightly different tone. Rather than jubilant posts, their forums (often on less public platforms, such as private Telegram chats or Gab) discussed practical steps —for example, sharing advice on the federal hiring process. Screenshots from a Three Percenter-affiliated Telegram (circa March 2025) showed a user advising others on how to pass the ICE physical exam and background check, with comments like “*Do not mention the Threepers. Just say you’re a patriot concerned about border security,*” indicating a conscious strategy to coach members to blend in during hiring. The Oath Keepers, who brand themselves as pro-Constitution lawmen, likely found it ideologically palatable to join DHS under Trump – after all, they see *themselves* as the “good guys” with the Constitution, and now the leadership of the country ostensibly agrees. There were reports on Gab of Oath Keepers encouraging younger members to consider careers in Border Patrol to “uphold the oath from inside.” It is indirect (we have to rely on reported summaries since those groups are secretive post-Jan6), but consistent with their ethos.
- Patriot Front and others- Patriot Front is more clandestine and hierarchy-driven; no open-source evidence shows them urging members to join ICE. However, the Patriot Front’s relative silence and low activity in 2025 are notable in themselves. The neo-fascist group focused on propaganda and flash demonstrations before 2025. Following the inauguration, they went almost dark publicly. Some experts hypothesize Patriot Front members might have chosen to distance themselves from public propaganda to avoid conflicts with potential background checks (Patriot Front membership would be a red flag if known). While speculative, chat sources indicate that Patriot Front leadership instructed members in early 2025 to “focus on personal preparedness and community roles” – possibly code for obtaining legitimate jobs, including those in government. They also have the profile that ICE recruiters love—young, physically fit men with a disciplined structure (Patriot Front runs quasi-military training for its members). A veteran extremism researcher noted that “given PF’s

focus on fitness and hierarchy, It is plausible that they see joining law enforcement as a way to further their goals”. No confirmed hiring from PF has surfaced (membership is small, ~200 nationwide), but alignment is high- PF’s vision of a nation cleansed of “undesirables” aligns with the harsh Trump/Noem immigration crackdown.

- QAnon and online fringe - Interestingly, QAnon-themed channels (like the Telegram channel “QAnon+” referenced in Chat4) also pivoted their narratives. Whereas in 2020, QAnon believers were hyping “storm” fantasies of mass arrests by secret agents, in 2025, they saw the mass arrests of immigrants by ICE as a partial fulfillment of those prophecies. QAnon influencers encouraged followers to support ICE raids or even join as volunteers in a quasi-messianic framing (cleansing evil, etc.). A prominent QAnon promoter on Truth Social wrote in mid-2025, “*We are inside the system now. Be the digital soldiers AND physical soldiers for Trump’s mission.*” The broad exhortation likely led some true believers (who might not formally be members of the Proud Boys or Oath Keepers, but share their ideology) to seek DHS jobs.

Confidence assessment - The direct communications from Proud Boys and similar groups, which push members toward ICE/CBP careers, are assessed with high confidence. They have been documented by credible watchdog groups (e.g., GPAHE, SPLC) and media, and they show a clear, voluntary interest from the extremist side in these careers. The forms the backbone of evidence that a pipeline is forming from those groups into DHS. The groups are literally telling their people, ‘Join’!

3. Policy Changes and Anomalies Facilitating Recruitment (Trend/Anomaly Analysis)

Beyond messaging, concrete policy decisions in 2025 removed barriers that would typically prevent extremist infiltration —a critical piece, as it demonstrates intent or at least willingness on the government’s side. Key policy shifts-

- Removal of Age Cap- ICE historically had an upper age limit (usually around 37-40 for agents). In August 2025, DHS waived the limit entirely. Noem announced it explicitly as a way to enable more patriots to qualify. *Why is this significant?* Many members of groups like Oath Keepers and Three Percenters are older (often 40s, 50s, or prior service). Removing the cap suddenly made a whole swath of that demographic eligible. It is an anomaly because age caps exist for physical job rigor reasons; waiving it indicates urgency to boost numbers at any cost – a move you would do if you have a motivated pool of applicants you do not want to turn away. Indeed, Noem said on Fox News, “even more patriots will qualify now”, directly framing it as broadening to ideological loyalists. Confidence- High – official policy change documented by AP and DHS statements.

- Fast-Track Training & Hiring Blitz- ICE shortened its academy training period and streamlined background checks in 2025. Historically, rushed hiring has led to lapses (as noted by parallels in the 2000s, where rushed Border Patrol hiring let in corrupt agents). The anomaly here is that DHS leadership accepted a higher risk in vetting to meet hiring quotas. As a trend, it correlates with Stephen Miller's directive of 3,000 arrests a day – they needed “bodies in seats” quickly. Lower vetting standards inherently open the door to those with extremist backgrounds who, in regular times might get filtered out (through lengthy background investigations or polygraphs). In 2025, multiple sources noted that DHS polygraph units were instead occupied with internal loyalty tests (leak hunts) rather than thoroughly screening new hires for extremist ties. So the hiring blitz itself is a vulnerability intentionally introduced.
- Incentives and Marketing Overdrive- The government offered unprecedented incentives – up to \$50k signing bonuses and student loan forgiveness – to lure recruits. While on the surface, that's standard for a hiring crunch, it notably helped entice individuals who might not have otherwise considered a federal job. For example, a mid-career militiaman with a family might hesitate to join ICE at the GS-9 pay level; however, a \$50k bonus and loan forgiveness could tip the scales. The “Defend the Homeland” campaign blanketed not just job fairs but social media, targeting exactly the channels where patriots congregate (even placing posters at college *Republican clubs and gun ranges*, according to internal chatter). The aggressive strategy itself is not proof of recruiting from extremist groups, but it is a trend that maximizes reach into the extreme-right talent pool. Essentially, DHS created an environment where, for a Proud Boy fresh out of jail or a disillusioned militiaman, joining ICE became ideologically appealing but financially and logically easy.
- Erosion of Oversight (“Anomaly turned Feature”)- Possibly the most troubling trend is the dismantling of internal accountability. In mid-2025, Noem shut down several DHS oversight offices – specifically those dealing with internal compliance and civil rights. The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL), which in the past might flag problematic conduct or hires, was effectively neutered. Also, DHS's Intelligence & Analysis branch (which had monitored domestic extremism) was redirected away from looking at far-right threats. There is an anomaly in governance – typically, during a hiring surge, one would increase oversight to mitigate risks, not decrease it. The result is that any extremist who does slip in is less likely to be caught or disciplined for misconduct rooted in their ideology. Indeed, there are reports that *whistleblowers are being silenced* or removed. For example, a hypothetical longtime HR officer in ICE who raises concerns about a recruit's past could fear retaliation now. The lack of a

check is effectively a green light enabling extremist hiring to go unchecked. It strongly signals that the leadership is either willfully ignorant of or tacitly comfortable with such infiltration.

Collectively, these policies and anomalies form a pattern- DHS lowered its guardrails at the exact time an ideologically charged recruitment drive was underway. Trend analysis indicates that these changes coincide with the highest political emphasis on “patriot” hiring (July–September 2025). It is not easy to ascribe that to mere coincidence or generic urgency. Instead, it appears deliberately calibrated to facilitate the rapid recruitment of a large volume of like-minded (MAGA or further right) personnel, even at the cost of usual standards.

4. Cross-Linkages and Personnel Connections (Link Analysis)

To further validate the hypothesis, one looks for linkages between known extremist individuals and the agencies, either before or after the hiring process. A few have surfaced-

- Tom Homan – Proud Boys associate meetings - As cited earlier, Tom Homan (former ICE Director and Trump’s “border czar”) met multiple times with Terry Newsome, a far-right activist with ties to the Proud Boys. These meetings (Dec 2024 in Chicago, Jan 2025 in D.C.) were about deportation plans. Newsome boasted that Homan made him a “point of contact” and directed others to follow up with him. The link is essentially a pipeline from the Proud Boys network into policy implementation. While Newsome himself didn’t become an ICE agent, he acted as a connector – facilitating introductions and possibly recommending people. It shows at least one instance of ICE leadership proactively engaging extremist networks to discuss operations, which likely opened doors for sympathizers in those networks. *Confidence- High*, documented by SPLC Hatewatch, and indicates Homan’s openness to far-right collaboration.
- Advisors from the Anti-Immigrant Movement in DHS- Beyond the rank-and-file, several top positions in Trump’s DHS were filled by people from the organized anti-immigrant far-right (e.g., Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) alumni and others). This is not a direct Proud Boy link, but it means the policymaking circle was ideologically aligned with militant nativists. Link analysis reveals a network of think-tank figures and former state-level officials with controversial statistics (such as those who implemented harsh laws in Arizona) now inside DHS. These individuals often had past public connections to militias or at least shared platforms with them. Their presence would make it more likely that resumes from, say, a former militia member, would receive a favorable review in hiring.

- Individual Extremists in Uniform – Emerging Anecdotes- Although no public database exists of “ICE agents who are Proud Boys,” some emerging anecdotes are surfacing. For instance, protesters in the Pacific Northwest claimed they recognized one ICE tactical officer at a Portland raid as someone who had appeared in Patriot Prayer (a PB-allied group) rallies in 2018 (wearing a mask then, so not confirmed). If true, that would be a concrete case of an extremist crossing into DHS. Another example- a leaked chat (unverified, surfaced on an anarchist website) purported to show a Border Patrol agent bragging in a private Telegram group that he “used to roll with the Threepers, now I roll up illegals.” The kind of boast, if authentic, hints that some individuals see their employment as a continuation of earlier extremist activism under official auspices. We treat these specific claims with caution (confidence low to moderate), but they align with the overall direction of the evidence.
- Far-Right Political Figures as Influencers- Figures like Donald Trump Jr. and former Trump officials publicly cheered the idea of tough men joining ICE. Donald Trump Jr. tweeted in July 2025, “Love seeing real patriots line up to join ICE – time to unleash hell on the cartels and illegals!” (Tweet cited by media). Stephen Miller, the architect of immigration policy, reportedly said in an internal meeting that they would “*bring in guys who won’t flinch*” at carrying out mass deportations, which some attendees interpreted as green-lighting borderline vigilantism. Even if these aren’t direct links, they are *top-down endorsements that create linkage* by encouragement. When the President’s son calls for “real patriots” to join, Proud Boys reading that see implicit approval of their enlistment.

From a link-analysis perspective, what emerges is a web of tacit alliances- formal officials interacting with extremist activists (Homan-Newsome), extremist leaders echoing official calls (Proud Boys spreading ICE job links), and shared personnel between anti-immigrant hardliner groups and DHS. We do not yet see a “smoking gun” link, such as an HR list showing Proud Boys membership, but the network of relationships strongly supports a pipeline.

5. Case Study- Chicago ICE Raid & Proud Boys “Lookalikes”

One illustrative incident tying together many threads was a high-profile ICE operation in Chicago in October 2025. DHS Secretary Noem was present on the ground (a PR move to show toughness). The raid involved ICE’s tactical units detaining dozens of people. Observers noted that some of the agents wore minimal identification, had unusual insignia patches, and, in the words of one journalist, “*looked like the Proud Boys with badges*”. This could be hyperbole – implying the agents were burly, bearded, and wearing militaristic kit – an aesthetic often associated with the Proud Boys. Notably, Noem’s presence atop an armored vehicle during the raid conveyed a clear message of political sanction. We cannot

confirm if actual Proud Boys were part of that operation, but the fact that outside onlookers drew the comparison speaks to perception- the style and conduct of ICE is now indistinguishable from paramilitary extremists. The convergence in appearance and behavior (“stylometric” similarity in a sense) was punctuated by Noem praising those agents as patriots after the raid, further validating whatever subculture they represent.

For the analysis, the Chicago case is a microcosm- a Trump official (Noem) literally on the scene with agents who may well include members of a far-right group, jointly executing harsh enforcement. The symbolism and optics here reinforce our hypothesis. If one of those agents were an infiltrator, it would be a perfect success story for the Proud Boys narrative – and Noem would likely not mind, as long as the job got done.

6. Evidence Matrix and Confidence Grading

To systematically assess each signal, we compile a simplified evidence-to-hypothesis matrix-

Signal (source)	What it indicates	Relevance to the hypothesis	Confidence
DHS “Defend the Homeland” campaign uses the term “patriots” and warlike propaganda	Official recruitment appeals to far-right identity markers (white nationalist and militant themes).	Direct alignment – DHS is courting the pool that includes extremist group members.	High (official DHS releases & reporting confirm it).
Trump orders 10k ICE hires, lowers age & training bars	Massive expansion with reduced vetting = opportunity for extremists to enter.	Indirect but crucial – creates conditions for the hypothesis to manifest.	High (well-documented policy change).
Proud Boys celebrate pardons & promote joining ICE	Group pivoting strategy from street violence to law enforcement infiltration.	Direct – group members actively encouraged to become ICE agents.	High (from GPAHE and media sources).
Oath Keepers/Three Percenters discuss assisting ICE (forums)	Militias transitioning to collaboration roles (informal or formal).	Direct – indicates an intention to integrate into ICE operations.	Moderate (evidence from monitored chats, credible but less publicly confirmed).
Patriot Front low profile, internal discipline aligned with the ICE mission	Possibly members quietly joining or supporting from the sidelines.	Indirect – no overt evidence of joining, but the group’s attributes fit the pipeline.	Low to Moderate (analytical inference, little open-source confirmation).

Signal (source)	What it indicates	Relevance to the hypothesis	Confidence
Homan meets a Proud Boys associate about deportations	Link between top ICE planner and extremist network facilitator.	Direct conduit – suggests pipeline at leadership/planning level.	High (SPLC-confirmed meetings).
Noem shuts oversight offices, quotes “patriots” welcome	Removal of safeguards, explicit welcome rhetoric from DHS Sec.	Indirect support – environment that would allow extremist hiring.	High (official actions & statements on record).
ICE agents seen with “militia” aesthetics, extreme rhetoric in operations	New hires possibly carrying extremist style and mindset into duty.	Indirect – suggests presence of those with militia backgrounds in ICE ranks.	Moderate (anecdotal but corroborated by multiple observers).
Lack of overt recruiting posts in original Telegram channel dumps (Chats 1-2)	Official/pro-ICE social media didn’t explicitly say “Proud Boys apply here”.	Inverse indicator – any recruitment pipeline is covert/implied, not explicit.	High (we expect no open admission; absence of evidence there is itself notable).
Surge in “patriot” applicants (claimed 100k in 2 weeks by DHS)	Extremist and MAGA base responding enthusiastically to recruitment push.	Direct – large numbers from target demographic entering applicant pool.	Moderate (number is from chat content, needs external confirmation, but trend of huge interest supported by KSAT and Guardian reports of long lines at career expos).

(Table- Key signals related to hypothesis with assessments.)

As shown, multiple high-confidence signals support the hypothesis that DHS/ICE hiring is drawing from these right-wing groups. The evidence is a mix of direct (explicit calls and meetings) and indirect (policy changes, rhetoric alignment). Importantly, no single piece is a smoking gun, like an official admitting, “We recruit Proud Boys”; rather, the cumulative weight of signals points to the same conclusion.

The initial analysis of Telegram dumps found no direct mentions of group-based hiring in those particular channels – which is consistent with the being a covert pipeline. Those channels were more about cheerleading ICE actions and trolling enemies, with nothing like “hey Proud Boys join up” overtly stated. That lack itself was instructive —it means that any official outreach to extremists occurred through coded language and parallel channels, not through open Telegram posts. This shaped our approach to look deeper at cross-platform evidence.

To ensure thoroughness, we apply specific analytic lenses-

- Forensic Linguistic Analysis - The language used by DHS officials in 2025 exhibits unusual concordance with extremist slang. As noted, “invasion,” “traitors,” “homeland,” “rule of law” (in dog-whistle context), and heavy use of “patriots” are notable. Linguists have dissected these word choices as borrowing from far-right discourse. By contrast, prior DHS recruitment efforts, such as those in 2016, employed a bureaucratic tone. The shift in lexicon is evidence of intentional targeting. On the extremist forums, one sees them picking up on these cues – e.g., an 8kun (QAnon board) post gleefully said “DHS finally talking like us.” The convergence in discourse strongly suggests an overlap in communicative strategies and, consequently, a shared target audience.
- Semiotic & Meme Analysis - Memes have been weaponized in recruitment. DHS posting gator memes (referencing “send the illegals to the gators” joke) or the Uncle Sam poster referencing a neo-Nazi book are high-level semiotic signals. On the flip side, extremist groups use much iconography – black-and-yellow (Proud Boys), Spartan imagery (Threepers) – none of which appears in official branding (that would be too obvious). But what we do see is an embrace of generic militant imagery (skulls, Punisher logo, etc., in ICE merch) which are also beloved by the far right. A stylometric hallmark of extremist online content is overly masculine, combative imagery; ICE’s new campaign literature is full of it (armored agents, aggressive taglines). By analyzing the visual style, it is apparent that DHS comms are intentionally tapping into the meme culture of the far right (as the father-son rifle image clearly does). The cross-pollination of memes effectively lowers the psychological barrier for a militia member to see himself in that role.
- Stylometric/Communication Style- Even the tone in official statements has changed to mirror the blunt, often hyperbolic style of MAGA influencers. For instance, Noem’s quote- *“Our country is calling you... courage never more essential... defend the homeland”* reads like a campaign rally cry. Stephen Miller’s internal description of new agents as “foot soldiers” was noted by insiders – an interesting militarization of terminology. Stylometry also extends to how new recruits communicate. There are reports that internal ICE email lists have seen an uptick in political banter, like agents forwarding memes about “the squad” (left-wing congresswomen) as enemies. Such behavior suggests the new cohort carries their online extremist communication style into the workplace, shifting norms.
- Anomaly Analysis- One anomaly was flagged in Chat2’s exploitation- a January 28, 2025 Telegram joke that Patriot Front are “FEDs in action”. The ironically presaged

what we're examining but in reverse (the far right often accuse groups like Patriot Front of being FBI honeypots due to their very uniform appearances). In our context, that gag shows the blurred lines – if Patriot Front was thought to be run by feds, now the feds are effectively being run by (or filled with) Patriot Front-types. Other anomalies - The sheer scale of hiring (10k ICE agents in a year is astronomically high, approaching a doubling of the workforce). As *Guardian* reporting highlights, the last time something similar happened (following the post-9/11 Border Patrol expansion), it led to corruption and the hiring of criminals slipping in. The anomaly of repeating that mistake knowingly suggests other priorities (political loyalty) trumping usual caution. Also, the “Which Way, American man?” poster is an anomaly for a gov’t agency – referencing a neo-Nazi text is not accidental and has no precedent. It stands out as almost sabotage-level oversight or intentional infiltration of communications by someone sympathetic to that content (which could itself mean an extremist is already inside the communications team).

- Trend Analysis - The timeline from January to October 2025 reveals a clear trend: initial extremist jubilation (January), followed by the increasing formalization of recruitment (spring/summer), culminating in integrated operations (fall). Each quarter of the year escalated – Q1: pardons and talk; Q2: policy rollouts and first hires; Q3: full recruitment push and numerous hires; Q4: utilization of new forces in aggressive operations. The trend line indicates by end of 2025, the process of integration is well underway. If the trend continues linearly (absent interruption), by 2026, one might expect a measurable percentage of ICE/CBP to be composed of these ideologically driven recruits. Already, we know ICE had the goal of 10k new hires – that’s roughly a 50% increase of enforcement staff. Even if only, say, 10% of those new hires are from explicit extremist group backgrounds, that would put ~1,000 such individuals into the field – a formidable number. The trend of far-right groups fading from public activism also continued steadily through 2025, reinforcing the narrative that their energy has been redirected.

In intelligence terms, the convergence of multiple analytical lenses on the same finding (different pieces of evidence all pointing to infiltration) significantly increases our confidence in the assessment.

Counterpoints and Caveats

We find it is important to note what we have not seen and maintain analytic rigor-

- No official acknowledgment or smoking-gun document- Nowhere did DHS or DOJ say, “we are recruiting from Proud Boys,” nor did an internal memo leak explicitly

instructing to target these groups. The hypothesis is based on inferences from aligned indicators. There's a possibility that the overlap is circumstantial (i.e. the campaign sought any conservatives, not specifically Proud Boys). However, given the specificity of messaging, that seems unlikely – the evidence tilts towards intentional courting of the far-right fringe, not just generic conservatives.

- Possibility of self-selection bias- Some might argue those joining ICE are just patriots, not necessarily Proud Boys etc., and that we're labeling all "patriotic" applicants as extremists incorrectly. We should be cautious not to equate all Trump-supporting recruits with membership in hate groups. The analysis here targets individuals who are explicitly affiliated with or clearly share extremist ideology. Many of the 100,000 "patriot" applicants (if that DHS figure is accurate) could be ordinary Americans drawn by nationalism but not members of any group. The overlap does not equal identity. So, the pipeline might be drawing heavily from the same milieu without every individual being a card-carrying Proud Boy. The distinction is fine, but relevant —the risk factor is ideological extremism, whether one is a formal group member or not.
- Operational security of groups- Some groups (especially Patriot Front) are paranoid about infiltration (ironically, by feds) and might discourage members from government roles that require background checks, fearing exposure. It is possible Patriot Front leadership quietly told members *not* to join ICE to avoid compromising their covert cells. We have no evidence either way. This could limit how many from certain groups actually attempt to infiltrate.
- Hiring process still has filters- Even under Trump, a known violent felon or someone with an open extremist social media profile might get flagged. The background check process, while sped up, wasn't abolished. The hypothesis assumes that either extremists hide their affiliations or that background investigators (or those reviewing) are turning a blind eye to certain red flags. That might not always hold – some applicants could be weeded out. Without internal HR data, we can't quantify how many extremists tried vs. got in. Our analysis assumes a non-zero, probably significant number succeeded based on downstream indicators (language, conduct, etc).
- Not all within ICE/CBP welcome this- We should acknowledge internal resistance. The chats (from the initial analysis) noted a DHS official who was concerned about Trump appointees and got ousted for it. There are career professionals uncomfortable with unqualified ideologues joining. Some reportedly have been leaving ICE due to the culture shift (quiet resignations). There is internal tension, and

it is not a total takeover – yet. If that tension grows, it could mitigate some worst-case outcomes if whistleblowers do come forward.

Despite these caveats, none of them negates the pattern – they only contextualize it. The absence of formal admission is expected; the presence of filters only slows, not stops, determined entrants; and internal resistance, while real, is being actively suppressed by leadership choices.

Wrap Up

Evidence from early 2025 onward points to an informal recruitment pipeline connecting far-right extremist milieus to DHS components, especially ICE and CBP. Aligned interests at the political level, coded invitations in official messaging, and hiring-gate changes reduced friction for ideologically extreme applicants. Far-right channels amplified encouragement to join, reframing enforcement careers as a path to “defend the homeland” and to “work from within.” The resulting accession waves altered the culture and practice of immigration enforcement in 2025.

Confidence and rationale. Overall assessment stands at high confidence. Pillars include leadership rhetoric that mirrors movement language and symbols, policy shifts that relax age limits and compress training timelines, group-side calls to enlist, and field optics consistent with militia aesthetics and discourse. No single smoking-gun directive surfaced, yet the accumulation of mutually reinforcing signals converges on the same judgment —a de facto pipeline exists, even without a formal program memo.

Strategic significance. The integration of ideologically extreme volunteers into federal enforcement erodes institutional neutrality and raises human rights risks. Access to training, intelligence, and authorities grants extremist-aligned personnel reach that fringe networks lacked outside government. Enforcement actions start to carry a partisan edge, with elevated likelihood of selective targeting, harsher tactics, and chilling effects on dissent. Trust in DHS components declines among immigrant communities and civil society, which hampers cooperation, distorts reporting, and fuels further polarization. A longer-term national security risk emerges as trained insiders transport tactics and contacts back into movement ecosystems after leaving government service.

Foresight 12–24 months.

Three paths dominate. Entrenchment occurs when hiring goals are met, oversight remains weak, and a loyalist cohort solidifies norms that privilege ideological zeal over professional standards. Expect broader deployment into interior cities, more aggressive raids, and rhetorical fusion between campaign politics and enforcement briefings.

Exposure and pushback - a scandal or whistleblower disclosure triggers oversight, partial vetting resets, and selective removals; recruitment propaganda with extremist cues recedes, although residual cultural shifts linger.

Slow burn- no singular shock; infiltration advances incrementally, public attention drifts, and normalization takes hold until a later political or legal shock forces correction.

Indicators to watch. Look for reinstatement or rollback of polygraph universality; issuance of disqualifying-affiliation guidance tied to named extremist organizations; durable removal of overt “patriot” cues from official recruiting; rates of disciplinary actions involving ideological bias; whistleblower traffic into inspectors general and Congress; cross-platform chatter in extremist spaces celebrating onboarding wins or sharing onboarding tradecraft; measurable shifts in use-of-force and complaints correlated with accession cohorts; procurement or merchandising that mirrors militia iconography; and leadership speeches that either intensify or retire movement-coded phrasing.

Risks and consequences. A continued influx will institutionalize a partisan paramilitary posture under the guise of federal authority. Civil rights exposure escalates, litigation burdens grow, and international scrutiny intensifies. Internal cohesion suffers as career professionals confront ideological newcomers, prompting attrition among standards-driven personnel. Interagency relations deteriorate when partner agencies reject partisan alignment, hindering joint operations and intelligence sharing. Once embedded, removal requires sustained political will, legal craftsmanship, and time; rapid reversals remain unlikely without external shocks.

Counterarguments and residual uncertainty. Not every “patriot” applicant holds extremist membership; some influx reflects broader partisan enthusiasm rather than formal group ties. Background checks still screen out a share of high-risk applicants. Open-source limitations leave gaps in precise counts of extremists hired. Those caveats do not overturn the pattern; they narrow scope and highlight measurement challenges. Confidence remains high in the existence of the pipeline, moderate on the scale at present, and moderate to high on the trajectory toward deeper entrenchment absent intervention.

Recommendations. Rebuild guardrails fast-

- Reinstate full polygraph coverage and strengthen adverse-information adjudication with explicit extremist-affiliation criteria grounded in constitutional limits.
- Issue recruiting guidance that bans movement-coded language and symbolism; require legal and civil-rights review of all campaign materials.

- Stand up independent oversight channels with protected whistleblower pathways; publish anonymized quarterly metrics on screening outcomes, disciplinary actions tied to bias, and complaint resolution.
- Mandate recurring training on First and Fourth Amendment constraints, anti-bias enforcement, and duty-to-intervene standards; tie promotion eligibility to demonstrated compliance.
- Commission an external audit of 2025–2026 accessions to quantify risk signals and recommend remedial actions, including revocations where material misrepresentation occurred.

All strands point in the same direction- DHS components, particularly ICE and CBP, opened a path that draws from extremist group orbits through rhetoric, policy, and practice. Group ecosystems embraced the invitation. Immigration enforcement now bears the imprint of that convergence. Near-term choices by leadership, overseers, and courts will determine whether the trend hardens into an entrenched partisan force or recedes under scrutiny. National security, civil rights, and institutional credibility hang in the balance; rigorous oversight and transparent course corrections must begin immediately.

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