

# Far-right influencers turn against Trump campaign

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Some of the internet's most influential far-right figures are turning against former president Donald Trump's campaign, threatening a digital "war" against the Republican candidate's aides and allies that could complicate the party's calls for unity in the final weeks of the presidential race.

Nick Fuentes, a white supremacist and podcaster who [dined with Trump](#) at his Palm Beach resort Mar-a-Lago in 2022, said on X that Trump's campaign was "blowing it" by not positioning itself more to the right and was "headed for a catastrophic loss," in a [post](#) that by Wednesday had been viewed 2.6 million times.

Laura Loomer, a far-right activist whom Trump last year called "[very special](#)," said his "weak" surrogates had unraveled his momentum and that his approach "needs to change FAST because we can't talk about a stolen election for another 4 years," in an X [post](#) that was "liked" more than 8,000 times.

And Candace Owens, a far-right influencer with 5 million X followers who was [photographed with Trump](#) in March, described the conservative infighting in a [podcast](#) Tuesday as a "MAGA Civil War" fueled by anger that Trump's policies and persona had been softened to boost his mainstream appeal.

"I'm just not sure who is driving the MAGA bus anymore," she said, making it clear that like other vocal far-right influencers, her problem isn't with Trump but with his staff. "You're losing that support from the people that believed in you. ... You need those people."

The insider attacks, which come as other backers are calling for Trump to [take a more disciplined, policy-oriented approach](#) to his campaign, highlight a new vulnerability in one of the loudest corners of Trump's nationwide base. With millions of followers, the far-right provocateurs have long been one of the most reliable engines for winning Trump attention online, helping to build the viral energy that boosted his political career and his [strong lead](#) among predominantly White male voters. Trump embraced far-right internet celebrities before the 2016 and 2020 elections, even [welcoming some](#) to the White House for a 2019 "[social media summit](#)."

As Trump's campaign grapples with slumping performance in the polls, the far-right activists argue that it has failed by not adopting harder-right positions on race and immigration. They have also called for the campaign to fire its co-managers, Chris LaCivita and Susie Wiles, blaming them for a lackluster strategy.

Many of the campaign's hard-right critics said they still stand strongly behind Trump himself. But some of them have vowed to pummel the campaign online and at Trump rallies unless it changes course, presenting a challenge for campaign officials who have worked to publicly disavow or disregard extreme voices for fear they could alienate voters.

Trump's retooling of his campaign on Thursday, including rehiring his 2016 campaign manager Corey Lewandowski, prompted Fuentes to declare a "first victory" of his campaign, despite Trump's public praise for LaCivita and Wiles. Online, Loomer mocked Fuentes as having "nothing to do" with the return of Lewandowski — co-author of the book "Let Trump Be Trump" — and said he should "stop pretending like he is calling the shots."

Some campaign officials previously argued the far-right influencers offer value by amplifying political messages to their audiences. But the more overt recent attacks of Fuentes and his followers, who call themselves "groypers," have become a "noisy" and counterproductive distraction to the campaign, said a person familiar with its operations, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

"If anything, [Fuentes] is hurting the idea of getting fresh blood into the campaign, because it makes it far more difficult for Trump if it looks like he's responding to the groypers," the person said.

Asked for comment, Trump's campaign referred to a Truth Social post on Aug. 11 in which Trump said he was "leading in almost all of the REAL polls" and that his team was "doing a great job."

In an appearance that day on CBS, Trump's running mate, JD Vance, called Fuentes a "total loser" and said the proper response was to "ignore" trolls like him until they "go away."

But the far-right criticism has proved agitating for some of Trump's most devoted online cheerleaders. Brenden Dilley, a pro-Trump podcaster in Georgia, on Monday asked whether Fuentes and others who had attacked Trump were all part of a secret psychological operation, or "psy-op," designed to "reinforce the Kamala Harris surge narrative."

"I've got a job to do, and these people are a problem," Dilley said. "Are they being compensated? Are they being deployed as a collective? I do not know." (Fuentes said he was not paid and took action only to further his views, which he defined as "far-right reactionary.")

Colin Henry, a researcher at George Washington University who has studied political extremism online, said influencers on the far right have grown visibly frustrated in recent weeks by Trump's fading performance in the polls and the campaign's disavowal of hard-line policy proposals, such as Project 2025. "They saw that as a shot across the bow from the mainstream folks, who wanted to do all this stuff with policy and institutions," he said.

The anger of far-right influencers matters because they have proven adept at "punching above their weight" in conservative circles in a way that could bedevil Trump's campaign, said Ben Lorber, a senior researcher at Political Research Associates, a think tank in Massachusetts that monitors right-wing groups.

"This movement has the ability to move conservative discourse and to open up space far to the right of acceptable conservative opinion for people like Trump to move further rightward," he said.

During Trump's conversation Monday with X's billionaire owner Elon Musk, Fuentes directed his followers via live stream to repeatedly post their views on X, where several of their demands for changes in the campaign sailed to the top of the platform's trending topics.

His followers led a parallel effort on Trump's social media platform Truth Social, and the messages, such as #NoMoreImmigration, still ranked among the top hashtags the morning after the interview. #FireLaCivita, with 20,000 recent posts, overshadowed even #Trump2024. Fuentes has also told his followers they should start collecting the phone numbers and email addresses of campaign officials so as to contact them en masse.

In an interview, Fuentes said he intended to push his followers to adopt "guerrilla" tactics and "escalate pressure in the real world," including through mass appearances at Trump rallies in battleground states such as Michigan, until the campaign had met their demands to stop "pandering to independents." He has urged followers to withhold their votes for Trump, saying it was the only way to awaken a campaign that had "no energy ... [and] no enthusiasm."

"If they blame me for Trump losing, so be it," he said. "He'll have lost because he stopped talking to the MAGA base he had in 2016." (Loomer and Owens didn't respond to requests for comment.)

Jared Holt, a senior researcher at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue who studies hate and extremism online, said Fuentes has seemed to lose some of the influence and cachet he gained during Trump's presidency, but he retains a "cult following" among young conservatives who could indirectly influence the campaign "to adopt more extreme positions."

Collaborators of Fuentes have worked for far-right members of Congress, including Reps. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) and Paul A. Gosar (R-Ariz.). And at times, messages from Fuentes — who calls for a white ethnostate in the United States, in which even legal immigration is banned — and more established pro-Trump accounts have closely aligned.

A Tuesday tweet by the campaign account @TrumpWarRoom labeled a photo of Black men “Your Neighborhood Under Kamala” and warned: “Import the third world. Become the third world.”

Vance has been asked about Trump’s dinner with Fuentes several times in TV interviews, telling ABC on Sunday that “just because you talk to somebody doesn’t mean you endorse their views.”

On live streams and social media, Fuentes has marshaled his followers to launch what he is calling “Groyper War 2” — a sequel to a series of chaotic spectacles in 2019, during which they appeared en masse at speaking events of people they deemed “fake conservatives” to heckle and pepper them with provocative questions over issues such as race and LGBTQ+ rights.

Amanda Moore, a left-wing activist and researcher who has followed Fuentes’s group, said that effort was “extremely successful” in helping far-right influencers publicize their ideology.

“Their objective is to push the party to the right. And they got exactly what they wanted,” Moore said, adding that its success has proved costly for Trump by making his base more volatile. “This is what happens when you’re walking the line for years. This is where it’s going to get you.”