

The United States: Anti-Democratic Consolidation — One-Page Summary

Disclaimer¹

Central judgements

- **Direction, not destination.** A coalition of executive-branch actors and aligned technology wealth is weakening the constraints on executive power — a convergence of interests, not a directed conspiracy, but cumulative. We judge it **unlikely (25–35%)** that competitive national elections cease by 2028, but **likely (55–75%)** continued movement toward competitive authoritarianism: elections held on a tilted field.
- **The 2026 midterms are the decisive test:** how they are run, certified, and whether adverse results are accepted.

The instruments of force (asymmetric and rerouted)

- **Professional military: holding at a price** — 2025 dismissals and deployments, but courts voided them (Posse Comitatus) and forces withdrew by January 2026.
- **Federal paramilitary (immigration enforcement): the active front** — ~\$75bn expansion, urban operations, minimal professional restraint. Thresholds crossed here that no other layer approaches.
- **National Guard: the constitutional seam** being probed; local police divided county by county (sheriffs the specific electoral risk); pardoned militias latent.
- **Consolidators need only one instrument willing to act and the others willing to stand still.** Composite warning: any two layers under single political direction near the electoral cycle.

The FBI (the referee with guns)

- **Leadership politicised** — media-drawn heads, sustained purge of Jan-6 and Mar-a-Lago personnel; the ten-year director norm breached twice in a decade.
- **The sword drawn once and caught** — 2025 indictments of political opponents collapsed on an invalid appointment. Most probable crisis failure mode: not repression but **the FBI as spectator — present, armed, unused.**

The oligarchy inside the apparatus

- **Infrastructure, not appointments.** A single firm — CIA-seeded, owned by a principal of the post-democratic strand — is now the data-integration backbone across immigration, the Army and intelligence. **High confidence on the integration; no assessed intent to subvert the order.**
- **The concern is asymmetry:** the components of an authoritarian machine are being assembled for commercial reasons, and intent can change faster than infrastructure can be dismantled. Irreversibility may be closer than assumed.

Counter-evidence (weighted, not dismissed)

- Courts keep blocking executive action; the states legislate freely; the oligarchy is split (some AI money funds the democratic side); markets price governance risk. **The system is under attack and resisting at once; which prevails is genuinely uncertain.**

¹ Disclaimer: Prepared as workshop material by the Social Cyber and Tech Academy, July 2026. It is an exercise in intelligence assessment tradecraft using open sources only. Probability language follows the PHIA yardstick (Annex). Statements attributed to serving and former officers are paraphrased from their public, on-the-record remarks. No classified material informs this document, and no allied service has publicly released any assessment of this kind. This document has not been independently verified and does not necessarily represent the views of the Social Cyber Institute or Social Cyber and Tech Academy. Readers are encouraged to critically evaluate all of the analysis, evidence, assumptions and conclusions presented.