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Trump clears way for local police to obtain military gear

By SADIE GURMAN August 28, 2017

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WASHINGTON
(AP) — Local
police
departments
will soon have
access to
grenade
launchers,
high-caliber

U.S. military
gear after
President
Donald Trump
signed an
order Monday
reviving a
Pentagon

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groups say
inflames
tensions
between
officers and
their
communities.

President
Barack Obama
had sharply
curtailed the
program in
2015 amid an
outcry over
the heavily-
armed police
response to
protesters
after several
police killings
of black men
in Ferguson,
Missouri and
other cities.
The Trump
administration
maintains the
program is
needed to
protect public
safety and

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police.

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Restoring the
program will
“ensure that

you can get
the lifesaving
gear that you
need to do
your job,”

Attorney
General Jeff
Sessions told
a cheering
crowd at a
national
convention of
the Fraternal
Order of
Police in
Nashville,
Tennessee.
The group,
America’s
largest
organization
of rank-and-
file officers,
endorsed
Trump for
president
after he

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program.

Sessions said
restrictions
imposed by
Obama went
too far. “We
will not put



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above public
safety,” he
said.

0:00



In issuing the
order, Trump
is fulfilling a
campaign
pledge made
as he depicted
crime as
rampant and
police forces
undercut by
unfair
criticism, with
Obama failing
to support
them
sufficiently.
Trump, feeling
increasingly
under attack
in recent
weeks, has
been doubling
down on
appeals to

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Last week, he
pardoned the
controversial
former
Arizona
sheriff Joe
Arpaio, who
had been



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judge's order

to stop
racially
profiling
Latinos.

Sessions has
been steadily
restoring
tough-on-
crime policies
while
reshaping the
way his
Justice
Department
enforces civil
rights law,
particularly in
the areas of
policing, in
ways that have
made
advocates
nervous.

Civil liberties
groups and
some
lawmakers
assailed
Trump's order
as a sign of

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of local police,
arguing that
the equipment
encourages
and escalates
violent
confrontations
with officers.



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enforcement
and
communities
remain high,

yet the
president and
the attorney
general are
giving the
police
military-grade
weaponry
instead of
practical,
effective ways
to protect and
serve
everyone,”
said Kanya
Bennett,
legislative
counsel for
the American
Civil Liberties
Union.

Republican
Sen. Rand
Paul of
Kentucky
called the plan

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government
power that
would
“subsidize
militarization.”
Another
Republican,
Rep. Mark



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Carolina, said
the program
“incentivizes
the
militarization
of local police
departments,
as they are
encouraged to
grab more
equipment
than they
need.”

But in
Newberry
County, South
Carolina,
Sheriff Lee
Foster said his
department
wouldn’t be
able to afford
equipment
like night-
vision goggles
or ballistic
helmets on its
own. His
deputies
wouldn’t need
body armor or

... 1 1 1 1

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but the items
could save
their lives in a
rapidly
unfolding
situation.

“I don’t know
... 1 1



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around with a
Kevlar helmet
on his head
during routine

situations,”
Foster said.
“The right to
have access to
this stuff
doesn’t mean
you’ve
militarized
your agency.”

Congress
authorized the
program in
1990, allowing
police to
receive
surplus
equipment to
help fight
drugs, which
then gave way
to the fight
against
terrorism.
Agencies
requested and
received

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camouflage
uniforms and
bullet-proof
vests to
firearms,
bayonets and
drones. More
than \$5 billion



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has been given
to agencies.

Obama put
limits on the

program in
2015, partly
triggered by
public outrage
over the use
of military
gear during
protests in
Ferguson,
Missouri,
following the
shooting
death of 18-
year-old
Michael
Brown. Police
responded in
riot gear and
deployed tear
gas, dogs and
armored
vehicles. At
times, they
also pointed
assault rifles
at protesters.
The Justice

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Attorney
General Eric
Holder
blamed the
militarized
response for
exacerbating



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Obama's order prohibited the government from providing grenade launchers, bayonets, tracked armored vehicles, weaponized aircraft and vehicles, and firearms and ammunition of .50-caliber or greater to police.

That frustrated some law enforcement groups who see the gear as needed to protect officers responding to

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terrorist attacks. An armored vehicle played a key role in the police response to



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San
Bernardino,
California.

The Defense
Logistics
Agency, which
manages the
program,
recalled at
least 138
grenade
launchers,
more than
1,623 bayonets
and 126
tracked
vehicles —
those that run
on
continuous,
tank-like
tracks instead
of wheels. The
agency
declined to
comment
Monday,
saying it had
not yet
received

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The new order
largely lets
local agencies
set their own
controls and
rules
governing use



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Several states
have enacted
laws
restricting

police
departments
from
obtaining
surplus
military
equipment.
Those state
laws will
remain in
place even as
Trump
loosens
federal rules.

The plan to
restore access
to military
equipment
comes after
Sessions has
said he
intends to pull
back on court-
enforceable
plans to
resolve

“It’s not a

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rights
violations.
Sessions they
can malign
entire
agencies and
make officers
less aggressive



revived a
widely
criticized
form of asset

forfeiture that
lets local
police seize
cash and
property with
federal help.

Associated
Press writers
Erik Schelzig
in Nashville,
Meg Kinnard
in Columbia,
South
Carolina and
David Lieb in
Jefferson City,
Missouri
contributed to
this report.

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Woman Takes
It Too Far...

Unexpected...

Better-Bi

Now Legal in Michigan,...

Tommy Chong's CBD

Eddie: A...

Eddie by Giddy

Amazon Left In Chaos Afte...

ExpertsInMoney.co

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We Couldn't Wait. Early...

Promoted: Lume

Killer New EVs That...

Promoted: Unsold

A Soldier Just Taught Me...

Promoted: EarthBreeze

Man ch...
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AH...

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