# London’s far-right rally exposes rising influence and growing violence amid fears of increased division



On Saturday, London was shaken by one of the largest demonstrations of its kind in recent history — a stark display of the far-right’s growing influence and determination to push a divisive agenda grounded in nationalism and xenophobia. Over 110,000 demonstrators gathered for what was billed as the “Unite the Kingdom” rally, organized by radical figures seeking to escalate anti-immigration sentiment and assert their version of free speech at any cost. The event, far from a patriotic celebration, was marred by overt nationalist symbolism, including Union Jack and St. George’s flags, alongside American and Israeli banners, and some supporters donning MAGA hats — a disturbing sign of how foreign far-right influences are infiltrating UK discourse.

The speakers, ranging from the controversial Tommy Robinson to former European far-right politicians like Eric Zemmour, drummed up hostility with rhetoric designed to stoke division. Elon Musk’s appearance — a veiled endorsement of their extremist views — only underscored the rally’s dangerous crescendo. Musk’s remarks criticized the UK government’s immigration policies, blaming what he called Britain’s “destruction” on what he termed “massive uncontrolled migration,” a tactic to inflame fears and lay blame on vulnerable communities. These figures, echoing the messages of hardline nationalist factions, aim to undermine the progress made towards social cohesion and unity.

The event’s setting in Whitehall, with speeches centered on immigration control and the suppression of free speech — rather than the pursuit of national stability — reveals the true intent of the far-right movement: to sow discord and turn patriotic sentiment into a weapon against migrants and minority communities. Chanting slogans aimed directly at Prime Minister Keir Starmer, they sought to recruit discontent among the disillusioned, exploiting fears surrounding the high migrant numbers arriving via the English Channel — over 28,000 so far this year, according to official statistics. It’s evident that these protesters are mobilizing around a narrative that portrays Britain’s diversity as a threat, risking further division at a time when unity should be paramount.

Counter-protests by groups like Stand Up To Racism, rallying around refugee rights, were met with hostility from the far-right crowd, leading to violent clashes. Police reports confirm that officers faced an onslaught of aggression, with scuffles escalating into assaults and criminal damage. Incidents included a police horse being struck by a bottle, injuries sustained by officers — four seriously — including broken teeth, potential broken noses, concussions, and even a prolapsed disc. Nearly three dozen officers were injured, and over 25 arrests made — a sobering reminder that such overt displays of hostility threaten the safety and stability of our streets.

The police response was robust, deploying over 1,600 officers from multiple forces, including specialized units with dogs and mounted police. Despite their efforts to maintain order and protect the right to peaceful protest, they faced an ongoing challenge: balancing civil liberties with the need to prevent violence. The event extended well beyond the scheduled time, as chaos and confrontations persisted into the evening. This level of disorder underscores how far the far-right’s influence has penetrated into the political landscape — a dangerous trend that only risks further unraveling the social fabric.

This summer, Britain’s political climate has increasingly been shaped by fear and alienation, with nationalist symbolism dominating public discourse. The so-called “Unite the Kingdom” rally epitomizes the dangerous direction in which some factions want to steer the nation — one where division supplants unity, and multiculturalism is demonized. As mainstream parties fail to effectively challenge these extremist narratives, the danger is that such demonstrations will become more frequent and more violent, undermining society’s foundations. It’s essential to recognize these developments not as isolated incidents, but as a wake-up call that our unity and national identity are under threat from forces intent on fueling discord rather than fostering dialogue.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/25-arrested-and-26-police-officers-hurt-at-unite-the-kingdom-rally/a1914543609.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.apnews.com/article/e4c7bfd7d7fda25b3c4ef8ef7e0a2f53> - A major protest organised by far-right activist Tommy Robinson in London, titled 'Unite the Kingdom,' drew between 110,000 and 150,000 attendees, significantly exceeding expectations. The march, held under the premise of free speech, prominently featured anti-migrant rhetoric and nationalist themes. The event turned violent when some participants clashed with police, resulting in 26 injured officers—four seriously—and 25 arrests for offences like violent disorder and assault. Robinson, founder of the far-right English Defence League, addressed the crowd alongside European far-right politicians and tech entrepreneur Elon Musk, who criticised the U.K. government and migration policies. Demonstrators carried nationalist flags and anti-immigration signs, while a smaller counter-protest of about 5,000 people, organised by Stand Up To Racism, advocated for refugee rights and condemned fascism. The march occurred amid heightened tensions over immigration, especially following high-profile criminal cases involving asylum seekers. Although the protest was primarily nonviolent, confrontations between the groups escalated later in the day, prompting police intervention. This event followed a previously planned 2024 rally by Robinson, which he missed due to imprisonment for contempt of court.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/police-protesters-scuffle-110000-join-anti-migrant-london-protest-2025-09-13/> - On September 13, 2025, over 110,000 people joined the 'Unite the Kingdom' anti-migrant protest in central London, making it one of the largest right-wing demonstrations in recent UK history. Organised by controversial activist Tommy Robinson, the rally featured Union Jack and St. George's flags, chants against Prime Minister Keir Starmer, and placards with anti-immigration messages. Some attendees wore MAGA hats and brought American and Israeli flags. A rival counter-protest by 'Stand Up to Racism' drew about 5,000 people. London's Metropolitan Police reported violent clashes, with 26 officers injured—four seriously—as protesters broke from the approved route and threw objects at law enforcement. Twenty-five arrests were made, with further action expected. The protest marked the climax of a tense summer marked by anti-migrant demonstrations outside temporary migrant housing. In a video address, U.S. billionaire Elon Musk supported Robinson and criticised the UK government, calling for political change. Immigration has overtaken economic issues as the dominant political concern in the UK, with over 28,000 migrants arriving via small boats this year. The surge in red and white English flags has divided public opinion, seen by some as patriotic and by others as xenophobic.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/over-100000-anti-immigration-protesters-march-london-2025-09-13/> - More than 100,000 people took part in a major anti-immigration protest in London on Saturday, one of the largest right-wing demonstrations in modern UK history. Organised by controversial activist Tommy Robinson under the banner 'Unite the Kingdom,' the protest focused on opposition to illegal migration and calls for greater free speech. Protesters carried British, English, American, and Israeli flags, and some wore MAGA hats. They also expressed criticism of Prime Minister Keir Starmer and voiced support for Robinson, chanting and carrying signs with messages like 'send them home.' Police deployed over 1,600 officers, including 500 from other forces, to manage the event and a nearby counter-protest by 'Stand Up to Racism' attended by around 5,000 people. Multiple confrontations occurred as some protesters attempted to break through police lines, leading to officer assaults. The demonstration followed a summer of tensions around asylum seekers housed in hotels and comes amidst rising immigration numbers, topping 28,000 arrivals this year. The use of national symbols like the St George’s Cross and Union flags has raised concern among anti-racism groups, who view it as promoting hostility toward immigrants.
5. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/scuffles-with-police-as-100000-anti-immigration-protesters-march-in-london-2025-09-13/> - On Saturday, over 100,000 anti-immigration protesters marched through central London in what was described as one of the largest right-wing demonstrations in UK history. Organised by activist Tommy Robinson under the banner 'Unite the Kingdom,' the rally drew around 110,000 participants who carried Union and St. George’s flags, with some waving American and Israeli flags and wearing MAGA hats. A smaller counter-protest organised by 'Stand Up to Racism' attracted around 5,000 attendees. Scuffles broke out between protesters and police, who were reportedly caught off guard by the turnout. Officers faced violence, including kicks, punches, bottles, and flares being thrown, resulting in at least nine arrests with more anticipated. The protest highlighted growing domestic tensions over immigration, which has overtaken economic concerns in political discourse amid record asylum applications and arrivals via the Channel. Robinson, speaking at the rally, characterised it as the beginning of a 'cultural revolution' and received support via video from Elon Musk, who called for political change in the UK. The demonstration underscores a charged political climate, with nationalist sentiments rising and immigration policy at the centre of public debate.
6. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/london-police-brace-large-rival-protests-2025-09-13/> - On Saturday, London police are preparing for possible confrontations as rival protests take place in the city. The 'Unite the Kingdom' march, led by anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim figure Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (widely known as Tommy Robinson), is scheduled to start near Waterloo Bridge and proceed to Whitehall to honour Charlie Kirk, a U.S. conservative activist who was recently killed in Utah. Meanwhile, a counter-protest organised by 'Stand Up To Racism' will gather at the opposite end of Whitehall. To manage the potential for conflict, London's Metropolitan Police plan to deploy more than 1,600 officers citywide, including 500 from other police forces. Around 1,000 officers will be specifically assigned to the marches, which coincide with major football matches, concerts, and other high-attendance events. Commanding officer Clair Haynes emphasised a balanced approach to law enforcement, allowing lawful protest while promising swift action against any offences. The demonstrations come amid rising tensions in the UK over immigration, which has eclipsed economic concerns in public discourse. As record numbers of asylum seekers and migrants arrive, recent political changes include the appointment of Shabana Mahmood as Interior Minister by Prime Minister Keir Starmer.
7. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/tens-thousands-gather-london-anti-immigration-march-counter-protest-2025-09-13/> - On Saturday, tens of thousands of people gathered in central London for an anti-immigration and anti-Islam demonstration led by activist Tommy Robinson. The protest, titled 'Unite the Kingdom,' was themed around free speech and also paid tribute to recently slain American conservative activist Charlie Kirk. Protesters carried English, British, American, and Israeli flags, wore MAGA hats, and chanted anti-immigration slogans alongside banners criticising Prime Minister Keir Starmer. A counter-demonstration, organised by 'Stand Up to Racism,' also took place, highlighting deep national divisions following a summer of protests related to immigration and free speech. London police deployed over 1,600 officers to manage the demonstrations, with authorities emphasising a neutral but firm stance. There were concerns over potential anti-Muslim rhetoric and violence, as seen in past protests. These events come amid a heightened national focus on immigration, with the UK experiencing a surge in asylum claims and migrant arrivals crossing the English Channel. While many protesters portrayed the flags and slogans as expressions of patriotism, critics viewed them as symbols of xenophobia and exclusion.