In a historic move that could reshape the German political landscape, the country's domestic intelligence agency has officially designated the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party as a "proven right-wing extremist organization." The decision marks the first time in postwar German history that a party with nationwide parliamentary representation has received such a classification.

Announced Friday by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), the designation means the agency has gathered conclusive evidence that the AfD is not merely suspected of extremist leanings but is actively working against the democratic order enshrined in Germany's Basic Law.

A 1,000-page internal report, parts of which were cited by German broadcaster ARD, formed the basis of the ruling. It pointed to systemic violations of fundamental constitutional principles, including human dignity and the rule of law.

The new status does not lead to an outright ban but allows for heightened surveillance of the party, including the use of informants and communications monitoring, under court oversight. Authorities had already labeled regional AfD branches in states like Saxony and Thuringia as extremist, but this is the first time the entire party has received the designation.

While the ruling has no immediate legal consequences for the party's participation in elections, it significantly raises the political stakes. Mainstream parties, already under pressure, will likely face intensified demands to avoid any form of cooperation with the AfD at local, state, or federal levels.

AfD leaders Alice Weidel and Tino Chrupalla condemned the announcement as a politically motivated attack. In a sharply worded statement, they accused the federal government of orchestrating a last-minute campaign to discredit the party ahead of a looming change in government.

"The intelligence agency doesn't even have a sitting president, and this classification hasn't been finalized in court," the party's leadership said, calling the move "a serious blow to German democracy." They vowed to challenge the decision through legal channels.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who is stepping down in a matter of days, cautioned against using the BfV's findings as grounds for an outright ban on the AfD, warning against "knee-jerk reactions." "This report must be read thoroughly. We must proceed with care and legal precision," Scholz said during a visit to Hanover.

The decision also triggered an international backlash, particularly from the United States, where key members of President Donald Trump's administration expressed outrage.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio called the move "tyranny in disguise" on social media platform X, urging Germany to reverse course. Vice President JD Vance went further, accusing the German establishment of rebuilding "the Berlin Wall" to silence opposition. "It's not the Soviets this time — it's their own elites," Vance wrote.

The heated exchange underscored deepening transatlantic tensions at a time when Berlin and Washington face delicate negotiations on trade tariffs and NATO cooperation. Germany's incoming chancellor, Friedrich Merz of the center-right Christian Democrats, is expected to face an uphill battle in navigating relations with the Trump administration.

German lawmakers pushed back firmly against the U.S. criticism. Conservative MP Roderich Kiesewetter accused the Trump administration of undermining Western unity, adding, "Europe needs a Churchill to contain you." The Foreign Office also defended the intelligence agency's move, stating that it reflects "the lessons Germany has learned from its own history."

Despite controversy at home and abroad, the AfD continues to gain ground electorally. The party secured more than 20 percent of the vote in February's national elections, doubling its previous performance and solidifying its position as Germany's second-strongest political force.

The coming weeks will test both the resilience of Germany's democratic institutions and the political will of its leaders — new and old — to confront an emboldened far-right movement amid growing populist sentiment across Europe.