

Gunman kills fascist Trump activist Charlie Kirk

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Fascist pro-Trump political operative Charlie Kirk, 31, was shot to death Wednesday afternoon on the campus of Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah, as he was addressing a crowd at an open-air event.

Kirk was the founder and leader of Turning Point USA, a fascist youth group that has been active on college campuses promoting white supremacy and hatred of immigrants and leftists. After playing a major role in Trump's 2024 election campaign, including a prime speaking slot at the Republican National Convention, Kirk became a powerful advisor to the new administration, vetting cabinet nominees for their acceptability to Trump's fascist "base."

Police and Utah state authorities have so far released little information about the circumstances of the shooting and nothing at all about the motivation of the shooter. While FBI Director Kash Patel claimed that the gunman was in custody, local and state officials said only that they had a "person of interest" who was being interviewed, and that the investigation was ongoing. Patel later reversed himself, noting that the "person of interest" had been questioned and released.

The event at Utah Valley University was the first of a series of more than a dozen public meetings at campuses across the country at which Kirk was to defend the actions of the Trump administration, particularly the persecution of immigrants and the genocide in Gaza. The tour was to include a debate with Hasan Piker at Dartmouth College on September 25.

Trump made the first public announcement of Kirk's death, posting on social media, "The Great, and even Legendary, Charlie Kirk, is dead," he wrote, adding, "He was loved and admired by ALL, especially me, and now, he is no longer with us."

In a fascistic statement delivered from the White

House Wednesday night, Trump denounced the "radical left," which he said was "directly responsible for the terrorism that we're seeing in our country and it must stop right now."

Trump clearly went on national television to exploit the shooting and turn Kirk into a martyr to legitimize escalating violence from the far-right and threaten his political opponents. This is under conditions in which no arrest has been made and there is no actual information on the killer.

Trump ordered flags flown at half-staff through Sunday throughout the United States, in an extraordinary display of mourning for someone who had no record of public service, but rather had devoted himself to the most repulsive forms of hate-mongering and racism. Kirk is certainly the first full-blown fascist to receive such an honor.

Most of the official statements of sorrow and regret cited Kirk's comparative youth and the fact that he leaves two young children. No such considerations were voiced for victims of disappearance and detention at the hands of Immigration and Customs Enforcement thugs, such as Kilmar Abrego Garcia (who has three children with his American citizen wife, one of them autistic) and Mahmoud Khalil (who was denied compassionate release to be with his wife for the birth of their first child.)

The Utah Republican Party characterized the shooting as politically motivated left-wing violence, even without a shred of evidence yet available. Its statement declared: "The attack on Charlie Kirk and free speech is evil, pure and simple. The hate, violence and evil being peddled by radical extremists has no place in this country! Schools and social media have become breeding grounds for liberal hate. Enough!"

A flood of ultra-right and fascist commentators seized

on the Kirk killing to claim that “liberals” and “radicals” were engaging in a violent onslaught against the Trump administration and American society as a whole. Billionaire Elon Musk tweeted, “The left is the party of murder.”

In reality, there has been an upsurge of right-wing violence in recent years, most notably the fascist attack of January 6, 2021, when Trump sought to overturn the results of the 2020 election. Numerous fascist gunmen have carried out politically and racially motivated mass killings.

The shooting of Kirk follows the murder of a Democratic state legislative leader and her husband in Minnesota, and the arson attack on the home of the Democratic governor of Pennsylvania. And it comes amid a continual stream of threats of violence, imprisonment and deportation by President Trump against targets ranging from his opponents in the Washington political establishment to the millions of immigrant workers who have come to the US to escape persecution or find work.

The response of the Democratic Party has been cowardice and complicity in this right-wing narrative. Leading Democrats, including former presidents Barack Obama and Joe Biden, former vice president Kamala Harris, and Senator Bernie Sanders, all issued groveling statements. Sanders wrote on X/Twitter that “political violence has no place in this country” and “my thoughts are with Charlie Kirk and his family.”

California Governor Gavin Newsom called the killing of Kirk “disgusting, vile and reprehensible.” Newsom interviewed Kirk as a guest on his own podcast earlier this year, as part of an attempt to find common ground with the far right that also included a warm welcome to Steve Bannon.

The most groveling response to the killing of Kirk, and the fascist effort to profit from it politically, came from the *New York Times*, the semi-official voice of the Democratic Party. Within hours of the assassination, an editorial appeared on the newspaper’s web site headlined, “America Mourns Charlie Kirk.” (The title was subsequently changed to “Charlie Kirk’s Horrific Killing and America’s Worsening Political Violence.”)

It is politically appropriate to condemn the killing, which accomplishes nothing progressive and actually aids the efforts of the Trump White House to attack democratic rights and erect a police state. But that is no

reason to glorify the victim or cover up the bloodthirsty, bigoted character of his political perspective.

The *Times* editors claim, “Such violence is antithetical to America.” On the contrary, such violence is the stock in trade of the American ruling class, whether directed at striking workers, racial minorities, immigrants, or political figures deemed to be dangerous or merely inconvenient. It is barely a week since the president of the United States ordered the incineration of 11 people in a Venezuelan fishing boat, claiming, without offering any evidence, that they were drug smugglers and terrorists.

The glorification of Kirk by both capitalist parties and the corporate media in the wake of his killing requires covering up a sordid political record of nearly unmatched foulness.

Over the past decade, Charlie Kirk has seized every opportunity to promote racism, bigotry and fascism, building Turning Point USA with funding from billionaire Richard Uihlein.

He was a key organizer of the January 6, 2021 “Stop the Steal” rally that culminated in the assault on the U.S. Capitol. Kirk has been one of the loudest advocates of the neo-Nazi “Great Replacement” theory, which claims that Jewish billionaires are conspiring to “replace” the white population through immigration. At a 2023 Turning Point rally in Arizona, he ranted that Minneapolis was “destroyed” by immigrants, describing the city as a “perfect example of the Great Replacement.”

This year alone, Turning Point USA’s ties to violence and reactionary politics have been clear. In April, a member of the organization opened fire at Florida State University, killing two and wounding five. Shortly afterward, Kirk exploited the deaths from flooding in Texas to whip up racial hatred, using his podcast to blame an African-American official for the tragedy.



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