

# White House seizes on killing of Charlie Kirk to legitimize fascism and suppress opposition

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Early Friday morning, Utah Governor Spencer Cox and FBI Director Kash Patel announced the arrest of Tyler Robinson, the suspect in the killing of fascist operative Charlie Kirk.

The killing of Kirk has been seized upon by the Trump administration to justify an escalating campaign of repression against any criticism of the far right. This comes even as very little is known about the motives of the alleged shooter, and there are indications that he may be an extreme right-wing ideologue.

The most significant statement in the press conference came at the conclusion of Patel's remarks, when, paying homage to Kirk, he declared: "Rest now, brother, we have the watch, and I'll see you in Valhalla."

Patel's invocation of "Valhalla" was an explicit nod to mythology long appropriated by fascist movements. From Hitler's embrace of Wagner to modern neo-Nazi groups like the Order of Nine Angles, Norse symbols—especially Valhalla, the "hall of the slain"—have been used to cast political violence and martyrdom in heroic, quasi-religious terms.

References to Valhalla have appeared in the manifestos of mass murderers in Christchurch, Buffalo and Utøya, where it was invoked to cloak atrocities in the language of racial purity and a mythical warrior afterlife.

That the FBI director would echo this tradition underscores the extent to which the rhetoric and symbols of fascism have been normalized within the state itself. Kirk, as the WSWS noted yesterday, is being turned into the Horst Wessel of the MAGA movement, a martyr in the far-right crusade.

In terms of the details known so far, they come largely from the four bullet casings found at the scene, each inscribed with phrases.

Initial reporting in the *Wall Street Journal* that the casings expressed "pro-transgender ideology" has been exposed as a fabrication.

In fact, the inscriptions appear to be a mix of far-right memes and gaming references: one reads, "Notices bulges. OwO. What's this?"—an anti-transgender "joke" tied to online subcultures. Another casing reads, "Hey fascist! Catch! ? ? ? ? ?," a reference to the popular shooting video game *Helldivers 2*.

A third casing was inscribed with the lyrics to "bella ciao." While this is drawn from the famous Italian anti-fascist song, it also features prominently in the 2021 video game *Far Cry 6*, when it is played as the player ascends to a rooftop and unleashes machine-gun fire on opponents. The fourth casing reads, "If you read this you are gay [laughing my ass off]."

While no doubt details will continue to emerge about Robinson's views, in an interview with the *Daily Mail*, Robinson's grandmother, Debbie, emphasized that the family were strong Trump supporters.

"Most of my family members are Republican. I don't know a single one who's a Democrat," she told the paper. Photos circulating online show Tyler once dressed as Trump for Halloween and in several others posing with firearms. Public records confirm that Robinson's parents are both registered Republicans.

The Trump administration is nevertheless intensifying its efforts to utilize the killing to attack the left, which goes unchallenged in the media and from the Democratic Party.

In his Friday morning Fox News appearance, Trump insisted the shooter was driven by "left-wing politics." The fascist president declared, "The radicals on the right oftentimes are radical because they don't want to see crime. The radicals on the left are the problem."

The White House is also using Kirk's death to attempt to obliterate any distinction between church and state. On Friday, it released an official video featuring Kirk declaring: "Trust God and act obediently" and "that Jesus Christ was a real person, he lived a perfect life, he was

crucified, died and rose on the third day and he is Lord and God of all.” The video concludes with chants of “USA” and the display of the official White House logo.

The corporate media and major sports leagues have joined in staging public tributes to Kirk—holding moments of silence at National Football League and Major League Baseball games—as part of a broader effort to normalize white supremacist politics as a legitimate component of official state ideology. On Friday, the Chicago Cubs flew the flag at half-staff and held a “moment of reflection.”

A similar ceremony was held at Thursday’s Packers-Commanders NFL football game in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Among those in attendance at Lambeau Field were NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and Amazon CEO Andy Jassy, representatives of the corporate-financial oligarchy that bankrolls both professional sports and the far right.

Alongside the glorification of Kirk, a systematic campaign is underway to delegitimize and criminalize any opposition. In the media, he is presented as a heroic champion of “free speech,” while references to his fascist and neo-Nazi views are subject to an unspoken ban. The result is the transformation of the airwaves into a propaganda platform for the far right.

This framework is being used for a sweeping assault on democratic rights. A series of actions has followed MSNBC’s firing of commentator Matthew Dowd for describing Kirk as a purveyor of “hate speech … aimed at certain groups.”

A FEMA worker was placed on leave for objecting to flags being lowered for “racist homophobe” Kirk. A Michigan teacher was suspended for unspecified social media comments. A judge in Oakland County, Michigan has been pressured to resign after posting a Kirk video with the remark, “Talk about dying for your beliefs.” A Greenville, South Carolina teacher was fired for posting on their personal Facebook page, “Thoughts and prayers to his children but [in my honest opinion] America became greater today. There I said it.” Comedy Central abruptly pulled a South Park episode that had mocked Kirk.

Even more ominously, the State Department is warning that immigrants who “mock” Kirk’s death could face review of their legal status and potential removal. Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau declared, “Foreigners who glorify violence and hatred are not welcome visitors to our country.”

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth posted on social media Thursday that the Pentagon is “tracking” all social media

posts from military and civilian Department of War personnel that “celebrate or mock the assassination” of the fascist Kirk.

The killing of Kirk is being exploited not only to sanitize the politics of the far right but to build a mythology of a violent “radical left” supposedly running rampant in America. In this narrative, the far right—though it controls the White House and Congress, dominates the Supreme Court and enjoys the backing of billionaires and the corporate media—is cast as a persecuted victim.

The reality is that the principal source of political violence in America for years has been the fascist right and those it has inspired.

Kirk himself was notorious for giving political legitimacy to such violence. In 2022, he made national headlines when he suggested on his podcast that a “patriot” should post bail for David DePape, the man who attacked House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s husband with a hammer.

After the emergence of COVID-19, Kirk and Turning Point promoted anti-vaccine talking points. In July 2021, Kirk speculated that as many as “1.2 million people” died after receiving the vaccine. Last month, a 30-year-old anti-vaccine fanatic opened fire on Centers for Disease Control headquarters, killing a police officer in the process.

Just this month, a 16-year-old boy who carried out a shooting at Evergreen High School was revealed to have filled his online accounts with the same antisemitic and white supremacist propaganda found at any Turning Point USA event. Following Kirk’s killing, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) across the country were forced into lockdown after receiving bomb threats.

Meanwhile, Trump openly threatens to deploy the National Guard into one city after another—Washington, Memphis, Chicago, New Orleans—declaring, “We can bring in the military. We’ll do what we have to do.” Already thousands of troops occupy Washington D.C.

To portray the United States as plagued by “radical left” violence, while the fascist right continues to escalate its threats, is a grotesque inversion of reality. It is, however, essential for legitimizing the assault on democratic rights and the imposition of authoritarian rule.



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