

Trump White House weaponizes Kirk's death to prepare police state dictatorship

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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The assassination of Charlie Kirk is being seized on by the Trump administration to implement a coordinated assault on democratic rights and on mounting opposition to its preparations for a police state dictatorship.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* warned in the aftermath of the shooting, the Hitler-lovers in the Trump administration are working off the well-known Nazi playbook. In 1930, as the Nazis were clawing their way to power, they transformed murdered stormtrooper Horst Wessel into a martyr of the fascist cause. In 1933, just weeks after Hitler's rise to power, the new regime seized upon the mysterious burning of the Reichstag—the German parliament building—as a pretext for the creation of a dictatorship.

The assassination of Kirk has provided Trump with a present-day version of Horst Wessel and the Reichstag fire.

The clearest expression of the intentions of the Trump government came Friday from Stephen Miller, Trump's deputy chief of staff for policy and Homeland Security adviser. Miller is the principal architect of the administration's fascist program and is centrally tasked with translating Trump's diatribes into unconstitutional executive orders and repressive actions.

In a frothing rant on Fox News with Sean Hannity, Miller threatened a declaration of war on democratic rights. He alleged, without a shred of evidence, that the shooting was the product of “domestic terrorism” from the left. “When you see organized doxxing campaigns, where the left calls people enemies of the republic, calls them fascists... They are trying to inspire someone to murder them. That is their objective. That is their intent.”

These statements are made even as there is as yet no information on the motive of the accused killer, who comes from a Republican family in rural Utah. The real motives of the shooter are, in any case, irrelevant to the designs of the Trump administration.

Miller's venom was directed at the working class and all other segments of the American people suspected of disloyalty to the would-be dictator. He singled out “federal workers,” “educators,” “health care workers,” “nurses” and “professors” for supposedly “celebrating the assassination of Charlie Kirk.”

In a highly revealing statement that incriminates Kirk and himself in a criminal conspiracy to overthrow the Constitution, Miller concluded by invoking what he claimed were Kirk's “last words” to him, that the United States must “dismantle and take on the radical left organizations in this country.”

Under Trump's leadership, Miller vowed this would be done by any means necessary, including the use of racketeering charges, conspiracy indictments and accusations of insurrection. All those who oppose Trump are to be branded “domestic terrorists,” stripped of

their jobs and financial resources and, if possible, imprisoned. Hannity endorsed Miller's threats with the words, “well said.”

This is the language of civil war. Indeed, Stephen Bannon, Trump's former chief strategist and one of the central voices of the MAGA movement, declared: “The left has declared war on America” and that “Trump is a wartime president.”

Commenting on this statement, the *New York Times* noted on Sunday, “The notion of Mr. Trump as a wartime president in a war against some of his own people speaks to just how different his presidency is.” Trump has “dispensed with the usual bromides about national unity, and instead declared that the biggest threat to the United States is ‘the enemy from within.’”

The “enemy within” is the working class, students and all those who express, in any form, opposition to the fascistic regime.

Trump is not acting on his own. He speaks and rules on behalf of the American oligarchy. Only days before the killing of Kirk, Trump convened a private dinner in the White House with the country's leading corporate billionaires. Before the cameras, they showered him with praise and pledged their support.

When the cameras were off, one can assume, the billionaires pressed Trump to provide ironclad assurances that his administration would do whatever is necessary to defend their profits and private wealth against the dangers posed by escalating class conflict.

The ruling class is carrying out a wholesale assault on the working class: slashing social programs, gutting public health, accelerating exploitation and preparing for world war. This offensive unfolds under conditions of acute instability, including an economy staggering under mountains of debt, a looming global recession and intensifying geopolitical conflicts that threaten to spiral into global conflagration.

The oligarchy knows these conditions will produce explosive resistance. And it knows that the unprecedented concentration of wealth in the hands of a tiny elite means that once workers begin to fight back, the struggle will inevitably raise the most fundamental question: who controls society's resources, the oligarchs or the vast majority who produce its wealth?

The response to Kirk's killing in the media and political establishment has been to normalize his fascist politics while shifting the entire framework further to the right. Any reference to his record of racism, antisemitism or calls for repression is excluded, and in some cases it has even become grounds for losing one's job to state well-documented truths about what Kirk actually said and stood for.

The Democratic Party's response is a mixture of cowardice and complicity. As a party of Wall Street, it fears nothing more than legitimizing genuine mass opposition to the Trump administration. Its refrain is the platitudinous mantra that “there is no place for political

violence in America,” coupled with ritual condemnations of “violence on both sides.” The clear implication is that the United States is equally plagued by violence from the left and the right.

This is a grotesque falsification. In reality, political violence in America has always come overwhelmingly from the right.

The labor movement was forged in battles against armed strikebreakers, police repression and the National Guard. From the reign of lynch mob terror of the 1920s and 1930s to the assassinations of civil rights leaders in the 1960s, to Timothy McVeigh’s bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building in 1995, violence has been the weapon of fascist forces and the capitalist state.

Legally sanctioned murder by the state is a political fact of life in the United States. Since Utah’s firing squad execution of Gary Gilmore in January 1977—the first following the US Supreme Court’s lifting of the temporary ban on the death penalty—approximately 1,600 people have been put to death in the country as a whole.

Since 2015, the number of people killed by the police in the United States totals over 13,000.

Politically motivated mass killings are carried out overwhelmingly by individuals driven by the fascistic ideology of the far right: the 2015 massacre of nine Black churchgoers in Charleston, South Carolina; the 2018 slaughter of 11 worshippers at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh; the 2019 massacre of 22 people at an El Paso Walmart, explicitly targeting Mexicans; the 2022 shooting of 10 people at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York, motivated by the “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory promoted by Kirk and others; and the racist murder of three people at a Jacksonville, Florida Dollar General in 2023, to name just a few.

Incidents of overt rightwing political violence include the January 6, 2021 coup attempt; the kidnapping plot against Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer; the assault on the husband of Nancy Pelosi; and the vigilante shootings by Kyle Rittenhouse, celebrated by Trump and his allies.

Abroad, the pattern repeats, including the Christchurch massacre of 55 people in New Zealand in 2019 and Anders Breivik’s slaughter of 77 people in Norway in 2011.

Under the Trump administration, fascist violence is being ever more directly incorporated into and encouraged by the state. During his first term, and now enormously escalated in his second, Trump has pursued a worked-out strategy of legitimizing vigilantes, glorifying police killings and unleashing state repression.

Trump is now deploying or threatening to deploy the National Guard into city after city. Troops have occupied Washington, D.C., the nation’s capitol, for nearly a month. Trump has threatened to unleash “war” on Chicago, where an immigrant worker was killed in an ICE raid last week, and to send forces into Memphis. Reports also indicate that at least 1,000 National Guard troops are being mobilized for deployment in Louisiana.

The great danger is that there remains a vast gulf between the scope of these conspiracies and the level of popular awareness of what is happening. This must change. Trump’s actions do not command broad popular support. The American people as a whole do not want dictatorship or fascism. The general sentiment is one of opposition, but this must be mobilized, consciously and collectively.

In contrast to the political right, the socialist left has always rejected individual terrorist actions, not out of moral squeamishness but because the method of individual violence disorients the working class, provides a pretext for ruling class repression and contributes nothing to the development of the political consciousness of the

working class. The socialist perspective is rooted in the education, organization and mass action of the working class.

The *World Socialist Web Site* and the Socialist Equality Party call for the development of a powerful campaign against the fascistic conspiracies of the Trump administration. Whatever political differences exist among organizations of a left-wing character, there must be an unequivocal commitment to defend their democratic rights.

The SEP and WSWs will oppose every attempt to suppress or criminalize democratic, progressive and left-wing opposition. We will apply this principle in the defense of all organizations and individuals targeted by the Trump administration, regardless of their political differences with our party’s program and political positions.

The Socialist Equality Party calls for the organization of mass opposition to Trump’s conspiracy to establish a dictatorship.

There can be no serious defense of democratic rights unless it is rooted in the working class and directed against the cabal of financial and corporate oligarchs. To wait for and rely upon the Democratic Party to organize opposition to fascism can lead only to defeat and dictatorship.

The initiative for resistance to dictatorship must come from the independent social and political organization of the working class.

The formation of rank-and-file committees in every factory and workplace, to organize and coordinate the defense of democratic rights, is an urgent necessity. This fight must be strategically directed on the basis of the understanding that the impulse for fascistic dictatorship does not come from a single bad political actor, Donald Trump. Rather, it arises out of the capitalist system.

The massive concentration of wealth and power in the hands of an infinitesimal segment of the population is incompatible with democracy.

The aim of the media and political establishment is to intimidate the public, to cultivate an aura of unchallengeable power from the right. In reality, the greatest untapped force in the United States and internationally is the working class. Any act of collective struggle in the factories and workplaces is, to paraphrase Trotsky, of infinitely greater significance than the acts of fascist ruffians.

The urgent task is to mobilize that power in a unified movement to halt dictatorship and defend the most basic democratic rights. The struggle against fascism is inseparable from the struggle to overturn the domination of the financial oligarchy and the capitalist system.

Circulate this statement as widely as possible to your coworkers, fellow students, neighbors and friends.

We urge all those who agree with the strategy and analysis presented in this statement to contact and join the Socialist Equality Party.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact