

ABC/Disney joins fascist purge, suspends *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* indefinitely over Kirk remarks

Jacob Crosse
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Facing pressure from the Trump administration on Wednesday, ABC—owned by Disney—announced it would be suspending the late-night television show *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* “indefinitely,” after the host came under attack from fascists and Trump administration officials over his commentary on the assassination of Charlie Kirk.

While TV viewership is down across the board, *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* remains fairly popular. In addition to competing with Stephen Colbert for top late-night ratings on network television, the show has 20.7 million subscribers on YouTube—more than double the 10.2 million for CBS’s *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* but less than the 32.8 million for NBC’s *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*.

During his monologue on Monday night, Kimmel correctly observed that in the wake of Kirk’s assassination “the MAGA gang” was “desperately trying to characterize this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them and doing everything they can to score political points from it.”

Kimmel’s remarks were neither inflammatory nor inaccurate. In the wake of Kirk’s killing, right-wing politicians and media figures demanded retribution for the “left” even though no evidence had emerged revealing the shooter’s motivations or politics.

At no point in his monologue did Kimmel assert that the shooter was right-wing, a Trump supporter, or affiliated with any party or organization. No evidence has emerged linking the shooter to any left-wing group or the Democratic Party; the only known personal details are that he despised Kirk’s “hatred” and reportedly had a relationship with a man. These facts

have been weaponized by the Trump administration and its media allies to mount a reactionary campaign blaming the “left,” “LGBT ideology,” and “transgender radicals” for Kirk’s death.

Kimmel’s ouster is part of a widening purge of journalists and commentators accused of insufficient loyalty following Trump’s return to the White House. This political retaliation against Kimmel is part of a coordinated campaign to silence critics of the Trump administration across the corporate media, before and after the killing of Kirk.

Washington Post opinion writer Karen Attiah was summarily fired over her social media posts following Kirk’s killing. Attiah’s firing came after she posted a quote from Kirk in which he claimed that Ketanji Brown Jackson, Michelle Obama and other African American women “do not have the brain processing power to be taken seriously. You have to go steal a white person’s slot.”

Veteran ABC correspondent Terry Moran was pushed out earlier this year after criticizing Trump and fascist adviser Stephen Miller.

Paramount’s CBS division announced the cancellation of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* just days after Colbert publicly denounced the company’s \$16 million settlement with Trump. Each of these firings has occurred as their parent corporations—ABC/Disney, the Washington Post Company, and Paramount Global—seek regulatory approvals for multibillion-dollar mergers and acquisitions, underscoring that the corporate media’s purge of Trump’s critics is being carried out under the direct coercion of the state.

The political character of this purge is laid bare by the role of FCC Chairman Brendan Carr, who has acted as the Trump administration's enforcer in a government crackdown on First Amendment activity.

Appearing on the fascistic propagandist Benny Johnson's program on Wednesday morning, Carr spoke as a mafia boss, declaring, "We can do this the easy way or the hard way. These companies can find ways to take action on Kimmel, or there is going to be additional work for the FCC ahead."

Within hours, Nexstar Media Group—the largest owner of local television stations in the United States, *The Hill* and a company seeking FCC approval for its \$6.2 billion takeover of Tegna—announced it would preempt *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* indefinitely on its stations.

Nexstar currently owns or partners with over 200 broadcast stations in 116 US television markets. Under its proposed acquisition of Tegna (if approved), the combined entity would operate 265 stations in 44 states and Washington D.C., and its reach would expand to approximately 80 percent of US TV households.

Carr's remarks openly equated compliance with Trump's political line with fulfilling broadcasters' "public interest" obligations, turning that statutory language into a weapon for state censorship. Carr's claims collapse on their face when contrasted with Fox News host Brian Kilmeade's declaration last week that homeless people should be subjected to "involuntary euthanization"—a genocidal call broadcast to millions with no consequence or regulatory rebuke.

Carr and the FCC have nothing to do with protecting the "public interest" and everything to do with imposing political loyalty tests on the press, enforced through the federal government's licensing power.

Carr, choosing Johnson's platform to issue these threats, underscores the coordination between Trump's propaganda machine and federal regulators. Benny Johnson is a Trump propagandist who previously promoted the "Alligator Alcatraz" concentration camp on his show, praising it as a model for mass detention.



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