



Speak Out Now

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Kirk's Murder Reflects the Violence of This Society

Last week, far-right media personality and organizer Charlie Kirk was gunned down at a university in Utah. Kirk and his well-funded organization, Turning Point USA, rose to prominence over the past decade by holding campus events billed as debates on "free speech" and the state of U.S. politics and society. Kirk used these events to expand and solidify support for his organization by bullying and humiliating young people who questioned or challenged him.

Kirk spewed racist and right-wing views, claiming that colleges have become centers of left-wing politics that are brain-washing young people and undermining what some call "traditional values". Kirk made racist attacks on Black people and affirmative action. He claimed that immigrants and Jewish people, are "replacing" white people in the U.S. And his vicious attacks on LGBTQ people are well-known.

He became a face of far-right ideology. He was a key organizer, bringing young people into Trump's presidential campaign. Trump is canonizing him as an American hero and will honor him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor that the government can give to a civilian. He ordered that flags be flown at half-mast across the country. Trump doesn't want to miss any opportunity to unify his base against those who disagree with him and whom he blames for Kirk's murder. Kirk's memorial will be a spectacle, held at the Arizona Cardinals NFL stadium, with a capacity of over 63,000 people.

Trump and the Republicans have made Kirk into a martyr. They are using this as an excuse to further repress the population – to go after those who stand against the hatred Kirk spread. Since Kirk's death, many prominent Republicans have stated that they are "at war" and will do everything in their power to punish those on the left that they claim are responsible for this. People have been fired from their jobs and harassed for being critical of Kirk in the face of this celebration of his political activity.

This call for organized violence is all too familiar. It is the violence that runs throughout the society. And those who are actively opposing the masked ICE agents that are terrorizing and abducting immigrant workers and families, and the occupation of our cities by National Guard troops, are being targeted by those who are maintaining this order. People are accused of being antisemitic by both

Democratic and Republican politicians for opposing the genocide of the Palestinian people in Gaza, who are being starved and bombed to death with full support of the U.S.

This is the open violence of this system. The violence many face each day doesn't just come from the barrel of a gun. It is the violence of poverty or the threat of slipping into poverty – the threat of wages steadily falling below the cost of living, or the violence of being laid off or fired. And the new federal and state budgets guarantee the lack of access to health care, food and subsidies for housing for millions of people.

Those in power claim that there are people that are supposedly taking things at our expense – often people who are a different race, or have a different sexual orientation, or country of origin, or religion. Some people mistakenly believe that violent actions are the only way to respond. As a result, there are mass shootings of people at religious gatherings or in areas where people of specific races or nationalities live. And the tragic shootings of children at school has become commonplace. And like the man who shot and killed Kirk, some wrongly believe that killing individuals will have a political impact. In addition to Kirk, a number of elected politicians, both Democrats and Republicans, have been shot and some killed. This is the violence this society has created.

There is a war here at home against the majority of us, the working class. It is a war that breeds fear and creates divisions. It is a war that attempts to silence us, for fear of being attacked for standing up for what we know is right. It is a war that tells us that our only choice is to depend on either the Republicans or Democrats, when neither party represents our interests. They exist to maintain the system that creates the problems we face – a system that is run in the interests of a tiny billionaire class.

The challenges we face may seem impossible to confront. But the solutions begin in our daily lives. As workers, we are the ones who make this society run, The divisions that separate us are maintained to keep us weak. To deal with the challenges and chaos we confront, we can and must look to ourselves – our families, friends, co-workers, our neighbors and other like-minded people. Then we can stand together and defend ourselves.