

Intelligence Bulletin

Charlie Kirk Assassination

12 September 2025

Executive Summary

- On September 10, 2025, right-wing political activist and Turning Points USA co-founder and Executive Director, Charlie Kirk, was assassinated at 12:23 pm local time by an unknown gunman in Orem, Utah. New York Times visual timeline available [here](#).
 - On September 12, 2025, federal authorities [announced](#) that they had arrested a 22-year old white male, Tyler Robinson, for the shooting of Charlie Kirk.
 - Robinson was allegedly convinced to turn himself into authorities by his family and he allegedly admitted to his father that he was the shooter.
- ICDE has yet to confirm an ideological motivation for Robinson's attack on Kirk. Though anti-fascist slogans may suggest anti-fascist ideology, ICDE notes that Groyper adherents have regularly used those same slogans in trolling, irony-laden discourse online. Groypers have also held deep animosity toward Charlie Kirk due to a feud between Groyper leader Nick Fuentes and Kirk.
- Kirk was speaking to a crowd of supporters for his first tour appearance at Utah Valley University when a single gun shot hit him in the neck.
- Social media images and videos [before](#) and [after](#) the attack from bystanders show a potential "black-clad" figure on a nearby roof of the university near where authorities believe the shot was fired.
 - On September 11, authorities stated that they [uncovered additional evidence](#) tied to the suspected shooter and that they are working to identify and apprehend the individual. Evidence included a "high-powered bolt-action rifle," and video footage of the suspect.
 - Also on September 11, the Wall Street Journal [published a story](#) based on right-wing influencer Stephen Crowder's social media post claiming that an internal bulletin in the investigation alleges that the shooter's recovered rifle had antifascist and pro-transgender messages inscribed on the ammunition. **This has been walked back by authorities.**
- Conspiracy theories proliferated in the absence of early official evidence or leads. Antisemitism, hired hit, Democratic responsibility, and anti-transgender sentiment are the predominant themes.

****This Intelligence Bulletin was intentionally held until preliminary details were confirmed about the alleged shooter.***

Overview from Authorities on Tyler Robinson



Little is known about Tyler Robinson's pathway to violence at this stage.

From the open-source materials ICDE has been able to review and verify, Robinson appears to have had an extensive background in hunting, his family life and socio-economic dynamics were relatively stable and affluent growing up, and his father is reportedly a former law enforcement officer. Robinson reportedly [lived](#) with his family in St. George, UT, a multi-hour drive from Orem, UT. Robinson's father allegedly confronted his son about the public images released and claims Robinson confessed to the shooting, later convincing him to turn himself in to authorities (see mugshot left).

Robinson's digital footprint is sparse with most information about him coming through media reporting and what can be gleaned from the Facebook accounts of his parents. ICDE will continue to monitor for emerging details on Robinson's pathway to violence and review all allegations and data thoroughly before releasing additional analysis. At this time ICDE is also comfortable stating that preliminary reports of Robinson's association with the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) party are likely unproven but nonetheless contributing to online discourse that Robinson was a violent radical leftist. Evidence provided is largely stemming from a [picture](#) of an individual in a DSA tee shirt circulating on social media attributed to Robinson. See image below.



Image 1. An individual falsely stated to be Robinson circulating on X and social media

At the press event announcing the arrest of Tyler Robinson, Governor Spencer Cox stated that they reviewed inscriptions on bullet casings of the firearm they recovered. The inscriptions immediately place Robinson's actions into the same cultural script that Luigi Mangione pioneered. ICDE has observed immediate uptake of Robinson's actions by pro-Mangione spaces online with content like #freetylerrrobinson emerging as authorities named Robinson as the shooter.

Inscription	Meaning or Insights
notices bulges OWO what's this?	"Notices Bulge OwO whats this" is a meme with multiple applications, though is most commonly a sexual reference.
hey fascist! catch!	Refers to the idea of murdering fascists
up arrow, right arrow, three down arrows	This likely refers to the video game Helldivers , in which this series of directional codes calls for the largest bomb in the game. The game is a satire of a fascist empire.
oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao	Refers to a song sung by Italian resistance who fought Nazis in WWII and that has become a rallying cry for some anti-fascists
If you read this, you are gay LMAO	Refers to a common online phrase/meme overlay

While these slogans may suggest anti-fascist association or ideological influence, ICDE is not confident at this time that Robinson was motivated by those beliefs. Factions on the far-right, such as the Groyper movement led by Nick Fuentes, have long held animosity towards Charlie Kirk. At prior Turning Points USA events, Groypers (members of Fuentes' Groyper movement) aggressively engaged in [trolling activities](#) aimed at Kirk. Some of the slogans above have been ironically adopted by Groypers for trolling purposes against those on the far-right they view as insufficiently matching their ideological views. **As such, ICDE has not yet ruled out that legitimate anti-fascist views or Groyper views may be a factor in Robinson's actions.**

Early Response to Assassination

Online spaces doubled down on pre-existing views. Because the shooter wasn't rapidly identified, that uncertainty fed a considerable proliferation of speculation around the shooter and their motives, while fostering the emergence of numerous conspiracy theories. Conspiracy theories emerged from all political milieus with antisemitism, false flag, hitman, and other generic themes being commonplace. ICDE observed stark differences between the two main political persuasions in the United States, with right-leaning or right-wing responses expressing outrage and calls to action, which are continuing in the immediate follow up after the announcement of the shooter's capture and identification. Left-leaning or left-wing responses have ranged from condemnation to celebration of Kirk's death with numerous invocations of Luigi Mangione. See Appendix 1 for examples of left-leaning memes and responses to the assassination.

Left-Wing Responses

There is a considerable amount of user-uploaded content which ironically, sarcastically and directly celebrates the assassination of Charlie Kirk. The form of content is ranging from static files such as memes to short clips and livestreams. Additionally, ICDE has identified that political supporters of Kirk and the MAGA movement are cherry picking pieces of content of those who uploaded such videos and circulating them with thinly veiled calls to action or statements that border on dehumanization and incitement to violence.

Additionally, left-leaning accounts, particularly on X, spread various conspiracies that the assassination appeared to have been staged. Evidence provided for these claims included bystander footage showing two individuals within the security barrier for Kirk's tent stage giving "[hand signals](#)" just before Kirk was



shot. Neutral to left-leaning activity is currently best grouped under a version of the long-standing “deep state” conspiracy theory where “everything is connected.” Elements of this include:

- Apparent hand signals similar to those used in baseball or the [military](#) indicate some signal to the shooter to time the shot around the topic of transgender mass shooters, and thus foreknowledge of the attack.
 - **Fact check:** The questioner at the time has been [identified](#) as unaffiliated with the shooter.
- That the shooting was staged by President Trump or MAGA supporters to distract from continued criticism over Epstein and the failure to release the Epstein files.
- And that Kirk's shooting is being presented by some as further proof that the attempted assassination of President Trump in Butler, Pennsylvania was staged. Specifically that someone paid that shooter to narrowly miss Trump, a claim that ostensibly helps address questions around US Secret Service failures.

Tech sector moderation will face considerable challenges moderating this content as it falls far short of policy violations surrounding the promotion of violence or other actionable elements.

Right-Wing Responses

Right-leaning accounts are spreading various conspiracies that the assassination was driven by:

(1) Jewish or Israeli agents; **(2)** Democrats or radical leftists; **(3)** a transgender shooter; or **(4)** a variation on a hired hitman or “PMC” (e.g., private military corporation).

Specific narratives and factions on the right have leaned heavily into anti-Israeli or antisemitic conspiracies about Kirk's recent tone change on Israel and the Gaza war effort. Antisemitic assertions that claim Kirk was killed by the Israelis or vague Jewish actors are leaning into tropes around Mossad and Jewish cabals culling right-wing people who grow ‘too aware’ or who betray the state of Israel. One faction that has historically pushed antisemitic conspiracies towards Charlie Kirk is the Groyper ecosystem led by far-right agitator Nick Fuentes. Supporters for Fuentes have been spamming livestreams of influencers, news media and other digital spaces with antisemitism and praise for Fuentes. This activity draws from longstanding far-right grievances against Kirk for his pro-Israel stances within the highly antisemitic Groyper community. Some anti-war leftists have also expressed similar beliefs. See Appendix 2 for examples of antisemitic memes and responses to the assassination. **Tech sector moderation teams are advised to expand filters for keywords, phrases and known coded language symbols for antisemitism within livestreams.**

ICDE also identified a robust and preemptive placing of the blame for Kirk's death on Democrats or radical leftists. User uploaded footage from attendees in the immediate aftermath of the event as well as influencer and mainstream media figures rapidly shifted into a wholesale blaming of the attack on Kirk as a Democrat or leftist outcome. See Appendix 3 for examples of right-leaning memes and responses to the assassination.

Blaming Democrats or radical leftists is a trope that routinely emerges in the wake of a violent incident involving prominent right-wing political figures. Contemporary dynamics of this conspiracy bucket have roots in the 1990s around the Clinton family and conspiracies of their having hired hitmen to remove political opponents as they ascended to the White House. The QAnon and MAGA movements have supercharged these conspiracies over the last decade. **Complicating tech sector moderation response**

to this content is the challenge that many [posts are using non-violative language](#) which relies on a formulaic approach of saying “they” plus an action verb like took or assassinated.

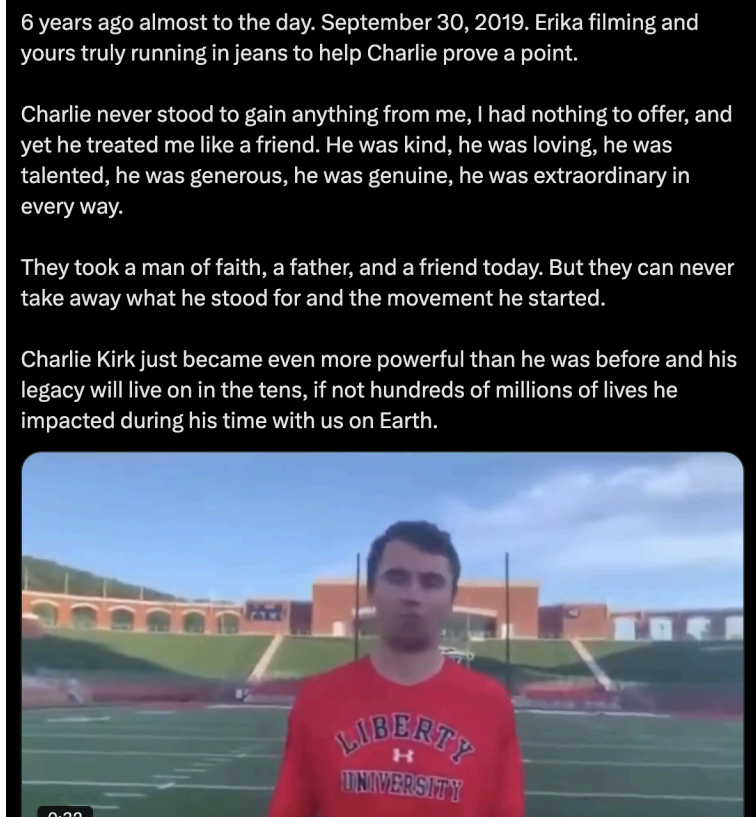


Image 2. X Post illustrating the use of “they”

Additionally, mainstream political figures are openly stating such conspiracies, see image below. Mainstream political figures are pushing aggressive or outright violent rhetoric around the assassination. U.S. House Representative Nancy Mace, Republican of South Carolina, [said](#) “I hope and pray that we bring the death penalty back and whomever did this gets a swift justice and a bullet to the head just like Charlie did.” Fox News host Jesse Waters [stated](#) in response to the assassination that “They are at war with us... and what are we gonna do about it.”



Image 3. Laura Loomer blaming Democrats for Kirk's attack

Prominent far-right figures are also stoking violent response discourse online, particularly X, that the assassination means war, and that Democrats or the Democratic Party are responsible for the shooting. Bannon's War Room hosts Jack Posobiec and Steve Bannon [framed](#) Charlie Kirk's death as a heroic martyrdom and that "if you come for one of our friends... gloves are off... something that requires a response." Posobiec also stated that the "Mangiones are now taking out the MAGAs." Bannon also stated that Kirk was [a casualty of war](#). FBI Director Kash Patel continued aligning Kirk's assassination with an act of war after the shooter had been identified, saying, "Rest now, brother. We have the watch. And I'll see you in Valhalla," a reference to after life in Norse mythology that is reserved for warriors.



Image 4. Prominent far-right violent misogynist influencer Andrew Tate posts a call for "Civil War" on X.

The third conspiracy category, attributing the attack to a transgender shooter began in the immediate aftermath of the attack Kirk had just been asked a question about how many mass shooters had been transgender and responded, "too many." Some viewers attributed significance to this timing before any official statements were made regarding a shooter or possible motives. Kirk's shooting occurred just over two weeks after the Annunciation school shooting in Minneapolis, Minnesota. That shooter identified as transgender, and spurred the [DOJ](#) to float the idea of removing Second Amendment rights

from transgender individuals. Several transgender individuals were identified online, especially on X, as possible or likely suspects after the attack.

What to Watch for in Low-Confidence Signals and Digital Trends

With the significant conspiracism that emerged in the pre-arrest time period following the assassination of Charlie Kirk, there is a wide range of potential ripple effects and implications of those digital trends. Far-right and far-left extremist spaces are leveraging the attack online. As such, ICDE suggests:

- Monitoring digital spaces for credible threats against:
 - Transgender individuals, or persons perceived to be transgender;
 - Prominent Democrats and elected officials;
 - Far-right political figures and tech sector executives seen as aiding or sympathetic to the MAGA movement to which Kirk belonged;
- Known extremist digital ecosystems for distribution and evolution of the above conspiracy theories;
- Growth in far-right activity on college campuses to “carry on” Kirk’s legacy with TPUSA;
 - Additional consideration should be given to narratives which may emerge painting Robinson as having been brainwashed or indoctrinated by college and thus why he killed Kirk;
- Targeted harassment online:
 - Individuals who made jokes on social media about the shooting are being doxxed, including on a website specifically dedicated to this purpose;
 - Please contact ICDE for specifics on this website;
- ICDE has observed considerable bot activity on X to stoke conspiracism and promote [civil war](#).
 - Utah’s governor confirmed that at least some bot activity originated in [China and Russia](#).
- Rumors are circulating that the video released by Trump to announce Kirk’s death was created by [AI](#).
 - This has the potential to connect to other conspiracism around Trump’s health, the Epstein files, antisemitic conspiracies related to cover ups, and the belief that Trump and/or MAGA orchestrated Kirk’s death.
- ICDE observed discussions of Kirk’s death being the start of a civil war proliferating early on Meta and TikTok, but have cooled somewhat in the immediate aftermath of the shooter’s identification. These could nonetheless reignite should information about the shooter or his family be conducive to such claims.
- Responses from Nick Fuentes and Groypers are worth monitoring given past tension between Fuentes and Kirk. Fuentes may try to appeal to Kirk supporters and gain status. Fuentes or other actors may also use this moment to amplify antisemitism given that Kirk changed his tone on Israel to a more questioning stance in recent months.

Appendix 1. Left-Leaning Memes and Responses

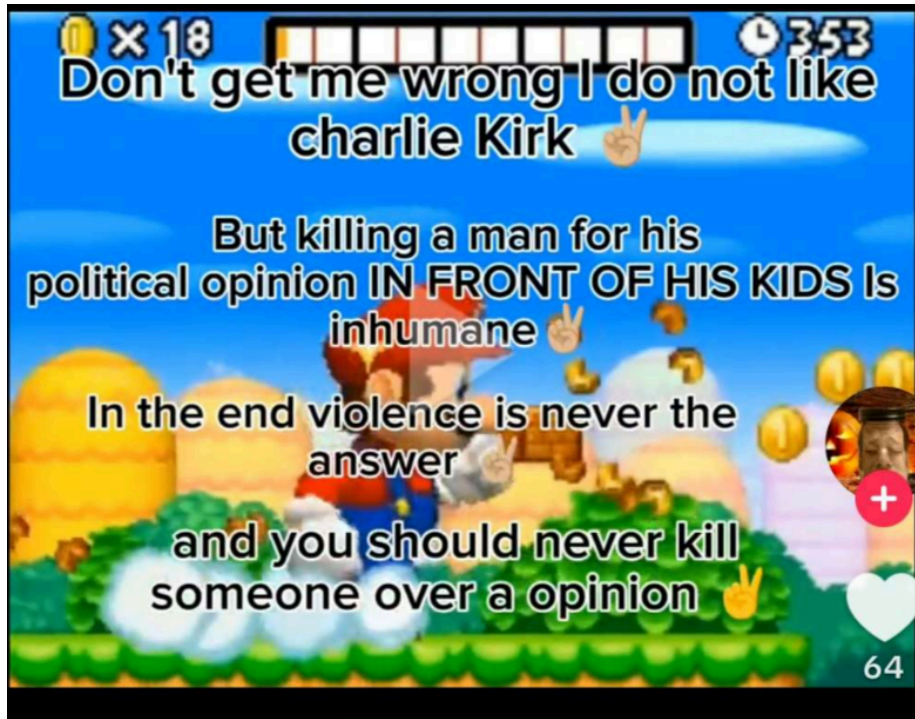


Image 5. An example of memes and discussions comparing Kirk's assassin to Luigi Mangione. The disavowal of the shooting here should be read as a sarcastic overlay rather than a sincere message, a common technique for memes. Describing the shooter as "Luigi's brother" also indicates support for the killer as a supposed necessary force for positive social change. This particular post was from TikTok.



MC
@mackkerz

X.com

I personally agree that nothing justifies it.

With that being said, Charlie Kirk himself would justify it, had it happened to someone else.

Image 6. An example of posts alleging sympathy for Kirk is hypocritical given his work with Turning Point and previous justifications of unrestricted gun rights and access.



Image 7. An example of posts that also referred to perceived hypocrisy over gun debates, this time highlighting the attention and posthumous honor Kirk received relative to a school shooting that occurred in COLORADO at roughly the same time as Kirk's assassination. This post was on Instagram.

Appendix 2. Antisemitic Memes and Responses



Image 8. An example of antisemitic claims and rhetoric. This particular instance asserted that Kirk was assassinated because he had recently softened his previous support for Israel. This post was on X.

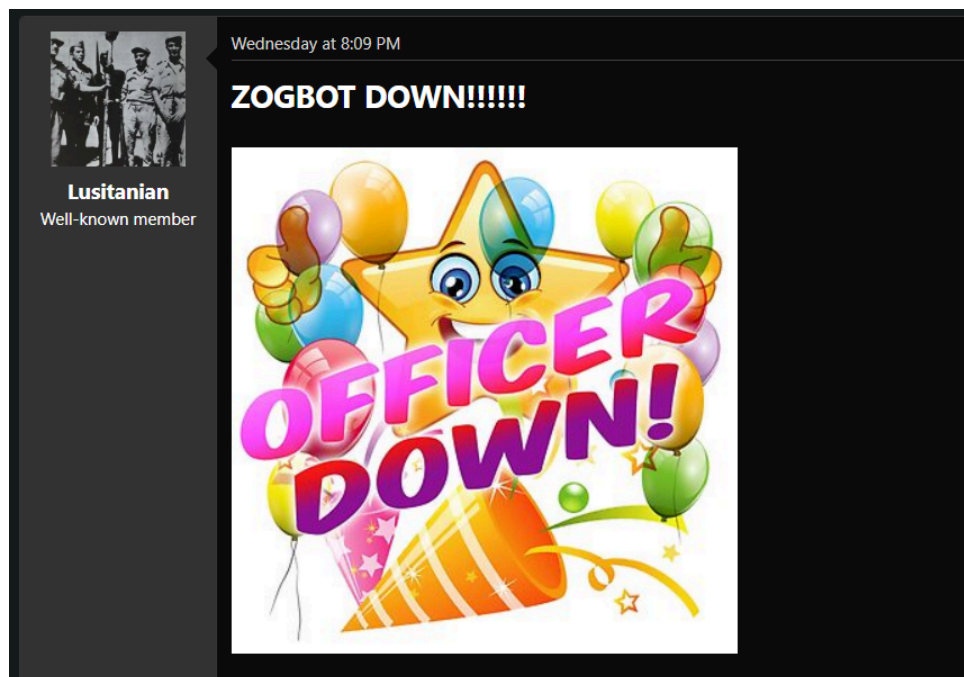


Image 9. A FashFront forum post celebrating Kirk's death, alleging he was a "zogbot," meaning an individual who brainlessly serves Israel's aims.

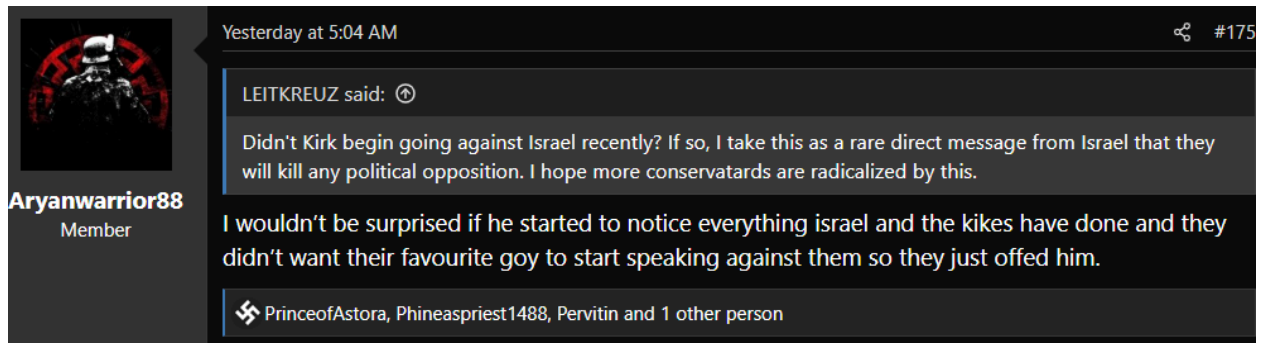


Image 10. Another image from a different FashFront user, repeating the claim that Israel was responsible for Kirk's death because he was turning against them.

Appendix 3. Right-Leaning Memes and Responses

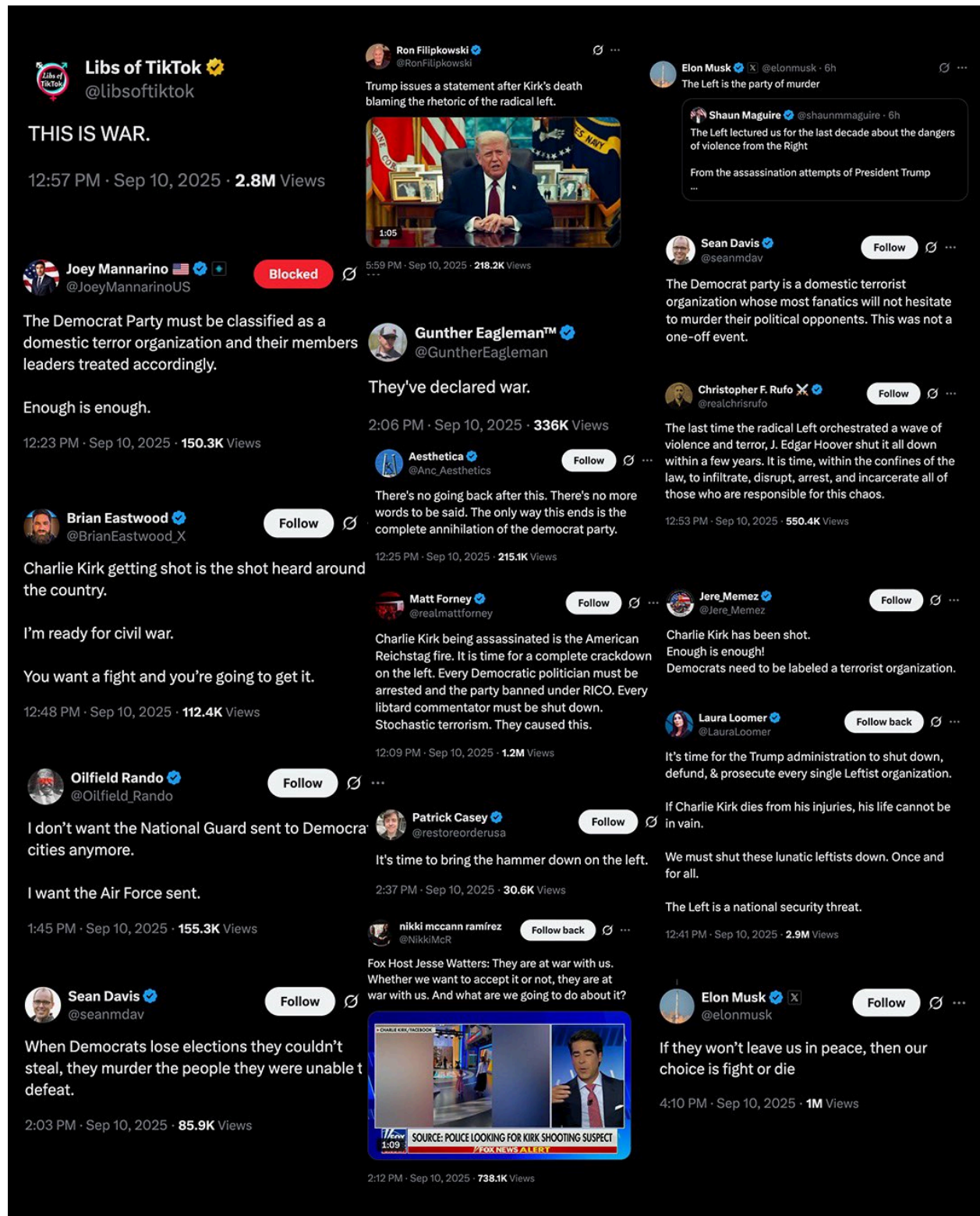


Image 11. A compilation of posts from X blaming Democrats and advocating for retributive violence.

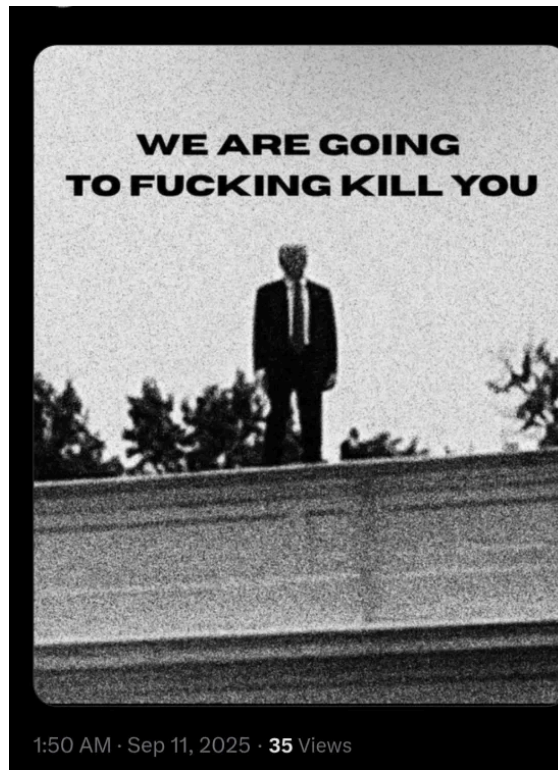


Image 12. This stylized image of Trump on the White House roof promises retribution (toward liberals) for Kirk's murder.

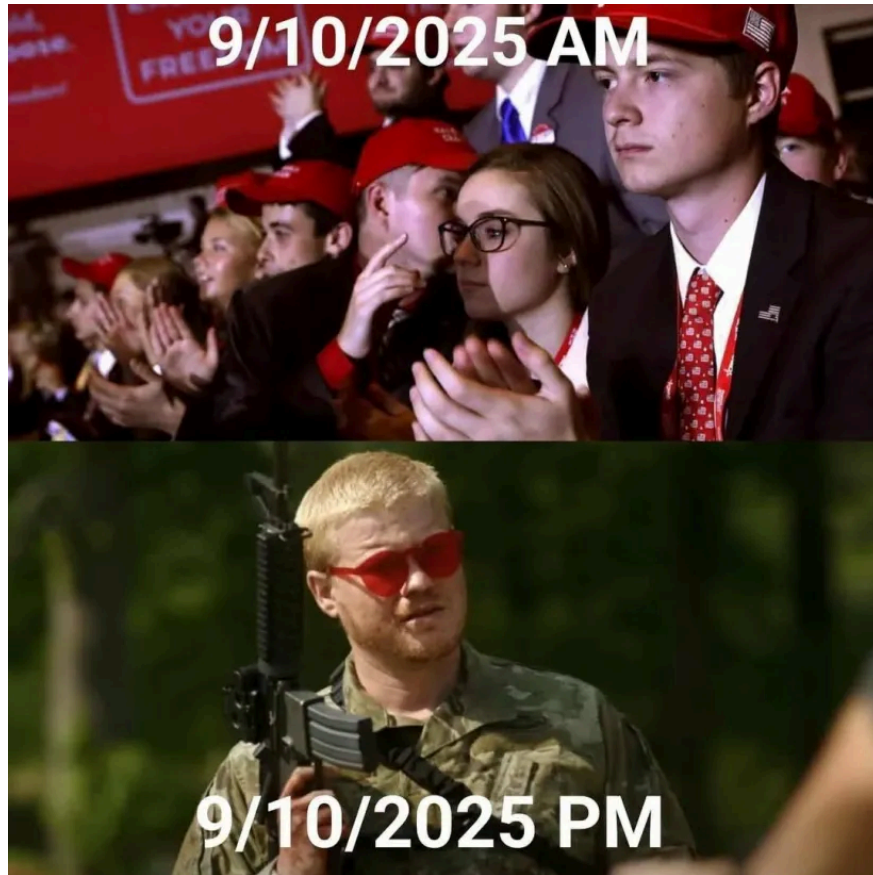


Image 13. This meme is intended to reflect a shift from peaceful, pro-Trump support to a civil war mindset following Kirk's murder. The latter image is from the movie *Civil War*.



Stephen Miller ✓
@StephenM



There is an ideology that has steadily been growing in this country which hates everything that is good, righteous and beautiful and celebrates everything that is warped, twisted and depraved. It is an ideology at war with family and nature. It is envious, malicious, and soulless. It is an ideology that looks upon the perfect family with bitter rage while embracing the serial criminal with tender warmth. Its adherents organize constantly to tear down and destroy every mark of grace and beauty while lifting up everything monstrous and foul. It is an ideology that leads, always, inevitably and willfully, to violence — violence against those uphold order, who uphold faith, who uphold family, who uphold all that is noble and virtuous in this world. It is an ideology whose one unifying thread is the insatiable thirst for destruction.

We see the workings of this ideology in every posting online cheering the evil assassination that cruelly robbed this nation of one of its greatest men. Postings from those in positions of institutional authority — educators, healthcare workers, therapists, government employees — reveling in the vile and the sinister with the most chilling glee.

The fate of millions depends upon the defeat of this wicked ideology. The fate of our children, our society, our civilization hinges on it.

Now we devote ourselves, with love and unyielding determination, to finishing the indispensable work to which Charlie bravely devoted his life and gave his last measure of devotion.

Image 14. A lengthy X post from Stephen Miller describing Democrats as an evil force whose destructive influences are incompatible with acceptable ideals.