

Charlie Kirk and George Floyd: A lesson in violence response

Conservatives pray and forgive; leftists loot and riot



[Charlie Kirk](#) would have been 32 years old on Oct. 14. Ironically, his birthday is the same as George Floyd's. The reaction to the death of each is a reflection of the views on violence held by those on the right versus those on the left.

In the month since Kirk's assassination, there have been vigils, prayer sessions and a memorial service in which a widow declared that she forgave her husband's assassin. Young people are stepping up and getting more involved with churches and pro-America groups at their colleges and high schools.

In the month after Floyd's 2020 death, protests began across the country. Many of them evolved into full-scale riots. A report by the World Economic Forum said these riots became the first civil disorder catastrophe event to exceed \$1 billion in losses to the insurance industry. I saw it in Wisconsin, where they tried to burn Kenosha to the ground. Radicals on the left called for defunding the police.

The difference in actions between those who responded to what happened to Kirk and those who responded to what happened to Floyd is crystal clear.

Don't get me wrong. Those of us who knew Charlie are upset about his assassination. We want to see the prosecution of his assassin. We also seek prosecution for anyone else who is found to have been criminally involved in the assassination, and we must expose those who celebrated his death.

That said, we denounce violence. Period.

Compare that with what we learned in Virginia during the past week. A disturbing string of text messages from the Democrat running for attorney general there reveal that he told a former legislative colleague he fantasized about shooting former House Speaker Todd Gilbert, a Republican. He wrote, "Three people, two bullets, Gilbert, Hitler, and Pol Pot. Gilbert gets two bullets to the head." He also said that the former speaker and his wife should have to watch their "fascist" children die.

The scandal kept growing Monday as a member of the House of Delegates said she told Mr. Jones that police officers would get killed if the legislature removed qualified immunity. In turn, she said, Mr. Jones told her, "Well, maybe if a few of them died, that

they would move on, not shooting people, not killing people.” The conversation was back in 2020, the same year as the Floyd protests and riots.

Jay Jones is unfit for any office. He should drop out of the race in shame.

Virginia Democrats, however, are sticking with Mr. Jones. U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine said the text messages are “indefensible,” but he is “still a supporter.” Abigail Spanberger, the Democrat running for governor in Virginia, said she was “disgusted” by the remarks in the text messages. Yet she has not removed her support for Mr. Jones.

Actions speak louder than words. Those in office and those seeking office must denounce violence. When former U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords, Arizona Democrat, was shot, I spoke out against the attack. I reached out to every member of Congress from Wisconsin to see whether they needed additional security within the state. Republicans and Democrats both denounced the act of violence.

Earlier this year, Republicans and Democrats alike spoke out against the murder of the former speaker of the House in Minnesota, Melissa Hortman, and her husband, Mark, as well as the attack on state Sen. John Hoffman and his wife, Yvette.

We must denounce violence against anyone. A poll conducted this year by the Network Contagion Research Institute and Rutgers University found that 55% of self-identified left-of-center respondents said it would be at least somewhat justified to murder President Trump. Nearly 50% said the same about Elon Musk. Previously, an Emerson College poll showed that 41% of voters ages 18 to 29 found the killing of the CEO of United-Healthcare in December “acceptable or somewhat acceptable.” Those responses are unacceptable.

Unfortunately, these polls indicate a growing issue with rage from many on the left. All during 2024, the Democrat now running for governor in Virginia said repeatedly, “Let your rage fuel you.” It is one thing to say that you will fight for something. It is entirely different to say you want to shoot, otherwise harm, or kill someone.

I constantly tell the students we work with at Young America’s Foundation that the radical left is trying to divide us by race, sex, gender and other categories. This is what Marxists do. They thrive on divisions.

Instead, we should focus on what unites us. We love America. It doesn’t matter to me whether you are young or old, rich or poor, Black or White, born here or immigrated. We should all have an equal opportunity for freedom and prosperity. After that, it’s up to us to make the most of the opportunity. That is the American dream.

Scott Walker is a columnist for The Washington Times. He was the 45th governor of Wisconsin and launched a bid for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination. He lives in Milwaukee and is the proud owner of a 2003 Harley-Davidson Road King. He can be reached at swalker@washington-times.com.