

CHARLIE KIRK, R.I.P.

[Bill Donohue](#)

We do not yet know the identity and the precise motive of the person who killed Charlie Kirk, but we do know who hates free speech, and that is what he championed.

Charlie Kirk was a conservative icon, especially in the eyes of young people. That made him a threat to those who see free speech as a problem, and there is no shortage of such people.

In 2023, a Real Clear Opinion Research survey on free speech found that Democrats were the least supportive of free speech and the most supportive of censoring speech they found disagreeable. In fact, a third of them said Americans have “too much freedom.” This was in stark contrast to 14.6 percent of Republicans.

The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression does an annual survey of free speech on college campuses. In its 2026 survey, which covered 68,150 students at 257 colleges and universities, it found that 34 percent of the students approved of using violence to stop campus speech.

The idea that violence is an acceptable way of settling political differences was promoted by the Communist Party USA. In his 1958 book, *The Naked Communist: Exposing Communism and Restoring Freedom*, W. Cleon Skousen detailed 45 communist goals. One of them was the normalization of violence.

“Create the impression that violence and insurrection are legitimate aspects of the American tradition; that students and special-interest groups should rise up and use ‘united force’ to solve economic, political or social problems.”

A few years later, Herbert Marcuse, the intellectual grandfather of the New Left, penned his essay, “Repressive

Tolerance," justifying censorship. He also advocated the use of violence.

There are crazies on the right who also hate free speech and endorse violence, but they tend to be on the margins of society. Those on the left who share these views are much more likely to work in education, the media, the entertainment industry, the arts and non-profit advocacy organizations. Special mention must also be afforded left-wing foundations who underwrite these causes.

Charlie Kirk did not die in vain. He inspired millions and his legacy is secure. May he rest in peace.