

II. Strategic

The Assassination of Charlie Kirk and the Strategy of Tension

by Harley Schlanger

Sept. 19—The murder of conservative activist Charlie Kirk at a public speaking event at Utah Valley University on September 9, and the ensuing escalation of partisan anger whipping through sections of the U.S. population, is not simply a random act of violence between two opposing political factions—as the mainstream media would have you believe. Rather, this assassination must be seen as part of a larger process, one that is being intentionally deployed to provoke deep counterreactions and the further entrenching of “left-right” profiles within the United States. As with the infamous “Strategy of Tension,” which gripped Italy from the late 1960s until the murder of Prime Minister Aldo Moro in May 1978, a similar strategy is at play now aimed at disrupting any potentially positive or productive actions from coming out of the United States today.

Kirk had achieved a high profile as a prominent supporter of President Donald Trump, through building a conservative youth organization, Turning Point USA (TPUSA), which has been credited by many with aiding Trump’s 2024 victory. With more than 3,500 chapters throughout the country, including 900 on college campuses and more than 1,200 in high schools, it is not surprising that his assassination has unleashed violent rhetoric, including forecasts of a civil war between supporters of Trump’s MAGA movement and corrupt establishment Democrats.

Despite numerous unanswered questions about the perpetrator, and the motivation for his action, the media has been featuring the most provocative statements to evoke violent reaction, by predictably highlighting comments aimed at activating “left-right” profiles. For example, from the “right,” Steve Bannon is describing the squaring off between these two supposed sides as a “war,” and Elon Musk is attacking Democrats as the “party of murder”—and these are some of the milder comments. From the “left” are profiled charges that this is Trump’s “Reichstag Fire,” the excuse he needs



CC/Gage Skidmore

Charlie Kirk

to carry out an “authoritarian crack down,” to censor opposition to his policies, increase surveillance, and expand mass deportations of “unwelcome” and “criminal” aliens. In his homage to Kirk, Trump ignored the recent concerns and disagreements raised by Kirk—for example, his questioning of Trump’s support for what he described as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s “ethnic cleansing,” opposition to the launching of a regime-change strategy for Iran, and the alleged cover-up by the U.S. Justice Department of the crimes of Jeffrey Epstein—and threatened a tough crackdown against the “radical leftists,” communists, and fascists he claimed were responsible for the climate which led to Kirk’s assassination.

The charges, taunts, and mostly unsubstantiated claims from each side are given full coverage, with the

podcasters competing with the mainstream news for salacious stories, leaving little room for the reporting of leading developments not related to the Kirk assassination. For example, as Netanyahu sent the Israel Defense Forces into Gaza City, to enact a murderous assault to “finish off” Hamas—which coincided with the opening of hearings at the UN General Assembly to find a means of ending what is now generally acknowledged as a genocide—Netanyahu put on a performance, claiming that his “dear friend” Kirk had maintained unwavering support for his policies.

There was little coverage in the media of the growing opposition among Kirk’s TPUSA members to the rampage underway in Gaza and the West Bank by the Zionist extremists, an opposition which was disclosed by close allies of Kirk, such as Candace Owens and Tucker Carlson. The media silence on the substance of comments from opponents of Kirk on the left and right allowed the Zionist Lobby to attribute their opposition to anti-Semitism, and demand a crackdown against the alleged anti-Semitism they were accused of spreading.

This tense environment is reminiscent of the “Strategy of Tension” in Italy, which culminated in the 1978 murder of Prime Minister Moro. Deadly terrorist acts were committed by the left and right, which led to tough anti-terror crackdowns. As Italian political expert Claudio Celani has reported, the terrorism ended shortly after Moro’s lifeless body was found.¹ To truly understand the Kirk assassination and the dynamic now underway in its aftermath, Americans must come to know the method of, as well as the reason why, such a Strategy of Tension is being deployed at a moment of such great global transformation as today.

The Strategy of Tension

The Strategy of Tension (from the Italian “*strategia della tensione*”) is [defined in Wikipedia](#)



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Photograph of Italian politician Aldo Moro, taken during his detention by the Red Brigades, as part of a Strategy of Tension. He was murdered by his captors.

[dia](#) as “a political policy that encourages violent struggle to create a climate of fear and insecurity,” leading the public to seek security in a strong national-security state. It involves “deployment of state or non-state actors to promote violence and chaos to manipulate public perception and political outcomes.”

To understand the multiply-connected effects of the assassination of Republican activist Charlie Kirk, the above definition is a useful starting point, but not fully adequate.

What is overlooked in this simplified definition is the goal of those behind it. In the case of Moro, for example, it was not just to establish an au-

thoritarian government, but to do so to prevent Moro from fundamentally transforming Italian politics by legitimizing a role in government for the Communist Party, the so-called “historic compromise.” This was an Italian version of the May 1978 deal between Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and German Chancellor



National Churchill Museum

Winston Churchill started the Iron Curtain strategy at his Fulton Missouri speech in 1946.

Helmut Schmidt, of pursuing détente with the Soviet Union at a moment of increasing concerns over the escalating geopolitical frictions of the Cold War.

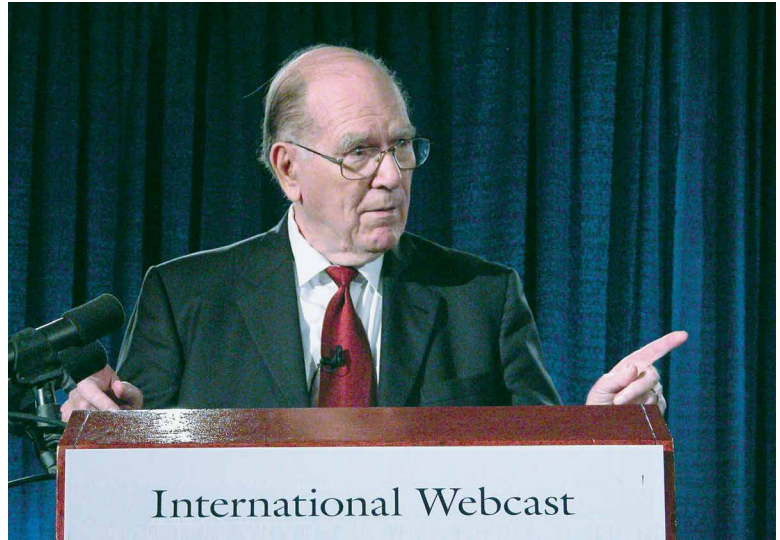
As Celani reported, many suspected that the authors of the Italian terror wave were British and American intelligence officers (MI6 and CIA in particular), deploying terror assets operating under NATO's Operation Gladio. These terror networks included former Nazis and Communists, who were recruited after World War II, to be deployed to undermine any effort to end the post-war division of Europe into two competing financial and military empires. The post-war division occurred only after the British realized that Winston Churchill's plan to invade the USSR, a plan known as Operation Unthinkable, which had been drafted by the British Chiefs of Staff Committee and was ready to go by May 1945, would not succeed.²

A more dynamic conception of the Strategy of Tension was provided by American economist and statesman Lyndon LaRouche in a March 24, 2004 article published in the *Executive Intelligence Review* and re-published in this issue, "How Must We Deal with the New Turn in This Worsening Crisis?" LaRouche was writing about two terror incidents which occurred during the period of U.S. involvement in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, which had been launched as part of the post-September 11, 2001 War on Terror by the Bush-Cheney administration, with substantial guidance from the British.

LaRouche wrote:

The March 11 Madrid train bombings have been labeled "Europe's 9/11." Middle East specialists have described the March 22 assassination of Hamas leader Sheikh Yassin as "a new Sarajevo, launching a World War III in the Middle East." As dramatic as these characterizations are, they miss a larger point. Both acts were part of a global "strategy of tension" eruption, aimed at creating conditions of worldwide chaos and ungovernability.

Taken from the top down, these incidents represent a systematic campaign by Synarchist banking circles to blow up the world, rather than allow sovereign nation-states [to] act to reorga-



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. discussing the Strategy of Tension during a 2007 webcast.

nize the doomed post-Bretton Woods floating exchange-rate system.

Given the proven accuracy of LaRouche's forecasts, especially regarding his insistence that the Strategy of Tension was integrally connected to the intent of the global financial and intelligence establishment in order to prevent any motion to break away from what became a trans-Atlantic "unipolar order," what can one conclude is the intent of those who would deploy assassins and terrorists today?

Defense of a Bankrupt System

LaRouche's widow, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, who has continued his fight to replace the bankrupt speculative order with a New Bretton Woods, provided an update on the reason for adoption of the Strategy of Tension in her weekly webcast on September 17. She said, "The strategy of tension is a method by which oligarchical governments use terrorism, assassinations, destabilizations, large-scale instigated demonstrations, and all kinds of such measures to divert attention from what is the real issue ... [which is that the Global Majority is] moving very clearly in the direction of building a new system ... against the quick-profit approach of Wall Street, the City of London, the Silicon Valley, and similar financial places."

The activation of a Strategy of Tension, therefore, serves to divert the attention away from the world-historic potential opened by the rejection of the collaps-

ing unipolar order, and the emergence of a new strategic and development architecture. This new reality has gained the support of the Global Majority, and was advanced at the recently concluded conference of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Tianjin, China. The presence at the SCO summit of Presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Xi Jinping of China, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, with leaders from more than 20 other nations, was an opportunity to deliberate on a strategy to create what Putin calls a “polyphonic” solution—a harmonic unity of many voices, to overcome the historic injustice of more than five centuries of European colonial suppression of nations of the Global South.

Putin and Xi both made clear their hopes that the powers of the Global North would peacefully accept the end of their hegemony, and join the Global South in creating a new paradigm, with a new security and development architecture. This has been the goal of fifty years of organizing by the LaRouche movement, going back to Mr. LaRouche’s drafting of a proposal in 1975 for an International Development Bank to replace the instrument of colonialism, the International Monetary Fund.³

The renewal of a Strategy of Tension allows the media to keep news of this development from the public. Instead, the Western media play on the profiles of desperate citizens, to keep them trapped with an “enemy image” in their own country to combat, while continuing to present Russia and China as dangerous adversaries. This has been a project of the media cartels since the emergence of Donald Trump as a candidate, who pledged to “become friends” with Russia, and to seek a path to collaborate with his “friend,” President Xi. The fabricated stories of Russiagate have dominated major media and political debate, as part of the hybrid warfare campaign against the normalization of relations with Russia and China.

As such, the Strategy of Tension has become the “new normal,” creating the basis for acceptance of permanent war, and belief in the “Clash of Civilizations” theory of Samuel P. Huntington, which has been adopted as the explanation for the endless wars versus the “Muslim” and “Arab” world. This explains why there have not been more effective protests in the West against the Zionist ethnic cleansing policy.

But opposition has grown to the expenditure of trillions of taxpayers’ dollars to fund the wars and regime-change operations demanded by the billionaires of the

military-industrial complex. This has been one of the main drivers of the emergence of the “America First” movement, which led to Trump’s two election victories and fueled the emergence of Kirk and his TPUSA movement.

The stories emerging of Kirk’s break away from the trans-Atlantic policy of war with Russia, extermination by Israel in Palestine, and cover-up of the intelligence operations in the Jeffrey Epstein case, shed new light on who would want him dead, and turned into a martyr to build support for permanent wars. As with other cover-ups of intelligence operations, such as the John F. Kennedy assassination, what really happened on 9/11, and how the eastward expansion of NATO and the U.S.-UK sponsorship of the Maidan coup in Ukraine provoked Putin’s Special Military Operation in Ukraine, the Strategy of Tension, run by the oligarchs above the nations, serves to protect them by hiding their intent and diverting attention away from real solutions.

For those who wish to honor Charlie Kirk, instead of using his murder to inspire a fight for the fake narratives of the establishment, his fight for freedom of speech would be a preferred battleground. It can be used to expose the Anglo-American intelligence and corporate establishment for their responsibility for the millions of deaths resulting from their wars to defend their predatory imperial order. And for those of TPUSA who identify Kirk’s Christian beliefs as their reason to join him, collaborate with The LaRouche Organization to bring Western governments into an alliance with the sovereign nations of the BRICS, the SCO, and other regional alliances, to create a world in which all citizens may act for the benefit of the other—and to put an end to the Strategy of Tension.

Endnotes

1. See Celani’s four-part series in *Executive Intelligence Review*, “Strategy of Tension: The Case of Italy,” [March 26](#), [April 2](#), [April 9](#), and [April 30](#), 2004, which details the role of Italian “Deep State” actors who coordinated the assault, in collaboration with NATO-U.S.-UK intelligence agencies.

2. The Fulton, Missouri Iron Curtain speech and creation of NATO was the fallback option, backed by Gladio special provocations, which were used to make the Strategy of Tension a semi-permanent feature of divided Europe.

3. See full coverage of the SCO summit in *EIR*, [September 12, 2025](#).