

The Most Fundamental Questions of Identity and Culture are not Resolved in the US

News:

Fox News reported today: "University of Virginia shooting: Ex-football player suspect in custody, victims ID'd as former teammates. Christopher Darnell Jones Jr. is charged with three counts of second degree murder".

Comment:

Also today, four university students were found dead in Idaho and Americans are fearful. According to one Fox News reporter; "no one seems safe from crime," and universities, schools and parents are seeking increased security. Murder is a disease within the US, and according to the latest statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there were 7.5 homicides per 100,000 of the US population making 24,576 homicides in the latest year for which statistics are available. 19,384 of these were due to being shot with a firearm. For a country claiming to be a world leader, this is an incredibly high level of violence. The US does lead militarily and economically at the moment, but its civilization is nothing to be desired.

America is deeply divided over the issue of violent crime and murder, and every time mass killings are reported the wounds get opened up again. The division is between so-called progressives, who see the Democrat party as the major party representing their version of democracy, and the conservatives whose values are aligned with the Republican Party. The progressives want to put restrictions on gun ownership, but the conservatives want to give guns to more people so that they can shoot back when there is a threat. Also, the progressives are calling for 'defunding the police' as the police forces in most US states are highly militarized and are responsible for many homicides, while Republicans want to give the police more guns and greater powers to use.

Within the US, this polarization between progressives and conservatives is called a culture war and some are talking about a civil war. Americans use the terms fight and war and many Christian fundamentalists use apocalyptic language and see themselves as being of a war between good and evil. With such strong feelings and partisan spirit within the US, it is not strange that murder and violence are common. The US congress is still investigating the January 6th insurrection at the Congress when a mob of Trump's supporters broke into the building hunting for their political enemies. Last month, the husband of Nancy Pelosi was attacked with a hammer in his home by someone looking Nancy Pelosi who is the Democrat leader in Congress. Commenting on the US midterm elections, 'The American Conservative' organization said, "Tuesday night's results solidified the importance of the culture war." The US defined its political structures in the constitution, and fought a civil war to settle the relationship of the states with each other and the federal government, but the most fundamental questions of identity and culture are not resolved in the US.

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