



City of Charlottesville Blamed for August Violence

“The City of Charlottesville was responsible for the events on August 12,” a preliminary report of the Governor’s Civil Unrest Task Force has concluded. The report was compiled by first responders from around Virginia in response to the tragic and violent events in Charlottesville, Virginia, in which neo-Nazis and members of the Ku Klux Klan clashed with Antifa demonstrators. Antifa is an organization of radical leftists associated with communism and anarchism.



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The incident turned deadly when a white nationalist ran his car into a crowd of Antifa demonstrators, killing 32-year-old Heather Heyer. Several others were injured.

When President Donald Trump reacted to the violent and tragic events by denouncing the violence “on all sides,” he was immediately and repeatedly castigated by the liberal media as somehow defending the neo-Nazis and Klansmen. On the other hand, Antifa was portrayed by the anti-Trump media as peaceful counter-demonstrators.

The report, however, placed much of the blame for the demonstration erupting into violence on the response of the Charlottesville government officials. “The City of Charlottesville placed minimal/no restrictions on the demonstrators,” the report charged.

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In fact, the report noted, “Many recommendations communicated by the state to the City of Charlottesville were *not* accepted, including industry best practices for handling violent events.”

White nationalist Jason Kessler organized the protest, the Unite the Right rally, for Emancipation Park (formerly Lee Park). Kessler was very recently a known supporter of President Barack Obama and a left-wing activist with the Occupy Wall Street movement, and it is still unclear how he so quickly became a “leader” in the “alt-Right” movement. (Many accuse Kessler of being a leftist agent provocateur.)

The report is correct in placing blame on the city officials of Charlottesville. The city’s political leadership, uniformly left-wing Democrats, ordered the police to stand down. As William F. Jasper recently noted in *The New American* magazine, they “directed the police to corral the demonstrators and push them into one another.”

Among the laws that Charlottesville police were not allowed to enforce is Virginia’s anti-mask law. Antifa thugs conceal their identity with masks, but Virginia statutes state, “It shall be unlawful for any person over sixteen years of age while wearing any mask, hood or other device whereby a substantial portion of the face is hidden or covered so as to conceal the identity of the wearer, to be or appear in any public place.” The law was passed during the years in which the modern KKK committed many of its violent acts, concealing their identities with white sheets and hoods.

Jim Baker, the director of the International Chiefs of Police, faulted Charlottesville for failure to be adequately prepared for what they knew could be a violent clash. He also noted that Emancipation Park



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on October 31, 2017

was simply too small for the two groups of protestors. He even claimed that the city was warned about the possibility of an attack using an automobile.

But while the report provides an important corrective to the false narrative of the mainstream media's presentation that the violence was all one-sided and that Antifa is somehow a heroic organization peacefully demonstrating against white racism, it is incomplete. The truth is that state officials also bear much of the blame for what happened in Charlottesville.

As Jasper recently wrote, "The video evidence, as well as eyewitness accounts from reporters and participants on opposing sides of the demonstrations, indicates that the Virginia State Police knowingly shoved unarmed members of the Unite the Right demonstration directly into the arms (and bats, fists, and other weapons) of the much larger Antifa mob." After Governor Terry McAuliffe (a close political ally of former President Barack Obama *and* the political leadership of the City of Charlottesville) declared a state of emergency, his state police took control of the increasingly violent situation. Instead of separating the two groups of extremists, they drove the white supremacists into the mob of Antifa counter-demonstrators.

While even neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and communist/anarchist demonstrators such as Antifa have a First Amendment right to hold peaceful demonstrations, what was different about this event was not so much that neo-Nazis were violent, but that they were even there. In most recent violent clashes, Antifa simply attacks non-violent, non-Nazi, non-racist, peaceful demonstrators. On the campus of the University of California - Berkeley, Antifa mobs have been allowed to violently attack students and vandalize property. Invited guest speakers have been not allowed to exercise their First Amendment rights. This has precipitated a lawsuit by students who claim that the mayor of Berkeley, Jesse Arreguin, and his equally leftist city council have on multiple occasions ordered the police to stand down and not protect the rights of students who differ with Antifa.

In a like manner, Charlottesville's liberal government bears much blame for what happened on August 12, but they were not alone in that blame. The radicals of both sides took advantage of the opportunity offered to them.



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