

Binding the Spirit Behind Political Violence

Some politicians tell us the crime rate is dropping in the United States, but you wouldn't know that from looking at the violence that erupted during this presidential election season. We are indeed a bitterly divided nation. Tempers are boiling. Last week President Biden called all people voting for Donald Trump "garbage," and New York governor Kathy Hochel said anyone not voting with her Democrat Party is "anti-American."

Hateful rhetoric has a way of fueling more hate—which may be the reason so many people have been threatened, bloodied, shot or hospitalized during campaign events. Consider:

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– Last week a man in Bath, New York, entered a grocery store and attacked a man because he wore a Trump hat. The assailant, Robert Yott, didn't know the victim, but he punched him in the head several times and even broke some of his teeth. Yott has been charged with felony assault.

– Last April, a man with a sledgehammer attacked a 64-year-old Trump supporter in a tire store in Pennsylvania. The victim, known for driving around town in a van decorated with Trump signs, had to be taken by helicopter to a hospital because of the multiple head wounds he received.

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– This June in Fall River, Massachusetts, a 27-year-old man named Aidan Courtright approached an elderly Trump supporter

who held a political sign. Courtright ripped the sign out of the man's hands, screamed at him, threw him to the ground and then kicked him. The victim, age 82, was hospitalized.

– Democrats have also been victimized by political violence. Last month, the leader of a pro-Israel group within the Democratic Party was bloodied and threatened by a group of anti-Israel protesters in New York City. Later in October, an 18-year-old Trump supporter in Florida brandished a machete, threatening to harm two elderly Kamala Harris supporters.

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