





Correcting False Media Reporting on Thomas Crooks


Connections to Willy Tepes


Background: Media reports suggested contact between Crooks and an Antifa-linked individual named Willy Tepes.

- The FBI investigation revealed no direct communication between an individual named Willy Tepes and Crooks.
- A YouTube account with the name Willy_Tepes tagged/mentioned Crooks on four YouTube posts. These occurred in August of 2020 in response to a gun control-related video titled, “This is Bad California AB 2847 Moves On.”
- The FBI investigation did not reveal Willy_Tepes tagged/mentioned in Crooks’ reply posts. Crooks did mention/tag an account named Willy 420.
- According to information posted on antifa.tk, in January 2022, a Telegram user named Willy Tepes was identified as Bjorn Leif Hjelmerud. The post provided an address and telephone number for Hjelmerud. Hjelmerud’s name and telephone number were negative in all FBI systems. In the post, Telegram user Willy Tepes appeared in an image that included a sign for the Nordic Resistance Movement, which is a Specially Designated Terrorist Group that espouses Racially or Ethnically Motivated ideology.

 **@Willy_Tepes** 5 years ago
Tom Crooks The obvious solution is to cut the head off the snake, but that is always a bloody affair. I don't think it is avoidable though, so why are we shying away from this important task? Freedom is not something you can give away at the ballot box, I will not allow it! It is my freedom too even if I am a minority.
👍 🗨️ Reply

 **@Willy_Tepes** 5 years ago
Tom Crooks If a gun and a badge is all that is needed, then authority obviously comes from the barrel of a gun. We have more guns than they do :) There is no way we can avoid a war at this point, so you better just get used to the idea.
👍 🗨️ Reply

 **@Willy_Tepes** 5 years ago
Tom Crooks I can't really see any downside to people who are sitting on a armory of guns. The more guns that are out there, the less likely a gun confiscation will be possible. Nope, guns do not guarantee a victory anymore than jet fighters, tanks and drones do. It is the fighting spirit and brains that wins. We have nothing to lose and everything to win.....and the alternative, a global police state, is unacceptable! Nothing in life is simple, but that is no argument against doing it. :)
👍 🗨️ Reply

 **@Willy_Tepes** 5 years ago
Tom Crooks It takes two sides to keep the peace, but only one side to start a war. It does not look like the Commies want peace. Just don't say we started it when we eventually are forced to resist. Yes, technology helps but today technology and knowledge is so widespread that the military don't have a monopoly on drones or missiles, and all the other stuff they have can be stolen by us. A lot of technology is also dependent upon good weather,....so i'll just attack in the rain. I'd love to get my hands on a TOW missile launcher, it has been such a long time ...
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Crooks' Use of They/Them Pronouns

Background: Media reports suggested Crooks used “they/them” pronouns in online spaces and was a transgender person. Others indicated this is similar to the backgrounds of recent perpetrators of political violence.

- **Crooks created accounts on deviantart.com which is a forum to share and comment on images/art. The default settings on this forum automatically set profile pronouns as “them/them” unless deliberately changed by the account user.**
- **FBI search warrants revealed no evidence Crooks advocated for the use of “they/them” pronouns in describing himself.**
- **In an FBI interview of Crooks’ father, he claimed Crooks had an “anti-woke” mentality. FBI investigation revealed no indication Crooks was a transgender person.**

Alleged Interest in the Anthropomorphic Community

Background: Online commentary suggested Crooks had an interest in the anthropomorphic community, commonly referred to as the “furry” community.

- **Evidence obtained through the FBI investigation, to include digital evidence and search warrants of Crooks’ home, revealed no evidence of involvement in the anthropomorphic community.**
- **The FBI investigation revealed Crooks displayed an interest in animated female muscle-building erotica.**

Political & Political Violence Posts

Background: Media reports suggested Crooks had a 180 degree shift in his political ideology since 2019.

- **Crooks posted a number of political statements and advocated for violence, most notably:**
 - **December 2019: “MURDER THE DEMOCRATS”**
 - **February 2020: “No im pretty sure people are just racist and Trump is one of them, there does not need to be a deep state for that.”**
 - **April 2020: “Well the point I was trying to make was if you are so right and Trump did so great why is it that most people disagree with you, if I had to guess it is likely because they are looking at the facts and have found that Trump hasn’t done so well, whether or not other world leaders have done worse is irrelevant Trump didn’t do that great and the majority of people know that.”**
 - **May 2020: “OK heres what I don’t understand, voting by mail will help more people vote so in fact Republicans should be standing up for that why aren’t they?”**
 - **August 2020: “...IMO the only way to fight the gov is with terrorism style attacks, sneak a bomb into an essential building a set it off before anyone sees you, track down any important people/politicians/military leaders etc and try to assassinate them. Any sort of head to head fight is suicide and even ambush/surprise attacks likely aren’t going to end well..”**
- **In the 30 days preceding the assassination attempt, Crooks searched frequently for “trump” and “biden.”**

Crooks' Use of Alias Including "Rod Swanson"

Background: Media reports suggested Crooks used the name, "Rod Swanson," the name of a former FBI agent who was involved in the response to the Las Vegas mass casualty shooting event.

- **Crooks used a number of aliases to make online purchases. For example, he used the names, "Bill Cook," "Bob Dole," and other aliases to purchase tactical gear/weapons parts leading up to the attempted assassination. The FBI assessed this was done as a form of online security.**
- **The FBI is aware Crooks used the name, "Rod Swanson" (among others) as an alias to make an online purchases of animated female muscle-building erotica from Amazonias in May 2023.**
- **FBI investigation revealed no Google searches for "Rod Swanson."**

FBI's Knowledge of Crooks, Prior to Assassination Attempt

Background: Given the social media posts referenced in the "Political & Political Violence Posts" section, many outlets questioned what the FBI knew about Crooks prior to the assassination attempt.

- **Neither Crooks nor his online posts were referred to the FBI for investigation.**
- **Crooks was 16 at the time of many of his posts in 2019-2020.**
- **Crooks was not referenced in FBI holdings prior to the attempted assassination.**