

Video shows neo-Nazis attacking woman at Detroit Pride festival while police look on

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Days following the June 8 march by 15 neo-Nazis at the Motor City Pride festival in Detroit, a video was published on YouTube showing Detroit Police Officers looking on as a woman is assaulted by a member of the National Socialist Movement (NSM).

A member of the NSM is seen shoving the woman while police look on.

The video, published on Jun 12, further shows the woman in question being shoved to the ground while police stand by and making no attempt to intervene. The neo-Nazi who shoved her then states “touch us again and I’m going to f***** put you out.” One of the Nazis then proceeds to yell “f*** you, n*****” at a man standing nearby and the entire group proceeds towards the main thoroughfare.

The Nazis are then briefly stopped by police and are politely approached by African American Deputy Chief Elvin Barren who assures them that the police are “going to be civil” with the Nazis. He informs them that they “are free to walk down the way” but that they will have to wait for a police unit to arrive. Later in the video a young woman asks an officer why they are protecting the NSM members.

The video, shot on a GoPro worn by one of the NSM members, was acquired by the woman who was shoved by the NSM member wearing the GoPro and posted to social media. At almost 9 minutes in length, the video shows what festival-goers were subjected to by the NSM members.

On June 8, members of the National Socialist Movement (NSM), an American neo-Nazi organization, disrupted Motor City Pride, an annual LGBTQ festival held in downtown Detroit. The NSM members, numbering around 15 in total, were provided a police escort by the Detroit Police Department as they marched through the festival.

Yelling racist slurs and performing Sieg Heils, the Nazi demonstrators ripped a Rainbow Pride flag and simulated urinating on an Israeli flag. “F**k n*****s” and “f**k you, f*****s” were among the slurs they hurled at Pride Festival goers over megaphone and many of the NSM members made chimpanzee noises at black Detroiters.

In addition, the NSM members openly carried firearms, which is legal under Michigan’s open carry laws, and threatened festival-goers and pedestrians with violence while police looked on. Fifteen to 20 counter protestors, some of whom identified as members of Antifa, followed the neo-Nazis, exchanging verbal barbs with them. Both counter-protestors and festival goers denounced the neo-Nazi demonstrators and the decision by Detroit police to provide them with an escort.

Motor City Pride is part of a series of national events held each June throughout North America. The national festivals are held each year to commemorate the anniversary of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, in which members of the LGBT community protested in response to continuous harassment by the police in New York’s Greenwich Village. This year over 50,000 people were in attendance in Detroit, marking it as the largest Gay Pride festival in Michigan’s history.

The appearance of Nazis at the Gay Pride Festival, hurling racist epithets and threatening festival-goers, while being protected by a police detail, provoked criticism of police conduct. Cell phone footage and photos of the police with Nazis went viral on social media platforms later in the day, forcing the police chief to hold a media conference to address the backlash.

In response to denunciations of police conduct the Detroit Police Department (DPD) Chief, James Craig,

claimed that the police were only seeking to prevent a violent conflict between festival-goers and the NSM members.

"They [the Nazis] wanted something even more substantive than Charlottesville. That's according to credible intelligence we received... I'm told through our intelligence sources (the Nazis) wanted (Charlottesville 2.0)," Craig said.

Details provided by Craig suggested that the neo-Nazis were seeking to provoke a confrontation that they could have used to legally justify a violent response. "They had a videographer there, an attorney there, and most participants were wearing GoPro cameras," the chief said.

He stated that DPD received intelligence on NSM's plans a week before the festival. No explanation appears to have been provided of why the police chose not to inform anyone, including festival organizers, of the NSM's plans to crash the parade and potentially attack those in attendance.



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