

Anti-vaccine zealots join with fascist militia forces at D.C. rally to oppose all COVID-19 public health measures

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25 January 2022

On Sunday, several thousand people protested in Washington D.C. in opposition to any and all measures aimed at stemming the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

The “Defeat the Mandate” event was heavily promoted by far-right media, including segments before and after the rally on Fox News. Nevertheless, the turnout was significantly lower than the 20,000 people predicted by event organizers.

In an attempt to maximize attendance, the rally was held less than 48 hours after the far-right “March for Life” rally, which was also held in D.C. As in previous appearances in the nation’s capital, the neo-Nazi group Patriot Front, which marched alongside anti-abortion protesters, was afforded a robust police escort.

Sunday’s anti-vaccine protest included detachments of the Proud Boys and III Percenters militia groups. Members of both groups are facing charges for their role in Donald Trump’s failed fascist coup of January 6, 2021. Many signs carried by attendees bore pro-Trump, anti-scientific and right-wing libertarian slogans, such as “Free to Infect Others,” “Trump Won,” “Vaccines are Mass Bio-Weapons” “Resist Medical Tyranny,” “Jesus is My Vaccine” and “No Socialism.”

Reflecting the violent atmosphere being cultivated by the sections of the ruling class against public health and science in general, a large bus featuring “wanted”-style photos of Dr. Anthony Fauci, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Rochelle Walensky, Microsoft founder Bill Gates and Jacob Rothschild, bearing the words “Arrest or Exile,” repeatedly circled the crowd.

In addition to far-right foot soldiers, high-level organizers of Trump’s failed coup were present at the rally. Joe Flynn, the brother of former Trump National Security Advisor Lt. General Michel Flynn, was

photographed at the event. Both Flynn brothers participated in the “Stop the Steal” rallies following Trump’s electoral defeat. The rallies, heavily attended by militia groups that would later storm the US Capitol, galvanized far-right support in furtherance of Trump’s plot to overturn the election of Joe Biden.

The “Defeat the Mandate” rally was organized in part by political operative Will Witt of the far-right media company PragerU, who also appeared on “Fox and Friends” after the rally, falsely claiming that some 50,000 people had attended. Featured speakers at the event included anti-vaccine zealots Dr. Robert Malone and Robert F. Kennedy Jr. In addition to a recent appearance on comedian Joe Rogan’s podcast two days before the rally, Malone was a guest Friday night on the fascistic Tucker Carlson program on Fox News.

During his show, Carlson likened coronavirus vaccine mandates to war crimes committed by the Imperial Japanese Army and “Nazis’ medical experiments.” Malone readily agreed with Carlson’s deranged comparison. After thanking Carlson for “bringing up the Nuremberg trials,” Malone claimed that vaccine mandates were “frankly illegal, and I’m so glad that the courts are making it clear.”

Robert Kennedy Jr. is the son of the assassinated senator from New York and nephew of the assassinated president John F. Kennedy. Since at least 2005, Kennedy Jr. has peddled the debunked claim that vaccines cause autism. He is the founder and chairman of Children’s Health Defense. Since 2011, the organization has advocated against various public health programs, including vaccinations and the fluoridation of drinking water.

During his delusional remarks Sunday, Kennedy Jr. denounced the COVID-19 mitigation measures—which are extremely limited—still in effect in some parts of the

United States. He suggested that measures to stem the spread of the deadliest pandemic in a century, which has already claimed the lives of nearly 1 million people in the US, constituted a worse fate than that suffered by Anne Frank, the 15-year-old Jewish girl who died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp after evading Nazi capture by living in a tiny attic with her family for two years.

“Even in Hitler’s Germany, you could cross the Alps to Switzerland. You could hide in an attic like Anne Frank did,” Kennedy told the crowd assembled in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

Kennedy’s stupid comments were widely denounced by various Jewish and historical organizations. The US Holocaust Museum stated, “Making reckless comparisons to the Holocaust, the murder of six million Jews, for a political agenda is outrageous and deeply offensive. Those who carelessly invoke Anne Frank, the star badge, and the Nuremberg Trials exploit history and the consequences of hate.”

This is not the first time Kennedy Jr. has participated in the whipping up of anti-Semitic and fascist elements in opposition to the measures to contain transmission of COVID-19. Despite travel restrictions at the time, Kennedy Jr. was able to fly to Germany and participate in a far-right rally against coronavirus public health measures on September 1, 2020.

During that rally, which was attended by neo-Nazis and QAnon supporters, sympathetic elements in the police allowed fascists to storm the steps of Germany’s federal parliament building.

While anti-vaccine advocates were trivializing the Holocaust in Washington D.C., a small number of fascists were continuing to distribute anti-Semitic propaganda across the US, claiming the pandemic is the fault of the Jewish people.

Over the last two months, including over the weekend, in Miami and Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Denver, Colorado; San Francisco and Pasadena, California; and Annapolis, Maryland, anti-Semitic propaganda has been distributed in neighborhoods claiming that the coronavirus pandemic is a Jewish conspiracy.

The fascist fliers assert that “every single aspect of the COVID agenda is Jewish.” Police in Miami claim to have a lead on an individual believed to have distributed more than 200 fliers this past weekend.

Speaking to local reporters, one Miami resident said that what is on the back of the fliers is even more disturbing: “One of the things they say is to ‘sacrifice people, including Jews, sometimes when necessary,” an

anonymous Fort Lauderdale resident told WSVN News.

On Monday evening, the Jewish Federation of Broward County, Florida issued a statement that read, in part, “The Jewish Federation of Broward County condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the distributing of anti-Semitic propaganda... Because Broward County is home to the third largest population of Holocaust survivors in the world, we are acutely aware of what happens when hate is allowed to thrive unfettered and unchallenged.”

The disgusting material is believed to have been distributed by the Goyim Defense League (GDL), a small fascist outfit that has been reported by the Anti-Defamation League. Last year, the neo-Nazis hung a banner from an overpass in Austin, Texas that read “Vax the Jews.”

In December, the group leafleted private homes in California, Texas, North Carolina, Idaho, Vermont, Alabama, Illinois and Florida. One Boise resident told CBS News at the time that the propaganda package included pellet gun ammunition.

Speaking to *The Algemeiner* last year, Carla Hill, associate director of the Center on Extremism of the Anti-Defamation League, said the recent surge of incidents was due, in part, to a promise by the founder of the GDL, Jon Minadeo, Jr., to send \$100 worth of fascist merchandise to any of his members who participated in propaganda distribution.

Minadeo is the founder of an online store that sells merchandise glorifying Adolf Hitler and the SS. “It’s purely and simply the monetization of hate,” Hill said. Despite the fact that Minadeo Jr. is the leader of the GDL, as of this writing it does not appear that he has been arrested or even brought in for questioning by any law enforcement agency.



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