

Nazis, DeSantis supporters rally outside Disney World in Orlando, Florida

Jacob Crosse
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Emboldened and encouraged by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis' continuous attacks on immigrants, abortion rights, LGBTQ people and socialists, this past Saturday afternoon, roughly 15 Nazis waved flags and signs featuring swastikas, antisemitic caricatures and images in support of DeSantis outside Disney World in Orlando, Florida.

Video taken of the incident by a passerby shows the Nazis cursing and threatening visitors at the park. In the video, one Nazi is heard yelling, "Go back to Mexico," while another is seen holding a red placard with DeSantis' face in the middle.

According to the Orange County Sheriff's Office, the Nazis protested for about two hours and left without any arrests or physical altercations. Several of them have been identified by antifascist researchers and the Anti-Defamation League.

One of the Nazis, known as "Grandfather88" on social media, was identified as US military veteran David Howard Wynder. Wynder and a few others held a similar demonstration at the same location outside Disney World on May 7, 2022.

Texas Observer investigative correspondent Steven Monacelli tweeted that one of the neo-Nazis outside of Disney appeared to be "Ronald Murray Junior." Monacelli previously observed Murray Jr. at "multiple anti-LGBTQ protests in Texas."

Antifascist researchers Miami Against Fascism identified another Nazi, who was observed wearing a Totenkopf skull shirt, as Jason Brown. Brown is a member of Goyim Defense League and is a former New Jersey corrections officer. He was one of three

Nazis who was charged last year for participating in an assault on a Jewish Florida college student.

After that assault last year, which provoked widespread outrage, several prominent Florida politicians, such as Republican Senator Rick Scott, denounced the Nazis and their violence. DeSantis, however, eyeing a presidential primary campaign against Donald Trump and seeking to appeal to sections of the ruling class as a more competent fascist leader, refused to denounce the assault when asked by reporters. Instead, DeSantis angrily accused the media and his political opponents of trying to "smear me as if I had something to do with it."

As of this writing, DeSantis, currently second in the Republican presidential primary polling to recently indicted ex-President Donald Trump, has refused to denounce the Nazi presence outside Disney World or renounce their support of him. This is a testament to the ongoing and open embrace of fascist ideology within the American ruling class as a whole. Without this support, the Nazis, with only microscopic numbers, would evaporate.

The embrace of fascistic politics by DeSantis and the Republican majority backing him has led to a dramatic increase in "antisemitic incidents" in Florida, according to research by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). In a report issued by the organization in March of this year, it found that antisemitic incidents in Florida increased by 42 percent compared to 2021, "an all-time high" and "more than double" the number of incidents recorded by the ADL in 2020.

ADL research recorded 269 "incidents" in Florida last

year, which includes vandalism, harassment and assault. The only states with more “incidents” than Florida, home to over 657,000 Jewish people (third most in the US), were New York (580), California (518) and New Jersey (408). Nearly every single “incident” documented by the ADL was attributed to “right-wing extremist and white supremacist groups,” such as “Donald Trump’s army,” the Proud Boys.

That Nazis have decided to protest outside Disney World is not an accident. DeSantis has frequently attacked the Disney corporation for being “woke,” especially after the company released a statement last year in opposition to HB-1557, commonly referred to as the “Don’t Say Gay” bill.

In response to Disney’s opposition, DeSantis revoked a special tax district that had been created to benefit the corporation. In the last few months, Disney and DeSantis have traded lawsuits, and last month, Disney CEO Robert Iger revealed that the company was ceasing construction of an office complex in Orlando which Disney claims would have provided 2,000 jobs.

The Nazi protest outside of Disney World was one of three “antisemitic and anti-LGBTQ+ neo-Nazi demonstrations held in central Florida” this past weekend, according to the ADL. In Lakeland, Florida, fewer than 10 members of the National Socialist Movement held a demonstration after the Polk County commissioners board rejected a proclamation to celebrate Pride month.

While Nazis and fascists continue to be increasingly embraced and accepted by the Republican Party, it must be stated that the fight to eradicate fascism cannot be carried out by the Democratic Party. In addition to funding pro-Trump “MAGA” candidates, following the January 6 coup, the Democratic Party, led by President Joe Biden, has done everything in its power to strengthen the Republican Party, mainly by refusing to hold Trump and his cabal of co-conspirators accountable for their failed coup.

Exposing as phony their pretext to defend the democratic rights of workers in Ukraine or anywhere else, the Democratic Party, going back to the Obama

administration, has spearheaded the embrace and arming of neo-Nazi elements in Ukraine as part of its anti-Russia strategy, culminating in the US-NATO proxy war in Ukraine against Russia.

Leading Democratic politicians, such as California Representative Adam Schiff, embraced members of the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion at Congress last year. And last August at the Department of Defense-sponsored “Warrior Games” held in Disney World, Democratic Party supporter and comedian Jon Stewart presented a member of the Azov Battalion with an award for his “spirit and determination.”

The defense of democratic rights can only be achieved through the mass independent and revolutionary struggle of the working class for socialism in opposition to the capitalist system.



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