Elon Musk, world's richest promoter of antisemitism

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For over two weeks, the richest capitalist in the world, Elon Musk, in concert with neo-Nazis and Republican Party operatives, has affirmed and promoted century-old antisemitic tropes to millions of people on the social media platform he purchased last year for $44 billion.

In multiple tweets on Twitter/X, Musk has accused Jewish people of controlling the mass media and the financial markets. In a September 4 Twitter/X thread, Musk accused the Anti-Defamation League, which was founded in 1913 to combat antisemitism and racism, of "trying to kill this platform by falsely accusing it & me of being anti-Semitic."

Blaming Jewish people for the cratering of Twitter/X's value, Musk wrote: "Our US advertising revenue is still down 60%, primarily due to pressure on advertisers by @ADL (that's what advertisers tell us), so they almost succeeded in killing X/Twitter!"

"If this continues," Musk added, "we will have no choice but to file a defamation suit against, ironically, the 'Anti-Defamation' League."

In the same thread, Musk responded to a question posed by fascist provocateur and InfoWars correspondent Mike Cernovich. Musk took the opportunity to accuse the ADL of spreading antisemitic content on the platform since he purchased it, writing "there is no way to tell if the organization complaining was somehow complicit in creating the very thing they complain about!"

Prior to his September 4 outburst, Musk and others incited an online pogrom against Jewish people under the hashtag #BanTheADL. Thousands of posts have been made on Twitter/X under the hashtag promoting the genocide of Jews.

The #BanTheADL hashtag was created by neo-Nazis at the end of August. The hashtag originated with Irish fascist Keith Woods (real name Keith O'Brien). Woods, neo-Nazi Nick Fuentes, and retired mixed martial artist/UFC fighter Jake Shields started the #BanTheADL campaign on Twitter/X following an August 30 tweet from ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt.

It must be said that Greenblatt and ADL's distorted definition of antisemitism—which treats as antisemitic all criticisms of the capitalist state of Israel, including comparisons of its decades-long persecution of the Palestinians with the Nazis' treatment of Jewish people in the period before the Holocaust—has allowed actual neo-Nazis to claim they are falsely being labelled as antisemitic by the organization for merely criticizing the state of Israel.

The #BanTheADL hashtag is not a legitimate response to the ADL's adoption of the false and viciously right-wing definition of antisemitism by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which is targeted against any left-wing or socialist critique of the oppression of the Palestinian people by the state of Israel. The IHRA definition could also be used against the popular opposition to the fascistic Netanyahu government among the majority of Israeli Jews.

Rather, the #BanTheADL campaign seeks to use the anti-democratic role of the IHRA to discredit any reporting and exposure of actual antisemitic content on Twitter/X. Neo-Nazis, and Musk, attack the ADL for authoring reports pointing to the rise of fascist content on Twitter/X since Musk bought the company.

In his August 30 tweet, Greenblatt thanked Twitter/X CEO Linda Yaccarino for "reaching out and I'm hopeful the service will improve. @ADL will be vigilant and give her and @ElonMusk credit if the service gets better ... and reserve the right to call them out until it does."

The following day, August 31, Woods and Fuentes began promoting #BanTheADL on Twitter/X. Woods promoted it through his account that was reinstated following Musk's purchase of the company, while Fuentes promoted it through accounts he set up to evade a similar ban, which has not been rescinded, and encouraged his neo-Nazi followers on Telegram to promote it. That same day, Shields tweeted a screenshot from the ADL's website and wrote, "Despite what the ADL wants you to believe it is ok to be white #bantheADL." Shields's post was retweeted by Woods and, according to Twitter/X, has been viewed nearly 200,000 times.

Musk and far-right elements propelled it to trend on Twitter/X beginning on September 1 and through the Labor Day weekend. On September 1, Musk "liked" a tweet Woods posted calling for the ADL to be banned from Twitter/X. In the tweet liked by Musk, Woods repeated antisemitic tropes that a Jewish cabal controls the media, writing that the ADL "orchestrated an advertiser boycott of Tucker Carlson. Why should they have a platform on X to hold @elonmusk to ransom? It's time to #BanTheADL."

Musk continued to engage with the #BanTheADL topic and its promoters, including Woods, liking several subsequent tweets by the fascist. On September 1, Musk replied favorably to a Woods tweet attacking the ADL, writing that the "ADL has tried very hard to strangle X/Twitter."

Woods has previously spoken at fascist political conferences and favorably interviewed Fuentes on his program. Woods regularly shares antisemitic, nationalist, fascistic, and racist content on all his social media platforms.

As Musk continued to engage with Woods, other right-wing elements joined in the antisemitic campaign. On September 1, Charlie Kirk, co-founder of the fascistic Turning Point USA and co-conspirator in Trump's failed coup, wrote on Twitter/X, "I believe in the First Amendment so I don't want to ban anyone's speech, but if I was going to start somewhere it would be #BanTheADL."

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Appealing to neo-Nazis and white supremacists, Kirk added, “The ADL is a mass purveyor of anti-white hate.” Kirk deleted his tweet, only to change the last sentence to read, “The ADL itself is America’s number-one purveyor of hate speech (and the [Southern Poverty Law Center] is #2). #BanTheADL”

That same day, several other right-wing commentators, including Michael Knowles, Michael Walsh and neo-Nazi Jack Posobiec, tweeted their support for “#BanTheADL.”

Continuing the campaign, the next day, September 2, Musk retweeted far-right Dutch political operative and recent speaker at CPAC Hungary, Eva Vlaardingerbroek, writing “Perhaps we should run a poll on this?” In her tweet, Vlaardingerbroek said that the fact #BanTheADL was trending showed “how done people are with the ‘we’re labeling everything we don’t like as hateful/racist/dangerous/far-right’ BS.”

On September 4, Woods posted a video clip from Alex Jones’ InfoWars program in which Jones claimed the ADL was “the most pro-Hitler organization I’ve ever seen.” Musk replied to the video/Woods tweet, “The ADL, because they are so aggressive in their demands to ban social media accounts for even minor infraction, are ironically the biggest generators of anti-Semitism on this platform!”

Holocaust denier and Trump Thanksgiving guest Nick Fuentes has a specific purpose in the anti-ADL campaign. He noted in a recent livestream that while it was “beneficial” that the hashtag spread freely on Twitter/X, “maybe the most important feature here is with Elon Musk.”

“It’s not just that ... millions of people are seeing the conversation,” the neo-Nazi said, “but it’s specifically this audience of one, Elon Musk, is paying attention. And we have been watching it closely. It almost seems like he wakes up and checks Keith Woods’ timeline. For updates on this!

“It’s hard not to believe that based on when his engagement starts for the day. And he starts everyday by liking the tweets, and he replies to a few of them, even replying to some of the retweets on Keith Woods’ timeline. So that’s maybe even a bigger deal ... we have a captive audience of one, who just happens to be the richest man in the world. The kingmaker on the platform, who is very ... in tuned ... to this conversation and specifically the conversation as it pertains to what we are saying about it.”

“He tweeted 28 times in just the last 24 hours about this campaign,” Fuentes noted.

Musk’s vociferous promotion of antisemitic conspiracy theories that Jews control the media and society at large is not a new development. This past spring, Musk attacked billionaire Democratic Party funder and Holocaust survivor George Soros. On May 15, 2023, Musk tweeted, “Soros reminds me of Magneto.” In the X-Men comic, the super-villain Magneto’s willingness to use violence against humans to protect his mutant allies stems from his family’s annihilation by Nazis at Auschwitz as a child during World War II.

In response to Musk’s tweet comparing Soros to a comic book villain who killed thousands of people, Twitter user Brian Krassenstein noted that the Magneto character frequently aided the heroic X-men and was also a Holocaust survivor. Musk replied that Soros “wants to erode the very fabric of civilization. Soros hates humanity.”

Musk later added that his original tweet was unkind to Magneto. In a follow-up interview on CNBC, Musk doubled down on his attacks against Soros, a bogeyman for the international fascist right, telling the host that he thought it was “true” that Soros wanted to destroy humanity.

On September 17, Musk, using Soros as a bogeyman for international Jewry, responded to a fascist Twitter account blaming Soros for an “invasion” of immigrants in Italy, “The Soros organization appears to want nothing less than the destruction of western civilization.”

Musk’s tweet is a recapitulation of the “Great Replacement” fascist conspiracy theory which animated the Tree of Life Synagogue, Jacksonville, Florida, and Buffalo, New York mass shooters. The fascist lie, which is a pillar in the anti-immigrant propaganda espoused by neo-Nazis, white supremacists and a majority of the Republican Party, posits that a cabal of Jewish people and left-wing elements are seeking to “replace” white Christians in the US and Europe with “lesser stock” from Africa, Asia, and South America.

Under Musk’s stewardship, and by his own admissions, the value of the social media platform he invested heavily in, and was forced to purchase, has collapsed. Since his acquisition of Twitter last year, Musk, a self-declared “free speech absolutist” and racist imbecile, has fired thousands of workers, re-branded the platform and introduced a paid-subscription service.

Over the same period, Musk has overseen the unbanning of Trump’s Twitter/X account while remaining silent on the execution of Saudi dissidents who tweeted their opposition to the dictatorship on Twitter/X. He regularly engages with far-right and openly antisemitic language. Musk regularly promotes his preferred right-wing presidential political candidates while banning left-wing, anarchist, and even bourgeois-liberal journalists.

Musk is one of several billionaire “pandemic profiteers” that saw their wealth explode during the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2020, Musk illegally ordered the resumption of production in violation of public health orders at the Fremont, California Tesla assembly facility. Wall Street rewarded Musk for this criminal act that led to thousands of COVID-19 infections by shooting up Telsa’s stock price from under $60 a share in May 2020 to over $235 by the end of the year. As of this writing, Musk has an estimated net worth of around $250 billion, roughly 10 times the amount he had “earned” prior to the onset of COVID-19.

Musk’s temporary immense wealth does not inoculate him from historical retribution. Terrified of a growing strike wave in the working class, and increasing support for socialism among workers and youth, the richest person in the world has exposed himself as a Nazi sympathizer and a Jew-hater.

As the war in Ukraine continues to falter, capitalist reaction and fascism are oozing out of every pore of the ruling class. Seeking to blame an external enemy for the failures of capitalism, sections of the ruling class are whipping up the oldest and most genocidal lies in human history, in a last-ditch effort to divide the working class and protect their unearned wealth and parasitic existence.

Musk’s antisemitic rampage demonstrates that Trump’s embrace of “very fine people” at Charlottesville in 2017, and the refusal of Governor Ron DeSantis to condemn neo-Nazis operating openly in Florida are not aberrations. The Republican Party’s transformation into a fascist organization reflects the authoritarian transformation of large sections of the US ruling class.

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The Democratic Party and the Biden administration, which have played an immense role in making the electric vehicle manufacturer Musk a very wealthy man, have proven incapable of fighting the fascist threat. While Trump and a few of his top co-conspirators have finally been charged with some of the crimes related to the failed coup, his co-conspirators in Congress, the Pentagon and the Supreme Court remain free.

The Democrats share Musk's terror of an independent movement of the working class against capitalist exploitation. This was expressed in the coming together of the Democrats with their "Republican colleagues" last year to ban railroad workers from striking, while at the same time passing record military budgets and seemingly unlimited funding for war against Russia.

History has shown that fascism will never be defeated by voting for capitalist parties, or by relying on the capitalist state as the supposed bastion of democracy. It requires the mobilization of the working class on a revolutionary socialist basis. Workers and youth committed to eliminating the fascist threat and fighting the financial oligarchy should contact the *World Socialist Web Site* today.

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