

OANN's Posobiec Met With Polish Neo-Fascists and Amplified Their Messages Online



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One America News Network (OANN) correspondent Jack Posobiec promoted the cause of neo-fascism in Poland, Hatewatch determined during an investigation into his ties to white supremacy.

In April 2017, Posobiec amplified for his Twitter followers an event staged by the Polish neo-fascist political movement called Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny (ONR). ONR has a long history of promoting and emulating Nazism. As the German Nazi movement of the 1930s rose across the border, ONR sought a “cleansing” of Jews in Poland. ONR members were also responsible for a wave of violence targeted at the country’s Jewish population. As recently as June 2019, authorities opened an investigation into ONR after they publicly commemorated the memory of a Belgian member of the Schutzstaffel (SS), which was the paramilitary arm of Hitler’s Nazi party.

Posobiec, as well as Canadian white nationalist pundit Stefan Molyneux, participated in a march on Warsaw that included ONR, as well as a collection of other extreme far-right groups. Marchers that day chanted “white Poland,” according to a report in *The New York Times*. The march took place in November 2018, while Posobiec was employed by OANN. Someone took a picture of him at the march, walking with a child in his arms.

Posobiec also met with Krzysztof Bosak of the extreme far-right party Ruch Narodowy (RN) in Poland in July 2017, around the same time Trump gave a nativist-themed address in Warsaw, according to social media posts and local reporting from that time. Posobiec led an event he described as a “MAGA meetup” in a series of Twitter posts. (MAGA refers to “Make America Great Again,” a Trump campaign slogan.) RN has been criticized for antisemitism. To provide context for RN’s beliefs, party president Robert Winnicki said in 2018, “the Jews will not get a penny from us,” in response to a U.S. bill that was passed in an effort to help give restitution to Holocaust survivors and their families. In 2013, while president of the far-right group All Polish Youth, Winnicki also defended a historian who blamed Jews for their own genocide during World War II.

Posobiec, who is of Polish heritage, has served as a link between President Trump’s brand and Polish far-right politics. He has promoted Trump in person in Poland and also appeared on Polish state television, hyping the U.S. president. (Following one of Posobiec’s early appearances on Polish television in July 2017, local Polish media depicted him as a conspiracy theorist and a troll.) Hatewatch previously reported on Trump’s apparent affinity for Posobiec, noting that he has singled the OANN correspondent out with praise and used Posobiec’s disinformation and propaganda to deflect from criticism that he has stoked white supremacist violence in the U.S.

Poland is currently under the leadership of Andrzej Duda, a reactionary politician endorsed by Trump who gives voice to hardline anti-LGBTQ views. Like Trump, Duda has overseen a rise in far-right activity and antisemitism in his country. Duda met with Trump as part of Duda’s push for reelection in June. When Trump acknowledged Duda’s victory on Twitter on July 13, Posobiec replied with a GIF of Polish football fans celebrating.

Posobiec, who denies being a fascist or an antisemite, said he called the FBI after Hatewatch reached out for a comment on this series back in April. In part one of this series, Hatewatch reported on Posobiec’s links to American white supremacists and the beginnings of his career as a journalist, which

included adding “fmr CBS News” to his Twitter bio despite having no apparent connection to that broadcasting company. In part two, three Jewish groups offered statements describing Posobiec’s words as being antisemitic or denounced OANN’s relationship to him.

Those stories published on July 8. Posobiec responded to their publication by retweeting allies of his who claimed he was not an antisemite, and by issuing a series of tweets about so-called cancel culture, which refers to the idea of someone being socially ostracized over their behavior. Posobiec did not respond to a voice message from Hatewatch offering him an opportunity to provide further comment.

“Cancel culture is not only awful and disgusting [sic], it is un-Christian[.] As Christians, we believe that all humans are imperfect, and that Christ has offered a path of redemption to all[.] Cancel culture kommisars offer only hate[.] Christ asks us to pray for them, and so we shall,” Posobiec wrote on July 8, immediately following the stories’ publication.

OANN’s CEO, Robert Herring, called Hatewatch’s effort to report on Posobiec’s ties to white supremacists “a guilt by association fallacy” and “a typical smear tactic” in April. Herring did not respond to a follow up email Hatewatch sent on July 8 after the publication of the first two stories in this series.

Posobiec promoted 'the very symbol of fascism in Poland'

Posobiec used Twitter to amplify the neo-fascist Polish movement National-Radical Camp, or in Polish, Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny (ONR) on April 30, 2017. ONR “is antisemitic, full stop,” according to Polish sociologist Dr. Rafal Pankowski of the “Never Again” Association (in Polish, Nigdy Więcej). Pankowski also described ONR as being “the very symbol of fascism in Poland” in an interview with Hatewatch.

Georgetown University research published in 2017 backs up Pankowski’s depiction of the group. They note that ONR sought a “cleansing” of Polish Jews during Hitler’s rise in neighboring Germany. ONR’s members also perpetrated acts of violence against Jews in Poland including bombings of Jewish homes and shops, according to historians. Poland banned the group around this time, but they were reestablished decades later, according to Pankowski.

“Polish Nationalists March in Support of No Migrant Policy,” Posobiec wrote to his followers about ONR.

Posobiec’s description of ONR excluded important context. Pankowski noted to Hatewatch that the group marched the streets that day to celebrate their founding in 1934. A local newspaper report corroborates Pankowski’s assessment and notes that ONR chanted the slogan “Death to enemies of the homeland” at that march. Posobiec relayed none of these details to his followers.

Posobiec’s post about ONR was retweeted more than a thousand times, according to a screenshot captured by The Atlantic Council. As an example of how Posobiec’s post was interpreted, a Trump supporter replied to him on Twitter that day by writing: “Poland is always out in front. The west should use Poland as the example.”

The U.N. called on Poland to follow through on its initial ban of ONR in September 2019.

'MAGA Meet Up' with Krzysztof Bosak in Poland's capital city

In July 2017, two weeks after President Trump gave a hardline, nativist-themed speech in Poland, authored by Stephen Miller, Posobiec met in Warsaw with a group including Krzysztof Bosak,

according to Bosak's social media history. Bosak is the deputy leader of the extreme far-right party "Nationalist Movement," or in Polish, Ruch Narodowy (RN).

Bosak ran for president of Poland in 2020 as a fringe, far-right extremist candidate but lost, accruing less than 7% of the vote. He is known for making bizarre statements, like questioning whether the earth really revolves around the sun. RN's leadership has made antisemitic statements and supported historical revisionism of the Holocaust.

A report published in the Polish publication Kontakt noted that Posobiec "came to Poland with his family in early July," and did so "at the same time as Donald Trump."

Kontakt described the event at which Posobiec met Bosak as a "MAGA meet up" scheduled for July 21, 2017. Bosak's Twitter posts were still up at the time this series was written, and corroborate the July 21, 2017, meeting date. Posobiec also posted selfies from that night labeled "MAGA Meetup Warsaw!" according to archives. Kontakt reported that Posobiec chased two teenage boys down the street with his cell phone during the meeting, blaming their presence on billionaire George Soros. Soros is at the center of many antisemitic conspiracy theories promoted by the far right.

"They were sent by Soros to destroy my meeting with people supporting Trump. This boy's brother works for the European Union. He just confirmed his brother is an EU journalist and he was sent here to ruin our thing," Kontakt quoted Posobiec as saying about the people he chased.

Bosak publicly congratulated Posobiec on his wedding in November 2017. He referred to Posobiec on Twitter as "my friend" in February 2018. Posobiec, for his part, cited Bosak as a source on Twitter as recently as June 5, while referring to antifa, a protest movement that targets white supremacy. Posobiec referenced Bosak's views about antifa after Trump claimed the protest movement constituted a "terrorist organization."

"[Bosak] is right," Posobiec wrote on Twitter on June 5 about the fringe candidate. "Antifa is a terrorist network with cells in East and West Europe, Canada and the United States."

Dr. Pankowski of Never Again noted to Hatewatch that Poland's far-right extremist community "seized on" Trump's comments about antifa in June, using them to buoy their own propaganda. Hatewatch reached out to RN by email about Bosak's connection to Posobiec but did not receive a response.

Posobiec collaborator warned radical-right Polish forum against a 'Jewish mafia'

Posobiec appeared at a far-right march along with a Polish man named Wojciech Pawelczyk, who describes himself in his Twitter bio as the administrator for Posobiec's Facebook page. Followers of Posobiec might be familiar with Pawelczyk's handle, as the OANN correspondent periodically promotes videos that were cut by him. For example, in May 2019, Posobiec tweeted a video Pawelczyk cut from a talk given by the John Birch Society, an American far-right group.

Pawelczyk claims in his Twitter bio to serve as video editor for "War Room Pandemic," a podcast hosted by Steve Bannon, where Posobiec has appeared as a guest on a semi-regular basis. Pawelczyk, who has accrued over 75,000 Twitter followers as of the writing of this story, was among the users of that website who employed the hashtag #IStandwithJackPosobiec on July 8, after Hatewatch published the first two parts of this series.

Pawelczyk also contributes to "a Polish radical-right, Catholic fundamentalist forum" called Fronda and made comments warning against colluding with the "Jewish mafia" there, according to research

conducted by Pankowski of Never Again. Pawelczyk warned the Fronda community in May 2019 that if they supported the wrong political party, it would be the equivalent of “voting for the payment of Jewish mafia claims,” according to Pankowski’s translation. Pawelczyk also refers to Posobiec on the forum as his friend and boasts of having access to his and Steve Bannon’s social media accounts, based on Pankowski’s translation. Steve Bannon’s communications director, Alexandra Preate, responded to Hatewatch’s request for comment by asking for more information about the statements Pawelczyk made on Fronda. After Hatewatch described Pawelczyk’s statements for her, Preate did not respond.

Posobiec met Pawelczyk during a far-right march to celebrate Polish independence, he said in a tweet.

“Proud to finally meet the great @PolishPatriot™ today in Warsaw!” Posobiec tweeted on Nov. 11, 2018, linking to a handle Pawelczyk used on Twitter at that time.

According to Posobiec’s tweet, he and Pawelczyk met while in Warsaw as a swarm of European far-right groups marched across Warsaw that day, some carrying flares that dotted the sky with a faint red light. ONR and RN, the antisemitic Polish groups Posobiec respectively promoted and appeared with at the “MAGA meet up,” also marched on Warsaw that day. Marchers yelled white supremacist chants, according to news reports. One publication translated a chant as saying, “Poland will be WHITE.”

Just as Posobiec did following the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, he used Twitter to deflect accusations of white supremacy away from those who attended the march.

“We have been here all day, and have not heard a single person say anything [sic] like that. Polish people don’t even talk like that. Quit the fake news, you just look dumb,” Posobiec wrote in response to those reports, according to archives.

Pankowski of Never Again said that Posobiec’s denial is inaccurate and described the march as an event that has attracted far-right extremists from across the world for years, including an international slate of white nationalists and neo-Nazis. The U.K.-based civil rights group Hope not Hate noted that “around 15 [English] nazi skinheads, proudly wearing KKK t-shirts, braces and boots” landed in Poland to attend, marching in the same crowd as figures such as Posobiec and Stefan Molyneux. Molyneux, a Canadian man who was suspended in recent weeks from websites like Twitter and YouTube, gained infamy for repeatedly promoting debunked claims that women and non-white people are predisposed to be of lesser intelligence than white men. Posobiec often associated with Molyneux on Twitter before the Canadian pundit’s removal from that website.

“The event was basically a magnet for the far-right for Poland and other countries. I believe it was the biggest gathering of far-right and white racist groups of its era, internationally speaking,” Pankowski said of the march Posobiec attended that day. “I was struck by the intensity of the hatred at this march. Marchers launched anti-Muslim, anti-gay, and antisemitic chants.”

Pankowski told Hatewatch that the march is an annual occurrence and that Posobiec would have been aware of its nature, based on his connections to Poland.

“Posobiec would have known what kind of march this was before he participated in it,” Pankowski said.

<https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2020/07/22/oanns-posobiec-met-polish-neo-fascists-and-amplified-their-messages-online>