

Fascism's Tightening Grip in the SoCal Desert

Tucked away in the sand, surrounded by luscious mountains and rolling hills of all sizes holding the earth with their Stoney fingers, under the ocean of blue sky, is Coachella Valley. World famous Palm Springs with all its history of a multitude of Hollywood celebrities, U.S. presidents, secretive and not so secret international meetings, the legacy of Modernism architecture, pro-LGBTQ+ acceptance with caveats, and more, including a history of racist programs against Black people that have long made the city home, is the first landmark of this place. The Festivals of Coachella Fest and Stagecoach, the two next most well known to people who may have never heard a word or seen a sight of this valley. However, beyond these, beyond the obscene wealth of a city like Indian Wells, sits cities far less known in the dusty desert, and to the wider world, yet just as important.

The Coachella Valley's known status grows, and with that an importance for many reasons, but in the realm of the political, it's taken a greater role not only for here, or even the country, but for our shared world. Every January, the Koch Brothers would meet with others of their pestilence in the city of Palm Desert to plot how to make the world a more miserable place, how to advance their own hyper capitalist goals, and plots to destroy the very flawed Liberal Democracy of the US, and the wider world their ilk thinks they have claim to. During 2020, business owners and other Middle Class miniature tyrants, staged Fascist astroturfed anti lockdown protests in the valley in places like Downtown Palm Springs, Palm Desert, and elsewhere, despite this country never locking down in any true sense. Some kept their businesses open and faced no repercussions, like dive bar Escapades in the city of Desert Hot Springs. Investors for lithium mining want to plunder the unresolved ecological disaster of the man-made Salton Sea, to pillage the land and rape it for products that will be created and sold throughout the world. Local Realtors are trying to entice renters and buyers who lost homes in the L.A. Fires, or do not want to live in LA anymore, not always for rational reasons. Or another one being Palm Springs International airport recently becoming a true international airport that can take you anywhere or come from anywhere (in theory, given what we are living through), as well being a frequent military stop-over the last circa 7 years, becoming more militarized in the process, as AC-130s and Ospreys and others stop by between bases in the San Diego area, and the Marine Base in Twenty-Nine Palms in the High Desert (we are the Low Desert, due to elevation). And of course, it's long retained a history with the most powerful heads of state of the world, US Presidents. Some, like the Whitehouse living curtain that was President Ford, retired here, others vacation here. Within my lifetime, a president has visited here at least once in their term. The three most recent, Obama, Trump, and Biden journeyed here. Trump, who's returned to the presidency, will in all likelihood appear here again with his entourage of scum. As the US descends further into Fascism under his Fascist regime, should he not croak, he will

return, there is little doubt. The effects of his personal Fascism, the Fascist regime, and the Fascism within people in the populace of the US, are already in growing effect here.

Trump made it a point to hold one of his tail end Fascist rallies from his campaign, here. This rally enjoyed uncritical reporting from local news who boosted it and broadcasted it, like sycophants. It was given personal guard and support from tinpot Fascist Sheriff Chad Bianco, whose murderous reign and goons are responsible for multiple murders in recent years, in addition to their daily brutal actions like carrying out evictions for parasitic landlords. Good old Chad is even going to run for Governor, no doubt with full backing from the Fascist regime. Why he does, when Newsom has gone full Fascist collaborator, is of course, because he is an arrogant little tyrant, and the Fascist he is, would like to be higher on the food chain. One other notable thing from this rally, is another fan of Trump was arrested for entering the grounds with guns, in an alleged attempt to kill Trump like the previous failed attempts. Many of attendees were left in terrible (though deserved) conditions at the grounds chosen for the rally, with cars getting stuck in sand and other hilarity, so these people could glimpse and gasp, holler and cheer, at their Dear Leader. This Valley, beyond having wealthy areas that support Trump, and the general divide of The Valley and Riverside County being Democrat leaning, but also heavy in GOP support, contains a personal history of business for Trump.

In what feels like always being stuck with this Fascist asshole, Trump at one time was the recipient of a deal with Spotlight 29 Casino. Growing up, it was not just Home Alone 2 or The Apprentice where I saw this demonic creature, this husk of a human, and personification of a landlord and capitalism, his face a constant fixture on billboards adorning The Valley, for "Trump's Spotlight 29 Casino". This lasted a number of years until the deal was ended in 2006. The Casino's actual owners are the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, one of the tribes of Native Americans in this area of California, such as the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. In the years since 2015, stickers, posters, flags, and of course, red hats, have been a fixture in The Valley. Including the Patriot Store, a Fascist store selling the most tacky shit one can imagine, most dedicated to Dear Leader. Or Rocky's Pawn Shop which blasts Christian music and is reported to been giving undocumented workers to ICE in the first Trump regime, to get out of paying them for working at these ramshackle shitholes of "blessed" misery. Trump also sees it as a place to outdo his predecessor, Biden. One of Biden's final acts, was designating Chuckawalla as a National Monument, protecting it from the destruction of land development. Trump, reversed that, drawing protests against it here.

Yet, it is not just him. Tesla, which has dealers here that see protests like those across the world, are seen frequently in The Valley, including the polygonal looking Swastatruck as it is nicknamed. This area contains a lot of wealth and upper Middle Class, who salivate at the mouth

to display their loyalty to their Fascist leaders. Even when those overpriced and over glorified Ford Pintos catch fire here as happened recently on the 10 Freeway, one of the most vital freeways crossing through California and across the United States. They are not dissuaded from supporting Wunderkid NeoNazi Musk, nor Dear Leader. They see themselves as apart of it. That somehow, a high tide is lifting their ships, in the most out of touch clash with reality one can imagine. Often from their gated communities, themselves dens of discrimination and reaction, being overwhelming in their make up, of white racists dependent on the labor of immigrants to upkeep these little petulant micro societies.

We also have Fascist paramilitary members here, including one of the January 6 coup members Trump pardoned. In my time over the years, I have found multiple Three Percenters, Oath Keepers, Proud Boys, NeoNazis in the more old school style, and more here. Most of the Fascists are unaffiliated, more Mass Movement supporters in this Valley not belonging to particular groups like the aforementioned. The many aforementioned gated communities that litter the Valley, are home to a large percentage of them, and almost all the wealthy to upper middle class. The many, many experiences personally within these places, has been an up close and ugly sight with the most everyday, banal forms of bigotry and paranoia, petty tinpot mini tyrants. Wealth in the most sickening of displays. While formal segregation is not yet apart of them, these are majority white spaces and racism is abundant, as mentioned before. It is a however by no means, relegated to just these areas. Outside the gates and walls, still lurks much of the same rotted hearts and filth that wallow in their proud bigotries and paranoias based on crooked fantasies.

Within the city of Desert Hot Springs, one of the "lesser" cities, the cops have announced an expansion of their forces. This is not a large city. It is however, one of the poorest areas, and heavy in a multiracial, multi cultural way. Since the George Floyd Uprisings in 2020, this city's police have been attempting to recruit more into the Desert Hot Springs PD, using trite but slick ad campaigns on TV and online. In a personal capacity, I have seen the construction site behind the station to expand the station in a physical sense. The ground torn away, piles of dirt behind a chain fence with temporary facilities brought in. This includes a new helicopter pad they in their arrogance and glee, announced to the public via Facebook. Something I have witnessed landing behind the station as well.

This chopper pad serves as a jumping off point for heavier, increased patrols with the chopper. Often in tandem with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. The chopper on March 26th, 2025 was systematically going up and down every street in the city. I watched it for an hour, and in an even fashion, went back and forth, got slightly farther away with each pass over every street in the city. This coincided with increased patrols at night with

the drone, run by a drone team. Seen by its blinking green and red lights and erratic movement, and hovering in place with it signifying buzzing in the air. This drone is seen in the day as well, examining streets, backyards, and even following people on a walks from whispers on the street. No home, person, nor any place is safe from this flying electric eye buzzing like plague flies in a mass, watching anything it happens to fly above.

All of this, has increased in a rapid and expansive manner since the election.

Another feature, that almost all cities have now in the Coachella Valley, and even the more barren desert roads in County territory, are FLOCK cameras plaguing the Valley. It's well beyond the stoplight cameras started on this path over the 2010s. The surveillance state has expanded its massive architecture from the West to the East, and everything in between. Money that is desperate in need for a variety of things the people of this valley need, is instead funneled to the boot and fist, to the electric eye of the state. The Fascist state being built should it not be stopped. A Fascist state that was paved by the Liberal one's authoritarianism that worked so hard for this, naive that it could ever become a weapon of something worse in their self righteous arrogance, their all knowing ignorance. Now the sword is pointed firm in a backwards fashion to all those "law abiding" citizens. The ones that needn't worry they were told, if they "weren't doing anything wrong, they didn't need to hide anything".

As the desert sands sweep across the desert, as the sun shines on the lines and creases of the earth below dotted with settlements of fragile humanity, built on the stolen land and genocide of humans that were here before, the grip of the Fascist state tightens. From the wildlife, to the very ecological make up of this place, to the people that inhabit it below the blue sky that casts itself like an overhead ocean. An area unimportant to some, but as important as anywhere. As worthy of defense. As worthy of life. As worthy of liberty and liberation.

A post-script:

I finished this essay, and sat on it. However, on the day I intended to publish this, May 17th, 2025, car bomb was detonated in Downtown Palm Springs at the American Reproductive Centers Clinic. The clinic survived and intends to continue its service, and none of the IVF embryos were destroyed nor were staff present. The only death thus far, seems to be the perpetrator of the bombing. People were injured by shards of glass flying through the air in surrounding buildings that felt the impact of the blast, and surrounding buildings damaged, the clinic itself damaged too. So far state forces from the Palm Springs Police to the Trump led FBI and affiliated agencies are there. This will be a test to see if any pressure can make them

treat what is almost certain to be an attack by a Fascist, as a threat. It is not something to place hopes in, because this is one of their own. That said, it will be revealing regardless. More revealing, is this is another escalation that is only getting worse. This time, in the author's own backyard, perhaps something that could've happened to the author or someone they know, who could've been in the area. I do not know what else to add to this other than, we are in the fight of our lives and the boiler is getting hotter and hotter, closer to combustion.

Stat safe, stay ready, and remember we will not falter to Fascism. We carry the legacy and lives, the sacrifices, of all Antifascists in us, past and present. From the Arditi Del Popolo, to the many in our world today, and in everywhere in between. Named, unnamed. We carry that until our last breaths.

No pasaran.