



ARRESTER outside Nazi headquarters Thursday on the Southwest Side, Irving Lewis (left) is fed from his apartment at 525 W. Deming after a police search failed to reveal any hidden explosive devices Lewis, who told police he planned to set fire to the storefront headquarters, had five Molotov cocktails in his auto when he was arrested. (Sun-Times Photo by Jerry Tomaselli)

Man arrested in plot to fire-bomb Nazi HQ

By Jim Casey

Police arrested a "self-employed problem-solver" Thursday who they said told them he planned to fire-bomb the American Nazi headquarters on the Southwest Side.

Police Sgt. Harold Zeigler quoted Irving Lewis, 28, as saying he planned to set fire to the front of the Nazi storefront headquarters at 2519 W. 71st, and then blow up an auto parked at the rear as the Nazis fled out the back.

Lewis, of 525 W. Deming, was observed by police as he sat in an auto parked in an alley behind the building that serves as a meeting place and residence for the National Socialists Party of America.

ZEIGLER SAID that when police sought to question Lewis they smelled gasoline and asked him to step outside his car. Inside, Zeigler said, police found five Molotov cocktails made out of soft drink bottles, filled with gasoline, two 4-foot logs and a wine bottle filled with gasoline.

Lewis told police his plan was to ignite the gasoline-soaked logs against the front door, hurl the fire-bombs against the front of the building, and then blow up the car at the rear by lighting a paper wick shoved into the full gasoline tank, Zeigler said.

Lewis added that the car belonged to his

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girl friend. He was charged with possession of explosives.

A spokesman for the Nazis said there would be no change in their plans "just because one crazy Jew tried to burn himself up."

Zeigler said Lewis gave his occupation as "a self-employed problem solver for business and industry." He told police he tried to bomb the building "because he was inspired by the TV program Holocaust," Zeigler said.

Leighton also said that Collin and the Nazis would sign a waiver stating the Park District would not be liable for any injuries or damage that might take place.

Collin said he interpreted the clause to mean that his Nazis would be liable for injuries or damage caused by themselves. "I am willing (to sign)," he said. "All I wanted was a fair shake. I'm willing to go halfway,"

Richard J. Troy, attorney for the Park District, said he interpreted the immunity from lawsuits to mean that Collin and the Nazis will be liable. Asked whether the Park District had been used as a pawn in the struggle over a Skokie rally, Troy said: "The Skokie problem has now moved into the City of Chicago."

He said he will evaluate all legal options, including an appeal, before he decides what to do.

Leighton issued the order verbally Tuesday. At that time, Nazi leader Frank Collin said that if the signed order was to his liking he would call off the Nazi rally scheduled for Sunday in heavily Jewish Skokie.

Jewish leaders, who had planned a counter-demonstration of 50,000 persons in Skokie to the Nazi rally, have said they in turn will call off their rally if the Nazis do.