

STATEMENT FROM ALBERT J. SMITH, MAYOR OF SKOKIE...

June 21, 1978

Although recent developments hopefully will result in the cancellation of the planned Nazi demonstration here on Sunday, June 25th, the Village of Skokie must still go ahead with plans to deal with that event, scheduled to take place from 3:00 to 3:30 p.m. Village officials have a sworn obligation to maintain order in Skokie on Sunday...to safeguard the lives and property of its residents. This is an awesome task. Christians and Jews, not only from the Chicago metropolitan area, but also from around the country, will be pouring into our Village on Sunday. Therefore, extraordinary measures to deal with this situation are required.

The purpose of this briefing is to familiarize you as thoroughly as possible with our plans for the handling of this event. I will outline the Village's security measures and community protection preparations as thoroughly as possible for you today. Sgt. Mike Burns, Police Public Information Officer for Skokie, will discuss press credentials.

However, I want to state right now that there are some aspects of our plan for Sunday which, for security reasons, are confidential in nature. Please understand that the circumstances surrounding this event require detailed situation-response planning which must be kept secret if we are to provide our citizens with the fullest measure of protection. At the conclusion of this briefing, both Sgt. Burns and myself will answer as many of your queries as possible.

Reluctant as we are to take the following measures, we have deemed them necessary to deal with this event. First, we have enlisted the aid of a number of cooperating police organizations to assist us. Skokie's police force will be supplemented by representatives of the Cook County Sheriff's Police and police from 12 surrounding suburban communities: Evanston, Glenview, Lincolnwood, Morton Grove, Niles, Wilmette, Winnetka, Northbrook, Northfield, Glencoe, Kenilworth and Wheeling. A total of approximately 300 police officers, including Skokie's 140-man force, will be on hand. The Illinois State Police and Illinois National Guard will have a number of men in Skokie to assist the cooperating community police departments. The National Guard will also make available seven helicopters which will be used for area surveillance.

The Nazi demonstration is restricted to the sidewalk area in front of Village Hall and only that portion of the sidewalk which parallels the building's width. They will not be permitted to assemble in any other location.

Because of the expected crush of people and cars on Sunday, extraordinary police action will be necessary. To provide security, reduce confusion and alleviate congestion in the demonstration area, a perimeter line will be established to prohibit motor vehicle traffic into the Village's Central Business District. Only residents' vehicles will be allowed into this designated security zone bounded by:

Main Street on the North
Howard Street on the South
Skokie Boulevard on the East
Edens Expressway on the West

Residents who must get in or out of this area must enter or exit at one of the following four checkpoints:

Niles Center Road at Main Street or
Gross Point Road at Main Street at the North border
and
Lincoln Avenue at Howard Street or
Niles Center Road at Howard Street to the South

Officers at these checkpoints will search all vehicles for weapons. In addition, residents must show positive identification to pass through these checkpoints into the security zone. Within this restricted vehicle area, there will also be a police line cordoning off several blocks in the immediate vicinity of the Nazi demonstration area. Only the Nazi demonstrators and working press will be allowed into this locale.

Again, I want to emphasize that the Village regrets it must take these extraordinary measures to safeguard the community, but the occasion most certainly warrants these actions. We hope every affected resident will understand the necessity of taking these steps.

Representatives from the Illinois National Guard, State Police, Skokie Police and Village of Skokie will maintain a Command Center at Niles West High School. There will be no access to this location. A press room with typewriters and telephones will be set up at Niles East High School Student Lounge. Entrance to the Lounge is from Mulford Street (between Niles Avenue and Lamont Avenue) at Door #21 (marked Assembly). We will attempt to keep the media up-to-date on a minute-by-minute basis at this location. An official representative of the Village will be present to brief the media as necessary. Contact will be maintained with the Command Center from here.

In addition, Skokie will provide its residents with a telephone information service to answer questions pertaining to the event. These phones are now being installed and a phone number will be announced as soon as possible. This service will begin at 8:00 a.m. Sunday morning and will remain in operation through 6:00 p.m. Sunday evening.

Sgt. Michael Burns will now discuss press credential arrangements for the demonstration.