

Greiman says Nazi ban will pass

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STATE REP. Alan Greiman (D-15th) said he expects the house to approve two bills designed to block a Nazi march in Skokie, after making a few changes in the versions already approved by the state senate.

Greiman told *The LIFE* from Springfield Tuesday, May 16, that both bills probably will be passed out of committees this week and will come up for house votes about next week.

The bills were sent to the house after senate passage May 10 by a margin of 4-1.

If enacted, the new laws could be Skokie's last hope to postpone a demonstration now set for June 25 by the National Socialist (Nazi) Party of America. A federal judge ruled Skokie's own anti-Nazi ordinances uncon-

stitutional and village attorneys are awaiting an appeals court ruling on the matter.

ONE BILL, sponsored originally by State Sen. Howard Carroll (D-15th), would revive a "group libel" law, making it illegal to display in public any sign, slogan, uniform, or symbol that defames any group on the basis of race, creed, or religion.

The second bill, sponsored by State Sen. John Nimrod (R-4th) would prohibit parades and demonstrations that arouse "reasonable apprehensions" of "the use or display of physical force in promoting any political objective." Courts could consider the racial and ethnic characteristics of the neighborhoods involved.

Greiman, who is a leader of the effort to pass the bills in the house, de-

nied reports that Democrats planned to scuttle Nimrod's bill so that Democrat Carroll's bill would be the only one enacted.

Although the Nazi march in Skokie is hardly a "high priority concern" for most legislators, Greiman said support for the bills is widespread and generally non-partisan. No organized opposition to them within the legislature has surfaced, he added.

SOME LAWMAKERS have suggested amending the Carroll and Nimrod bills in the house, in order to make them more acceptable to members with concerns for their constitutionality, Greiman noted.

One of the possible amendments to Carroll's bill would be to limit its scope to cover only written forms of communication, such as symbols and signs.

"The courts still hold oral communication sacrosanct, but labor laws restricting picketing established that not all written forms are fully covered," he said.

When asked whether either bill might also be amended to tie it more directly to a threat of imminent violence, Greiman said, "That's a double-edged sword and I'm not sure we'll touch that one."

The American Civil Liberties union (ACLU) has stated that it probably would challenge the two laws as unconstitutional abridgements of free speech, if they are enacted. The ACLU, which is defending the Nazis in court, has led the fight-against Skokie's efforts to block a march.