

Editor's Mail

How long will Frank Collin hold Skokie as his 'hostage?'

Human emotions are indeed very complex. One minute they are calm and peaceful; the next minute your emotions make you feel as though you are sitting by the side of a bed having just dropped one bedroom slipper to the floor and are waiting for the other one to drop. Right now, my emotions are leaning toward the latter.

I've just seen and heard Frank Collins make his monumental statement that his particular group of neo-Nazis will not march into Skokie on June 25. This statement could not end there, however and Collins had to send the yo-yo down for another ride by adding that there would be a march in Skokie if his rights to march in Marquette

Park were ever denied. My first reaction to this statement was that of a sense of relief because my husband and many of our friends were going to be part of the counterdemonstration, and while they would be well protected, I still feared for their safety. When the statement sank in, this sense of relief turned to disgust as I realized that once again this human affront to the meaning of free speech was once again using our village as a lever or hostage to get what he wanted.

Because I was fortunate enough to have been born in the United States, I never saw first hand the horrors Jews were made to suffer at the hands of Hitler and his storm troopers. While I

did encounter some anti-semitism while growing up in Chicago, I never saw members of my family killed because we were Jewish. I have been fortunate in that no one in my family or husband's family has ever been in the position of being blackmailed. I have felt a sense of apprehension because many friends were held hostage by a group of terrorists in Washington, DC. about 2 years ago. Then as now I felt a great deal of fear for their safety. The government in Washington, like the government here in Skokie, did not give in to the terrorists demands and ultimately, all who were held were released. Other than this incident, I've never had to feel the anxiety one feels

when people they care about face a potentially dangerous situation because they were Jewish or black or because they were lucky enough to have survived a time that should have never happened or because they lived and/or worked in a community that has a large population of Jews residing there. I've been fortunate in that I've never had to feel oppressed or in essence held for ransom until Frank Collins and his band decided to use this village as a means to get what he wanted at any cost.

Hurray, June 25 has been cancelled! But, what about July 9 in Marquette park in Chicago? And if, for some reason, Collins cannot get into Marquette

park is it back to Skokie again? According to Collins, "Yes"! WHERE IS THIS MERRY-GO-ROUND GOING TO END? How long must decent, peace loving people have to endure this affront to the rights of everyone to freedom to worship as they believe and be created equal regardless of the color of their skin.

One cannot help but wonder just how far this small band of hate mongers would have gotten if the TV, radio and newspaper media would not have played this march up so much. We cannot help but wonder why the Chicago park district suddenly changed their policy of allowing Collins and this band to march in Marquette as he had done in the past. One cannot help but feel outrage about the fact that this particular group of approximately 20 could literally hold a normally quiet community for ransom and blackmail a government by using the First Amendment as its ransom note. One cannot help but feel gratitude and appreciation for the Skokie village officials and law enforcement officials who gave 160% of their time and efforts to try and bring this game of cat and mouse to a hopefully peaceful conclusion.

If any good has resulted from this entire business, it is the brotherhood,

camaraderie or for lack of a better word solidarity shown by the churches and synagogues not only here but all over the world. It is this person's opinion that brotherhood has taken a new meaning and will be felt throughout the year and not for one week during the year. And while the Frank Collins of this world continue to spew hate and "White Power," those of us who want peace can continue to speak of brotherhood and believe in God any way we choose.

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Skokie