

Anti-Nazi groups hedge on march plans

By Bob Olmstead
and Harry Golden Jr.

A coalition of 42 civil rights, religious and

community groups condemned nazism Thursday but could not agree on whether to counter-demonstrate at a Nazi rally scheduled Sunday in Marquette Park.

At a press conference in the Pick-Congress Hotel, the coalition endorsed a statement pledging "to work together on an on-going basis to see the end of nazism and related evils throughout the Chicago area."

In individual statements, representatives of the groups took positions ranging from advocating a counter-demonstration even if city and park permits are not granted to an appeal for everyone to stay home and ignore Frank Collin's Nazis.

BILL WATKINS, a spokesman for some groups supporting a march, said they "are still committed to a demonstration" which will assemble at 71st and Hamilton at noon and then march to Marquette Park.

Said Watkins:

"We would like to ask the following question to the people here today: Why is there a different agenda for Marquette Park than there was for Skokie? It appears that the West Englewood-Marquette Park community has been abandoned.

"We are appealing to the 100 leaders who stood so firm in Skokie to stand with us today."

The Nazis had planned a rally in Skokie on June 25, but canceled it after a federal court judge ruled that the Chicago Park District must allow them to rally in Mar-

quette Park without posting an insurance bond. A coalition of anti-Nazi groups had planned a massive counter-demonstration in Skokie.

Among those who said they would take part in the counter-demonstration at Marquette park were spokesmen for Operation PUSH and the South Side branch of the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People.

A spokesman for the Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation said, "There 'is no more support for the Nazis and nazism in Marquette Park than there is in Skokie." However, he pleaded, "If the rally does have to take place, we appeal on behalf of the children, the old people, the good people of Marquette Park, leave it to the Nazis.

"Do not play into their-hands and make it a battleground for crazies."

Others said they would hold meetings Sunday afternoon outside of Marquette Park.

Leon Finney, spokesman for The Woodlawn Organization, said his group and others were trying to find an available nearby church to hold a meeting deploring nazism.

MEANWHILE, Mayor Bilandic at a press conference at City Hall expressed hope that the U.S. Supreme Court would step in and block the Nazi rally in Marquette Park.

The Park District, he said, is asking the high court to delay the march until an appeal on the constitutional question of the insurance bond is heard.

The mayor added that he is in constant communication with Police Supt. James O. O'Grady on preparations for the rally.