

# Hamlin quitting as ACLU leader after Nazi case

By Bob Olmstead

David M. Hamlin, who headed the Illinois division of the American Civil Liberties Union during its membership crisis prompted by support of American Nazis, is resigning effective Oct. 15.

Hamlin, 33, said, "I am leaving of my own free will."

He said he intends to "arrange not to have a job for a while" so he can spend time writing about "a variety of things that intrigue me," including the ACLU's controversial legal battle to enable Frank Collin's National Socialist Party of America to rally in heavily Jewish Skokie.

Hamlin, who is not a lawyer, said his position has had the unwavering support of the state ACLU's board of directors during a time when helping the Nazis cost it up to 25 per cent of its membership.

The ordeal, he said, "cer-

tainly took its toll. Part of my desire to resign has to do with the fatigue of the past 18 months. However, I certainly am not disenchanted over anything to do with my job or the path the ACLU took."

In the first two weeks after the ACLU announced its legal representation of the Nazis, Hamlin said, he answered a steady stream of calls by angry members, followed by



DAVID M. HAMLIN

"hundreds and hundreds of letters of resignation."

"The ACLU leadership understood, but a lot of ACLU members disagreed with the position," he said. "And the public, at least at first, disagreed that the Nazis had rights."