

# Mikva opposes march

By ROBERT FEDER  
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CONG. ABNER Mikva (D-10th) said

he hopes his support of Skokie's efforts to keep Nazis from marching in the village won't cost him the support of his

## Mikva's Nazi position

*HERE IS THE text of the statement released by Cong. Abner Mikva (D-10th) Monday, March 27, on the planned Nazi march in Skokie:*

The recent events involving efforts by a group of Nazis to march in Skokie have traumatized a substantial segment of the Skokie community. The survivors of the Holocaust now living in Skokie, and they are a substantial number of people, have been subjected to the prospect of an invasion by Nazi storm-troopers in brown shirts and swastikas, a scene all too reminiscent of the indescribable terror unleashed on them and their families two generations ago.

The survivors of Nazi Germany are not the only ones who feel the terror or the deep sense of revulsion that the Nazis represent. In a real sense, we are all survivors of Nazism, and the Nazi symbols of hate and destruction recall a nightmare that millions of other Americans share.

I do not want the Nazis to march in Skokie.

The courts have ruled on many occasions that local governments can place limits on where and when groups can assemble and speak. In many instances, the Supreme Court has upheld these limits as compatible with the constitution.

HOWEVER, THE COURTS not too long ago upheld local ordinances which have banned the Ku Klux Klan from marching in their white sheets and hats, the very kind of symbols that served to terrorize and deeply offend a community as do the Nazi symbols. I

continue to hope that the courts will eventually rule that the constitution does not require a permit to the Nazis to march in Skokie.

I, along with others, have urged Mayor (Albert) Smith of Skokie to pursue every judicial remedy available in this regard. I have also written to Thomas Sullivan, our U.S. attorney, urging him to examine the relevant federal statutes that might govern the Nazis and their proposed march, including the Voorhis act and others.

Next month, between April 16th and the 23rd I will participate in a vigil that will be held in Skokie as a memorial to the millions of Jews and non-Jews alike who lost their lives at the hands of the Nazis before and during World War II.

I hope the vigil will also set the tone for a peaceful counter-event that should be held if, after all of the judicial remedies are exhausted, the courts finally rule that the Nazis have the right to march in Skokie.

I WILL CONTINUE to work with community groups throughout the Chicago area to help plan such an event as a peaceful one, an event that not only reminds anyone who has forgotten about the madness and evil of Nazism, but an event that reaffirms our commitment to the ideals for which we have struggled, and which we cherish and want to preserve for our children and grandchildren.

These are ideals and values that we must never take for granted, and they are still our best and only weapons for effectively combating the venom of the Nazis.

liberal friends.

Mikva called a press conference Monday, March 27, in Skokie, specifically to break his long silence on the planned Nazi demonstration and he came down clearly on the side of Skokie.

Urging Skokie Mayor Albert Smith "to pursue every judicial remedy" to keep the National Socialist Party of America from marching, Mikva said the Nazis' purpose was not "to exercise free speech, but to terrorize residents."

Mikva also pledged to participate in a vigil next month organized by the Niles Township Democratic organization as a memorial to the victims of Nazism in World War II.

WHEN ASKED why he didn't take a stand on the issue earlier, Mikva said he feared giving the Nazi group publicity and accelerating their notoriety. He had been under intense pressure from constituents on both sides of the issue to speak out.

Despite the belief of some liberal Mikva supporters that the Nazis do have a constitutional right to march, the congressman said he hopes his own position won't cost him liberal backing. "I hope this isn't a political issue," he said.

"Nobody wants to trample on the First amendment," he said, adding that the issue involves "a delicate balancing" of constitutional rights.

HOWEVER, MIKVA'S position immediately came under fire from Franklyn Haiman, national secretary of the American Civil Liberties union (ACLU) and a professor and First amendment expert at Northwestern university.

Haiman, who has actively supported Mikva in his campaigns, attended the press conference Monday as an observ-

er to hear Mikva read his statement first-hand.

The ACLU is defending in court the Nazis' right to march in Skokie. Mikva is a member and former Illinois board member of the organization, Haiman said.

"Although I love Ab and I still support him, I disagree with him," Haiman said after hearing Mikva's statement.

Mikva based his decision that the courts may side with Skokie in preventing the Nazi march on past rulings which allow local governments to regulate free speech in some instances. He also compared the Nazis marching in their uniforms to Ku Klux Klan members terrorizing Southern towns in white sheets and hoods.

BUT HAIMAN said the courts have upheld regulations on free speech "only when it has to do with things like the volume of sound trucks, rush-hour jam ups, and scheduling conflicts. It has never been acceptable to ban speech and I don't think that's a very formidable argument."

Mikva's analogy to hooded Klansmen also "doesn't hold water," Haiman said, because the 1920s laws were upheld by courts only because wearing white sheets and hoods concealed identities.

"If you wear a mask, the courts said, you may be hiding while committing a crime. But here, the Nazis will not be wearing masks over their faces, so his comparison doesn't hold water," he added.

The Nazi demonstration, which had been planned for next month, has been postponed indefinitely, thanks to a 45-day stay issued by a federal judge March 18. The stay delayed when his earlier order allowing the march would take effect.



CONG. ABNER MIKVA (D-10th): "I do not want the Nazis to march in Skokie."