

Valley Nazis Stir Concern of Veterans, Civic Groups

Organizations in Area Pledge to Fight Hate

BY BERT MANN
Times Staff Writer

How far should a democratic society go in tolerating hatemongers and organized groups bent on the destruction of liberty?

That is the question confronting a number of San Gabriel Valley veterans organizations, clubs and officials in cities where intolerant groups have focused their hate campaigns.

Concerned over the activities of the American Nazi Party in the Valley, the West Covina Elks Club recently co-sponsored with the La Puente Veterans of Foreign Wars a public meeting protesting the party's activities.

Represented were such West Covina organizations as the Elks, Lions, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Jewish War Veterans, Disabled American Veterans, American Veterans, Womens' Club, Emblem Club and Catholic War Veterans. Also the Lions Clubs in Anaheim and Alhambra have lent support. Others include the Covina Methodist Women's Society, Covina Chamber of Commerce, Glendora Elks and the VFW in La Puente.

The image of a little man with a mustache on a Munich street corner in 1923 still haunts veterans who fought a long war to correct his evils.

And despite the fact that the American Nazi Party apparently has few members in the Valley, the protest movement started with the memory that Hitler originally had only a few followers but within 15 years became the dictator of the German nation.

National Problem

In Glendale the American Nazi Party has attempted under its self-styled West Coast fuehrer, Ralph Forbes, to set up a headquarters. City Manager Eugene Perkins has had first hand experience with the Nazis. They derisively "crowned" him "King Gene the First."

Perkins told the West Covina meeting he was pleased to discuss "the Nazi problem" because "it is not just a Glendale problem or a California problem, it is a national problem."

Geoffrey M. Markell, loyal knight of West Covina Elks Lodge No. 1996, which has spearheaded a protest movement against the Nazis, is chairman of "The Civic Mind-Patriotic Citizens."

This group, according to Markell, is made up of citizens, service clubs, veterans clubs, and fraternal organizations from throughout the San Gabriel Valley.

Markell's group was formed after the Nazis stepped up picketing campaigns in Los Angeles and Glendale and served notice that they also would become active in West Covina.

Legal Knots

Markell says the Nazi problem has been tossed into the lap of local organizations because of the apparent inability of county or state government agencies to act.

He particularly referred to a report by County Counsel Harold Kennedy to the Board of Supervisors in which he pointed out that the U.S. Supreme Court decisions "have sharply curtailed the effectiveness of government's efforts to protect itself. . . ."

The report also noted that "Congress already has occupied the legislative field as regards the controlling of subversive activities directed against the United States, while the State of California in its turn has preempted this field to the exclusion of the county and municipalities. . . ."

Kennedy said in effect that until there is judicial

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READY FOR BATTLE — Geoffrey Markell (left) chairman of West Covina Elks Lodge's social and community welfare committee, and Enrico Salvo, head of lodge, look over literature supposedly put out by American Nazi Party. Lodge plans information campaign on dangers of Nazi party to public.

Times photo

NAZI THREAT

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clarification by the Supreme Court of the doctrine of the Communist Party case regarding its application to local registration laws, "there appears to be little possibility that the state could enforce the registration provisions of the state act against the Nazi Party."

Meanwhile Perkins says the Nazis are pursuing their objectives by a routine of quiet persuasion, firm demands, threats of picketing, threats of handbill attack, actual picketing and distribution of abusive and threatening handbills.

Primarily because of Perkins' insistence on the imposition of city ordinances, the Nazi Party so far has been unsuccessful in establishing a headquarters in a Glendale residence.

Perkins voiced concern at the apparent apathy toward the presence of the Nazis in his city.

He conceded that practically every civic club and organization in the city had unanimously adopted strong resolutions of protest condemning the Nazi objectives, but

beyond that, he adds, "they are watching and waiting."

Perkins disagrees with those who say the Nazis should be ignored and they will go away. "The parading of uniformed Nazis, the publishing and dissemination of tirades of hate by radicals and extremists make it evident that our conflict with these evil forces must at long last be recognized," he said.

The City of Glendale has received hundreds of letters and telegrams with reference to the Nazis locating there. Most of them expressed shock and dismay, urging protests against the Nazis. A few, mostly unsigned or with fictitious names, supported the Nazi cause.

Letters supporting the Nazis were laced with anti-Semitic and anti-Negro diatribes.

But in a society where freedom of speech is sacrosanct, it is difficult to combat a hate group without descending to undemocratic methods. This provides groups such as the Nazis their greatest protection.

But Perkins believes that effective and lasting action is possible within a legal framework, provided there is proper investigation at the federal and state levels, followed by legislative action.

On the local level, Perkins has volunteered his services in an effort to alert the public to what he believes are the "vicious objectives of Nazism."

Beyond this the Glendale city manager believes the most beneficial of endeavors is to promote tolerance of understanding among all persons with an emphasis on true patriotism "rather than phony flag-waving," and "a true brotherhood of men, without exceptions and reservations as to creed or color."

La Puente VFW Commander Paul Green says veterans keenly remember that 293,986 men gave their lives

fighting the Nazi movement and that 6,026,000 Jews were slaughtered by the Nazis.

Green says his group "will do everything within the law to stop the progress of the American Nazi Party."

The West Covina City Council also has gone on record as opposed to the Nazi group and Congressman Ronald Brooks Cameron has committed himself to urging the focus of a Congressional inquiry on Nazism.

Arthur (Bud) Kaufherer, of American Legion Post 790 in West Covina says the San Gabriel Valley has nearly one million people of all faiths, and races. "Here we live in peace, brotherhood and harmony," he said. "Let the Nazis look elsewhere for a hate nest. We don't want them here and will fight as long and as hard as necessary to keep them out of our communities."