

Neo-Nazi group a no-show in nation's capital

District of Columbia's police department wants to sue for expenses

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Special to Sentinel-Voice

(NNPA) — The District of Columbia's Police Chief (DCPD) Charles Ramsey is urging the city to file a lawsuit against Davis Wolfgang Hawke, the 20-year-old leader of the American Nationalist Party, also known as the Knights of Freedom (KOF), for all expenses incurred by the proposed march. Reports put the figure at more than one million dollars.

Commander Michael Radzilowski of the DCPD would not comment on the exact number of police deployed on Aug. 7 but did confirm that the Civil Disturbing Officers Riot Formation Team, U.S. Park Police, Secret Service and Federal Protective Service agents were all present in riot gear in preparation for the event.

It is estimated that there were 1,450 uniformed police officers and 1,000 regular duty officers prepared to protect bystanders, anti-protesters and neo-Nazi marchers. Out of the

predicted 150 to 300 members scheduled to attend the rally, only four of their members actually showed up.

Ramsey wants Hawke, a South Carolina College student, and his followers to foot the cost of policing the march.

In addition to manpower, a staging area and fencing were also erected. Police officers were assigned to accompany the Knights of Freedom marchers from James Monroe Park along the five-block route to Lafayette Square in front of the White House where the "anti-government protest" was to have taken place. The matter has now been turned over to the Contract Office of D.C.'s Corporation Counsel. Spokesman Robert Rigsby said he emphasizes with Ramsey, but he doesn't feel a lawsuit would be in the best interest of the city.

"After consultation with the Chief of Police and the Mayor [Anthony Williams], I recommended to the Mayor that the city not pursue legal action against the organizers. The Mayor accepted this recommendation," Rigsby said.

"As evidenced by the dismal attendance at the march, this

group has few followers and little or no organizational strength. A lawsuit would give added and unnecessary publicity to a group of individuals whose views are deeply offensive and hurtful, and would consume taxpayers' dollars with no reasonable chance of collecting," he said.

Despite their no-show, Radzilowski said that KOF could re-apply for a march permit in the future.

This is not the first time the nation's capital has been the site of protest by a hate group. In 1990, a Ku Klux Klan (KKK) rally turned violent when anti-protestors began hurling rocks and bottles at marchers and destroying police blockades.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center's Militia Task Force, which tracks KKK and neo-Nazi activity across the country, Hawke started KOF in August 1996 with only 20 members. But, through access to the Internet that number has increased to between 100 and 300.

The Task Force estimates that there are more than 400 known hate groups in the United States.

Neo-Nazis plan Labor Day march in Idaho

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — A white-supremacist group that nurtured Buford O. Furrow Jr.'s anti-Semitism before he attacked a Jewish community center plans to march Sept. 4 in nearby Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, despite security concerns.

Coeur d'Alene cannot forbid the parade, but "I am personally hoping no one comes and watches the march," City Council President Nancy Sue Wallace said Friday.

Aryan Nations founder Richard Butler applied for a city permit in July and got approval last week for a march on Sept. 4 with "50 to 80 followers, plus one automobile and one dog."

Furrow, 37, a former member of the Aryan Nation's security guards, was charged with murder in the shooting death of a postal worker and with the attempted murder of five at a Jewish community center in Los Angeles on Tuesday.

Law enforcement agencies met Thursday to discuss security at the parade in light of the shootings, said Capt. Ben Wolfinger of the Kootenai County (Idaho) Sheriff's Department.

"Obviously, this is going to become a cause for more demonstrators and it will rally the Aryans," Wolfinger said.

Calls to Butler's compound near Hayden Lake, Idaho, on Friday got only busy signals.

Among those who plan a

counterdemonstration during the Sept. 4 march is Irv Rubin of the Jewish Defense League.

He and 200 others scuffled with about 80 Aryan Nations members and supporters in a Coeur d'Alene park on July 3, when a planned march was canceled.

A July 10 march by the neo-Nazi group was cut short by local human-rights activists who blocked the parade route.

Crime

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said.

Two would enter a store, with one acting as lookout and the other handling the cashier, Stephens said. A third was the getaway driver, he said.

"The one that was in front of me kept telling me I had two minutes to hand over the cash or she was going to shoot me," said Cynthia Woodard, a clerk at a convenience store. "I was so nervous I threw the money over the bag they held out in front of me."

Police were tipped off when the girls began bragging, Stephens said.

"It was brought to our attention that they were going to parties, really bragging up a storm," he said.

The girls are free on bond and face a hearing Sept. 2.

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