

WHAT TO DO WHEN ANTISEMITIC BULLIES COME TO TOWN

Imagine you live in a rural community and a neo-Nazi website puts your name, picture, pictures of your children, phone numbers, address, email and social media information on its website, encouraging white supremacists to “TAKE ACTION” and “Hit Em Up?”

The “Daily Stormer” website, which mimics the Nazi paper Der Sturmer’s swastikas, caricatures of Jews, and pictures of Hitler, did just that a few weeks ago, targeting Jewish residents of Whitefish, Montana.

How frightened would you be?

Imagine you then received calls, emails, texts and tweets, saying that justice would be served by hanging “filthy jews” from “the nearest lamp post.” Or being told to “Go choke on a shotgun and die . . . You would all be of greater worth to society as human fertilizer than as citizens.”

Criticized, Daily Stormer’s head Andrew Anglin doubled down. He said his group is “continuing our barrage against the criminal Jews of Whitefish [Montana]. . . . We are planning an armed protest in Whitefish . . . we can easily march through the center of town carrying high-powered rifles.”

Why the focus on Whitefish? The human rights groups, in which some local Jews are active, have raised concerns about white supremacist Richard Spencer, whose own white supremacist organization – the National Policy Institute – is based out of his mother’s home there. You may recall Spencer as the white supremacist who convened a conference after Donald Trump’s election, where chants of “Hail Trump” were heard, and Nazi salutes given.

After the threats were reported, and the local and statewide human rights groups -- [Love Lives Here](#) and the [Montana Human Rights Network](#) – defended the targeted Jews, the Stormer expanded its attacks and threatened these groups too.

What is the responsibility of the rest of us, to stop this antisemitic bullying?

History is instructive.

In 1992 a white supremacist group in Billings, Montana threw a brick through the bedroom window of a Jewish boy, who had displayed a picture of a menorah. The local human rights community, joined by the police chief, called on everyone to show the haters that their intimidation backfired. The Billings newspaper printed a page with a menorah, encouraging residents to put it up on their windows. When I asked the police chief how he could persuade people to put their families at risk by doing so, he said the more people who displayed the

menorahs, the lower the risk to any individual family, and the more likely the hate group would back down, given the strong community reaction.

A few years later a Montana white supremacist group called the Freemen threatened public officials who rejected the group's assertions that, as white men, they were "sovereign citizens," exempt from laws (like paying taxes and having a driver's license). Like the situation facing Jews in Whitefish today, children of public officials were threatened. Local Judge Martha Bethel, a target of death threats, sometimes sent her kids out of town. When they were home they heeded law enforcement's advice about which rooms of their house were the safest to sleep in – to survive a barrage of bullets.

No one should have to live this way.

Now, neo-Nazis want to march through town, with "high-powered rifles." Anglin says he will be "busing in skinheads from the Bay Area" for this event, possibly during the second week of January. While he says he wants no violence, according to the [Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights](#), his assertion shouldn't be believed. The groups with which Anglin appears closest have been involved in violent episodes (in some cases, mixing it up with anti-racist extremists who had tried to stop the racists from holding rallies). On June 27, 2016 Anglin wrote an article entitled "Battle of Sacramento: The First Major Battle of the Race War Ended in a Decisive Victory for Whites." He wrote, "This war has only just begun. Many more battles lie ahead. Go to the gym, train in martial arts, train to use weapons. The future depends on each one you preparing for what's coming."

The likelihood, given the empowerment many white supremacist groups feel from Donald Trump's election, is that racist and antisemitic thuggery will escalate. Whether that occurs depends not just on the people in Whitefish, but what the rest of us do.

Based on years of experience and successful strategies from other communities, the Justus & Karin Rosenberg Foundation is encouraging human rights supporters everywhere to make lemonade out of lemons. The "Project Lemonade" approach exacts a cost for hatred: if the white supremacists march, they'll be [raising money for things they detest](#).

Here's how it works. People promise to donate money to this special fund, tied how many minutes the white supremacists march. The money raised would be used locally for increased security for Jews and Jewish institutions, new programs to promote human rights and defeat hatred, educational events about the danger of white supremacy, and community and police training on how best to handle a hate incident. The Montana Human Rights Network is well-established organization that is ready to [take these pledges](#) and distribute any donations, to help the community and stop the white supremacists.

Our hope is that no money will have to be collected; that the announcement of the pledges – and the realization that if the white supremacists march they'll be raising funds for purposes they abhor – will be enough to stop them. The more people who sign up to donate to this cause,

the less likely the good people of Whitefish will continue being threatened by antisemitic bullies, and the less likely Anglin's group, or others like it, will harass people in other towns.

Justus Rosenberg – the president of the small Foundation I direct – is the last surviving member of the group that rescued artists and intellectuals from the Nazis in 1940-41. We are proud to make the first pledge to MHRN's [Project Lemonade](#) effort. Our initial pledge is \$10 for every minute of the march, up to \$2,500.

We encourage others who can't sleep well, knowing Jews and human rights activists are fearing being attacked in their homes by organized neo-Nazis, to join us in this effort. Antisemitic bullies can be stopped, but it is up to us all to stop them.

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January 2, 2017