

Neo-Nazis flee Lincoln Heights, Ohio after being confronted by local residents

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On Friday, February 7, a group of neo-Nazis, protected by local police, briefly took over an overpass on Interstate 75 in Lincoln Heights, Ohio, just outside of Cincinnati. The Nazis waved black and red flags adorned with swastikas and dropped a banner that featured a *totenkopf* (death head) skull and the phrase “America for the white man.”

It appears many of the neo-Nazis are part of a group called “The Hate Club 1488.” Emboldened by the election of fascist Donald Trump, members of the same group harassed and assaulted residents of Columbus, Ohio, last November following the election.

As was the case less than four months ago, local police did nothing to prevent the neo-Nazis from harassing and intimidating passersby. Residents on the way home from work and school reported that the Nazis chanted racial slurs and threatened violence. Eric Ruffin, a local resident, filmed the Nazis with a rifle and told the local ABC news station that they called him a “n*gger.”

While police did nothing to stop the Nazis from threatening residents, less than an hour after the fascists gathered on the overpass a much larger group of Lincoln Heights residents came to the bridge to confront the human dust. Video posted on social media shows the police clearly trying to protect the fascists from outraged residents.

In one video a resident is heard saying that the Nazis “can die today. They came to wrong hood with that sh*t.” Several outraged locals also demanded that the police stop protecting the Nazis and order them to leave.

Eventually more than 100 local residents came to confront the Nazis. As residents came closer to the Nazis, the police attempted to protect the fascists and tried to get the residents to disperse. Instead, residents

broke through the police line and forced the fascists to flee.

Video taken by the fascists shortly thereafter shows them piled into the back of a U-Haul trailer, while a few police protect them from the crowd. While in the back of the trailer, the Nazis continued to shout racial slurs as police urged them to leave. Before leaving, one fascist asked the police to retrieve one of their Nazi flags that had been confiscated by the community.

The flag was not returned. Instead, local residents lit it on fire. In a video showing the flag burning as residents stomp and spit on it, one is heard saying, “Hitler been dead. Y’all living in the ’40s.”

In a message to the Nazis not to return, after the flag was reduced to a charred crisp, one resident used bullets to spell out “LH” for Lincoln Heights.

The Nazis specifically chose to hold their demonstration in Lincoln Heights because of its large African American population and history of resistance.

Lincoln Heights was established in the early 1920s as an enclave for black people who were barred from owning property in the suburbs of Cincinnati due to racist redlining laws. Many former slaves and their descendants moved North to work at companies such as the Tennessee Fertilizer company and the Wright Aeronautical Plant, which would later become General Electric Aviation.

The first residents of Lincoln Heights did not have access to utilities, paved roads or sidewalks. There were no initial plans for future stores, schools or parks. No library, fire department or police station was established for over 20 years.

The city of Lincoln Heights did not become formally incorporated until 1947. Once it did, it became one of the largest predominately African American cities in

the US. At its height, nearly 8,000 people, virtually all African American, lived in the city. Scholar Carl Westmoreland, songwriters and performers the Isley Brothers, and poet Nikki Giovanni were born and raised in Lincoln Heights.

Today, Lincoln Heights is a shell of its former self. When the city was incorporated, it included none of the industries where workers labored, kneecapping any potential tax revenues. Following the postwar boom, Lincoln Heights, like so many towns in the industrial Midwest, began losing population and property values.

In 2014, the town's police and fire departments shut down. As of today, less than 4,000 people live in the town.

In an interview following the Nazi provocation with the local ABC affiliate, WCPO, Lincoln Heights resident Charlene Evans stated defiantly, "In this neighborhood, we do stand for something. This here turf is golden soil, and it won't be tarnished with things like that."

Syretha Brown, another resident of Lincoln Heights, noted the role of the police in protecting the Nazis, saying, "Nobody is coming to save us." Referring to the cops, she said, "They are allowing the Nazis in here."

Unsurprisingly, despite the fact that it appears this is the same group that assaulted residents in Columbus last November, police refused to arrest a single Nazi for threatening residents while brandishing firearms. Nor did the police cite the Nazis for using a U-Haul to illegally transport themselves.

In a statement issued after the Nazis fled, Evendale Police Chief Tim Holloway claimed the protest "while very offensive, was not unlawful." Holloway noted that after the "protesters" (Nazis) left, "No further action was taken by the Evendale Police Department."



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