

Huge Rallies Across the U.S. to Condemn Neo-Nazi Violence



Washington, August 14 (RHC)-- Thousands of people rallied in cities across the United States on Sunday to protest deadly violence by a mob of Ku Klux Klan members and neo-Nazis during a rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, on Saturday.

A 20-year-old Nazi sympathizer killed one anti-racist activist and injured more than a dozen others when he intentionally drove his car through a crowd of people protesting against the KKK and neo-Nazis, who were rallying to oppose Charlottesville's plan to remove a monument of Confederate General Robert E. Lee from a downtown public park.

On Sunday, thousands poured into the streets of Seattle, Denver, Baltimore, Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Dallas, Washington, D.C., Miami and in Charlottesville, Virginia, to protest white supremacist violence and mourn the death of 32-year-old Heather Heyer, who was killed in the attack.

At least three people were arrested at the protest in New York City. Across the country, many of the protesters also condemned the Trump administration for its ties to far-right and white supremacist figures and President Trump's refusal to immediately denounce the neo-Nazis and KKK members for carrying out the deadly violence.

The white supremacist violence in Charlottesville began on Friday night, as thousands of neo-Nazis, KKK

members and other white nationalists began descending on the city of Charlottesville to participate in the "Unite the Right" rally. Hundreds of white men and women bearing torches marched on the University of Virginia campus and surrounded the statue of Thomas Jefferson on Friday night, chanting "You will not replace us" and "White lives matter."

Thousands of counter-protesters also descended on Charlottesville over the weekend, including clergy, students, Black Lives Matter activists, and protesters with the antifascist movement known as "antifa."

On Saturday morning, more than 1,000 white supremacists marched to the public park, recently renamed Emancipation Park, which is home to the statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Many were carrying Nazi flags and other white supremacist paraphernalia, wore body armor and carried assault rifles and pistols. They were met by the thousands of anti-racist counter-demonstrators. Witnesses report police did little to intervene, even as fights broke out.

Around 1:45 p.m., a man named James Alex Fields, who had been rallying with the white supremacists earlier in the day, drove his Dodge Charger into a crowd of counter-demonstrators and then peeled away in reverse in what many are calling an act of terrorism.

A local paralegal named Heather Heyer was killed in the attack, and at least 19 others were injured. Heyer had repeatedly championed civil rights issues on social media. Her Facebook cover read: "If you're not outraged, you're not paying attention."

One of James Alex Fields's high school teachers says he was obsessed with Adolf Hitler and Nazi military history and showed clear Nazi sympathies that the teacher tried unsuccessfully to steer him away from. Fields has been charged with one count of second-degree murder and is slated to be arraigned today.

Two state troopers, Pilot Lt. H. Jay Cullen and Trooper-Pilot Berke M.M. Bates, also died Saturday, when their helicopter crashed en route to the scene of the violence.

Photographs and videos also show white supremacists beating other counter-demonstrators, including a young African-American protester named De'Andre Harris. He said, "They were trying to kill me out there. The police didn't budge, and I was getting beat to a pulp."

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