Unfortunate news out of Illinois regarding the five antifa arrested for their part in the melee at a white supremacist meeting back in May. We helped organize the benefit show for them in Philadelphia, and we will continue to support them at this time as well.

One People's Project

BRIDGEVIEW, IL – The Tinley Park 5, a group of men arrested charged with attacking a group of white supremacists at a family restaurant, will serve prison terms ranging from 3 ½ to 6 years after pleading guilty to three counts of armed violence, according to press reports.

The courtroom was packed as the five defendants accepted the plea deal and were handed their sentences. They will be eligible for parole when they serve half their respective sentences, and the 233 days they have already served will be applied to their time. They decided not to pursue a trial after considering that they would still spend another year in jail until the trial even started. “They want to resolve it today. They don’t want this to go on any more,” said Bridgeview attorney James Fennerty, who represented one of the Tinley Park 5.

34 other criminal counts were dropped due to the plea agreement.

On May 19, a protest turned into a scuffle between antifa and attendees of the 5th annual White Nationalist Economic Summit and Illinois White Nationalist Meet-and-Greet put on in Tinley

Park, IL by an organization called the Illinois European Heritage Association. The Tinley Park 5 were arrested as they tried to leave the parking lot of the Ashford House Restaurant where the event was held. Police also arrested two of the white supremacist meet-and-greet attendees on unrelated charges. Steven Speers of Grand Forks, North Dakota was arrested on an outstanding warrant in Dallas, Texas for possession of child pornography and Francis Gilroy of West Palm Beach, Florida, who goes by the screen name "Copperhead" on the neo-Nazi website Stormfront, which is also based in West Palm Beach was charged with unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon. Speers, who was extradited to Texas, reportedly facing trial on Jan. 29 in Dallas, TX, and Gilroy, who in October pushed in court to suppress his arrest, reportedly had a hearing on Dec. 13. At press time, there is no confirmation to internet rumors that his charges were indeed dropped.

In an effort to save face, the white supremacists and their supporters have developed a narrative solely based on Speers' generic anarchist tattoo and videos showing him rapping in front of his computer that says that he was in truth a mole sent in by their enemies. There is no other evidence to suggest that Speers had any connection with antifa groups or shares any of anti-fascist ideals.

Unlike the meet-and-greet attendees, who have tried in vain to curry sympathy as "victims", the Tinley Park 5 have received international support over the past seven months. A website , Facebook page and Twitter account has been built in support of them and antifa in Philadelphia, PA held a Show of Unity to raise funds for them last October. When news of their sentencing came out, the support continued, one tweet from the UK reading "Sounds like the court jailed exactly the wrong people."

Prosecutors believe that at least 13 others were involved in the melee, but may never be found. "We don't know anything about those 13 other people, or if the state's attorney's office is still investigating them, said attorney Brian Barrido, who represented another defendant. "Do I feel like justice was done today? Absolutely not. They got the five they wanted and they'll close this case out. You'll never hear about it again."