



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D.C. 20535

June 28, 2005

MR RUSS KICK

Subject: THE KU KLUX KLAN/SEC I AND SEC II/MONOGRAPH

FOIPA No. 1012762- 000

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Section 552a

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**Federal Bureau of Investigation**

**Freedom of Information / Privacy Acts**

**Release**

**Subject:** *The Ku Klux Klan / Sec. I and Sec. II / Monograph*

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See additional information which follows.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Hardy", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David M. Hardy  
Section Chief  
Record/Information  
Dissemination Section  
Records Management Division

Enclosure(2)

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# THE KU KLUX KLAN

## Section I

1865 -- 1944

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100-1172-272

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**THE KU KLUX KLAN**

**SECTION I**

**1865 - 1944**

**(Not for Dissemination Outside the Bureau)**

**July, 1957**

**Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice  
John Edgar Hoover, Director**

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## PREFACE

The Ku Klux Klan is once again receiving public attention. This time, the problem of integration has been the occasion. In order to better understand the Ku Klux Klan of today, a review of Klan activities during other periods of United States history will be helpful. Usually, it has been during periods of social unrest that the Klan and similar organizations have risen to their greatest heights.

The Klan has been chosen for attention because it has become the best known of many organizations with similar aims and purposes. The alliterative name, Ku Klux Klan, is catchy and easy to remember, with an air of mystery about it well suited to a secret order. This name has been used by various groups who sought to capitalize on the Klan's name in forming organizations whose activities could best be promoted through a haze of mystery and ritual.

Section I of this study is a brief historical summary of Klan activities in the period from 1865 to 1944. It is to be understood that this is not an exhaustive study of the history of the Ku Klux Klan. It is simply an introductory summary to the subject, organized to delineate the

basic nature of the Klan and its ideas. Section II, which is to follow, will be a more detailed analysis of the renewed activities of the Klan after 1944.

This monograph has been compiled from public-source and confidential material.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### A. Summary

The original Ku Klux Klan was formed as a social organization in Pulaski, Tennessee, in 1865. Southern leaders transformed it into a vigilante group during Reconstruction years, but acts of violence committed in the name of the Klan caused them to disband the organization.

The Klan was revived in 1915 by William Joseph Simmons. After 1920, it grew rapidly under the guidance of professional promoter Edward Young Clarke. The Klan reached its zenith in about 1925 under Hiram Wesley Evans, but revelations of terroristic practices and political corruption resulted in a decline of Klan activities after 1925. A brief resurgence started in the late 1930s under James A. Colescott. In the early 1940s, adverse publicity linked the Klan with the German-American Bund, and a brutal murder brought on an investigation of the Klan by the State of Georgia. The Federal Government sought to collect back taxes for the years 1921 to 1924 and for 1926. In June, 1944, Colescott announced that the Klan was suspending operations. By 1945, however, Klan activities had resumed under different leadership.

**B. Conclusions**

- 1. Chaotic conditions in the South during Reconstruction days brought about the rise of the first Ku Klux Klan as a vigilante organization to intimidate the Negroes and restore white supremacy.**
- 2. The Klan was revived in 1915 as an organization of "pure Americanism" based on a fourfold program of antagonism to Catholics, Jews, Negroes, and persons of foreign birth.**
- 3. The revived Klan was conceived and directed by promoters who sought political power and personal wealth by capitalizing on racial and religious intolerance.**

## I. THE KLAN OF THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD

### A. North and South Divided over Slavery

One hundred years ago the stage was being set for the emergence of the Ku Klux Klan. On March 6, 1857, the Supreme Court decided the Dred Scott Case, holding that Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in the territories. The decision added fuel to the growing controversy between the North and the South on the subject of slavery. By 1860, it was apparent that peaceful compromise of differences could not be had, and, in 1861, the country was plunged into a four-year Civil War.

Whatever may have been the other important reasons contributing to the secession of the Southern States from the Union, it soon became apparent that abolition of slavery was the dominant public issue to be decided by the war. President Lincoln differed with Congress as to how this was to be accomplished, the Chief Executive favoring a gradual change within the framework of existing state governments, and Congress insisting that reconstruction efforts be based on the premise that the Southern States were conquered territory.

Lincoln did not live to see the end of the war. President Johnson favored a program similar to Lincoln's, and since Congress did not meet again until December, 1865, he placed his program into effect during the summer of that year. Provisional governors were appointed for the Southern States under liberal reorganization terms. It was left up to the states to decide if the franchise would be given to Negroes.

B. Military Government Rules the South

When Congress met in December, 1865, it refused to admit the representatives of the Southern States and set up a Joint Committee on Reconstruction to investigate the situation. Starting in March, 1867, Congress enacted a series of Reconstruction Acts which declared that, except in Tennessee, no legal governments existed in the former Confederacy. The Southern States were divided into five military districts under control of the Army. The commanding general of each district was ordered to compile a list of voters in each state, including Negroes.

When the registration of voters was completed, it was found that 703, 000 Negroes and 625, 000 whites were eligible for the franchise.

Nearly 200,000 whites had been disqualified on the ground that they had voluntarily aided the Confederacy. In five states there were Negro majorities. But even though Negro voters were in the majority, leadership was assumed by white men -- carpetbaggers (Northerners who had come to the South in the hope of gaining power and fortune) and scalawags (Southern whites who supported the Reconstruction governments).

C. Union League Organizes the Negroes

The Union League, sometimes called the Loyal League, was organized in 1862 to promote the Union cause during the Civil War. It distributed war literature, raised money for the relief of soldiers, and recruited both white and Negro volunteers for the Union Army.

After the war ended, the activities of the Union League were extended into the South. Negroes were admitted to membership, and the carpetbaggers and scalawags soon saw in the League a potent instrument for controlling the Negro vote. Various methods were used to keep the Negroes under control -- night meetings, impressive ceremonies, solemn oaths, parades and drills, and threats of being returned to slavery. Strict discipline was maintained by the white leaders. Soon, nearly the entire colored population was brought under the influence of the League.



D. Vigilante Groups Arise

Southern whites found the situation intolerable, for as long as the Negro vote was controlled by Reconstruction forces their position was hopeless. As a result, vigilante organizations came into existence throughout the South as a means of intimidating Negro voters and forcing them to renounce their new political power. One of the largest was the Knights of the White Camellia, formed in Louisiana in 1867. Others bore such descriptive names as the Pale Faces, the White Brotherhood, and the Order of the White Rose. The most famous, however, was the organization that came to be known as the Ku Klux Klan.

E. Ku Klux Klan Starts as a Social Club

According to many historians, the Ku Klux Klan started innocently enough. In December, 1865, a group of ex-Confederate soldiers in Pulaski, Tennessee, decided to form a secret social club. They took the Greek word for circle, kuklos, for a name, which soon became Ku Klux, with Klan added for alliteration. An old, abandoned house was used for the club's initiation ceremonies. The Negroes in Pulaski were frightened by the mysterious activities taking place in a house which they believed to be

haunted. This fact soon became known to the club members, who began to circulate stories that the haunted house was being visited by ghosts of dead Confederates who were concerned over the activities of their former slaves.

Before long, mounted parades were added. Horses with muffled hoofs walked noiselessly over the ground, with both horses and riders fantastically garbed. The houses of the more aggressive Negroes were visited in the nighttime by these ghostly riders, but the object, at this time, was only to frighten the Negroes. The method was so effective that it soon spread to other communities.

F. Southern Leaders Take Over the Klan

Shortly after the Reconstruction Acts of 1867 were passed by Congress, some Southern leaders took over the Klan at a meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. Most historians place General Nathan Bedford Forrest, a celebrated Confederate cavalry leader, as the leader of the Klan during the Reconstruction period. Although Forrest denied being a member of the Klan in testimony before a congressional committee investigating the Klan in 1871, it was apparent that he had the knowledge of a very high-ranking leader of the Klan.

The Nashville meeting set up an oath of secrecy to be taken by all members, and set the pattern for the mysterious names and mumbo jumbo connected with the Klan which exist to this day. The constitution, or Prescript, provided for an Empire, i. e., the Southern States. This Empire soon became known as the Invisible Empire, and was divided into Realms corresponding to individual states. Realms were divided into Dominions (groups of counties approximating congressional districts); Dominions into Provinces (counties); and Provinces into Dens (local units). Officers were designated under mysterious titles: the Grand Wizard of the Empire and his ten Genii; a Grand Dragon of the Realm and his eight Hydras; a Grand Titan of the Dominion and his six Furies; a Grand Giant of the Province and his four Goblins; a Grand Cyclops of the Den and his two Night Hawks; a Grand Magi; a Grand Monk; a Grand Scribe; a Grand Exchequer; a Grand Turk; and a Grand Sentinel. Ordinary run-of-the-mill members were known as Ghouls.

G. Klan Principles Set Forth

A revised Prescript of the Klan in 1868 stated that the Klan's principles included "all that is chivalric in conduct, noble in sentiment, generous in manhood, and patriotic in purpose." It listed three objectives:

1. To protect the weak, the innocent, and the defenseless from the indignities, wrongs, and outrages of the lawless, the violent, and the brutal; to relieve the injured and oppressed; to succor the suffering and unfortunate, and especially the widows and orphans of Confederate soldiers.

2. To protect and defend the Constitution of the United States and all laws passed in conformity thereto, and to protect the States and the people thereof from all invasion from any source whatever.

3. To aid and assist in the execution of all constitutional laws, and to protect the people from unlawful seizure, and from trial except by their peers in conformity to the laws of the land.

On paper, these were worthy aims. It was, however, in the list of questions to be asked and satisfactorily answered by prospective members that the true purpose of the Klan was revealed. Included were such questions as:

1. Are you opposed to the principles and policy of the Radical Party, and to the Loyal League, and the Grand Army of the Republic?

2. Are you opposed to Negro equality, both social and political?

3. Are you in favor of a white man's government in this country?

4. Are you in favor of the re-enfranchisement and emancipation of the white men of the South and the restitution to the Southern people of all their rights?

H. Klan Expands Rapidly

The Ku Klux Klan expanded rapidly throughout the South. The air of mystery surrounding its activities, the robes and masks, the silent parades, the midnight rides, the mysterious language and commands -- all were effective weapons with which to terrify the Negroes and to intimidate the carpetbaggers and scalawags who led them.

Although the Prescript of the Klan set up an elaborate chain of command, in actual practice control over local units was largely lacking. This led to excesses being committed by reckless and even lawless local leaders. Floggings, tar-and-feather parties, and other terroristic acts became commonplace. In addition, persons and groups who had no connection with the Klan utilized its methods and regalia to commit acts of violence for which the Klan was blamed.

I. Original Klan Disbanded

Terror and violence in the name of the Klan became so prevalent by the end of 1868 that some leaders of the Klan, realizing that they had set

in motion a piece of machinery whose power they had not foreseen and which was rapidly getting beyond their control, ordered the Klan disbanded. In spite of this action, local organizations continued, some of them for several years. As a result, one state after another enacted legislation designed to curb Klan activities. In some states, martial law was proclaimed. When these steps failed to restore order, action by Congress was inevitable.

In May, 1870, Congress passed the first three Enforcement Acts. This legislation was designed to penalize those found guilty of using force, bribery, or intimidation to prevent citizens from voting. A second and stricter Enforcement Act was passed in February, 1871. The third Enforcement Act, sometimes called the Ku Klux Act, was passed in April, 1871. It specifically covered the various activities attributed to the Klan, and authorized the President of the United States to use troops to enforce its provisions and to suspend the writ of habeas corpus when he deemed it necessary to do so.

In October, 1871, President Grant utilized these powers in nine counties in South Carolina where violence and brutality had been most rampant. The trials and convictions that followed no doubt accounted, at least in part, for the sharp decline from this time on in the number of such acts attributed to the Klan.

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In May, 1872, Congress passed an amnesty act which restored political rights to all but a few hundred ex-Confederates. All Federal troops were withdrawn from the South by 1877, and home rule was restored there. The Reconstruction Period and the era of the first Ku Klux Klan were over.

## II. THE KLAN DURING AND AFTER WORLD WAR I

### A. Klan Revival Linked to Other Intolerant Movements

Chaotic conditions in the South after the Civil War largely explained the rise of the original Klan. This explanation is not valid for the revival of the Klan during and after World War I. It flourished, not as a result of relative social chaos, but as a commercial, promotional scheme directed by unscrupulous promoters who capitalized on various hatreds, prejudices, intolerances, and the postwar relaxation of ethics and morals in this country to create an invisible empire based on fear, violence, and secrecy. There was money to be made in this type of social racketeering.

The spirit of nativism which spawned the Know-Nothing movement of the 1850s and the American Protective Association forty years later was part of the postwar hysteria which made the Klan revival possible and profitable. A review of these and other examples of expressions of racial and religious prejudice through the years is set forth below to show the historical background of intolerance upon which the revived Klan was based.

#### 1. The Know-Nothing Movement

The Know-Nothing movement grew out of the nativism engendered by the increasing rate of immigration to this country in the mid-1800s.



Although it was intolerant of all immigrants, it was predominantly an anti-Roman Catholic movement. Such intolerance was branded by Abraham Lincoln\* in these words:

"...How can any one who abhors the oppression of negroes, be in favor of degrading classes of white people?... As a nation, we began by declaring that 'all men are created equal.' We now practically read it 'all men are created equal, except negroes.' When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read 'all men are created equal, except negroes, and foreigners, and catholics.'..." (1)

Local societies were formed to combat "foreign" influences and to uphold the "American" view. Efforts were directed toward electing only native Americans to office and requiring a 25-year residence for citizenship. Attempts to question supposed leaders concerning the movement were met with statements to the effect that they knew nothing -- hence, the name Know-Nothing arose. Although there was never a political organization bearing this name, the movement grew so rapidly that by 1855 it openly assumed the name American Party. This party was hopelessly split over the issue of slavery, and the strength of the movement was soon broken.

## 2. The American Protective Association

The American Protective Association was an anti-Catholic organization formed in Clinton, Iowa, on March 13, 1887, by a group of

\*In a letter to Joshua F. Speed dated August 24, 1855, at Springfield, Illinois.

seven men, led by Henry F. Bowers, who sought to curb the number of Catholics in this country by restricting immigration and to preserve the public schools from what they viewed as the Catholic purpose to subvert them. As the organization developed, it seized every opportunity to create a fear of imminent Catholic control of the United States, utilizing lurid anti-Catholic propaganda without regard for truth or decency. In its campaign to restrict immigration, the American Protective Association called for prohibition of the importation of pauper labor; restriction of immigration to those proving their qualifications for citizenship; and a change in the laws so that no aliens would be naturalized or allowed to vote unless they spoke the English language and had lived for seven continuous years in this country.

By capitalizing on racial and religious intolerance, the American Protective Association grew rapidly. It reached its peak in 1895-96, when it claimed a membership of 2,500,000 persons. No accurate figures are available; however, it is doubtful if actual membership was ever much more than 1,000,000.

The American Protective Association declined steadily after 1896. The Presidential candidates in 1896 were William McKinley and

William J. Bryan, and Bryan's proposal for the free and unlimited coinage of silver became the dominant political issue of the day. The leadership of the American Protective Association had refused to support McKinley's nomination because some of his intimate friends and backers were Catholics. This caused a split in the organization, one faction endorsing McKinley's nomination while another faction condemned such action. Public attention became focused on other issues, particularly after the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Little was heard of the American Protective Association after 1900, although it existed, at least in name, until about 1911.

### 3. The Rising Tide of Immigration

Intolerance of persons of foreign birth was one of the fundamental precepts of the revived Ku Klux Klan. As has been noted previously, this same intolerance played a part in the activities of the Know-Nothings and the American Protective Association.

Between 1790 and 1840, fewer than a million immigrants entered the United States. In the next ten years, however, 1,713,251 immigrants arrived, most of them from Germany and Ireland. After the Civil War, the United States entered into a period of industrial expansion. Cheap, unskilled

labor was in demand. Immigrants came to this country in great numbers to fill this demand, but after 1880 the trend of immigration changed. The bulk of "the old immigration" had come from northern and western Europe, but by 1896 more than half of all immigrants were coming from southern and eastern Europe. By 1910, "the new immigration" accounted for four fifths of the immigrants to the United States.

The new immigrants tended to settle in language groups and to retain their Old World customs. Social conflicts arose. The competition of cheap labor brought demands from labor groups that immigration be restricted. European immigration continued with few restrictions, however, during the early 1900s. After World War I, European immigrants came to the United States in great numbers, but industry could no longer absorb them and the feeling against immigration became very strong.

A law which refused admittance to immigrants who could not read or write in at least one language was passed over President Wilson's veto in 1917. The quota system of immigration was first established in 1921, and made more restrictive in 1924. The "national origins" law went into effect in 1929, limiting the number of quota immigrants to 150,000, and basing the quota for individual countries on the number of people of those origins living in the United States in 1920.

4. Thomas E. Watson

During the years before World War I, there were always those to fan the flames of intolerance, to agitate against the foreign born, the Catholics, and the Jews. One of the most notorious was Thomas E. Watson, Populist Party candidate from Georgia for Vice President in 1896 and for President in 1904. His publication, Watson's Magazine, scurrilously attacked Catholics and Jews from 1910 until it was excluded from the mails after the entry of the United States into World War I in 1917. His book, The Roman Catholic Hierarchy, published in 1910, was a virulent attack on Catholicism. He was indicted three times for the publication of this book, but was never convicted. In fact, he was elected United States Senator from Georgia in 1920 and served from 1921 until his death in 1922.

5. The Menace

The anti-Catholic publication, The Menace, was established at Aurora, Missouri, in November, 1911. By its own statement, "The Menace was launched in the belief that the Roman Catholic Political Machine, in its political intrigues and its interference with established American institutions, is the deadliest enemy to our civilization and liberties." It continued publication until 1925, and built a vast circulation on the most inflammatory agitation against the Catholic religion.

B. William Joseph Simmons Revives the Klan in 1915

In 1915, another organization appeared -- Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. It was the brain child of William Joseph Simmons, a fraternal organizer who has been described variously as a "dreamer and idealist" and as a "cunning, shrewd adventurer." Knights of the Ku Klux Klan was chartered by the State of Georgia on December 4, 1915, and by the Superior Court of Fulton County, Georgia, on July 1, 1916, as "a purely benevolent and eleemosynary society... for the purpose of conducting a patriotic, secret, social, benevolent order..." Simmons borrowed the name, the regalia, and some of the nomenclature of the original Klan, but the organization and purposes of the two Klans were entirely different.

C. Program of "Pure Americanism" Based on Racial and Religious Prejudice

Ostensibly, the Klan stood for "love of country and a pure Americanism." Actually, it capitalized on racial and religious prejudices, with a fourfold program of antagonism toward Catholics, Jews, Negroes, and the foreign born. Klan rituals and official documents were couched in high-sounding, patriotic, sentimental language which gave little indication

of the basic intolerance of the organization, and could be interpreted as the occasion required. For example, the oath taken by prospective Klansmen contained this masterpiece of literary double talk:

"I swear that I will most zealously and valiantly shield and preserve by any and all justifiable means and methods the sacred constitutional rights and privileges of free public schools, free speech, free press, separation of church and state, liberty, white supremacy, just laws, and the pursuit of happiness against any encroachment of any nature by any person or persons, political party or parties, religious sect or people, native, naturalized, or foreign of any race, color, creed, lineage, or tongue whatsoever." (2)

In the case of the Reconstruction Klan, it was in the questions to be satisfactorily answered by prospective members that the true purposes of the organization became clearer. This is also true of the "Qualifying Interrogatories" composed by Simmons for candidates for "citizenship" in the "Invisible Empire," as set forth below:

"SIRS: The Knights of the Ku-Klux Klan, as a great and essentially a patriotic, fraternal, benevolent order, does not discriminate against a man on account of his religious or political creed, when same does not conflict with or antagonize the sacred rights and privileges guaranteed by our civil government and Christian ideals and institutions.

"Therefore, to avoid any misunderstanding and as evidence that we do not seek to impose unjustly the requirements of this order upon anyone who can not, on account of his religious or political scruples, voluntarily meet our requirements and faithfully practice our principles, and as proof that

we respect all honest men in their sacred convictions, whether same are agreeable with our requirements or not, we require as an absolute necessity on the part of each of you an affirmative answer to each of the following questions:

"Each of the following questions must be answered by (each of) you with an emphatic 'Yes.' "

"First. Is the motive prompting your ambition to be a klansman serious and unselfish?

"Second. Are you a native-born white, Gentile American citizen?

"Third. Are you absolutely opposed to and free of any allegiance of any nature to any cause, Government, people, sect, or ruler that is foreign to the United States of America?

"Fourth. Do you believe in the tenets of the Christian religion?

"Fifth. Do you esteem the United States of America and its institutions above any other Government, civil, political, or ecclesiastical, in the whole world?

"Sixth. Will you, without mental reservation, take a solemn oath to defend, preserve, and enforce same?

"Seventh. Do you believe in clannishness and will you faithfully practice same towards klansmen?

"Eighth. Do you believe in and will you faithfully strive for the eternal maintenance of white supremacy?



"Ninth. Will you faithfully obey our constitution and laws, and conform willingly to all our usages, requirements, and regulations?

"Tenth. Can you be always depended on?" (3)

D. Kloran Outlines Government of Klan

Simmons composed the Klan's rituals and published them in a book called the Kloran. The following statement from the Kloran outlines the administrative machinery of the Klan:

"THE GOVERNMENT of the Invisible Empire is vested with the Imperial Wizard, the Emperor, assisted by his fifteen Genii -- the Imperial Officers constituting his official family; The government of a Realm is vested with a Grand Dragon, assisted by his nine Hydras -- the Grand Officers; the government of a Province is vested with a Great Titan, assisted by his twelve Furies -- the Great Officers, and a Klan is governed by an Exalted Cyclops, assisted by his twelve Terrors -- the elective officers of a klan." (4)

Officers of individual Klans were listed as follows:

Exalted Cyclops	- President
Klaliff	- Vice-President
Klokard	- Lecturer
Kludd	- Chaplain
Kligrapp	- Secretary
Klabee	- Treasurer
Kladd	- Conductor

Klarogo	- Inner Guard
Klexter	- Outer Guard
Klokan (singular)	- Investigator
Klokann (plural)	- Board of Investigators
Night-Hawk	- Charge of Candidates

E. Professional Promoters Take Over the Klan

Whatever else he may have been, Simmons was not a successful promoter, for the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan made little progress from 1915 to 1920. Simmons has claimed that one of his trusted employees embezzled all of the Klan's funds in 1916, but that, in spite of this, he steadfastly refused the offers of those who would commercialize the Klan, even though they would have made him rich.

Subsequent events belie Simmons' sincerity. On June 7, 1920, Simmons, as Imperial Wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, entered into a contract with Edward Young Clarke whereby Clarke was appointed Imperial Kleagle of the Klan in full charge of the solicitation of new members. Clarke was a professional fund raiser. With Mrs. Elizabeth Tyler, whom he brought with him into the Klan work, Clarke had operated the Southern Publicity Association in Atlanta, Georgia, specializing in fund-raising campaigns for various groups, such as the Salvation Army, the Anti-Saloon League, et cetera.

Clarke set up a Propagation Department in the Klan to organize Klan units throughout the country. A high-pressure, well-organized campaign was launched for members. The country was divided into various sales territories, or Domains, each supervised by a sales manager known as a Grand Goblin. Domains were further broken down into Realms, under the supervision of King Kleagles, who were the salesmen who actually solicited memberships. Each new member made a contribution (klectoken) of \$10.00 to the Klan. Clarke's contract with Simmons gave to Clarke \$8.00 of each \$10.00 collected. Out of this \$8.00 Clarke reimbursed his solicitors. In practice, the Kleagle who sold the membership kept \$4.00; the King Kleagle, \$1.00; the Grand Goblin, 50 cents; and the Imperial Kleagle (Clarke), \$2.50. Two dollars went to the treasury of the Imperial Palace.

Under the professional leadership of Clarke and Tyler, membership in the Klan increased rapidly. Although accurate records are not available, best estimates are that the membership approximated 2,500 when Clarke signed his contract with Simmons in June, 1920. During the next 15 months, some 90,000 "aliens" were "naturalized" into the Invisible Empire.

F. Acts of Terrorism Lead to Congressional Investigation

Simmons and his Klan have been described as "more or less historical accidents." High-pressure salesmanship applied during a period of postwar hysteria capitalized on all the old intolerances against Catholics, Jews, Negroes, and the foreign born. "Pure Americanism" was the slogan. Secret rituals and passwords combined with mysterious language and strange attire gave the whole operation an air of fraternal importance. But what the Klan lacked was a legitimate reason for existence. True, the Kloran did state:

"... The prime purpose of this great Order is to develop character, practice clanishness, to protect the home and the chastity of womanhood, and to exemplify a pure patriotism towards our glorious country." (5)

Such language was not much help to the membership in defining specific objectives, even when interpreted in the light of the portion of the Klan oath mentioned previously. One Kleagle, seeking advice as to what new Klans should do upon receiving their charters, was told by his King Kleagle, "Tell them to clean up their towns." It is not surprising that acts of terrorism began to take place. Klansmen, or those purporting to be Klansmen, took it upon themselves to punish persons

who had, in their opinion, violated some law, legal or moral. Warnings, floggings, kidnapings, and murders became so widespread by the Summer of 1921 that the House Committee on Rules, in October, 1921, held hearings on Klan activities.

Simmons proved to be an evasive witness before the Committee. He denied that the Klan was responsible for acts of violence, but in the few instances where Klan involvement could be definitely shown, he quickly noted that the charters of the Klans involved had been cancelled. His testimony consisted largely of self-serving declarations on behalf of himself and the Klan, which he maintained was an innocent, fraternal organization.

G. Dissension Arises Within the Klan

No action was taken against the Klan as a result of the Committee's hearings, and the leaders of the Klan utilized this as an implied approval of Klan activities. Membership increased rapidly under the promotional direction of Clarke, but the enormous possibilities for profit and power soon brought about a struggle for control. By June, 1922, Clarke was issuing orders as the Imperial Wizard, pro tem, and was the active head of the Klan until November, 1922. Simmons had been shunted into the

background, allegedly because of illness. In the meantime, Dr. Hiram Wesley Evans, a dentist from Dallas, Texas, who had formerly acted as Exalted Cyclops and as Great Titan of the Klan in Dallas, came to Atlanta to assume the position of Imperial Kligrapp (Secretary).

On December 28, 1921, a petition, signed by 197 insurgent Klansmen, had been filed in Superior Court, Fulton County, Georgia, against the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, asking that a receiver be appointed for the Klan and that Clarke and Mrs. Tyler be enjoined and restrained from any further connection with the organization. It developed that Clarke and Mrs. Tyler, guiding lights in this organization of supposedly high principles, had been arrested in Mrs. Tyler's house in Atlanta on October 15, 1919, and fined for disorderly conduct.

#### H. Hiram Wesley Evans Gains Control

The struggle for control of the Klan turned into a battle between Clarke, supported by Simmons, and Evans. Evans prevailed and, on November 28, 1922, he was elected Imperial Wizard to succeed Simmons, who was given the title of Emperor.

By February, 1923, Evans had forced Clarke out of the Klan. It is worthy of note that on February 28, 1923, Clarke was indicted at Houston, Texas, for a violation of the White Slave Traffic Act allegedly taking place in February, 1921. On March 10, 1924, Clarke entered a plea of guilty and paid a fine of \$5,000. Clarke apparently continued his promotional activities, for on January 26, 1933, he was indicted at Jacksonville, Florida, for using the mails to defraud in connection with the promotion of The Esskaye, Incorporated, an organization which had been advertised as a "super-klan" and as a "universal brotherhood to further prosperity and mutual love."

Evans faced a problem in disposing of Simmons, for it developed that Simmons had copyrighted in his own name the Klan ritual, constitution, et cetera, and had filed copies of these supposedly secret documents with the Library of Congress. As a result, Evans was forced to make a settlement with Simmons. Simmons later said that he accepted \$90,000 in lieu of continued payments of \$1,000 per month for life, and that he lost this \$90,000 in a futile attempt to start a new order, the Knights of the Flaming Sword.

It was under the leadership of Evans that the Klan reached its peak. By the mid-1920s, its membership was estimated at from 4,000,000 to 5,000,000, although the actual figure was probably much smaller. The Klan claimed to be nonpolitical, but it controlled politics in many communities and was an active force in the elections of 1922, 1924, and 1926. Texas, Oklahoma, Indiana, Oregon, and Maine were particularly under its influence. The Klan's influence was also felt to some extent in the Presidential campaign of 1928, when Alfred E. Smith, a Catholic, was a candidate.

I. Excesses in Indiana Contribute to Downfall of Klan

The story of the Klan in Indiana is especially sordid. Shortly after World War I, David C. Stephenson arrived in Evansville, Indiana, and set about organizing war veterans. When his first efforts to enter politics were unsuccessful, he joined the Klan, taking his war veterans with him. In 1922, Evans gave Stephenson the job of organizing the Klan in Indiana. Stephenson hired full-time organizers and found Indiana to be a fertile field for the Klan's traditional program directed against Catholics, Jews, Negroes, and foreigners, which he extended to include communists, bootleggers, pacifists, evolutionists, and all persons whom the Klan considered immoral. On July 4, 1923, Stephenson assumed the office of Grand Dragon of the Realm of Indiana.



Stephenson's political ambitions continued and he used the Klan to further them. In 1923, when the Governor of Indiana was convicted of using the mails to defraud, Stephenson seized the opportunity to point out that it was the duty of the Klan to purify and purge Indiana politics. His duplicity will soon become apparent.

Stephenson took the Klan into the Indiana political campaigns of 1924. Klan candidates were successful, including the candidate for governor, and Stephenson became a political power in Indiana.

In the meantime, Stephenson had incurred the enmity of Evans. On April 17, 1924, or, in Klan language, "on the Deadly Day of the Weeping Week of the Appalling Month of the Year of the Klan LVII," Evans signed an Imperial Edict ordering the Klan in Evansville, Indiana, to try Stephenson on charges of conduct "unbecoming a Klansman," addressing the order to "All Genii, Grand Dragons and Hydras, Great Titans and Furies, Giants, King Kleagles and Kleagles, Exalted Cyclops and Terrors, and to all Citizens of the Invisible Empire, in the name of the valiant and venerated dead."

Stephenson fought back, seeking to separate the Indiana Klan from the "domination" of Evans and attacking the "money-mad" individuals seeking to exploit Klan power selfishly!

Stephenson charged, among other things, that Klan leaders in Atlanta were trying to frame him on a morals charge. In this connection, it is interesting to note that on May 24, 1924, a special investigator for Imperial Wizard Evans appeared at the office of the United States Attorney in Nashville, Tennessee, accompanied by a woman who said that in June, 1923, she and another girl had accompanied Stephenson and one of his henchmen on a trip from Cincinnati, Ohio, to Atlanta, Georgia; Nashville, Tennessee; and Louisville, Kentucky. Her story may well have been true, but when, on the night of May 28, 1924, Evan's investigator and the alleged victim were ejected from their hotel in Nashville for immoral activities, prosecution of Stephenson under the White Slave Traffic Act was declined. It appeared that the sole motive behind the complaint was to use the Department of Justice for the purpose of enabling the Klan to get rid of Stephenson.

In the end, it was Stephenson who brought about his own downfall. On April 2, 1925, he was arrested for the murder of Madge Oberholtzer in March, 1925. Due to the prominence of Stephenson and the political implications involved, the case was a controversial one, but on November 14, 1925, Stephenson was found guilty of second degree murder. Two days later he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Stephenson later said, "I should have been put in jail for my political activities but I am not guilty of murder." He fully expected that Governor Jackson, whom he had put into office, would pardon him. When no pardon was forthcoming, Stephenson began to divulge a story of graft and corruption in Indiana politics. In Indianapolis, the mayor was indicted and convicted for corrupt practices, and six members of the city council paid fines and resigned after being indicted for receiving bribes. The Governor was indicted, but invoked the statute of limitations. Numerous lesser officials were involved.

The heyday of the Klan was past. Saner voices began to prevail. True, these same voices had always spoken out against the Klan and all it stood for, but the spirit of the times had caused their warnings to fall on deaf ears. After 1928, relatively little was heard of the Klan until the appointment to public office of a former Klansman called forth criticism.

J. Klan Revival Attempted in 1937

The critical publicity given to the appointment of former Klansmen to public office once again brought the Klan to the attention of the American masses. Klan leaders were quick to capitalize upon the publicity to attempt to revive the organization. On August 1, 1937, a Klan official announced

from Atlanta that plans were being made for a "national Klan mobilization to crusade against un-Americanism," and that a series of Klan meetings would be held over the Nation as a protest against "alien labor agitation." On December 19, 1938, Evans, who still controlled the Klan with the title of Imperial Wizard, announced that the Klan would hold a convention the following May to organize a fight against communism and the CIO\* He said that the Klan would reorganize on a regional basis of group interests and aims rather than along mere geographical lines. Subsequent Klan propaganda to the effect that the Klan had dropped its "opposition" to Catholics, Jews, and Negroes and would concentrate solely on a "pro-American" program was soon found to be publicity and nothing more.

K. James A. Colescott Becomes Imperial Wizard in 1939

On June 10, 1939, James Arnold Colescott succeeded Evans as Imperial Wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Colescott, a former veterinarian, had been serving as Evans' assistant for two years and claimed to have been an active Klansman since 1923. At the time of his election, Colescott stated that he planned a four-year "administration of action," and that the Klan strove to promote the interests of the "native born, white, Protestant gentile" populace of America.

\*Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Evans denied reports of dissension in the Klan over policy. However, he had attracted comment a few months earlier by attending the dedication of a new Catholic cathedral in Atlanta. The Imperial Palace of the Klan had been sold to the Catholic church as a site for the new cathedral in 1938.

When he relinquished the office of Imperial Wizard, Evans announced that he would devote his time to his asphalt paving agency in Atlanta. He had formed this company, the Southeastern Construction Company, sometime previously, and his activities in this connection are revealing. On May 30, 1940, Evans and others, including a former state highway purchasing agent, were indicted for violation of antitrust and mail fraud statutes in connection with the sale of asphalt to the Georgia State Highway Board during the period from January, 1937, to December 31, 1939. On January 24, 1941, Evans was fined \$15,000, the maximum allowable, in the United States District Court at Atlanta on a plea of nolo contendere in the antitrust case. Subsequently, on January 3, 1942, a former governor and 19 other persons, 10 of them former state officials, were indicted in Atlanta on charges of defrauding the State of Georgia of \$201,368. Evans was among those named.

Colescott began an active campaign to revive the Klan. In July, 1939, The Fiery Cross was established as the official publication of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. But the field was crowded. The depression years had spawned many other groups eager to capitalize on intolerance, hate, and economic unrest. There were [redacted] and the German-American Bund;\* William Dudley Pelley and the Silver Shirt Legion of America;\* Edward James Smythe and the Protestant War Veterans of the United States, Inc. ;\* b7C and Mrs. Leslie Fry and the Militant Christian Patriots, to mention only a few. Father Charles E. Coughlin, [redacted] and Gerald L. K. Smith each promoted his own brand of social intolerance.

Colescott ran into other difficulties. When the New Jersey Realm of the Klan held an all-day "Americanism" rally on August 18, 1940, at Camp Nordland, the German-American Bund's recreation camp near Andover, New Jersey, newspaper reports linking the Klan with the Bund proved extremely embarrassing. A brutal murder in Georgia in March, 1940, brought on an investigation of the Klan's activities by the State of Georgia and resulted in the conviction of several Klan members. In 1941, Colescott and other Klan officials were indicted in Pennsylvania on charges

\*Designated by the Attorney General pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

of illegal solicitation of funds and conspiracy to stir up hatred and ill will between different racial and religious groups in connection with attempts to revive the Klan in Pennsylvania.

L. Klan Suspends Operations in 1944

The Klan's office building in Atlanta, the last of the order's once-extensive real-estate holdings, was sold in 1943 for conversion into a housing unit. On June 4, 1944, Colescott announced that, at a secret Klonvocation (convention) held in Atlanta on April 23, 1944, the Klan had "voted to suspend the constitutional laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., to revoke all charter Klans and to order disbandment of all provisional Klans."

The Government was seeking to collect back taxes from the Klan. In May, 1946, the Collector of Internal Revenue at Atlanta filed a \$685,305 lien against the Klan for taxes due to the United States Government for the years 1921 through 1924 and for 1926.

When Colescott announced that the Klan had voted to disband, he made the following statement:

"This does not mean that the Klan is dead. We simply have released local chapters from all obligations, financial and otherwise, to the Imperial Headquarters.

I still am Imperial Wizard. The other officials still retain their titles, although, of course, the functions of all of us are suspended. We have authority to meet and reincarnate at any time." (6)

On this implied threat of things to come, another era of the Klan came to a close. But within a year, a new era was to begin. The story of the Klan after 1944 will be the subject of a separate monograph.



SOURCE PAGE

1. Roy P. Basler (ed.), The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln (New Brunswick, N. J. : Rutgers University Press, 1953), Vol. 2, p. 323.
2. The Ku-Klux Klan, Hearings Before the Committee on Rules, House of Representatives, 67th Congress, First Session (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), p. 100.
3. Ibid, pp. 115-116.
4. W. J. Simmons, Kloran, 4th ed. (Atlanta: The Ku Klux Press, 1916), p. 52.
5. Ibid, p 36.
6. The New York Times, June 5, 1944, p. 21.



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*JD*

*Conroy*

# THE KU KLUX KLAN

## Section II

1944 -- 1958

(Not for Dissemination Outside the Bureau)



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*100-10092-279*

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAY 1958	
FBI - BUFFALO	

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**58 D . 81**

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## PREFACE

This monograph, Section II of a two-part study on the Ku Klux Klan, is devoted to Klan activities from 1944 to 1958. During this period, there has been a significant change in the Klan picture. The Klan is no longer one organization under central control. It has degenerated into many individual Klan groups, whose promoters have taken advantage of the integration problem in the South to advance their own organizations. This monograph depicts the major developments in this ever-changing Klan picture and shows how the traditional Klan antagonisms against Negroes, Jews, Catholics, and persons of foreign birth have been utilized by Klan promoters to further Klan interests.

Material used in this Section came from public sources and from the FBI's coverage of Klan activities. Confidential material is included.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### A. Summary

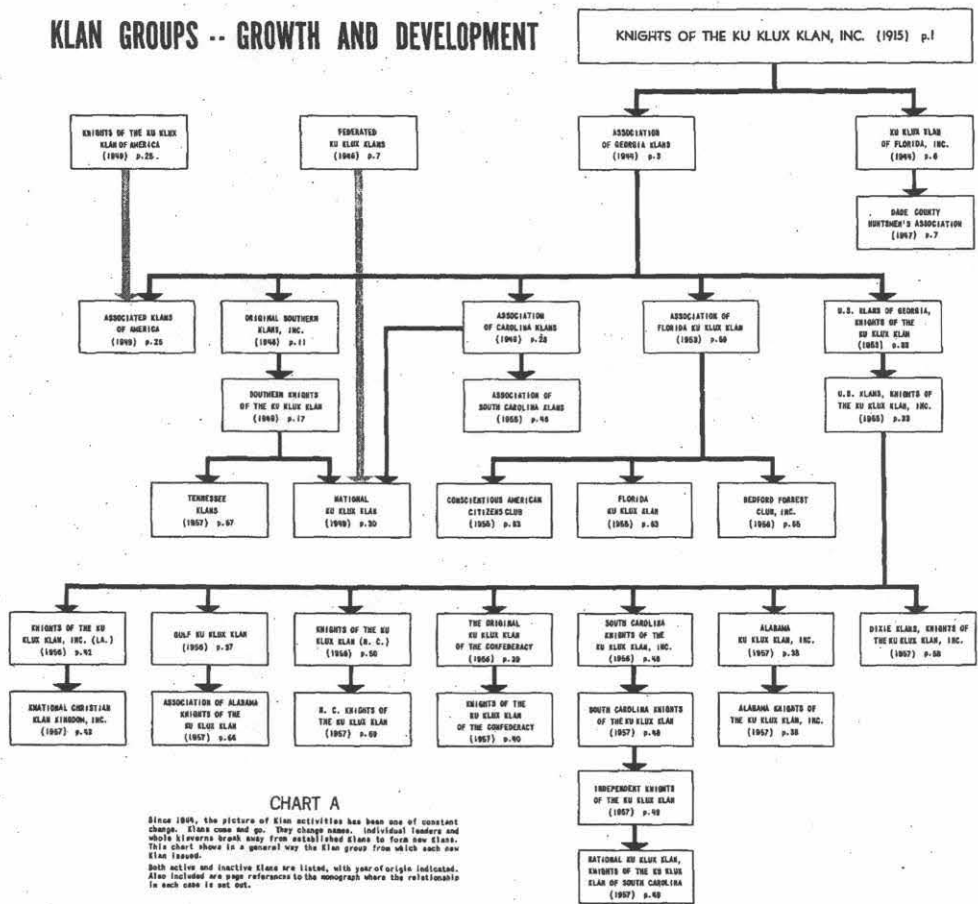
On June 4, 1944, Imperial Wizard James A. Colescott announced that Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., had suspended operations. Dr. Samuel Green immediately formed the Association of Georgia Klans, which remained the dominant Klan organization until Green's death in 1949. Samuel W. Roper succeeded Green, but the Association of Georgia Klans gradually became inactive. In the meantime, promoters were organizing other Klan groups. Klan activities subsided temporarily after a wave of terroristic acts culminated in the imprisonment in 1952 of Thomas L. Hamilton, South Carolina Klan leader, and others involved in violence. Klan activities increased rapidly after the United States Supreme Court decision on May 17, 1954, concerning segregation in the public schools. Factionalism and rivalry were prevalent among the many new Klan groups which were being formed all over the South. U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., formed by Eldon L. Edwards in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1953, and chartered by the State of Georgia in 1955, has emerged as the largest and best-known Klan in existence today.



**B. Conclusions**

1. No longer is it proper to speak merely of "The Klan," except in the most general sense. "The Klan" today is not one organization under central control, but is composed of many independent Klan groups.
2. Klan leadership is mediocre, at best. Bickering and dissension within and between Klans are commonplace.
3. The traditional Klan intolerances remain unchanged--antagonism toward Negroes, Jews, Catholics, and persons of foreign birth.
4. The integration problem in the South has provided Klan promoters with a "cause" upon which to base their activities.
5. Under the pretense of being patriotic, Christian fraternal organizations, the various Klans utilize the traditional Klan antagonisms to secure members in their campaign for "White Supremacy" and against integration.
6. Officially, Klan leaders deny that their organizations condone violence. In actual practice, inflammatory methods are used which ultimately can only lead to violence.
7. Although Southern sentiment is overwhelmingly against enforced integration of the races, Klan methods of combatting integration have resulted in the Klan's being discredited by responsible press and civic leaders throughout the South.

# KLAN GROUPS -- GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



**CHART A**

Since 1965, the picture of Klan activities has been one of constant change. Klans come and go. They change names. Individual leaders and whole chapters break away from established klans to form new klans. This chart shows in a general way the Klan group from which each new Klan issued.

Both active and inactive klans are listed, with year of origin indicated. Klans included are page references to the monograph where the relationship in each case is set out.



# KLAN GROUPS--ORIGINAL HEADQUARTERS CITIES

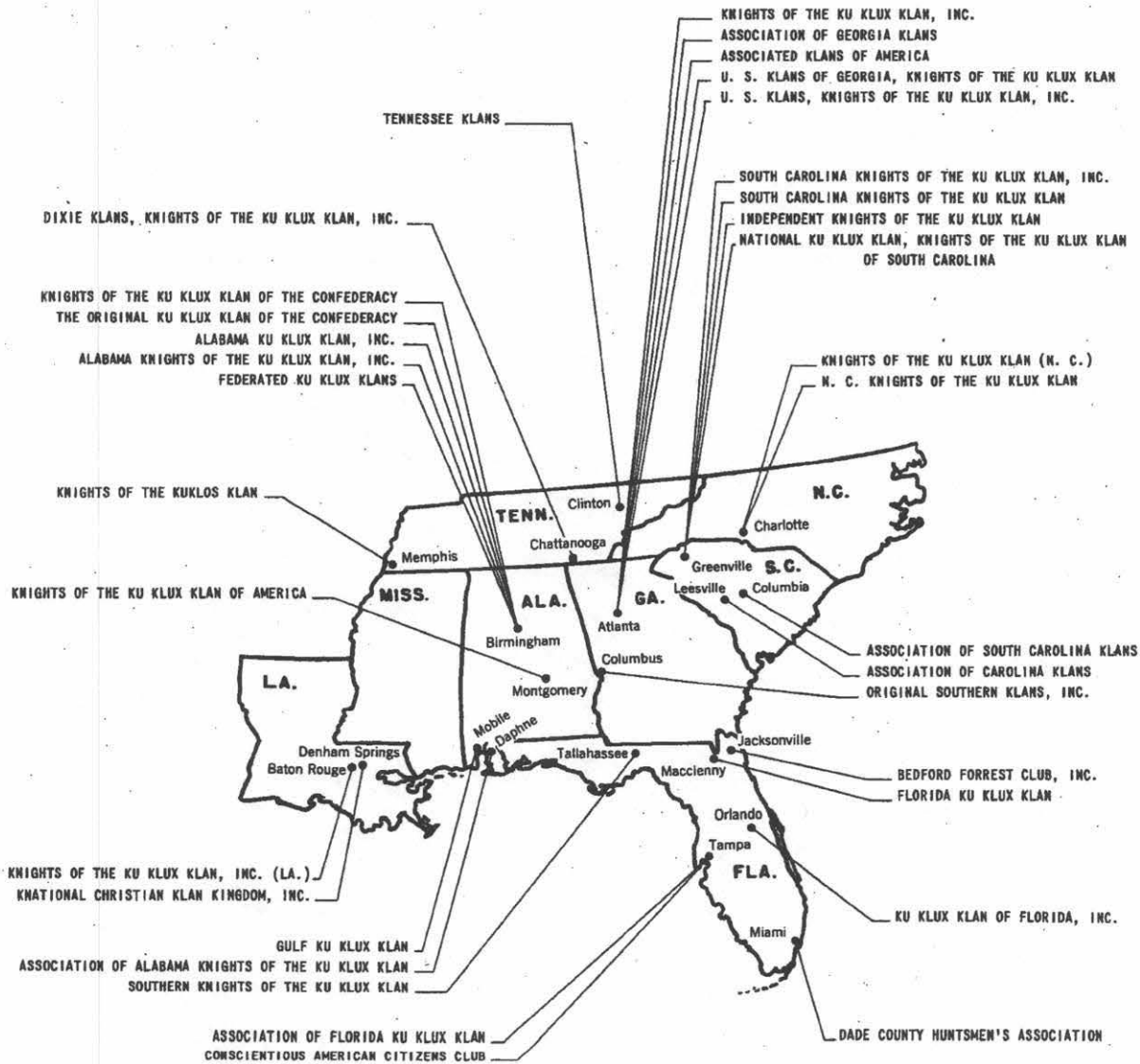


CHART B

This chart indicates the headquarters cities of various Klan groups at the time they were formed. Some Klans engage in widespread Klan activities; others are local in nature. Both active and inactive Klans are listed.



## I. THE KLAN REORGANIZES

### A. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

Faced with United States Government demands for back taxes of \$685,305 for the years 1921 through 1924 and for 1926, James A. Colescott, then Imperial Wizard, announced on June 4, 1944, that at a secret Klonvocation (convention) held in Atlanta on April 23, 1944, the Klan had "voted to suspend the constitutional laws of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., to revoke all charter Klans and to order disbandment of all provisional Klans." He added, significantly:

"This does not mean that the Klan is dead. We simply have released local chapters from all obligations, financial and otherwise, to the Imperial Headquarters. I still am Imperial Wizard. The other officials still retain their titles, although, of course, the functions of all of us are suspended. We have authority to meet and reincarnate at any time."

This was the end of Colescott, for he drifted into obscurity as a Florida veterinarian. And it was the beginning of the end of the Klan as a national institution. But the basic intolerances which have been the traditional lifeblood of the Klan and similar organizations still existed. Over the years, the name Ku Klux Klan and its symbol, the fiery cross, had become synonymous with activities directed against Negroes, Jews, Catholics, and persons of

foreign birth. Responsible Southern leaders denounce the Klan and its terroristic methods, but in the pressures created by changing social conditions in the South, there are always those who seek to capitalize on the Klan's name and tradition, either for personal profit or in a misguided belief that Klan practices are necessary, or both.

Until 1944, one organization, for all practical purposes, controlled all Klan activities. This was the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., which operated under a charter granted by the State of Georgia. When Colescott suspended operations of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., in 1944 (and the State of Georgia revoked its charter in 1947), the field was open to anyone who wanted to capitalize on the Klan name to promote his own brand of intolerance. This has created a great deal of confusion, not only among Klansmen but among the press and the general public. No longer was it possible to attribute acts merely to "the Klan," except in a very general sense of the word. The specific Klan organization has to be pinpointed in each case. This is not always easy to do.

The various Klan organizations themselves have not been stable. Constant bickering within and between Klan groups, mergers, reorganizations, and the shifting of membership and leaders from one group to another have

been normal procedure. In some cases, the rank-and-file members have not always been too sure to which group they owed their allegiance. Leadership, at best, has been mediocre. As one Florida Klan leader put it in May, 1957: "We have too many chiefs and not enough Indians to stage a war dance." He complained that there were so many Klans in operation in his area that the old countersigns and passwords would not work any more and suggested, albeit facetiously, that "members should be forced to be stamped with the branding iron or clip their ears with a leather punch like farmers mark their livestock."

B. Association of Georgia Klans\*

Twenty-eight days after the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., voted to suspend operations, and two weeks before Colescott made his public announcement that this action had been taken, a new organization was formed to continue Klan activities. This new organization stoutly denied any legal connections with its predecessor and claimed to be an informal, unincorporated association of local Georgia klaverns (local Klan units) which had decided to unite informally to continue Klan work until such time as the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., might decide to reactivate itself. No secret was made of the fact that this new group continued the beliefs, ritualistic practices, and other activities of the now inactive Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

\*Designated by the Attorney General pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

The new organization was called the Association of Georgia Klans.

It was formed on May 21, 1944, by Dr. Samuel Green, a middle-aged, small-mustached, Atlanta physician who had been the Exalted Cyclops (president) of an Atlanta klavern of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. Green assumed the title of Grand Dragon of Georgia, in keeping with his pronouncements that the Association of Georgia Klans had no organizational ties with Klan groups in other states.

The first open Klan demonstration after the close of World War II was a cross burning atop Stone Mountain, Georgia, traditional Klan shrine, on the night of October 16, 1945. This was followed by a mass "naturalization" (initiation) under the flickering lights of five fiery crosses at the same location on May 9, 1946. Recruiting efforts were stepped up. Using "White Supremacy" and "Fight Communism" as slogans, Green soon extended his activities into surrounding states. Naturally, part of each "klectoken" (initiation fee) collected was supposed to go to headquarters in Atlanta.

Green set the pattern for most of the Klan groups which were soon to spring up all over the South. The Klan was held out as a great, patriotic, American institution dedicated to the protection of the American way of life from those who would destroy it. The Klan ritual, as composed by William J. Simmons in the Kloran of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., was used with

minor, if any, changes. Unlawful, terroristic acts were not to be condoned, and when such acts were blamed on the Klan, Klan participation would be denied. When proof existed that Klan members had engaged in such activities, the offending members or klaverns would be officially "banished" with all possible publicity. Although the Klan would not officially condone or authorize terroristic acts, Klan leaders often assured members that what they did of their own volition was their own business. It was a fine line of distinction.

In addition to the profit motive, Green aspired to be a political power in Georgia. He threw the support of the Klan to the gubernatorial campaigns of Eugene Talmadge (1946) and Herman Talmadge (1948), both advocates of white supremacy. He is reported to have forbidden Klansmen to hold demonstrations or parades on the day or two before election in the Fall of 1948 because the United States Government might consider such acts intimidation and a violation of the civil rights of Negro voters. Governor M. E. Thompson of Georgia later publicly charged that there had been more than 300 public demonstrations by the Ku Klux Klan in Georgia on the eve of the Democratic state primary election.

Whatever Green's aspirations and motives may have been, they were cut short abruptly on August 18, 1949, when he fell dead of a heart attack.



In the five years of his leadership, Green had welded the Association of Georgia Klans into the largest Klan group then in existence.

C. Ku Klux Klan of Florida, Inc.

The Miami, Florida, unit of the old Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., had maintained a post-office box in Miami under the name of J. B. Gordon Klan. After Colescott suspended operations of the national organization, a new group was chartered by the State of Florida on September 7, 1944, under the name of Ku Klux Klan of Florida, Inc., with headquarters in Orlando.

On March 28, 1946, the Miami Herald noted that "local bigots are busy pumping life again" into the Miami Klan. The John B. Gordon Klan, No. 5, erected signs on highways leading into Miami welcoming prospective Klan members.

The John B. Gordon Klan, No. 5, was one of the more active units in Florida. In 1946, the Exalted Cyclops was a bridgetender and carpenter. Other offices were filled by an airline mechanic, an automobile mechanic, a typesetter, a bus driver, a carburetor repairman, and the operator of a mattress company. The purpose of the group, as put by one admitted member, was to establish an organization for "pure Americanism, and to keep the Jews, niggers, Catholics, and foreigners in their place."

In September, 1946, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Florida, and member of John B. Gordon Klan, No. 5, became [REDACTED] for the Ku Klux Klan of Florida, Inc. By the Summer of 1947, however, Klan members in Miami became dissatisfied with having to turn over a portion of all dues collected to state headquarters in Orlando, feeling that they were not getting a fair return for their money.

[REDACTED] John B. Gordon Klan, No. 5, became an independent Klan group under the cover name Dade County Huntsmen's Association. The women's auxiliary changed its name to The Friendship Circle. It was a change in name only--the aims and purposes of the organizations remained the same.

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D. Federated Ku Klux Klans

On July 17, 1946, three Jefferson County, Alabama, men applied for an Alabama charter for an organization to be known as Federated Ku Klux Klans, with headquarters in Birmingham, Alabama. Incorporators were William Hugh Morris, a roofing contractor; Robert S. Gullledge, Sr., a Birmingham realtor; and Dr. E. P. Pruitt, a 70-year-old Birmingham physician. The articles of incorporation stated that this new group would act as a social, fraternal, religious, eleemosynary, educational, patriotic, and philanthropic society, and listed the following purposes:

1. Teaching and inculcating loyalty to the constitutions and laws of the United States and Alabama.
2. Upholding and teaching the doctrines as exemplified in the "Holy Bible and New Testament."
3. Teaching of respect and reverence for the United States flag.
4. Assisting and supporting duly and legally constituted authority in the enforcement of criminal laws of the United States.
5. Upholding and protecting the chastity of all white womanhood.
6. Supporting the theory and doctrine of the supremacy of the Caucasian race in America.

Morris, the leader of the group, assumed the office of treasurer, and Pruitt took the title of chairman of the board of governors.

In an effort to attract members, the Federated Ku Klux Klans held an open meeting at the Court House in Birmingham, Alabama, on April 17, 1947. At this meeting, Gullledge announced:

"The Klan is not a hate group. It is not intolerant toward any race, creed or color. Rather, we have come to save the Negro from his own folly."

An editorial in the April 18, 1947, issue of the Birmingham Post commented that "the KKK bared its fangs last night at the Court House and displayed only a bad set of false teeth."

In October, 1947, Morris and four of his followers were arrested in Jackson, Mississippi, on charges of malicious mischief and carrying concealed weapons after being apprehended burning a cross near Jackson. Their explanation of their activities is interesting. They said they had come to Jackson in response to an anonymous letter requesting their aid because the "Negroes were getting out of control" in Jackson. They said the burning of the cross was to inform the unknown letter writer that his appeal had been received and that they were ready to assist in the organization of a Klan unit in Jackson.

Floggings, cross burnings, and other acts of intimidation became so prevalent in Alabama by early 1949 that a grand jury was ordered into special session to investigate the situation. On July 7, 1949, Morris refused to produce membership lists of his organization when requested to do so by the grand jury. He was cited for contempt and ordered to jail. Finally, after claiming that Klan records had been stolen from his home, he submitted a partial list from memory and was released from custody on September 20, 1949, after serving 67 days on the contempt charge.

Efforts by the State of Alabama to ban the public wearing of masks or hoods met with bitter opposition from the Klan. Morris told a legislative committee that such an act would be "an insult to the men who wore the hood

and robe in the '60s and '70s." He said that today's Klansmen were "blood descendants of those men, who have taken the same name and same robe that they had, for the same reason." [redacted] Alabama,

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[redacted] Morris, told the committee he would rather be hanged from the balcony over the steps of the Capitol building (where Jefferson Davis was inaugurated), than have the masks taken from the Klan. More will be heard about [redacted] and his Klan activities in subsequent pages.

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The Alabama antimask measure became law on June 28, 1949.

Anticipating this action, Pruitt announced on June 25, 1949, that members of Federated Ku Klux Klans would no longer wear masks in public. This created hard feelings between Morris and Pruitt, Morris claiming that Pruitt had overstepped his authority in issuing the order. On July 21, 1949, Pruitt resigned, stating that elements had "wormed their way into the Klan--men who used Klan robes to go out and whip people."

It is ironic that two Negro youths became the first persons to be convicted under the new antimask law. They were convicted on August 5, 1949, for donning hoods and sheets to scare two Negro girls who had been seen associating with white men.

E. Original Southern Klans, Inc. \*

Dr. Samuel Green personally went to Columbus, Georgia, on March 12, 1948, to present a charter to a new klavern of the Association of Georgia Klans in Columbus. Preliminary arrangements had been made by Fred New and [redacted]

Fred New was an attorney in Columbus, Georgia. He had been an Assistant United States Attorney at Macon, Georgia, from 1930 to 1933, and a special investigator for the Treasury Department from 1938 to 1941, when his heavy drinking allegedly cost him his job. A former associate described New as "unscrupulous, smart but crooked."

[redacted] in Columbus, Georgia. [redacted] The Georgia Tribune about 1946 as a pro-Klan, anti-Negro, anti-Jewish newspaper, and this editorial policy was continued after [redacted] sold The Georgia Tribune to Fred New in March, 1948. b7C

The charter ceremony on March 12, 1948, was just another Klan ceremonial until newspapermen appeared to take pictures. Klansmen attacked the newspapermen, administered whiskey and drugs to render them unconscious, and photographed them in compromising positions. Prior to the attack, the newspapermen had recognized Dr. Green, Fred New, and [redacted] [redacted] as being among the Klansmen present at the charter ceremony.

\*Designated by the Attorney General pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

Barely three months later, under the behind-the-scenes guidance of New  the Columbus, Georgia, and the Manchester, Georgia, klaverns of the Association of Georgia Klans withdrew from Green's organization to form a new Klan called Original Southern Klans, Inc. In June, 1948, a charter for this new group was issued in Superior Court in Columbus, Georgia, to Alton E. Pate, 23-year-old war veteran; Louis A. Hill; and T.C. Colwell; all of Columbus. Green branded the action as an uprising by "Bolshevik Klans which pulled out because they couldn't run things themselves." New later told a newspaper reporter that he broke with Green's organization because Green was in it for profit only.

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To avoid the legal flaw which ultimately led to the revocation of the charter of the old Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., as a nonprofit corporation, Original Southern Klans, Inc., was openly chartered as a profit-making group, although Pate was quick to point out that this merely meant that it would be operated "for the common profit of all America" and that the stockholders expected to realize "no return on the money they have placed in escrow as an investment in the American future." According to the articles of incorporation, Original Southern Klans, Inc., was formed to organize and operate fraternal, benevolent, and patriotic secret orders. The stated purpose was to gather and

disseminate information relative to the organization, activities, and operation of the Communist Party and its related organizations in North America, and to use such information for lawful purposes to defeat the goals and objectives of the Communist Party on this continent.

Pate was more candid in his first public announcements. After stating that his first public act would be the banning of the traditional Klan mask and that rowdiness and acts of terrorism would not be tolerated, he listed the following eight-point program for Original Southern Klans, Inc.:

1. Defense of Protestant Americanism.
2. Opposition to blending the white race with any other race.
3. Maintenance of the Southern white man's political superiority.
4. Preventing political demonstration of any inferior minority group.
5. Justice and equal laws and law enforcement.
6. Better schools, churches, recreational facilities, and housing facilities for minority groups in the South under strictly segregated conditions.
7. Teaching the principles of Americanism to minority groups in the South.
8. Opposition to the teachings of the Communist Party which embody the advocacy of sexual equality under the guise of social equality.



Original Southern Klans, Inc., departed from the standard Klan ritual originally composed by William J. Simmons and still used with minor variations by most Klan organizations. A new Klansman's Manual was issued in which the Terrors (officers) were listed as follows:

Grand Cyclops - - - - -	President
Grand Magi - - - - -	Vice President
Grand Chaplain - - - - -	Spiritual Advisor
Grand Monk - - - - -	Teacher
Grand Scribe - - - - -	Secretary
Grand Exchequer - - - - -	Treasurer
Grand Turk - - - - -	Captain of the Guard
Grand Sentinel - - - - -	Adjutant to the Grand Cyclops

In maintaining the pretense of being fraternal orders, most Klans advertise a series of degrees which allegedly can be earned by worthy members. Original Southern Klans, Inc., was no exception. The Klansman's Manual listed four degrees:

Degree One - - - - -	Probation Knight
Degree Two - - - - -	Sir Knight of the Klan
Degree Three - - - - -	Giants of the Klan
Degree Four - - - - -	Men of Justice

Although Pate announced that terrorism was not to be allowed, the ritual contained many phrases of an inflammatory nature. Membership was limited to "native born, white, Gentile, Protestant American citizens of good character and reputation who are interested in the maintenance of the Southern pattern of life and who are willing to fight militantly therefor." In the opening ritual, the Grand Cyclops states as follows:

"My Ghosts and Terrors: The night is long and the day filled with grave doubt. Only the steadfast devotion of loyal brothers united in a common love of our Southland can save her from destruction. We are sworn; we are brave and we must be ready. Tonight the hour may strike and we must meet the challenge with fearless heart and ready hands."

Later in the ritual, the Grand Cyclops further exhorts:

"Be faithful Klansmen; be militant; be courageous; the blood Americans have spilled shall not have been in vain. We will have peace and we shall have the rights for which we fought, if we must fight for them afresh every day."

In the closing ritual, the Grand Cyclops asks:

"Grand Turk, how do we retain the principles of the Klan?"

The ritual calls for the Grand Turk to rise and state:

"By right, if we can; by might, if we must."

Original Southern Klans, Inc., started the usual campaign to get new members, featuring parades, public rallies, and cross burnings. New's station wagon, equipped on the front with an electric cross, was a regular

feature at these gatherings. Speakers included [redacted] and [redacted] who said he had resigned the pastorate of a Baptist church in Atlanta "to go into Klan work." Both claimed to have been Klan members for over 20 years. White supremacy was their keynote, with the Communist Party as the villain that was trying to do away with "the Southern way of life."

Despite such elaborate preparations, Original Southern Klans, Inc., b7C was not a success. Pate, Hill, and Colwell, the original incorporators, soon dropped from sight. By the Fall of 1948, H. R. Stewart was acting as Kleagle (membership solicitor) and F. E. Keith was signing as Executive Secretary "By order of the Grand Wizard." Both Stewart and Keith were Columbus, Georgia, taxicab drivers. When the search for members, accompanied by the usual parades, extended into the northern part of Florida, Governor Fuller Warren of Florida publicly stated:

"The hooded hoodlums and sheeted jerks who paraded the streets of Tallahassee last night made a disgusting and alarming spectacle. These covered cowards, who call themselves Klansmen, quite obviously have set out to terrorize minority groups in Florida as they have in a nearby State."

Fred New [redacted] the real powers behind Original Southern Klans, Inc., disagreed over how the organization should

be run, and New is reported to have left town with the records. By May, 1949, Original Southern Klans, Inc., had ceased to exist as an organized group.

F. Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

Before Original Southern Klans, Inc., went out of existence, it had extended its organizational activities into the State of Florida. On March 31, 1949, a copy of the charter was filed with the Florida Secretary of State as a prerequisite to doing business in Florida. Bill Hendrix, a Tallahassee, Florida, electrician and builder, was listed as the local agent in Florida for Original Southern Klans, Inc.

Hendrix was to develop into one of the most indefatigable and unpredictable of postwar Klan promoters. He is a great publicity seeker, with a penchant for issuing exaggerated news releases, more often than not based upon pure imagination.

When Original Southern Klans, Inc., went out of existence, Hendrix gathered together the remnants in southern Georgia and northern Florida to form an organization of his own. In August, 1949, he announced the formation of a new Klan group to be called Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, sometimes referred to by him as Southern and Northern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. He said his new organization was a reincarnation of the "original

invisible empire" and claimed 302 chapters and 650,000 members in 12 Southern states, plus New York and New Jersey. He said the purpose of his Klan was to fight "fantastic taxation, regimentation, and a threat of a communist state."

Hendrix announced that he had been named Adjutant for Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. He introduced a new "gimmick" in Klan promotion by announcing that all other officers were to remain anonymous, the Emperor taking the title of Samuel II and the Wizard a seven-digit number, 4-006800. [redacted] of Jacksonville, Florida, [redacted] National Chaplain of Hendrix' group.

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The usual program of cross burnings and parades was instituted to attract members. Hendrix told reporters that his group did not believe in violence and would not engage in floggings, beatings, threats, and like activities. "We don't hate the Negroes," he said. Early in August, 1949, however, robed Klansmen parading in Iron City, Georgia, became involved in a shooting scrape with local citizens which resulted in the arrest of three Klansmen, including Hendrix and W. B. Rogers, an associate from Tallahassee, Florida.

Hendrix was not one to overlook any possible source for new members. In September, 1950, he addressed a letter to the FBI inviting membership "of any White Protestant, Christian Agent" in his Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

In the Fall of 1952, a special Federal grand jury was convened in Miami to investigate terrorism in Florida. On March 25, 1953, this grand jury reported its findings. It described the Ku Klux Klan as a "cancerous growth as destructive of basic civil liberties as communism itself." It reported that the Klan was founded on the worst instincts of mankind:

"At its best, it is intolerant and bigoted. At its worst, it is sadistic and brutal."

Hendrix announced on April 29, 1953, that he had severed all connections with Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, and that he had called on the organization to disband "because they have carried out their intended program set up in 1948." On June 20, 1953, however, in a typical Hendrix press release, Hendrix announced that a secret meeting of 299 Klansmen and sympathizers in Columbus, Georgia, had on that date elected him Imperial Emperor of United Ku Klux Klans, formed to combat nonsegregation which he said was "a communist program to take over America." Southern Knights

of the Ku Klux Klan was to be part of this new Klan, according to Hendrix. United Ku Klux Klans, of course, never materialized.

On June 23, 1953, in Tallahassee, Florida, Hendrix obtained an evangelist's permit and a license to run a secret service agency which he called National Secret Service Agency. Two days later, Hendrix, who had been an unsuccessful candidate for Governor of Florida in 1952, announced that he would run again. On June 29, 1953, he announced that [redacted]

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[redacted] Grand Dragon of the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

The fact that he had previously announced that Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan had been disbanded did not dismay Hendrix. His explanation was that he had tried repeatedly to disband the group, but "we can't because some bunch always runs out and forms an independent group and gets us in trouble."

On October 13, 1953, Hendrix, through Grand Dragon [redacted] issued a startling announcement. Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan would henceforth discard its robes and rituals and would open its ranks to "all races, creeds or colors." The Klan still believed that "segregation of the races is the law of God," but Negroes were invited to join on a segregated basis and form their own klaverns. The only membership requirements, [redacted] said, were to "believe in God and the Constitution of the United States"--and to pay a \$1.00 fee.

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Needless to say, Hendrix' announcement found little support among other Klan leaders and members.

On June 9, 1954, Hendrix announced the formation of a new group called The White Brotherhood, which he said was pledged to preserve segregation by legal means. He said that the Klan all over the country had been broken up and that this successor group would operate as a religious group, would have no uniforms, and would "try to avoid killing and violence." Hendrix subsequently told an informant that this announcement had been entirely fictitious and that he had made it merely to confuse the public and the FBI as to the activities of the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and related Klan organizations.

Hendrix continued his organizational efforts, taking advantage of every opportunity to secure publicity for himself and his activities. He sold memberships in a series of organizations which he devised to attract new members, using such names as American Confederate Army, White Democrats of the South, Order of Bethel, and National Secret Service Association. In May, 1955, he sent the following news release to The Evening Star newspaper in Washington, D. C.:

"After two years of underground organizing the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan will start a public program against De-segregation. The public should now know that things laid on the Klan were not



true, there have been many bombings and riots in the last two years in the northern states and some in the south recently, these bombings in the south were laid on the unions when in fact they were done by the commies. The Klan has elected officers for the next two years and will come out openly against De-segregation. De-segregation is a communist trick and the Supreme Court has never built one school house in the south, it is better to do away with the public school than it is to mix the white and negro race. The schools were built by white people, and we will either have white and negro schools separate or we will have no public schools. The Klan officers will be known by number only from now on, except those officers who are in charge of programs and organizing. We will retain the robe and mask in our meeting halls and on private property.

"Bill Hendrix of Tallahassee, Florida has been elected director of organizing and programs and all releases will come through him and his workers. We are asking the two hundred thousand old Klan members in the south to Re-instate.

"Once a Klansman always a Klansman.

0168  
Grand Wizzard  
Washington, D. C."

An informant had previously advised that Hendrix was again dreaming of big things for himself in Klan organizing. Hendrix was reported as saying that he was going to drop "Southern" from the name of his group and operate as Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. He proposed to have a theoretical headquarters in Washington, D.C., with a fictitious Imperial Wizard at the head. Neither the Imperial Wizard nor the headquarters would actually exist, but Hendrix would hold himself out as the national organizer ostensibly following the instructions of the mythical Imperial

Wizard. The news release set forth was apparently issued as part of this scheme.

In August, 1955, Hendrix announced that he would again run for Governor of Florida on a slogan of "Dollars for Segregation." In January, 1956, he addressed a letter to the United States Department of Justice in Washington, D. C., on a letterhead of Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, in which he advised that "every klavern and branch of the Klan which I represented has now been disbanded and all our records are being stored for future reference." However, in August, 1956, he issued an announcement to the effect that he was reorganizing the Klan on a national scale. He began bringing John Kasper, the controversial pro-segregationist from Washington, D. C., into his Klan activities. The Miami Daily News carried a story on March 4, 1957, to the effect that Hendrix had announced that he would send 35 riflemen to Miami to "protect" Kasper when he spoke there, stating that the armed guards were part of his American Confederate Army, which he had organized to fight integration.

Hendrix' penchant for "phony" publicity was climaxed at a rally of the Association of South Carolina Klans held on April 20, 1957, at Greenville, South Carolina. Hendrix appeared in Greenville, apparently uninvited and unannounced, and told a local reporter that he had come to integrate the South

Carolina Klan group into his organization. He said a meeting of his "Imperial Council" would take place that night after the rally. There is no indication that this was anything more than another figment of Hendrix' imagination, but Hendrix later told the reporter that the meeting of his "Imperial Council" had taken place and that one of the resolutions passed was that membership in his group would now be open to Catholics.

## II. THE FIGHT FOR CONTROL

### A. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of America

At the time of Dr. Green's death on August 18, 1949, the Association of Georgia Klans was the largest and best known of all Klan groups. His death precipitated a fight for Klan leadership, which involved not only leaders of the Association of Georgia Klans but leaders of other groups as well. William Hugh Morris, leader of the Federated Ku Klux Klans, was handicapped by the fact that he was still in jail in Birmingham, Alabama, for refusing to produce Klan records for the grand jury. Thomas L. Hamilton, an organizer for the Association of Georgia Klans in South Carolina, wanted to succeed Green. Bill Hendrix was aspiring to make his new organization in Florida the dominant Klan group. A new contender appeared in the person of an eccentric former [REDACTED] On August 23, 1949, [REDACTED] announced that several Klan groups had joined together to form a new organization, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of America, and had elected him to the office of Imperial Emperor. He said that headquarters of Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of America would be in Montgomery, Alabama, and claimed that the new organization would start with 265,000 members, principally in Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Missouri, and Louisiana. Klan groups allegedly participating in Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of America were listed as the Independent Klans, Seashore Klans, Ozark Klans, Star Klans, River Valley Klans, and Allied Klans.

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As it turned out, Samuel W. Roper, 54-year-old former Atlanta policeman and onetime head of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, who had served as the Exalted Cyclops of an Atlanta klavern of the Association of Georgia Klans, succeeded Green as Imperial Wizard on August 27, 1949. Three days before, the Federal Government had levied a [redacted]

[redacted]

Referral/Direct

**B. Associated Klans of America\***

On September 24, 1949, Roper announced that the Association of Georgia Klans had merged with [redacted] Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of America to form the Associated Klans of America, with Roper as Imperial Wizard and [redacted] as Imperial Chaplain and Public Relations Counselor. Actually, Associated Klans of America never became more than a paper organization, and [redacted] association with Roper lasted only a few months.

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Roper never attained the stature of Green as a Klan leader. Georgia, traditionally, has been the fountainhead of Klan activities, but Roper was not an apt leader and he was beset with many difficulties. [redacted]

[redacted]

\*Designated by the Attorney General pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

Recruiting efforts continued, however. Speakers at public rallies emphasized white supremacy and criticized the Administration's civil rights measures. [redacted] became Imperial Kligrapp (secretary) and Roper's principal assistant. At a fiery-cross meeting at Gray, Georgia, on October 21, 1951, [redacted] called on the Klan to fight the United Nations, "whose charter says you must sleep with Negroes, support the government of Israel and let the Roman Catholic Church tear up our school system."

In January, 1950, [redacted] for William Hugh Morris' Federated Ku Klux Klans, joined forces with Roper after being "banished" from the Federated Ku Klux Klans after an argument with Morris. [redacted] was ousted from his position as National Chaplain of the Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan after an argument with Bill Hendrix, and he too joined with Roper in the position of Klokard (lecturer) and editor of The American Klansman.

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The Association of Georgia Klans gradually became inactive. A few years later, a new Klan leader charged that Roper and [redacted] had stolen between \$16,000 and \$20,000 of Klan money and had been "banished" for life.

The lack of central organization and strong leadership created a chaotic condition in Klan affairs. Each group claimed to be the Klan, and internal bickering within the various Klans and arguments between Klan leaders

were prevalent. Parades, cross burnings, and public rallies increased as each Klan sought to attract new members. Increased emphasis was placed on racial segregation and maintenance of white supremacy in the South. Klan speakers capitalized on the communist threat, playing up the Communist Party line of Negro equality. Wildly inflammatory language was used to instill fear and to enlist the support of persons who normally would have nothing to do with a Klan-type organization.

In such an atmosphere, it was inevitable that violence would occur. The various Klan leaders loudly and righteously proclaimed that they would countenance no violence; that their Klans were law-abiding fraternal groups dedicated to the preservation of the "American" way of life. But more and more Klansmen were being identified in the wave of floggings, murders, and other acts of violence which started in 1950.

#### C. Association of Carolina Klans

Soon after Roper succeeded Green as head of the Association of Georgia Klans, Thomas L. Hamilton set up a Klan of his own with headquarters in Leesville, South Carolina. He called this new group the Association of Carolina Klans, and organized it from klaverns in North Carolina and South Carolina which he had previously organized for the Association of Georgia Klans.

Hamilton, formerly a grocer in Augusta, Georgia, claimed to have been a Klansman since 1926. In a public announcement on November 20, 1949, of the formation of his new Klan, Hamilton called for "maintenance of white supremacy, separation of church and state, free speech, free press, and liberty and justice for all." Roper branded Hamilton a "traitor," while Hamilton countered with the claim that Roper was interested only in the revenue he had been receiving from the Carolina klaverns. Although the Association of Carolina Klans severed all connections with the Association of Georgia Klans, the ideals, purposes, and policies of the two groups remained the same.

Parades, speeches, and cross burnings were utilized by the Association of Carolina Klans to stir up enthusiasm and to attract new members. One parade, near Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, led by Hamilton, resulted in a fracas at a Negro dance hall in which one of the Klansmen, a robed, off-duty policeman, was shot and killed. Hamilton and others were arrested, but the charges were later dismissed.

Floggings and other terroristic acts soon extended into North Carolina. There, Hamilton was not so fortunate. The action of the Fair Bluff, North Carolina, klavern on October 6, 1951, in abducting [redacted] and [redacted] taking them across the state line into South Carolina and there flogging them for alleged immoral activities, brought on an FBI investigation

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which resulted in ten convictions. Hamilton insisted that the Klan did not sanction such activities, and publicly revoked the charter of the Fair Bluff klavern. State and local action against terrorists during the next 12 months, however, resulted in almost 100 arrests, culminating in the arrest of Hamilton on May 24, 1952, on charges of conspiracy to kidnap and assault. Despite his first protestations of innocence, Hamilton entered a surprise plea of guilty on July 22, 1952, and on July 30, 1952, he was sentenced to four years in prison. Sixty-two other sentences were meted out as the climax of one of the largest mass trials in North Carolina history.

There was a lessening of Klan activities throughout the South. Southern editors expressed the hope that the Klan menace had at last been laid to rest. As it turned out, these hopes were premature. Klan leaders needed some incident upon which to base a fresh appeal. This was provided by the United States Supreme Court decision on May 17, 1954, concerning segregation in the public schools.

#### D. National Ku Klux Klan

To go back briefly, in the Fall of 1949, Klan leaders sought to form a national union of Klan organizations. Their attempts were not successful due to the inability of the leaders to agree on who should head such a group.

In December, 1949, a loose affiliation of three groups was formed, to be known as National Ku Klux Klan. Participating were Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Federated Ku Klux Klans, and the Association of Carolina Klans. An Imperial Council was set up, consisting of three members from each participating Klan headed by Bill Hendrix, William Hugh Morris, and Thomas L. Hamilton, respectively. This was not a merger, and no monies were to be sent to any national headquarters.

Roper's Klan in Georgia was not included in the new National Ku Klux Klan. Hendrix accused Roper of blocking national union of all Klans. Roper denied this, and charged that he had been double-crossed by Hendrix and Hamilton. Hamilton, in turn, charged Roper with blocking unification by insisting that all funds be payable to him.

Formation of the National Ku Klux Klan was publicly announced on January 29, 1950. Militant action was called for against such groups as the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, B'nai B'rith, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. A slightly different approach to Catholics was formulated in a statement that while the Catholic Church was sincerely fighting communism, its "clerical hierarchy" was totalitarian in its views and "must not be permitted to dominate and control

the fight against communism." Progressive education was termed "nothing more than a communist movement, sometimes called Socialist, to use the schools and colleges to overthrow the American way of life and our Constitution." The Klan, said the announcement, was tolerant and supported free enterprise and the Constitution.

Although members and leaders of the three Klans appeared from time to time at parades and public rallies of other participating Klans, each Klan pursued its own course and the National Ku Klux Klan never amounted to anything as an organized group.

### III. KLAN MOVEMENT MARKED BY FACTIONALISM

#### A. U. S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

In 1953, a number of officers and members of the Association of Georgia Klans, dissatisfied with Roper's leadership, withdrew to form a new Klan, which was destined to become the largest and best known of all Klan groups. Eldon Lee Edwards, an Atlanta automobile painter, became Imperial Wizard and on September 4, 1953, he copyrighted the old Kloran of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., with only minor changes, in the name of U.S. Klans of Georgia, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

Edwards set out to build a national Klan organization, but soon found that the name U.S. Klans of Georgia, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, was a definite obstacle in soliciting members in other states. He solved this problem by changing the name. On October 24, 1955, in Fulton County (Georgia) Superior Court, a charter was granted to E. L. Edwards, M. Wesley Morgan, and William A. Daniel, Sr., in the name of U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. The attorney for the charter petition was Samuel Green, Jr., son of the late Imperial Wizard of the Association of Georgia Klans. This new group was described as an organization for social and charitable purposes, and the general nature of its business was to formulate

and execute plans for the advancement of the fraternal society, and to promote Christian faith and a better way of life among its members. The real purpose, of course, was to promote white supremacy and the continuation of segregation in the South. Edwards maintained that these objectives would be met only through legal means and without violence.

Edwards established headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. Imperial Wizard Edwards, with Imperial Klaliff M. Wesley Morgan and Imperial Kligrapp William A. Daniel, Sr., both described as long-time Klan fanatics, set the policy for the new Klan. [redacted] Georgia, [redacted]

[redacted] took an active part as Imperial Klokard, and [redacted] formerly active in Original Southern Klans, Inc., now joined forces with Edwards as an organizer.

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National Klonvocations (conventions) are held in Atlanta. At a Klonvocation in June, 1956, a new password was released to members present--"White Man." At a Klonvocation in June, 1957, after a delegate had told assembled Klansmen that it was time for all Klansmen to carry their Bibles in one hand and their muskets in the other, a new password was adopted--"Fight Communism."

[redacted] Roper's Association of Georgia Klans after being "banished" by Morris from Federated Ku Klux Klan, now joined forces with Edwards. On October 27, 1956, Edwards appointed [redacted] Grand Dragon for Alabama. [redacted] was an inflammatory orator. True, he usually predicated his remarks with a statement that the aims of the Klan were peaceful and that lawful means would be used to prevent integration, but such statements were overshadowed when he would cry, "Negroes who try to force their way into our white schools aren't looking for an education--they're looking for a funeral." In highly descriptive terms, he would exhort his listeners on the theory that if white girls and Negro boys went to the same school they would also go to dances together, and that "your fair skinned, fair haired daughter" would soon find herself in the arms of a "burr-headed, liver-lipped, goat-smelling nigger with his mind deep in adultery."

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In June, 1957, [redacted]

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[redacted]

On June 10, 1957, Robert M. Shelton, a Tuscaloosa attorney, was appointed Grand Dragon for Alabama. On June 14, 1957, U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., was registered with the Secretary of State of Alabama.

On January 10 and January 27, 1957, Montgomery, Alabama, where city bus segregation had just been ended, was the scene of a series of bombings and attempted bombings of Negro churches and ministers' homes. Montgomery police blamed "members of the Montgomery branch of the Ku Klux Klan" for the acts. An unnamed Klan spokesman said "the Klan as an organization does not sanction nor does it condone such violence," but admitted that he "understood" that some of the men charged with the acts belonged to the Klan. The Klan immediately rallied to the defense of the four men indicted for these bombings. A defense fund was set up to raise the \$60,000 needed for attorneys' fees for the indicted men, and Imperial Wizard Edwards is reported to have sent an appeal to all klaverns asking for donations to this defense fund.

Typical of the organizational activities of Edwards was the chartering of a klavern at Mobile, Alabama, on July 7, 1956. [redacted] a [redacted] who had been active in William Hugh Morris' Federated Ku Klux Klans during 1949 and 1950, became the Exalted Cyclops of the new Mobile klavern. He and Edwards agreed that the fee for new members would be \$10.00, with a \$3.00 fee for members being reinstated. Of the first 25 members, Edwards was to receive \$7.00 for each new member and \$2.00 for each reinstatement. Thereafter, Edwards was to receive \$4.00 for each

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new member and \$1.00 for each reinstatement. Edwards agreed to send speakers for an open meeting as part of a general membership drive.

According to [ ] Edwards appeared to be interested only in the money involved.

B. Gulf Ku Klux Klan

[ ] was not long satisfied with this arrangement, for three months later, in October, 1956, he withdrew the Mobile klavern from Edwards' Klan and formed his own Klan, the Gulf Ku Klux Klan. The aims and purposes remained the same--to maintain white supremacy and separation of the races, and to fight communism and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He said his Klan would have three degrees, Apprentice Klansman, Klankraft, and Master Klansman, but when he attempted to copy-right these degrees he was turned down because they were not submitted in proper form.

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[ ] took the title of Imperial Wizard and appointed [ ] [ ] as Grand Dragon for Alabama. [ ] had been officers of the old Federated Ku Klux Klans, and [ ] had previously stated that he had had to "banish" [ ] in 1950 for failure to account for membership dues. He said he had reluctantly accepted [ ] into the new Mobile klavern of U. S.



Klans in July, 1956, and had promoted him to Grand Dragon of his new Gulf Ku Klux Klan so he could keep an eye on him.

In addition to the usual cross burnings, during the Winter of 1956 [redacted] instituted a series of visits by hooded Klan members to local churches where, with all possible publicity, contributions would be made to the churches. After several months, such visits became less frequent, allegedly because Klan members complained that the practice was causing too much of a drain on their pocketbooks.

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C. Alabama Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

In May, 1957, Birmingham Klavern No. 1 of the U.S. Klans of Alabama voted to withdraw from Edwards' group and form a new Klan. The reason behind this move was reported to be opposition on the part of the klavern members to sending money to Imperial Headquarters in Atlanta and to contributing to the defense fund of the Klansmen under indictment for the bombings in Montgomery, Alabama. As a result of this withdrawal, the Exalted Cyclops and certain other officers of Birmingham Klavern No. 1 were "banished" by Edwards from the U.S. Klans of Alabama "for the rest of their miserable lives." First known as Alabama Ku Klux Klan, Inc., the original charter filed with the Jefferson County, Alabama, Probate Court on June 7, 1957, was amended on August 19, 1957, to change the name to Alabama Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

D. The Original Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy

A klavern of the U.S. Klans of Alabama had been established at Ensley, Alabama, a suburb of Birmingham. [redacted] a notorious Alabama segregationist, had been accepted as a member of this klavern. Edwards demanded that [redacted] be "banished" from the klavern, and when this was not done, Edwards "banished" the entire Ensley klavern. b7C

[redacted] immediately formed a Klan of his own, which was incorporated in Alabama on November 20, 1956, as The Original Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy. The stated purposes of the new group were to promote the betterment of communities, municipalities, and counties in the state; to defend the Constitution and to lawfully oppose those who would destroy or pervert it; to assist in avoidance of racial tensions; and, by friendly discussion, to bring about understanding between the races.

Strange, indeed, were the methods employed to inspire members to carry out these ostensibly worthy purposes. Meetings were called to order with a ceremony which included the thrusting of a sword into the floor and a knife into the speaker's rostrum. Members were reported to openly carry knives and guns during meetings. At one initiation ceremony, held in a pine forest in a remote rural area, many

of the masked and robed members carried revolvers, knives, swords, et cetera. Models of human skulls glowed in the fire. Applicants, warned that they would be killed if they divulged Klan secrets, put ashes from the fire on their faces, which [ ] explained was a viking custom known as "ashes of the dead." At the end of the ceremony, after taking the "oath of death" and the "oath of secrecy," each applicant took the "blood oath." This consisted of each initiate cutting his arm with a bayonet, dipping his finger in his own blood, writing his initials on a piece of paper, and throwing the paper into the fire.

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[ ] "one man rule" and his methods of handling Klan funds soon caused dissension in The Original Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy. These differences reached a climax at a meeting on January 22, 1957, culminating in a shooting affray in which two members were wounded.

E. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy

After the shooting on January 22, 1957, The Original Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy split into two groups. One group subsequently incorporated on July 23, 1957, as the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy, with the same ostensible purposes as were listed for The Original Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy.

The followers of [redacted] formed their own faction and ultimately became involved in one of the most shocking examples of senseless Klan brutality ever perpetrated.

According to police accounts of the crime, on September 2, 1957, members of this faction met with their Exalted Cyclops. One of the men had been selected for the position of Assistant Exalted Cyclops, but first he had to "prove himself worthy." Six men were selected to look for some "damn Negro to scare the hell out of." They toured the Negro area in two cars for an hour until they happened across [redacted] who was accompanied by a woman companion. [redacted] was kidnapped and taken to a remote hideout. He was forced to his knees before a robed figure and given his choice of mutilation or death. In the ensuing scuffle, [redacted] was

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[redacted]

same thing would happen to any Negro who tried to send his children to a white school. [redacted] unmarried and [redacted] had been selected solely by chance. He had never taken part in any integration movement.

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F. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. (Louisiana)

On May 11, 1956, a charter was filed with the Louisiana Secretary of State for Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. Registered agents were listed as Edgar C. Taylor, Jr., and Perry E. Strickland, and the charter set forth that the group had been organized at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on May 10, 1956, "to promote the Christian Faith; the intellectual improvement and amusement of its members; to promote, foster, and afford opportunity for athletics, sports, and all indoor and outdoor games and sports; to promote a better way of life among its members and to uphold the Constitution of the United States, and generally to do all things necessary or proper to achieve such ends." This new group was to be associated with Edwards' U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

In accordance with Louisiana law, which requires yearly filing of complete membership lists from all but National Guard or church groups, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., submitted a membership list to the Louisiana Secretary of State on December 3, 1956. However, when Edwards had conferred with officers of the Louisiana group on December 1, 1956, an argument developed over finances and control by Edwards. The breach was not healed, and the new Klan soon split into two factions. Edgar C. Taylor, Jr., service station employee and welder, remained as Grand Dragon for Louisiana

and attempted to reorganize the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., as an affiliate of Edwards' Klan. He met with little success, and in September, 1957, Taylor told an informant that his organization was inactive.

G. Knational Christian Klan Kingdom, Inc.

The other faction of Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., led by Reverend Perry E. Strickland, Baptist minister and insurance salesman, formed an independent group with headquarters at Denham Springs, Louisiana. This faction first called itself the National Ku Klux Klan, but when the charter was filed with the Louisiana Secretary of State on May 1, 1957, it was under the name Knational Christian Klan Kingdom, Inc. Strickland announced that his organization was chartered as a church group, and so would not be required to file membership lists. Its stated aims and purposes were to uphold the Constitution of the United States and to promote Christian faith, intellectual improvement, amusement, and athletic activities of its members. The actual purpose, of course, was the same as any other Klan group--to prevent integration. Strickland himself publicly announced that Knational Christian Klan Kingdom, Inc., was a nonprofit corporation formed "to protect the ideals of the white race."

Plans were laid for both a state and a national organization, with Strickland as National Grand President. Individual klaverns were to be called "kingdoms," and the password for 1957 was "White Supremacy." During the first few months, Strickland claimed some success in attracting members in Louisiana, but by September, 1957, National Christian Klan Kingdom, Inc., was largely inactive.

#### H. How U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., Sought New Members

On June 11, 1955, speaking before a 30-foot burning cross at a public rally six miles south of Sumter, South Carolina, Imperial Wizard Edwards of the U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., called for a rebirth of the hooded order in the Carolinas. This was reported to be the first open Klan meeting in South Carolina since Thomas L. Hamilton, former South Carolina Klan leader, had been sent to prison in 1952.

Edwards delivered an inflammatory speech designed to attract new members. He charged that the Supreme Court decision calling for termination of racial segregation was not an order but "an edict" framed by the "nine buzzards" making up the Court. He charged that the decision was a communist-Jewish-Catholic plot aimed at "destroying and mongrelizing" the white race, and said that the communists believed that once the "white man

has been mongrelized, they will have everybody in their power." He called President Eisenhower "Eisenberger," and linked him with the "Jewish conspiracy" which had brought about the racial integration decision. He said that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was "not a Negro organization," but had been formed in 1906 by a "group of three people sent directly from Russia," and that of the original 50-odd members, "two-thirds had been later named as Communists." Others named by Edwards as having a part in the "conspiracy" were "the Jew Bernard Baruch" and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. As can be seen, Edwards utilized all of the four traditional Klan targets in his speech--Negroes, Jews, Catholics, and foreign born. He closed with a plea for "unity," and called for all members of the audience who were "one hundred per cent Protestant white Americans" to join the Klan.

Edwards appointed [redacted] South Carolina, [redacted] as organizer for South Carolina. [redacted] staged well-advertised public rallies, complete with burning crosses, to stir up interest in his Klan and to secure members. Speakers included [redacted] various Klan officials from Atlanta, and local Klan leaders, all expounding on variations of the theme set forth by Edwards at Sumter, South Carolina. [redacted] a

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[redacted] South Carolina, joined forces with [redacted] and soon became known at Klan rallies as the [redacted]

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[redacted]  
By the Summer of 1956, [redacted] of Grand Dragon of South Carolina. Membership fee was set at \$10.00, \$3.00 going to [redacted] \$3.00 to the local klavern, and \$4.00 to the recruiter. Presumably, some of [redacted] share was forwarded to Edwards in Atlanta.

Klansmen in neighboring areas were often called upon to assist at rallies. For example, in a letter to the Exalted Cyclops of a Savannah, Georgia, klavern dated April 2, 1957, [redacted] announced a rally to be held near Kingstree, South Carolina, on April 13, 1957, and said that he wanted as many Klansmen "as can be found" to attend the meeting because "this section is loaded with Catholics which is trying to entergrate the Negro."

#### I. Association of South Carolina Klans

[redacted] soon found he had competition in South Carolina. In the Fall of 1955, a group in Columbia, South Carolina, started a Klan patterned after the old Association of Carolina Klans of Thomas L. Hamilton. After some confusion as to just what name this new Klan would adopt, it finally became known as the Association of South Carolina Klans. [redacted] a

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[redacted] was the motivating force behind this new organization, assisted by [redacted] of Mims Electric Co., and [redacted] [redacted] a student.

By the Fall of 1956, [redacted] had dropped out of the Association of South Carolina Klans, allegedly to promote a new group called Protestant Brotherhood of America. Certain factions of the Association of South Carolina Klans left with [redacted] including a group of the Camden, South Carolina, klavern known as the "Holy Terrors." The "Holy Terrors" had split the Camden klavern because of their terroristic activities. Members of the "Holy Terrors" were believed responsible for the floggings on December 27, 1956, of [redacted] for alleged b7C  
prointegration remarks. [redacted] for the six men arrested for the flogging.

The Protestant Brotherhood of America never developed into more than a temporary cover for [redacted] Klan activities. [redacted] faction soon joined with Edwards' group, and at the National Klonyocation of U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., held in June, 1957, at Atlanta, [redacted] was elected to the Imperial Office of Klabee (treasurer).

[redacted] continued promoting the Association of South Carolina Klans, assisted [redacted]  
[redacted]

**J. South Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.**

A klavern of the U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., had been organized in Greenville, South Carolina. This klavern was disbanded in the Fall of 1956 after a dispute with [redacted] over finances. Led by [redacted]

[redacted]  
[redacted] remnants of this group on December 12, 1956, published legal notice of intention to incorporate as the South Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. In April, 1957, after the South Carolina Secretary of State refused to issue the charter, this organization announced that it was disbanding.

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In May, 1957, members of the disbanded Klan, led by [redacted] a former officer of the Greenville klavern of U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., formed a new organization known as South Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, which was to be associated with Bill Hendrix' Florida Klan group. A large rally was set for June 1, 1957, near Greenville, at which the principal speakers were Bill Hendrix and [redacted] After [redacted] talked about his pro-segregationist activities, Hendrix addressed the rally. He discussed the dangers of racial mixing and told of the Klan's fight for "liberty and freedom." He is reported to have said that if the Supreme Court continued

the way it was going, the day would come when feeling against the Jews would be so high that the reaction "will make Hitler look like a Baptist Sunday School picnic." He was also quoted as saying that white children "can handle integration in the schools with some baseball bats."

The June 3, 1957, issue of the Greenville Piedmont newspaper reported an interview with Hendrix. "It's doubtful that we can continue to fight segregation by lawful means," he said. When asked about the possible use of violence, he replied: "Violence? No, I don't think we'll have to use violence, but you must remember that we (officials) have no control over what individual or a group of klansmen will do."

By the Fall of 1957, South Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan had extended its activities into surrounding states and the name was changed to Independent Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. In the meantime, [ ] met with opposition from members who were not in favor of the alliance with Bill Hendrix. He was forced out of the organization after the Grand Council found him guilty of embezzling Klan funds.

On October 4, 1957, [ ] announced that he had resigned the title of Grand Dragon of the South Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan to become Grand Dragon of a newly organized group to be known as National Ku Klux Klan, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of South Carolina. However, on January 1, 1958, [ ] said that National Ku Klux Klan had been dissolved and that he was urging all former members to join the United White Party recently formed at Knoxville, Tennessee. b7C

**K. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (North Carolina)**

Early in 1956, Arthur W. Bryant and his brother Joseph C. Bryant, both of Charlotte, North Carolina, and president and executive secretary, respectively, of the States Rights League of North Carolina, started distributing anti-Semitic and pro-segregation literature. Joseph C. Bryant is reported to have said that the States Rights League of North Carolina was to be the nucleus for a Klan group in Charlotte.

The activities of the Bryant brothers led to their arrest, with four other persons, on May 31 and June 1, 1956, for violation of a North Carolina statute making it a misdemeanor to mail or distribute written or printed material which, if published, would bring persons identified therein into public contempt or disgrace. All were later released except Arthur W. Bryant and Percy C. Wyatt, who were fined and given suspended sentences in Charlotte Recorder's Court on June 8, 1956.

Arthur and Joseph Bryant, with another brother, Harry, operated the Art Stone Works in Charlotte. At the time the arrests were made, a search of this establishment revealed quantities of alleged defamatory matter, a printing press belonging to Wyatt, and 33 applications to join or be reinstated in the U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

Wyatt has been described as having been a fanatic on racial matters for many years, with a particular bias against Jews. At one time (1935), he had been [redacted] He was a charter member of the Patriots of North Carolina, Inc., an organization chartered in North Carolina on August 22, 1955, "to maintain the purity of the white race, promote racial peace and goodwill, maintain existing social structures and promote the rights of states to regulate their own internal affairs." In 1954, he was listed on letterheads of Pro-Southerners as a member of the Advisory Board.

After the conviction of Arthur W. Bryant and Percy C. Wyatt on June 8, 1956, Bryant communicated with klaverns of U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., in other states in an appeal for funds to pay fines and attorneys' fees, et cetera. In the meantime, he had been assisting [redacted] [redacted] in organizing the Klan in South Carolina. Bryant attended the National Klonvocation of U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., held in Atlanta in June, 1956, as the lone representative from North Carolina.

Early in the Fall of 1956, [redacted] "banished" Reverend James Cole, reportedly because Cole was advocating the use of force and violence in Klan activities and because Cole had been using his position in [redacted]

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organization for his own personal gain. Cole immediately joined forces with the three Bryant brothers in trying to establish a Klan organization in North Carolina. Arthur W. Bryant assumed the title of Grand Dragon of North Carolina and sought to have his group recognized as part of Edwards' U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. [redacted] in South Carolina, protested, with the result that about November, 1956, Edwards is reported to have "banished" Arthur W. Bryant from the U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

When attempts to affiliate with Edwards' group failed, Bryant told an informant that his organization would be known as Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and that he would attempt to secure a charter from the State of Delaware. Public rallies were staged in North Carolina during the Fall and Winter of 1956 in an effort to arouse interest in the new organization.

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[redacted] North Carolina, assisted in the organizing efforts, but the Bryant brothers allegedly were not completely satisfied with Watkins, apparently because of some previous financial dealings in which they felt that Watkins had been dishonest.

Reverend James Cole, the "country preacher from down the road," was the principal speaker at public rallies of Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

Cole, a good speaker with a flair for showmanship, has been described by persons who have known him as a money-mad individual who preached only because he felt it was the easiest way to make a living. A former associate in the Baptist ministry said Cole was not a "man of God," could not be trusted, and would do anything for personal gain.

A typical public rally of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan would start with a recording of the national anthem, followed by the Klan "anthem"-- "The Old Rugged Cross"--and a prayer. Speakers would emphasize that this organization did not believe in violence, but in the next breath would make statements which could only incite to violence. For example, the North Carolina General Assembly had enacted a law concerning integration in public schools of North Carolina. This law was known as the Pearsall Plan. Reverend James Cole, criticizing the Supreme Court, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Ford Foundation, the National Council of Churches, the Catholic Church, Masons, et cetera, in speaking on the evils of integration, would climax his talk with: "If the Pearsall Plan will not work, the Smith and Wesson Plan will."

At a rally at Salisbury, North Carolina, on July 20, 1957, Cole referred to an instance where Durham Negroes tried to swim in a white



swimming pool. Paraphrasing words formerly used by [redacted] Cole, who by now was calling himself Grand Wizard, told his audience: "A Negro who wants to go to a white swimming pool is not looking for a bath, he's looking for a funeral."

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For a time, Cole used a five-year-old child as a speaker at Klan rallies. When called upon to speak, the youngster, dressed in Klan regalia, would deliver a one-sentence message: "I ain't going to school with Niggers."

A pamphlet entitled "Why You Should Become a Klansman" was distributed at rallies of Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Excerpts set forth below illustrate a typical Klan appeal to anti-Negro, anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish, and antiforeign-born sentiments, thinly disguised under the cloak of patriotism and Christianity.

"If you are a White Man your place is with an organized White Man's movement dedicated to the task of preserving the integrity, the blood-purity, the traditions, the ideals, and the heritages of the White Races in America. This is the Racial Mission of the Klan.

"If you are a native-born American your place is with an organized White, Native-born American movement dedicated to all the high and holy ideals and principles of real American patriotism. In its influences and its teachings, and its principles, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan seeks to generate and impart a spirit of loyalty to America, of consecration to her ideals, of fealty to her institutions, of support to her government, of obedience to her laws, and of unselfish devotion to her interests.

"If you are a Protestant your place is with an organized White, Native-born American Protestant movement dedicated to the re-animation of genuine Protestantism in America. As it grows, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is quietly but effectively aiding in the upbuilding of Protestant Christianity."

"If you believe in law and order your place is with an organized movement that is effectively creating respect for Law, emphasizing obedience to Law, and insisting upon the full and impartial enforcement of Law, in every place where it is fully operative. The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is dedicated to this principle."

"If you believe in the American Public School System your place is with an organized movement that is dedicated to the principle that the American Public School System must and shall be preserved, supported, and developed for the highest possible functioning in our American life."

"If you believe that White, Native-Born Protestant Americans should have the same rights in their own country that are granted to alien and other groups, then your place is with the movement that is organized to cherish, establish, and maintain these rights for Americans. Other groups are actively operative in furthering their own peculiar group interests. The Jews are organized to protect Jewish interests; the Roman Catholics are organized to further papal interests, the Negroes are organized to advance the interests of that race; and in various parts of America, various racial and alien-national groups are organized for the furtherance of their particular interests and the spread of their peculiar ideals among our own American people. These racial and religious groups exercise the rights of freedom of assembly, free speech, and free press. The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan believes that White, Native-born, Protestant Americans should be protected in their own exercise of these fundamental American rights, and especially in their right to insist that America shall be made American through the promulgation of American principles, the dissemination of American ideals, the creation of wholesome American sentiment, the preservation of American institutions, and through all of those means that will make for a nobler, purer, and more prosperous America."

In December, 1957, Reverend James Cole attempted to extend his Klan activities into the State of Virginia. On December 3, 1957, one James Garland Martin arrived in Danville, Virginia, to make arrangements for a rally and cross burning to be held near Danville on the night of December 7, 1957. Leaflets circulated in the Danville area announced that the Grand Wizard would talk on "Why I Believe in Segregation." Virginia newspapers noted that this was the first Klan meeting in Virginia since the late 1920's.

The rally was not a success. It took place in a waterlogged pasture during a steady rainfall. The 13 robed Klansmen present had difficulty in lighting the water-soaked cross. Cole attempted to stir up interest in the Klan, with little success. As stated in an editorial in the December 8, 1957, issue of The Danville Register:

"...They simply looked ridiculous--as ridiculous as they were..."

The Roanoke (Va.) Times commented editorially on December 17, 1957, on the idea of a Klan revival in Virginia:

"The idea is deplorable because the Klan is the distillation of all the cowardice, cruelty and moral corruption present in extreme racism."

Reverend James Cole and James Garland Martin were soon to be involved in an incident which, in spite of its serious implications, was to

make the Klan the laughingstock of the Nation. Early in January, 1958, crosses were burned near Indian homes in Robeson County, North Carolina, which has a population of approximately 40,000 white people, 30,000 Lumbee Indians, and 25,000 Negroes. Cole was quoted as saying the cross burnings were intended to be a warning to those Indians who were trying to integrate. A Klan rally was announced for January 18, 1958, near Maxton, North Carolina.

The rally turned into a rout. Indians, shooting shotguns and rifles into the air, descended upon the Klansmen and broke up the meeting. Local officers used tear gas to quiet the melee, and the Klansmen withdrew. James Garland Martin was arrested on charges of public drunkenness and carrying a concealed weapon. Later, a North Carolina State grand jury indicted Martin and Cole on charges of inciting a riot. Cole, by then, had returned to his home in South Carolina, where he issued a statement that he planned to institute legal action against the Sheriff of Robeson County. He complained that he had been denied his rights under the law because he was a member of the white race.

L. Knights of the Kuklos Klan

Harry William Pyle, an elderly, retired painting contractor of Memphis, Tennessee, published a mimeographed monthly paper called

The Political Reporter, which has been described as a bitterly anti-Negro, anti-Jewish-type "hate sheet." He was the founder and promoter of a white supremacy group called Pro-Southerners, and, about 1954, started promoting a new Klan-type organization of his own, which he called Knights of the Kuklos Klan. Pyle assumed the title of Imperial Dragon, and claimed that his organization descended from the original order of Nathan Bedford Forrest of Civil War Reconstruction days. The purpose of the group, as described by Pyle on one occasion, was to "save this Nation from the Negroes, Zionists, and Communists," and to preserve white supremacy and segregation of races.

Little progress was made by Knights of the Kuklos Klan, although for a time in 1954 and 1955 [redacted] attempted to stir up interest in the group in Florida. After Pyle split with Pro-Southerners in March, 1956, he started active promotion of Knights of the Kuklos Klan in and around Memphis. He interested Edwin H. Wilson, another elderly Memphis man, in the organization, and Wilson became active as a promoter. There was a brief period of growth, but Knights of the Kuklos Klan was so loosely operated that chaos resulted. Pyle and Wilson gave conflicting expressions of the aims and purposes of the group to prospective recruits, and both handed out honorary titles promiscuously until it appeared that the majority of the

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members considered themselves to be officers of some type. By the Summer of 1956, Knights of the Kuklos Klan was almost completely dormant. Wilson started selling memberships in a group of his own, The Kuklus Klan, which he said he had organized to obtain information for law enforcement agencies regarding potential racial trouble spots. Pyle died in Memphis on February 28, 1957.

M. Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan

On July 7, 1953, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Great Titan, Imperial Nighthawk, and member of the Imperial Council of the Association of Georgia Klans, formed a new Klan which he called Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan. This new group was not to be affiliated with any other Klan, but was to operate under the same principles and bylaws as the Association of Georgia Klans. b7C

[REDACTED] previously associated at various times with Bill Hendrix and Samuel W. Roper in Klan promotion, now affiliated with [REDACTED] and former associate of Hendrix' until a disagreement had caused them to sever relations, also joined [REDACTED] organization.

At a state meeting of Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan held on November 21, 1954, near Live Oak, Florida, speakers included Grand Dragon [ ] and [ ] members of the Imperial Council; [ ] and [ ] stated that any member who used force or violence would be expelled, and praised the work of [ ] and the National Association for the Advancement of White People. [ ] quoted the Bible as the basis for his position that to give equality to Negroes would be a "sin against God." [ ] said that Hitler was "the greatest man of all time," praised Hitler's efforts to exterminate the Jews, and said that "the Jews must be destroyed." He said that the Negro problem was only secondary.

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[ ] referred to Hitler as "one of the greatest men of all times, whose policy of extermination was the only solution to the Jew problem." He said the Klan should resort to every means at hand to attack the Jews, who he claimed were responsible for the segregation problem. He contended that the Negro was only a tool in the hands of the Jews to destroy western civilization.

[ ] told an informant that the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan was working hand in hand with [ ] and the National

Association for the Advancement of White People, and that policy had been agreed upon which would make it impossible to tie the two organizations together. [ ] said that [ ] group would be used by the Klan "to exert mass pressure," and referred to the Klan as the "underground parent" of the National Association for the Advancement of White People.

In the Summer of 1954, [ ] appointed [ ] of [ ] Florida, as a Grand Titan of the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan. [ ] as previously noted, became involved with Harry William Pyle in promoting the Pro-Southerners and the Knights of the Kuklos Klan, which led to a split between [ ]

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On January 22, 1955, representatives of the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan and of the U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., met near Live Oak, Florida, to discuss proposed cooperation and possible merger. Details of leadership could not be worked out, so nothing specific was decided. In April, 1955, [ ] told an informant that he had been offered a salary and commission, which would keep him in "green pastures," to organize new klaverns for U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., but that he had turned it down because he believed in a state organization rather than a national group. Later, [ ] told the informant that he had been offered



a monthly salary if he would agree to a merger between his Klan and Edwards' U. S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

Dissension developed at a state meeting of the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan held at Live Oak, Florida, on June 11, 1955, when [redacted] thought some of the other officers were usurping his authority. As [redacted] put it in a letter to a fellow Klansman dated June 16, 1955:

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"...I have Fired, the hell out of [redacted] as Great Titan, and I have Abolished the Imperial Council, and- I have planned for a SPECIAL SESSION, to adopt the necessary and important things concerning the Klan."

"So dont worry about [redacted] protecting himself, and the Klan. I have let my hair down, and pulled my gloves off, and waiting for the Bell. I have everything to gain and nothing to loose, and I have had Telephone Calls, by the Dozens, and letters are pouring in from everywhere, congratulating me on my firm stand, to keep the Klan-Clean, and avoid Bastards, who seek personal gain, and Leadership, like old man [redacted] and a few others..."

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[redacted] did call a meeting on July 10, 1955, at Eustis, Florida, but the breach was not healed. On August 11, 1955, the Tampa Morning Tribune reported that Griffin had announced that he had ordered the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan to disband.

N. Conscientious American Citizens Club

[ ] continued his organizational activities in Tampa, Florida, changing the name of the former Tampa klavern of the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan to Conscientious American Citizens Club,\* the announced purpose of which was to work for the segregation of races in every way short of violence. [ ] had incorporated the Conscientious American Citizens Club on November 28, 1947, as a nonprofit organization to foster civic interest and integrity in public office, but actually used by him to screen his Klan activities. A secret inner group of the Conscientious American Citizens Club was to be known as Aryan Knights of the Great Forest. b7C

According to one informant, [ ] had no real program to offer, and seemed to be mainly concerned with having someone listen to his speeches. Within a year, the Conscientious American Citizens Club became inactive.

O. Florida Ku Klux Klan

Despite [ ] order to disband, the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan continued to operate. [ ]

[ ] was appointed Grand Dragon to replace [ ] and the name was changed to Florida Ku Klux Klan.\* [ ] was not a strong leader and had difficulty maintaining control over the state organization. Local leaders \*August, 1955. b7C

sought power; individual members and whole klaverns changed allegiance or became independent. The situation in Jacksonville is illustrative of the confusion which reigned.

Pieced together from stories of various informants, this is the picture. When the Jacksonville klavern of the Association of Georgia Klans had become inactive, many of its last active members affiliated with [redacted] Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan. After Bill Hendrix publicly announced that the Southern Knights of Ku Klux Klan would open its ranks to Negroes, the Jacksonville klavern of Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan became independent, then affiliated with [redacted] group.

This Jacksonville klavern of the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan continued as part of the Florida Ku Klux Klan under [redacted] until November, 1956, when dissension among the officers reached a climax. The klavern split into two factions, one remaining with [redacted] Florida Ku Klux Klan and the other, led by Exalted Cyclops [redacted], affiliating with Edwards' U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. [redacted] later became Grand Dragon for Florida in the Edwards organization.

b7C

[redacted] attitude toward the claimed peaceful motives of the Klan is illustrated by a statement attributed to him in an article by Robert S. Bird which appeared in the May 5, 1957, issue of The Washington Post and Times Herald:

"I don't know what any of you boys would do about it, and I'm not telling you to go out and do murder. But I know what I'd do if one of them ding-Jew kind of niggers ever said anything to my wife. I'd get me a shotgun."

P. Bedford Forrest Club, Inc.

To go back briefly, another Jacksonville klavern of [redacted] Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan had been [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] had been a member of this group. When [redacted] attempted to disband the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan, this klavern operated independently for a time, planning to remain with [redacted] if [redacted] set up another organization. When this did not materialize, they entered into negotiations with Edwards to affiliate with U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. These negotiations fell through at the last minute, so finally, on February 3, 1956, this group secured a charter from the Duval County (Florida) Circuit Court as the Bedford Forrest Club, Inc. This cover name was selected because it was felt that it might be difficult or embarrassing to obtain a charter in the name of the Klan. [redacted] [redacted] took the title of Imperial Wizard. The ritual remained essentially that of the Association of Florida Ku Klux Klan, and the primary objectives continued to be:

b7C

1. To fight integration in schools and other public places.
2. To seek the reversal of the Supreme Court decision on segregation.
3. To oppose the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

In June, 1957, [ ] announced that he was starting a new Klan group. Plans of the Bedford Forrest Club, Inc., to affiliate with [ ] fell through when [ ] insisted that Klan members married to Catholics must be denied membership. One of the officers of the Bedford Forrest Club, Inc., was married to a Catholic.

Q. Association of Alabama Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

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[ ]  
[ ] had been Exalted Cyclops of the Spanish Fort, Alabama, klavern of Gulf Ku Klux Klan. In June, 1957, [ ] and other members of this klavern broke with Gulf Ku Klux Klan and formed an independent Klan group called Association of Alabama Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, with headquarters at Daphne, Alabama. [ ] became Grand Dragon of this new Klan. In September, 1957, [ ] advised Bureau Agents that the purpose of Association of Alabama Knights of the Ku Klux Klan was to oppose integration of the races. He said

the organization was opposed to the use of violence and intended to work for segregation through political and religious channels. However, on January 27, 1958, [ ] advised that the Association of Alabama Knights of the Ku Klux Klan had suspended operations in November, 1957, and that final decision as to whether to resume activities or to disband entirely would be made in about May, 1958.

R. Tennessee Klans

Tennessee Klans, sometimes referred to as Tennessee Ku Klux Klan, was formed at Clinton, Tennessee, in the Summer of 1957 by [ ] According to one informant, [ ] had been a member of Hendrix' Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and aspired to the position of organizer for the entire State of Tennessee. When he failed to get this job, he withdrew and formed his own Klan. b7C

[ ] is reported to have said that his organization would have no charter or membership cards and would use a costume consisting of a mask with crossbones on the forehead. Initiation fee was set at \$5.00, with monthly dues of \$1.00 per member. In November, 1957, [ ] claimed that Tennessee Klans had 32 members. According to one source, [ ] said that persons from other areas would come into Anderson County, Tennessee,

to do whatever was necessary in that area and that local members would travel to other cities to take care of necessary work there.

Tennessee Klans has committed no known acts of violence, but

[redacted] has, in the past, indicated an interest in the making of hand grenades and the storage of dynamite in the Clinton area.

S. Dixie Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.

In September, 1957, Exalted Cyclops [redacted] and four other leaders of Klavern No. 1, U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., in Chattanooga, Tennessee, were "banished" from the klavern because of alleged irregular activities in conducting the klavern's business. [redacted] and [redacted]

b7C

[redacted] one of the other "banished" leaders, formed a new Klan group known as Dixie Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., with headquarters in East Chattanooga, Tennessee. A General Welfare Charter of Incorporation, issued by the Tennessee Secretary of State on October 21, 1957, listed some of the purposes of the organization as freedom of speech and association, rejection of forced integration, preservation of the constitutions of the United States and the State of Tennessee, and preservation of the sovereignty of each of the 48 states.

On February 1, 1958, [redacted] was elected Imperial Wizard of Dixie Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc. [redacted] previously had been appointed Grand Dragon for Tennessee.

T. N.C. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

In December, 1957, Klavern No. 22 of Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (North Carolina) became an independent Klan organization with headquarters in Charlotte, North Carolina. It took the name N.C. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and was subsequently referred to by members as National Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. The objectives of the group were to fight racial integration and to maintain supremacy of the white race.

The terroristic methods to be used by the N.C. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan to obtain its objectives soon led the organization into difficulties. After burning a cross at a Negro school near Charlotte on February 5, 1958, several members were apprehended on February 15, 1958, while attempting to bomb this same school. On February 21, 1958, Grand Wizard Lester Frances Caldwell and four others were convicted and fined in Recorders Court in Charlotte on misdemeanor charges resulting from the cross burning. On March 20, 1958, Caldwell received a 5-to-10-year prison sentence after being convicted by a jury in Mecklenburg County Superior Court for the attempted bombing of the Negro school. A 2-to-5-year term for plotting the bombing was suspended. In addition, two other members of N.C. Knights of the Ku Klux Klan received 2-to-5-year sentences after being convicted on conspiracy charges.



#### IV. REACTION TO THE KLAN

##### A. Editorial Comment

The various Klans and their promoters have been thoroughly discredited by informed citizens of the South. This is illustrated vividly by editorial comments which have appeared in a number of Southern newspapers.

"The Ku Klux Klan is a cancer anywhere it appears. It can bring nothing but sorrow. It includes in its membership many good, bewildered, ill-informed persons with grievances which seem just to them, and who are used by the cynical and hypocritical exploiters of the Klan for devious purposes, none good. In some localities the Klan gets completely in the hands of the jerks and oafs and does some vicious, violent acts."

The Atlanta Constitution, Atlanta,  
Georgia, January 26, 1949.

"It is obvious from the cases enumerated by the (Federal) grand jury that the Klan is not composed of patriotic men trying to uphold basic morals, traditions and laws, as Klan officials like to assert.

"Instead, it is composed of degenerate cowards who delight in abuse, mayhem and murder. They vent their brutal spleen on helpless individuals. They seek to impress their prejudices and rancor upon whole communities."

The Florida Times-Union, Jacksonville,  
Florida, March 29, 1953.

"Let us not be lulled into complacency by any idea that such an organization may be needed as a defense against those who would force the issue of racial integration. It has nothing constructive to offer..."

Birmingham Post-Herald,  
Birmingham, Alabama, September 4,  
1956.

"Groups like the Ku Klux Klan are groups of people whose identity is not known. They are groups which habitually wear masks over their faces and operate during the hours of darkness. They are groups which knock on doors in the night, drag citizens from their beds, haul them off in the woods, and beat them with leather straps.

"They are groups which replace the law with the worst kind of terrorism and illegal violence.

"This opinion of klan-type groups is not a fancied or biased conjecture: it is an opinion which can be documented by a long list of court convictions extending over a period of almost forty years.

"Klan-type terrorism never has and never will confine itself to the correction of the evil it pretends to combat. The organization of this type terrorism lends itself to the perverted usages of cowards and sadists, private revenges, political prostitutions, perversion of police powers, and nocturnal orgies and revels in the savage bloodlusts which are our brutal heritages from the darkest jungles.

"It snatches away not alone the liberty of the Negro citizen stubborn enough to want to send his child to a white school. It snatches away the right of every citizen to live peacefully in his own home, to enjoy the legal protection for which he pays his taxes, and to exercise his hard-won constitutional rights of free speech and freedom of religion.

"By the very nature of its anonymity and its clandestine standard operating procedure the klan-type organization cannot confine itself to its original objectives; and it lends its name and its methods to the purposes of the lowest type of cowardly hoodlum, whether or not that hoodlum be a member of the organization.

"Business of calling in such groups as the Ku Klux Klan to help preserve segregation in the South is comparable to using an atom bomb to break up a street brawl, comparable to setting loose a band of man-eating murderous tigers to rid the village of rats."

"Solution of integration or any other evil will never be found under a mask of terror and a soiled sheet of midnight violence."

Fayetteville Observer, Fayetteville,  
North Carolina, September 15, 1956.

Well-meaning persons still succumb to Klan propaganda and join

Klan groups "to help the cause." An editorial in the August 18, 1955, issue of the Charlotte News, Charlotte, North Carolina, noted;

"The Klan must not be allowed to rear its ugly head again-- here or anywhere else. There may be a few sincere but deluded Tar Heels who think that such an organization can perform some useful purpose. It cannot. These same citizens who 'mean well' are invariably victimized by organizers who cynically use the Klan for financial gain or restless, reckless and sadistic men and hot-eyed religious fanatics who thirst for drastic action."

After the August 8, 1957, flogging of four Negroes in Evergreen, Alabama, by individuals wearing Klan regalia, at least two members of the Evergreen Klavern resigned because they wanted nothing to do with such activities. The mayor of Sylacauga, Alabama, who had agreed to let a Klan group hold meetings in a building owned by his family, withdrew his permission when he became convinced that this Klan group was composed of radical and criminal elements. In October, 1957, a Klansman in Chattanooga, Tennessee, returned his membership card when asked to buy dynamite for another Klansman.

In their public utterances, Klan promoters are careful to emphasize that their organizations are against violence in any form. In the same breath, however, they flatly state that there will be no integration of the races in the South. But they have no program to bridge the gap--a fatal defect which distinguishes Klan groups from legitimate organizations seeking the answers to social problems in the South today. The September 12, 1955, issue of The Pensacola Journal, Pensacola, Florida, editorialized as follows:

"The klan came into existence because of trouble and now it exists simply to create and continue fresh trouble. It is not so much a question of the klan being unnecessary in a peaceful work (sic); it is a question of a troubled world being necessary to the klan. Well, we control mosquitos and we can control these other social pests."

**B. The FBI and the Klan**

Klan organizations are investigated by the FBI (1) when the organization has been designated pursuant to Executive Order 10450 or is actually or allegedly affiliated or has a subsidiary relationship with a designated organization; (2) when there are alleged or actual acts of violence or the organization has indicated it has adopted a policy of advocating or approving the commission of acts of force or violence to deny others their rights under the Constitution; (3) where there are alleged or actual violations of Federal laws within the investigative jurisdiction of the FBI.\* However, in order to fully discharge its responsibilities, it is necessary that the FBI keep abreast of all pertinent Klan activities. This can only be done through informants and sources who are in a position to report on the activities of the various Klan groups.

In the sensitive atmosphere prevailing in the South today, it is imperative that there be no misunderstanding of the FBI's position. The FBI takes no position in the problems involved in segregation versus integration. It is interested only in fulfilling its obligations in connection with violations falling within its investigative jurisdiction. Actual investigation by the FBI of individual acts of violence which are solely local violations would result in criticism for interfering in local affairs.

\*Subject to change. See Section 87 EE, Manual of Instructions.

There is an interesting example which illustrates the necessity of avoiding any appearance of interference in local affairs. At a Klan meeting at Concord, North Carolina, on October 26, 1957, a photographer and a writer of the Concord Tribune were attacked. Imperial Wizard E. L. Edwards of the U.S. Klans, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, was charged with assault, but was acquitted at a trial held on November 7, 1957. After holding that the evidence was not sufficient to prove the charges against Edwards, Judge Clyde L. Probst, Jr., made the following statement:

"Don't let the fact that you came up here from Georgia and received a fair trial in this court give you or anybody else the idea that we encourage the operation of the Klan here.... I view many of the things done in the name of the Klan as very little higher than a soldier in a school house--Little Rock was at one extreme and the Klan is at the other. We don't like anybody coming in from the outside and interfering in our affairs."