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**The Ku Klux Klan as Legal Organizations in the 2000's**

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## ***Dedication***

*I dedicate this modest work to my beloved parents.*

*To my dear brothers and sisters.*

*To all my family, my friends and my colleagues.*

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## **List of Abbreviations**

**WASP:** White Anglo-Saxon Protestants.

**KKK:** Ku Klux Klan.

**KKKK:** Knights of Ku Klux Klan.

**UKA:** United Klans of America.

**NAACP:** National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

**VEP:** Voter Education Project.

**JDL:** Jewish Defense League.

**CORE:** Congress of Racial Equality.

**SBI:** State Bureau of Investigation.

**SPLC:** Southern Poverty Law Center

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## **Abstract**

The bad situation that African Americans suffered from, led to the emergence of “The Civil Rights Movement”, which aimed to free the Blacks and guarantee their rights as American citizens. As an opposition, the Ku Klux Klan appeared. A society that attacked African Americans who became free during the Civil Rights-Era. So, to what extent could the KKK shift from a secret society to legal organizations in 2000’s in U.S? This work deals with the Ku

Klux Klan as a violent movement, which murdered Negroes in a very aggressive way during the Civil Rights Movement (1960's). It also deals with that change of the KKK from a secret society at the beginning, to legal organizations in the 2000's. The first chapter of the work, talks about the Ku Klux Klan as an emerging movement starting with its definition in the first title, then, the Klan movement divided to the First Klan (1886) and the Second Klan (1915). It also mentions the most famous leaders or wizards of the group, ending with the klans' status during Kennedy's Administration, who had the same policy and ideas as Lincoln. His first interest was to protect the nation. The second chapter is only dealt with the Civil Rights-Era. It spots light on the theKlans' development at that period of time. North Carolina, was most famous with its activities so that was called "Klansville". It also speaks about Bob Jones, the most famous wizard at that period. The Klans' reaction over the Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights and "I Have a Dream" speech, was mentioned in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> title of the chapter. At its end, there is the fall of the Klans after the dissolution of Jones' leadership. The end of the movement didn't last very long; they reemerged in a new, more powerful era, under the protection of the American Law (Chapter3). The last part of the work emphasizes on the Klan's impact on the American society and politics. It takes a look inside the new KKK, how they perform their aggressive activities and its status in the time present. Also the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan as a continuity to the Ku Klux Klan. The present-day Klan threat is no longer about the KKK itself. In this "Post-Klan" era, the KKK's former constituencies might now reside in a range of white power movements or supports political candidates who draw on residual segregation.

## General Introduction

Following the Civil War(1861-1865), the era of Reconstruction was a difficult time for southerners in general and Blacks in particular. Despite the abolition of slavery by January 1st, 1863 by President Lincoln who formally issued the Emancipation Proclamation, calling on the Union army to liberate all slaves in states, black people in America remained subordinated to the white men. In other words, African Americans' existence was limited to serve the whites, and they were supposed to follow the latter's orders, and make their life comfortable and easier.

For centuries, African Americans had to fight for several rights that white Americans had taken from them. The right of education, voting rights, similar employment and desegregated public facilities were all forbidden for the Black population of America. The Civil Rights Movement of the 60s came as the symbol of hope and change in the course of American history by taking actions that would change the law to grant blacks more rights.

In Pulaski, Tennessee, a group of federate veterans formed a secret society that they called the "Ku Klux Klan".The group was based in the south of America and attacked those who became free after the Civil War: the African Americans. The economic prosperity that America witnessed during the Roaring Age didn't filter the South a lot. It is an established group that was formed, or designed, to spread fear throughout the Southern Black Society. It included the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP).

These efforts for more freedom upset a group of men in Pulaski, Tennessee in 1865. The group in question was composed by federate veterans who formed a secret society that they called the "Ku Klux Klan".

The group was based in the south of America and attacked those who became free after the Civil War: the African Americans. The economic prosperity that America witnessed during the Roaring Age didn't filter the South a lot. It is an established group that was formed, or designed, to spread fear throughout the Southern Black Society. It included the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP).

The group's purpose is to protect the white race rights using violence and terrorism against the American minorities such as Jews and African Americans.The name of the Ku Klux Klan was derived from the Greek word "Kyklos",meaning "circle" and the Scottish-Gaelic word "clan". Under a platform of philosophized white racial superiority, the group employed violence as a means of pushing back Reconstruction and its enfranchisement of African Americans. Former Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest was the KKK's first grand wizard; in 1869, he successfully tried to disband it after he grew critical of the Klan's excessive violence.

In 1866, the First Klan was considered as a "Subversive or terrorist organization", whose members showed a kind of postwar violence, especially against the Blacks. They elected



Brian A. Scate as the president of their organization. In 1915, another Klan (the Second Klan) organization was established that glorified the Clansmen.

Today, the African American is no longer called a Black, who represents the second-class position in society, but he is just an American citizen who doesn't differ from the others. Oprah Winfrey, Cande Carroll and many others, showed the new image of the Afro-Americans who are playing an important role in the American social life as well as the political one. With the election of Barack Hachel Obama, who is originally from Kenya, symbolizes the Afro-American who has achieved success and who has been recognized as representing the American dream of equality but still; if the belief in equal rights was really at hand no matter one's colour, how does it come that the UKA still improves itself as legal organizations acting under the protection of the American law? And what are the reasons behind the continuity of the Klan groups in the so called "POST-RACIAL" America despite the Civil Rights Activists efforts?

The Ku Klux Klan Movement started many years before 1900 and is still alive today. This work is about the evolution of the Klans from small secret groups to legal organizations nowadays. This chronological study is thus divided into three parts. The first one examines the emergence of the Klan Movement and how it started; it also emphasizes on the main leaders of the movement. The second chapter deals with the status of the Ku Klux Klan during the Civil Rights Movement. The third and last chapter states the actual situation of the Klans in the time present.

Although the Afro-American could, legally, gain his rights as an American citizen regardless of his race or his skin color, he remains seen that strange person who can't coexist, in some cases, with the other white race, and he is still separated and neglected by the American society more than the white. The existing of the Klan groups till now is a proof of some whites' refuse of the Black presence on their land of freedom and equality.

# Chapter One

The Emergence of the Ku Klux Klan

**Chapter I: The Emergence of the KKK**

## 1- What is the Ku Klux Klan?

The “Ku Klux Klan” is an Anglo-Saxon group who believed in white supremacy. The movement was first formed in the 1860’s in the South of America in order to protect the white rights. In 1615, the KKK was reestablished with great force, standing for “Americanism, Christianity and Morality”. They continued to grow, till the late of 1960’s.( Albert C.,416)

The KKK used aggressive manner and force upon the black people, which stopped them from living near the white communities or to use their rights.(416)

The KKK was a significant group because of the vast amount of members that belonged to the movement, especially in the southern states. They started installing fear among black population. The black people could not know who was a Klan member or not, so they became scared of all people; this led to blacks even losing faith in the law and American politics. Many of the Klan’s members were powerful having powerful jobs: Senators, judges and police chiefs, the fact that installed a greater fear into the black people of America.

*Beginning in April, 1867, there was a gradual transformation ... The members had conjured up a veritable Frankenstein. They had played with an engine of power and mystery, though organized on entirely innocent lines, and found themselves overcome by a belief that something must lie behind it all — that there was, after all, a serious purpose, a work for the Klan to do(Albert C.417)*

Historians generally classify the KKK as part of the post-Civil War insurgent violence related not only to the high number of veterans in the population, but also to their effort to control the dramatically changed social situation by using extrajudicial means to restore white supremacy. In 1866, Mississippi Governor William L. Sharkey reported that disorder, lack of control, and lawlessness were widespread; in some states armed bands of Confederate soldiers roamed at will. The Klan used public violence against black people and their allies as intimidation. They burned houses and attacked and killed black people, leaving their bodies on the roads. (Du Bois 671–675)

Historian Eric Foner observed: *In effect, the Klan was a military force serving the interests of the Democratic Party, the planter class, and all those who desired restoration of white supremacy. Its purposes were political, but political in the broadest sense, for it sought to affect power relations, both public and private, throughout Southern society. It aimed to reverse the interlocking changes sweeping over the South during Reconstruction: to destroy the Republican Party’s infrastructure, undermine the Reconstruction state, reestablish control of the black labor force, and restore racial subordination in every aspect of Southern life. To*

### **Chapter I: The Emergence of the KKK**

*that end they worked to curb the education, economic advancement, voting rights, and right to keep and bear arms of blacks. The Klan soon spread into nearly every southern state, launching a reign of terror against Republican leaders both black and white. Those political*

*leaders assassinated during the campaign included Arkansas Congressman James M. Hinds, three members of the South Carolina legislature, and several men who served in constitutional conventions.(Foner342)*

*The first Klan, founded in Tennessee, was formed by former members of the Confederate army in around 1865. Those members wanted back the old values that existed before the Civil War, keeping the white power over society.“What is the Ku Klux Klan?” THE SUN, A NEWS UK COMPANY, www.thesun.co.uk/news/2154997/ku-klux-klan-imperial-wizard-leader-frank-ancona-donald-trump-thomas-robb. Accessed 22 March 2018.*

As a movement it was relatively short-lived at the outset - but, as secret vigilantes, the Klan carried out acts of terrorism such as the lynching, arson, murders, tar-and-featherings, rapes and other violent attacks historically associated with the group. During the first era, these attacks were directed towards anyone who challenged white supremacy. Ibid

The second Klan, founded in Atlanta, Georgia in 1921, presented itself as a fraternal organization - employing full-time recruiters. At its peak, it was present in every state in America, having at least 4 million members, operations in Canada, and even reportedly some recruiting activity in the UK. The third revival came in the 1960s in opposition to the civil rights movement, which in the Klan's eyes threatened segregation. Ibid

*As they were for the Klan, nationalism and racialism were National Socialism's means of countering the class divisions it is so abhorred. Not only in its world view, but also in its dynamics as a social movement, the Klan had much in common with German National Socialism and Italian Fascism's movements.(Maclean 181)*

The Klan took advantage of the deep racial ethnic and skin divisions in the American working class to advance its projects, especially in the South. It preyed on the narrow craft-union consciousness of native born, protestant, white, skilled workers in efforts to turn them against black, foreign-born, and radical workers. There was a conflict between the Klan and local élite in the South.(182)

## **2- Historical Background**

Following the Civil War, the Ku Klux Klan emerges to suppress and victimize newly freed slaves. Founded in 1866, the Ku Klux Klan extended into almost every Southern state by 1870 and became a vehicle for white Southern resistance to the Republican Party's reconstruction-era policies that aimed at establishing political and economic equality for

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blacks. Its members waged an underground campaign of intimidation and violence directed at white and black Republican leaders. In 1867, the Klan organized a convention and established what they called an “Invisible Empire of the south”, leading by the Grand Wizard “Nathan Bedford Forrest”. The organization's name was derived from the Greek word

“kyklos”, which means “circle”. Congress passed legislation across the south in the 1870’s. After a period of decline, white protestant nativist groups revived the Klan in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, burning crosses and staging rallies, parades and marches denouncing immigrants, Catholics, Jews, Blacks and organized labor. “The Ku Klux Klan” *Encyclopedia Britannica* “12”.

The African American participation in public life, and as they won election in southern governments and U.S. congress, they became the most essential aspect of Reconstruction. The Ku Klux Klan started campaigns of violence towards Republican leaders and voter, blacks and whites. They started restoring white supremacy through Radical Reconstruction.

During the 1867-1868 constitutional conventions, the elected black legislators became victims of violence during Reconstruction, and some of them were killed. Black schools and churches were also targets for Klan attacks. Klan activity flourished mostly in the South where blacks were a minority. In 1871, masked men in South Carolina attacked the Union county jail and hanged eight black prisoners. “The Ku Klux Klan” *Encyclopedia Britannica* “12”.

The Klan organization included all class lines, from small farmers to planters, lawyers, merchants, physicians and ministers. Having lawyers by their side, the Clansmen were easily released when they were arrested and those who accused them found it difficult to find witnesses willing to testify against them. After Republican Party took power in the south, the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871 was released. It authorized certain individual crimes as federal offenses.

Inspired by their romantic view of the Old South as well as Thomas Dixon’s 1905 book “The Clansmen” and D.W. Griffith’s 1915 film “Birth of a Nation”, white protestant nativists formed a new Klan organization in Georgia. The new Klan was not only against the Blacks, but also Roman Catholics, Jews, foreigners and organized labors. They used burning crosses as their own symbols, held rallies and marches around the country. “What is the Ku Klux Klan?” THE SUN, A NEWS UK COMPANY, [www.thesun.co.uk/news/2154997/ku-klux-klan-imperial-wizard-leader-frank-ancona-donald-trump-thomas-robb](http://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2154997/ku-klux-klan-imperial-wizard-leader-frank-ancona-donald-trump-thomas-robb). Accessed 22 March 2018.

At its peak in the 1920’s, Klan membership exceeded 4 million. The 1960’s South movement witnessed developed Klan’s activities, like bombing black schools and churches and many violence forms against both black and white activists in the South. Ibid

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The 1930’s Great Depression affected the Klan’s membership, which made it disband temporarily in 1944. Their violent activities urged in the south during the Civil Rights Movement era of the 1960’s. Ibid

### **3- The First and Second Ku Klux Klan**

Ku Klux Klan (KKK), or the Klan, is a southern group of White Americans whose purpose is to protect the white race rights using lynching, violence and terrorism against the American minorities such as Jews and African Americans in order to restore the white supremacy. They are supporters of Protestantism, and their actions opposed Roman Catholics and labor unions. The movement appeared after the Civil War. "Ku Klux Klan". Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 15 January 2018, 16:38 pm, [en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Ku Klux Klan.htm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ku_Klux_Klan.htm). Accessed 20 January 2018.

The group was based in the south of America and attacked those who became free after the Civil War: the African Americans. The economic prosperity that America witnessed during the Roaring Age didn't filter the South a lot. It is an established group that was formed, or designed, to spread fear throughout the Southern Black population. It included the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP).

Generally, the Ku Klux Klan is considered as "subversive or terrorist organization". Its members expressed a kind of postwar violence. They used violence especially against the Blacks, burning their houses, killing them and leaving their bodies on the roads. In 1866, the Klan members (most of them were veterans) elected Brian A. Scates as the president of their organization in Nashville meeting, Tennessee. Ibid.

George Gordon developed the prescript, in which, he suggested elements of white supremacist belief, like "the reenfranchisement and emancipation of the white men of the South, and the restitution of the Southern people all their rights".<sup>18</sup> Ibid. He told the slave trader and Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest in Memphis, Tennessee about the Klan's idea and Forrest responded: *That's a good thing; that's a damn good thing. We can use that to keep the niggers in their place.* Ibid.

Forrest claimed that the Klan was mainly against the Republican state government, which all blacks were voting for. The historian Eric Foner expressed his opinion about the Klan when saying: *In effect, the Klan was a military force serving the interests of the Democratic Party, the planter class, and all those who desired restoration of white supremacy. Its purposes were political, but political in the broadest sense, for it sought to affect power relations, both public and private, throughout Southern society. It aims to reverse the Interlocking changes sweeping over the South during Reconstruction: to destroy the*

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*Republican Party's infrastructure, undermine the Reconstruction states, reestablish control of the black labor force, and restore racial subordination in every aspect of Southern life.* Ibid.

The Klan members were hiding in masks and robes, putting conical hats. They attacked black members of the Loyal Leagues, and also the heads of families, because for them, they had to accomplish a kind of mission. In June 1867, there were 197 murders and 548 cases of violent attacks, during 18 months, in both North and South Carolina. The Klan worked to prevent

black voting, more than 200 black Republicans were killed after they had been lynched through the woods and obliged to vote for the Democratic party.(Du Bois 680-681)

The NAACP asked Washington for help to combat the KKK, but with no reaction. In the 1920's, Black Americans started to follow Garveyism "Back to Africa", they wanted to return to Africa, but they could not because Garvey was put in jail.

In February 1871, former Union General and Congressman Benjamin Franklin Butler of Massachusetts released the Ku Klux Klan Act, decreasing the violence in the South, with the help of the Governor of South Carolina, who sent troops to keep control over the state."Ku Klux Klan". Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 15 January 2018, 16:38 pm, en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Ku\_Klux\_Klan.htm. Accessed 20 January 2018.

In 1915, another Klan organization was founded with the release of D.W. Griffith's the birth of a nation which glorified the Clansmen. Another reason for their re-emergence was Leo Frank, a Jewish man who murdered his factory's employer Mary Phagan, a white girl. The Klans (the Knights of Mary Phagan), regarded life imprisonment, not sufficient; they kidnapped him from prison and lynched him in Atlanta.Ibid

The Klan's members started to kill black soldiers coming back from W.W.1. The number of massacres increased, and from 1918 to 1927, 416 Afro-Americans were lynched mostly in the North, which was less influenced by the Clansmen.Ibid.

#### **4- The Leaders of the Ku Klux Klan:**

Although they are a secretive group, there is some knowledge of the Klan's beliefs and practices - which are all, based on their white supremacist views.The KKK also use unique titles and greetings among their members - with the leaders referred to as Grand or Imperial Wizards.Grand Wizard was the title given to the head of the Reconstruction-era Ku Klux Klan which existed from 1865 to 1869."What is the Ku Klux Klan?" *THE SUN,A NEWS UK COMPANY*,www.thesun.co.uk/news/2154997/ku-klux-klan-imperial-wizard-leader-frank-ancona-donald-trump-thomas-robb.Accessed 22 March 2018.

Nathan Bedford Forrest (July 13, 1821 – October 29, 1877), called Bedford Forrest in his lifetime, was a cotton planter, slave owner and slave trader, Confederate Army general

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during the American Civil War, was the first Grand Wizard of the movement during Reconstruction Klan, from 1867 to 1969, leader of the Ku Klux Klan, and president of the Selma, Marion, & Memphis Railroad."Nathan Bedford Forrest". Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 7 Febraury 2018, 10:40 am.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathan\_Bedford\_Forrest.Accessed 20 January 2018.

Forrest joined the Ku Klux Klan, apparently in 1867, two years after its founding, and was elected its first Grand Wizard. While Forrest was a leader, the Klan, during the Election of 1868, suppressed voting rights of blacks and Republicans in the South, through violence and intimidation. In 1869, Forrest became disillusioned with the lack of discipline among the various white supremacist groups across the South, ordered the dissolution of the Ku Klux Klan and its costumes to be destroyed, and withdrew from the organization. ( Browning 15)

William Joseph Simmons, was the imperial wizard during the Second Klan, from 1915 to 1922. He was born on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1880 and died on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1945. He was the founder of the second Ku Klux Klan on Thanksgiving of 1915. "William Joseph Simmons". Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 7 February 2018, 10:40 am. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Joseph\\_Simmons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Joseph_Simmons). Accessed 20 January 2018.

While convalescing in 1915 after being hit by a car, Simmons decided to rebuild the Klan which he had seen depicted in the newly released film *The Birth of a Nation* directed by D. W. Griffith. He obtained a copy of the Reconstruction Klan's "Prescript", and used it to write his own prospectus for a reincarnation of the organization. Ibid

As the nucleus of his revived Klan, Simmons organized a group of friends, in addition to two elderly men who had been members of the original Klan. On Thanksgiving night 1915, they climbed Stone Mountain to burn a cross and inaugurate the new Klan, with fifteen charter members. Ibid

Hiram Wesley Evans was also an Imperial Wizard during the Second Klan, from 1922 to 1939. Hiram Wesley Evans (September 26, 1881 – September 14, 1966), was a native of Alabama. He attended Vanderbilt University and became a dentist. He operated a small, moderately successful practice in Texas until 1920, when he joined the Klan's Dallas chapter. He quickly rose through the ranks and was part of a group that ousted William Joseph Simmons from the position of Imperial Wizard, the national leader, in November 1922. Evans succeeded him and sought to transform the group into a political power. "Hiram Wesley Evans". Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 7 February 2018, 10:40 am. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hiram\\_Wesley\\_Evans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hiram_Wesley_Evans) .Accessed 20 January 2018.

In 1923, Evans led the largest Klan gathering in history, attended by over 200,000, and endorsed several successful candidates in 1924 elections. He moved the Klan's headquarters

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from Atlanta to Washington, D.C., and organized a march of 30,000 members which is the largest march in the organization's history, on Pennsylvania Avenue. Ibid

*He was succeeded by his chief of staff, James A. Colescott. The next year, Evans faced accusations of involvement in a government corruption scandal in Georgia; he was fined \$15,000 after legal proceedings.* Ibid



*James Arnold Colescott (January 11, 1897 – January 11, 1950), was an American who was Imperial Wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Under financial pressure from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for back taxes, he disbanded the second wave of the original Ku Klux Klan in 1944. “James Arnold Colescott”. Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 7 February 2018, 10:40 am.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\_A.\_Colescott. Accessed 20 January 2018*

Imperial Wizard Hiram Wesley Evans left the Klan on June 10, 1939, and Colescott became the Ku Klux Klan's new leader. He was a chief of staff under Evans. Hiram Evans was effectively forced to quit, as his renouncement of Anti-Catholicism had proven unpopular with "rank-and-file Klansmen". He resigned in favor of Colescott, who was soon officially initiated as the Imperial Wizard. The initiation ceremony was held in the Dixie Ball Room of the Henry Grady Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. There were rumors that Evans sold control of the Klan to Colescott in a regular buyout. The alleged transaction of \$220,000 between the two men remains unconfirmed. Colescott and Samuel Green did however purchase the ownership of the Klan's headquarters in Atlanta, which they renamed to the Imperial Palace. Ibid

David Earnest Duke, the Grand Wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, from 1974 to 1980. He was born on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1950. He is an American white supremacist and white nationalist politician, anti-Semitic conspiracy theorist, Holocaust denier, convicted felon, and former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. “David Earnest Duke”. Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 7 February 2018, 10:40 am.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\_Duke. Accessed 20 January 2018

*A former Republican Louisiana State Representative, Duke was a candidate in the Democratic presidential primaries in 1988 and the Republican presidential primaries in 1992. Duke also ran unsuccessfully for the Louisiana State Senate, United States Senate, United States House of Representatives, and for Governor of Louisiana. Ibid*

#### **5- The Ku Klux Klan During Kennedy's Administration (1961-1963):**

*“I was an original 'Freedom Rider.' I was attacked and beaten by the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama; and I walked among the giants of the Civil Rights Movement and I felt at home.*

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*The lumps and bruises on my head are a daily reminder of my commitment and my obligations.”“JFK, Freedom Riders and the Civil Rights Movement”, EDSITEMENT, <https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/kennedy-administration-and-civil-rights-movement>. Accessed 2 February 2018.*

John Fitzgerald Kennedy JFK (May 29, 1917 – November 22, 1963), was an American politician who served as the 35th President of the United States from January 1961 until his assassination in November 1963. Kennedy verbally supported racial integration and civil

rights; during the 1960 campaign he telephoned Coretta Scott King, wife of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., who had been jailed while trying to integrate a department store lunch counter. Robert Kennedy called Georgia governor Ernest Vandiver and obtained King's release from prison, which drew additional black support to his brother's candidacy. Upon taking office in 1961, Kennedy postponed promised civil rights legislation he made while campaigning in 1960, recognizing that conservative Southern Democrats controlled congressional legislation. Historian Carl M. Brauer concluded that passing any civil rights legislation in 1961 would have been futile. During his first year in office Kennedy appointed many blacks to office including his May appointment of civil rights attorney Thurgood Marshall to the federal bench. (Dallek292–293)

Kennedy promised to end racial discrimination, though his agenda, which included the endorsement of the Voter Education Project (VEP) in 1962, produced little progress in areas such as Mississippi where the “VEP concluded that discrimination was so entrenched”. The Kennedy Administration faced the contradiction between its ideals and the realities of federal politics. In this case, the Kennedy Administration finally acted in defense of individual rights at the risk of offending powerful Southern politicians. Ibid

# Chapter Two

The KKK and the Southern movement (1955-1968)

## **ChapterII: The KKK and the Southern movement (1955-1968)**

### **introduction**

Following World War 2, many African Americans and whites united together to protest against the racism and discrimination that existed in the United States. For many years before World War 2, a smaller number of Blacks and Whites had fought for equality. However, with the end of World War 2, a more organized Civil Rights Movement came into being. This movement would put an end to segregation and other forms of racial injustice. This chapter deals with the status of the Klan group during the Civil Rights Movement, regarded as an opposition to the latter's peaceful activities.

#### **1- Klansville, USA (1960's Ku Klux Klan): North Carolina**

The third Ku Klux Klan activity came in the 1960s in response to the Civil rights movement. Specifically, the mid 60s North Carolina Klan, which grew from nothing to nearly 10.000 members in just two years, in what was supposedly the South's most aggressive state. *The people of North Carolina are ready for the Klan and nothing can keep it down when the people are ready!*, says Thomas Hamilton, founder and leader of the Associated Carolina Klans, during a Charlotte organizing meeting in 1949. (Cunningham 16)

*The Klan is the most dedicated organization in America.... You have to be white, Gentile and born in America to be a member of the Klan. You have to be a real American*, says a UKA member, speaking in 1964.(124)

UKA state officer Bob Kornegay announced in 1965 that his fellow klansmen: *don't hate the niggers, but we are afraid of Communists. Once you pull them away, the niggers will go back to being colored people.* Syble Jones (Jones' wife) encouraged Klan parents to teach their sons and daughters *to fight communistic activities and influence other teenagers against the evils of the Communist Doctrine.* (124)

Bob Jones Jr., was born in Montgomery, Alabama. He was the son of Bob Jones Sr., a previous Klan member. He was the most successful Grand Dragon in the Klan's history. He had grown the Carolina Klan from a handful of friends to some 10.000 members in just 3 years. He was discharged from the Navy after refusing to salute a black officer. *I would salute that uniform all day long, but I won't salute no nigger*, Bob Jones said. Shoshana Brain "Klansville (KKK) - The Rise and Fall of the Civil Rights", Youtube 31 December 2015,[www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAUp0sfwp0M&t=50s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAUp0sfwp0M&t=50s).accessed 2 April 2018. He was a Klan by blood.

Bob Jones motivation to join the Ku Klux Klan might have been the Brown decision, a decision made by the NAACP to challenge the segregated laws in schools; but he also saw membership as a way to honor his parents. Ibid

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Jones had earned a reputation as an aggressive and hard drinking defender of the Jim Crow Status quo and he was the Grand Dragon of the KKK in North Carolina. He was an emerging force in North Carolina politics. By 1965, the Klan's nightly rallies were the largest political gatherings of any kind in the state. During the mid-1960's, the «Carolina Klan » became the largest and most successful manifestation of the postwar Ku Klux Klan. As the UKA's 1964 constitution declared: *the principle and spirit of klankraft will at all times be dedicated in thought, spirit and affection to our Finding Fathers of the Original Ku Klux Klan organization in the year 1866, and active during the period of Reconstruction History; and to their predecessors in the year 1915 and 1916.* Ibid

*We want enough Klans people at this rally for the Press never again to use the word liberal when they write about the state of North Carolina, says Bob Jones in a 1965 letter to the UKA's membership. (Cunningham 72)*

*Hamilton demonstrated how the Klan's appeals to Christian morality were tightly interwoven with an ideology of white supremacy: I am fed up with the government and what goes on in America that promises to force us to go to school with the niggers and merge us into a society of half breeds .... It won't be long before young white men and women will be dating and marrying the colored people in the communities if they take away our white public schools that the white people built and paid for all these years.... Let me assure you tonight that the Ku Klux Klan is determined not to let this integration succeed in the Carolinas. We have organized to preserve the white race that believes in Jesus Christ and attends the protestant denomination churches of our land. This is Ku Klux Klan Country, welcome to Klansville, USA (North Carolina).(29-30)*

In his 1949 classic book *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, political scientist V.O. Key described North Carolina's prevailing mood as *energetic and ambitious. The citizens are determined and confident; they are on the move*, Key observed. *The mood is at odds with much of the rest of the South. A tenor attitude and of action that has set the state apart from its neighbors. North Carolina's progressive orientation*, he continued meant that its citizens exhibited a *willingness to accept new ideas, sense of community responsibility toward the Negro, feeling of common purpose, and relative prosperity. The result was a more sophisticated politics than exists in most Southern states.*(72)

## **2-The Klux Klan and Voting Rights for Blacks:**

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In the 1960's, North Carolina's black population was the nation's fourth largest, behind only those of New-York, Texas and Georgia. However, North Carolina's race gap-the difference in the percentage of registered white versus black eligible voters- was second only to the gap in Mississippi, which blunted black electoral power in the state. In 1965, 96,8% of eligible white voters were on the rolls, which exceeded the black registration rate by a full 50 percentage points. (72)

By 1968, North Carolina had fewer black elected officials than any other Southern state, with no black representation among mayors or state legislators, In March 1965, the eyes of the nation were fixed on Selma, Alabama, where civil rights marchers had been beaten while attempting to cross Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 07th. In response to that *Bloody Sunday*, after two weeks, King organized another civil rights March from Selma to Montgomery. (113)

Jones remained on federal agencies' radar when, several months later, the brutal murder of Viola Liuzzo by a carload of Alabama Klansmen spurred more intensive government involvement in the Klan problem. Within hours of the Liuzzo killing, as the March 1965 Selma to Montgomery voting rights March continued. Gary Thomas Hoover had been a passenger in the Klan car that chased and killed Liuzzo. (205)

North Carolina distinguished itself from many of its southern neighbors for its consistent, moderate course with race relations. Politicians promoting the *massive resistance* techniques that led to closed public schools and intervention by federal marshals in Virginia, Arkansas, Alabama and Mississippi failed in North Carolina. By late 1965, the UKA's North Carolina membership eclipsed that of the entire Deep South, with thousands of the state's residents supporting the Klan's activities at rallies and klavern meetings. (205)

The Carolina Klan could be dangerous and violent like its Mississippi counterparts, but the group prevented itself as respectable and civic minded. *If you don't believe in mixing races, we want to vote out all of those niggers that we have in office*, said Bob Jones, during the 1966 election season. *Start voting people in office that will be white men... because we need them in office now*. The ultimate aim, he argued, was to *form a voting bloc to defeat any nigger-loving politician that runs for office*.(113)

*People just won't stand for this civil rights stuff*, argued Bob Jones. *Somebody has got to organize this state, and I'm the one who's doing it*. In 1966 letter from civil rights activist John Salter to North Carolina officials, he says: *there is, of course, no question but that the intent and purpose of the Klan is to promote hatred and to incite violence*. (44)

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*We have the same right as the Negro to demonstrate*, Bob Jones told reporters, responding to the previous week's March on Washington of civil rights supporters, *the Catholics have their Knights of Columbus, the Jews have their B'nai B'rith, the Negroes have the NAACP and we have the Ku Klux klan*. (44)

The growth and spread of UKA support in eastern North Carolina by 1964 aligned with the precarious, economic and political conditions of whites across that part of the state. The high proportions of African American residents and fragile agricultural economies in the eastern plain meant that in that region's counties, civil rights reforms would break down traditional white privilege to a degree greater than would occur in the central piedmont or western mountains. (44)

The KKK was a successful movement and stopped many black people from succeeding in gaining Civil Rights, mainly in the South. However, in 1964, The Civil Rights Act was passed and therefore could not succeed and never really stopped it. Essentially, they just succeeded in prolonging this act for a while.(44)

Klan violence worked to suppress black voting, and campaign seasons were deadly. More than 2,000 people were killed, wounded, or otherwise injured in Louisiana within a few weeks prior to the Presidential election of November 1868. Although St. Landry Parish had a registered Republican majority of 1,071, after the murders, no Republicans voted in the fall elections. White Democrats cast the full vote of the parish for President Grant's opponent. The KKK killed and wounded more than 200 black Republicans, hunting and chasing them through the woods. Thirteen captives were taken from jail and shot; a half-buried pile of 25 bodies was found in the woods. The KKK made people vote Democratic and gave them certificates of the fact.(Du Bois 680–681)

### **3-The Ku Klux Klan and I Have a Dream Speech(1963):**

On August 28, 1963, during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the civil rights activist Martin Luther King delivered the *I Have a Dream* speech, calling for civil and economic rights.<sup>28</sup> “I Have a Dream”. Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 27 December 2017, 09:12 am.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I\_Have\_a\_Dream . Accessed 27 December 2017

It would be easy to assume that the stirring words of Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* speech affected Americans most of all. His goading of a nation to live up to the democratic principles of its founders was a sharp display of America's private grief. The wrongs he set out to right were internal and shaming - American sins that stretched back to

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the days of slavery. When he rose to speak, King was clearly aiming his remarks at his fellow Americans.“I Have a Dream” *HUFFPOST*,www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/08/28/i-have-a-dream-speech-world. Accessed 11 February 2018.

The Klans criticized one of King's most famous lines: *We also Have a Dream*. They claimed that *Blacks have NAACP, the Jews have JDL and white people have KKK fighting for God, race and our nation since 1886*. “KKK group attacks Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy on MLK Day” *SHEKNOW*,[www.sheknows.com/living/articles/1109581/kkk-group-attacks-mlk-legacy](http://www.sheknows.com/living/articles/1109581/kkk-group-attacks-mlk-legacy). Accessed 11 February 2018.

*The Negroes in this country own more refrigerators, and more automobiles, than they do in any other country*, South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond told NBC News in the hours after the event. *They are better fed, they are better clothed, they have better houses here than in any other country in the world. No one is deprived of freedom that I know about*. Senator Russell Long of Louisiana claimed that the push for equality violated the rights of business owners.“What critics said about King's speech in 1963” *MSNBC*,www.msnbc.com/msnbc/back-the-day-what-critics-said-about-king. Accessed 30 March 2018.

*You see a lot of white folks out there in that demonstration, he added. If they want to mix with that mob, that's fine. If somebody wants to be left alone by those people, I think he's entitled to be left alone too.* Ibid

That reaction was not confined to the south. By 1966, a nationwide Gallup poll found only 33% of Americans had positive feelings about Dr. King. As author Gary Younge pointed out on the program, it took years before America began to collectively embrace the *I have a dream* speech and the ideals of the March on Washington. Ibid

Watching the whole thing on TV in the White House, President John F Kennedy, who had never heard an entire King speech before, remarked: *He's damned good. Damned good.* Almost everyone, including even King's enemies, recognized the speech's reach and resonance. William Sullivan, the FBI's assistant director of domestic intelligence, recommended: *We must mark him now, if we have not done so before, as the most dangerous Negro of the future of this nation.* "Martin Luther King: the story behind his 'I have a dream' speech" *THE GUARDIAN*, [www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/09/martin-luther-king-dream-speech-history](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/09/martin-luther-king-dream-speech-history). Accessed 16 April 2018.

Some Christians opposed King's activism because they considered race relations a purely "social" issue and not a spiritual one. They tended to believe that the government should not force people of different races to integrate. Some even thought that segregation was a biblical mandate. "Why so many white churches resisted Martin Luther King Jr.'s call" *THE*

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*WASHINGTON POST*, [www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2018/01/15/why-so-many-white-churches-resisted-martin-luther-king-jr-s-call](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2018/01/15/why-so-many-white-churches-resisted-martin-luther-king-jr-s-call). Accessed 23 December 2017.

### **4-The Ku Klux Klan and Civil Rights Act (1964)**

On July 2nd, 1964, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, making segregation in public facilities illegal, racial discrimination became politically inexpedient as well. (Cunningham 219)

Georgia representative Charles Weltner, the sole southern congressman to vote for final passage of the Civil Rights Act, had proposed an inquest into the KKK. Investigators documented that North Carolina was by far the most active state for the United Klans of America. (219)

The Civil Rights Act would result in Democratic losses in the region for at least a generation, represents the most significant shift in the South's politics since the 1960's. (219)

Kennedy's civil rights proposals led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. President Lyndon B. Johnson, Kennedy's successor, took up the mantle and pushed the landmark Civil Rights Act



through a bitterly divided Congress by invoking the slain president's memory. President Johnson then signed the Act into law on July 2, 1964. This civil rights law ended what was known as the "Solid South" and certain provisions were modeled after the Civil Rights Act of 1875. "John F. Kennedy". Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 20 January 2018, 20:12pm, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\_F.\_Kennedy#Administration,\_Cabinet,\_and\_judicial\_appointments. Accessed 21 January 2018.

In his first State of the Union Address in January 1961, President Kennedy said: "The denial of constitutional rights to some of our fellow Americans on account of race – at the ballot box and elsewhere – disturbs the national conscience, and subjects us to the charge of world opinion that our democracy is not equal to the high promise of our heritage." Kennedy believed the grassroots movement for civil rights would anger many Southern whites and make it more difficult to pass civil rights laws in Congress, including anti-poverty legislation, and he distanced himself from it. *ibid*

His proposals became part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The day ended with the murder of a NAACP leader, Medgar Evers, in front of his home in Mississippi. As the president had predicted, the day after his TV speech, and in reaction to it, House Majority leader Carl Albert called to advise him that his two-year signature effort in Congress to combat poverty in Appalachia (Area Redevelopment Administration) had been defeated, primarily by the votes of Southern Democrats and Republicans. When Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.

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complemented Kennedy on his remarks, the latter bitterly replied, *Yes, and look at what happened to area development the very next day in the House.* He then added, *But of course, I had to give that speech, and I'm glad that I did.* On June 16 The New York Times published an editorial which argued that while the president had initially *moved too slowly and with little evidence of deep moral commitment* in regards to civil rights he *now demonstrates a genuine sense of urgency about eradicating racial discrimination from our national life.* *ibid*

Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney were killed by a Ku Klux Klan lynch mob near Meridian, Mississippi. The three young civil rights workers were working to register black voters in Mississippi, thus inspiring the ire of the local Klan. The deaths of Schwerner and Goodman, white Northerners and members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), caused a national outrage. "The KKK kills three civil rights activists" *THIS DAY IN HISTORY*, [www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-kkk-kills-three-civil-rights-activists](http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-kkk-kills-three-civil-rights-activists). Accessed 13 April 2018.

When news of their disappearance got out, the FBI converged on Mississippi to investigate. With the help of an informant, agents learned about the Klan's involvement and found the bodies. Since Mississippi refused to prosecute the assailants in state court, the federal government charged 18 men with conspiracy to violate the civil rights of Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney. *ibid*

Daniel K. Moore, the 1964 election candidate, referred to the Civil Rights Act as a «constitutional mockery». *At that time in the American conservative movement there was widespread opposition to the civil rights bill which became the Civil Rights Act of 1964*, author David Garrow said. "What critics said about King's speech in 1963" MSNBC, [www.msnbc.com/msnbc/back-the-day-what-critics-said-about-king](http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/back-the-day-what-critics-said-about-king). Accessed 30 March 2018.

### **5-The Fall of the Ku Klux Klan:**

*Bounded on one end by the First World War and on the other by the Second World War, this epoch was marked by pervasive social change and political crisis, above all by the contest between right and left the ideological struggle as Mayer sums it up, «between fascism and bolshevism». That match ultimately yielded the regimes of Mussolini in Italy, of Franco in Spain, and of Hitler in Germany. Any account of the second Klan that fails to consider it in the light of these contemporaneous movements is bound to yield a limited understanding of its place in history.*(Maclean 177)

*The Bureau continues its program of penetrating the Klan at all levels, and, I may say, has been quite successful in doing so*, says FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, in his 1966 statement before the House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Appropriations. (Cunningham 184)

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*The Klan we knew is gone*, lamented Raymond Cranford in 1968. *The units are skeletons. A bunch of them turned in their characters. The rallies are down to nuthin. Most of the real good boys have left. Seems like each one of them has gone out to for his own klan.... I'm telling ya, it's just awful. The boys need leadership real bad.* (184)

In the summer of 1966, the Carolina Klan had shrunk to half its size. The FBI estimated that fewer than 1.000 active clansmen remained. And even those modest members were again out in half by the decade's end. (184)

By the beginning of 1966, the UKA's rallies started to attract fewer supporters. In 1967, only 2000 or 3000 came out for an August event in Rowan County. Average rally attendance was reduced from 1880 in 1965, to 617 the following year, and again to 307 in 1967. Two months later, a rally in the northeast corner of the state, known as a «Klan hotbed», was canceled for lack of attendance.(184)

The Klan asserted itself as a viable line of resistance against encroaching civil rights initiatives. Finances and organizational strategy tore at the group from the inside. As with the KKK's decline in 1870's and the decimation of Thomas Hamilton and Catfish Cole's respective Klan outfits in the 1950's, the fall of the UKA predominantly a policing story. (184)

The Klan maintained its appeal only when government officials adopted a Laissez-faire orientation toward organized white supremacists. In contrast, in states like Florida, which

likewise eschewed massive resistance to desegregation policies, coordinated policing severely limited the KKK's ability to build a following. Unlike the active support for the Klan witnessed in much of the Deep South, the ambivalent action of supposedly anti KKK officials informally maintained less stringent policing in North Carolina. Gradually, however, intensified pressures by the federal government and the consequent commitment by state officials to preserve the state's progressive image overwhelmed such ambivalence.(184)

By the end of the 1960's, the UKA faced a closing window of political opportunity and increasing infighting over resources and tactics. With the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the following year's Voting Right Act, the idea that the Klan's militantly defensive posture would preserve Jim Crow became an increasingly hard sell. Massive resistance became less palatable, replaced even in the Deep South by subtler shifts that preserved the color line in less formal ways. Civil Rights reforms no longer seemed to pose a fatal threat to established systems of racial privilege. Shifts happened, and they helped to reduce the public's tolerance for the UKA's activities.(184)

The Raleigh Ministerial Association denounced the Klan as «basically un-American», and Washington County religious leaders released a statement on Christmas Day saying that the KKK made a «mockery of Christianity». The North Carolina Baptist state convention passed a

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*resolutiondecrying the bigotry prejudice, intolerance and ill will which characterizes the Ku Klux Klan in its treatment of social and economic problems, and protesting the Klan's perverted use of the Christian Cross, thus making the symbol of eternal love into a symbol of contemporary hate.*North Carolina state police officials opposed the Klan's lawlessness. (187)

In the face of a boycott by the state NAACP, which referred to state officials willingness to rent a booth to the UKA as «an insult to the Negroes of North Carolina», and Klan members' obvious harassment of passers-by the SBI (State Bureau of Investigation), only placed agents in the vicinity to defuse potential conflicts. Beginning in 1966, unrests for Klan related violence increased significantly. The FBI arrested twelve UKA members for their part in a space of shootings, bombings, and burnings in Rowan and Cabarrus counties. *Every time we turn around*Bob Jones lamented, *we get arrested.*(208)

In July 1967, five other Klansmen were convicted and sentenced to eighteen-month jail terms for their role in a cross-burning outside of Charlotte. The militancy of Black community and the decisive police response cemented the sense that *the era of open-air KKK rallies, public toleration, and racist violence with impurity had ended.*The Jim Crow era had ended and few looked to the Klan as a foundation for a parallel whites-only society.(209)

### **6- The Dissolution of the Jone'sKlans: The End of Jone's Leadership**

*The president will be sorry to hear that though we are bleeding and bruised, we are not beaten. We are still very much in business, and their so-called «investigation» has failed.* Bob Jones, in his televised response to a 1965 with editorial critical of UKA leaders' repeated invocation of the fifth amendment during HUAC's KKK hearings. (Cunningham 184)

After the rally of 1967, that attracted only half of the crowd and following the UKA's 1967 national meeting, Bob Jones found it difficult to hide his disappointment, complaining to the entire state membership that, for the first time in his four years as North Carolina Grand Dragon, he felt ashamed of the state's poor showing, the fact that made them organize rallies only on Saturday nights. (184)

Jones and his inner circle concocted increasingly desperate schemes to build the UKA's membership and finances. After a Sampson County newspaper editor published a like-minded blistering anti-spam attack, Bob Jones defensively complained that he was the victim of discrimination.(187)

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*Me and the boys done got you a Cadillac with three forward and one in reverse», Raymond Crawford ceremoniously pronounced during his split with Jones at a 1966 meeting. And I'll be damned if you ain't been doing nothing but backing-up ever since!*(188)

With Jones and Shelton still in prison and FBI informants working to exacerbate UKA shims, the conflict escalated into an irreparable fracture. Bryant, fed up with Sexton's financial acrobatics and under fire for his actions following the Hyde County debacle, began a campaign to split the north Carolina realm from the National UKA organization, winning the support of more than half of the state's klaverns. (188)

Bob Jones was released two months ahead of schedule for good behavior. Jones's tie to the KKK was as much an identity as an affiliation. *If they need me, I'll be available*, he promised. The passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts made militant, line-in-the-sand defenses of Jim Crow less viable. (210)

# **Chapter Three**

The Ku Klux Klan as Legal Organizations in the 2000's

## **Chapter Three : The KKK as Legal Organisation in the 2000's**

The Ku Klux Klan activities in the 1960's have had an enduring effect on contemporary politics.

### **1- The Ku Klux Klan Lasting Legacy on the USA Political System**

The Ku Klux Klan has failed as an organization in defeating the Black Civil Rights Movement, but the group had a legacy that still impacts the U.S political system. Reporters say that the KKK activity played an important role in shifting voters' political party allegiance in the South in the 1960's from Democratic to Republican, and it continued to influence voters' activities 40 years later. "Ku Klux Klan" *SCIENCE NEWS* *LINE* [www.sciencenewsline.com/news/2014120521000014.html](http://www.sciencenewsline.com/news/2014120521000014.html). Accessed 25 April 2018

David Cunningham, the KKK expert says: *The Klan's efforts to link voting behavior to its social agenda in the 1960s disrupted long-established voting patterns in the South, the fact that such efforts continue to predict partisan allegiances today demonstrates how the impact of a social movement can endure long after the movement itself has declined, as well as providing a new explanation of political polarization in the U.S.* Ibid

Statistics showed that Southern states, in which the KKK was active in the 1960's, had an increase in Republican voting during five presidential voting between 1960 and 2000, comparing to the states in which there were less Klans activities. Ibid

*The Klan's efforts to link voting behavior to its social agenda in the 1960's disrupted long-established voting patterns in the South. The fact that such efforts continue to predict partisan allegiances today demonstrates how the impact of a social movement can endure long after the movement itself has declined, as well as providing a new explanation of political polarization in the U.S.* "klansville,U.S.A"

BRANDISUNIVERSITY, [www.brandeis.edu/sociolgy/people/faculty/cunningham.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/sociolgy/people/faculty/cunningham.html). Accessed 2 May 2018.

*Our research also illustrates how racial conflict can have wide-ranging effects that resonate across generations in ways that today's voters might not easily or directly recognize. Ibid.*

The UKA, as a vigilant force, challenged the legitimacy of existing authorities by encouraging its supporters to defy any official body that failed to devote its full efforts to maintaining segregation and racial integrity. Ibid

*the KKK has become the most resonant representation of white supremacy and racial terror in the United States. Part of the KKK's enduring draw is that it refers not to a single organization, but rather to a collection of groups bound by use of now-iconic racist symbols — white hoods, flowing sheets, fiery crosses — and a predilection for vigilante violence. A*

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*greater number of KKK organizations exist today than at any other point in the group's long history, but that nearly all of these groups are small, marginal, and lacking in meaningful political or social influence. The Klan's influence did not end with the triumphs of the civil rights movement and has had a lasting impact on both southern and national politics. David Cunningham "The Ku Klux Klan in history and today" JANUARY 14TH 2015, [blog.oup.com/2015/01/klansville-usa-david-cunningham-ku-klux-klan/](http://blog.oup.com/2015/01/klansville-usa-david-cunningham-ku-klux-klan/). Accessed 17 February 2018.*

#### **2- The Klans in Illinois**

The State of Illinois has a long rich history with the Klan. At its peak in the late 20's there were an estimated 50,000 members in the state of Illinois alone, with a National estimate of 5 million members. Today in Illinois we are experiencing the growth of the Klan once again, with many new members taking the oath for God, Race, and Nation. "The 1920's Saw The KKK's Rise In Illinois" NPR ILLINOIS, [nprillinois.org/post/history-1920s-saw-kkks-rise-illinois#stream/0](http://nprillinois.org/post/history-1920s-saw-kkks-rise-illinois#stream/0). Accessed 22 January 2018.

It was the Roaring Twenties when Gangsters ruled Chicago, flappers ruled the dance floor and the KKK helped rule Illinois. *We know we're the balance of power in the state... We can control state elections and get what we want from state government, says Attorney Charles G. Palmer, grand dragon of the Illinois KKK. The Klan said it stood for "America." Anything that wasn't red, white, and blue, with an emphasis on "white," was wrong. For the Klan, that was a long list: African-Americans, Catholics, immigrants, and Jews. We support Protestants, whites, Prohibition... and law and order. Ibid*

The White Christian's of this state are beginning to realize how a corrupt Illinois Government has left a lingering effect on everyone in the state. Religious Freedom and the Bill of Rights are also becoming endangered with each passing day; Time has come to take a stand against the newly appointed administration. "Realm of Illinois" *United Northern and Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan*, [www.unskkkk.com/index.php/realms/realm-of-illinois](http://www.unskkkk.com/index.php/realms/realm-of-illinois). Accessed 4 March 2018.

Centreville town has the 26th highest crime rate in Illinois, where 1 in 56 people has a statistic chance of being attacked, raped or murdered each year. Plus, 1 in 29.8 people are robbed. In Robbins city, Illinois, The unemployment rate here is 15.5%. The schools are underfunded, and property values are well below the state average. A home costs \$72,500, which is a sure sign of lack of demand. You have a 1 in 9.4 chance of being the victim of some type of property crime here every year. That's not fun, either. "These Are The 10

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Worst Places To Live In Illinois For 2018" *ROADSNAKS*, [www.roadsnacks.net/places-in-illinois-that-need-a-hug/](http://www.roadsnacks.net/places-in-illinois-that-need-a-hug/). Accessed 9 April 2018.

[In September 2004, a postcard was offered on eBay depicting a group of men dressed in the garb of the Ku Klux Klan. The men apparently were University of Illinois students taking part in the 1916 Interscholastic Circus. Only a few of the men's faces are actually visible. Two of the depicted students may be members of the campus Ku Klux Klan. "Ku Klux Klan" UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, archives.library.illinois.edu/blog/ku-klux-klan/](#). Accessed 13 April 2018.

#### **3- Inside the New KKK**

Today, the KKK is still alive and dreams of restoring itself to what it once was: an invisible empire spreading its tentacles throughout society. As it marks 150 years of existence, the Klan is trying to reshape itself for a new era. "The KKK is slowly rising again" *NEWS*, [www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/the-klux-is-slowly-rising-again](http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/the-klux-is-slowly-rising-again). Accessed 19 April 2018.

In the early 1990's, the Klan was estimated to have between 6,000 and 10,000 active members, mostly in the Deep South. Today, the Klan's fragile, hard-won cohesion is unraveling, as a splinter group of progress-minded Klansmen is challenging one of the group's most dearly held beliefs: the subhuman, animal status of non-White minorities. This small group of reformers is claiming nothing less than that blacks and Jews may be partially related to human, or White, beings. And that has many in the Klan crying foul. "Reformist Ku Klux Klan Splinter Group Claims Blacks, Jews May Be Partially Human" *THEONION*, [www.theonion.com/reformist-ku-klux-klan-splinter-group-claims-blacks](http://www.theonion.com/reformist-ku-klux-klan-splinter-group-claims-blacks). Accessed 28 April 2018.



Critics say the reformers are betraying the teachings of their forefathers. But the reformers say they're only trying to bring the Klan into the modern era. *New advances in the mapping of the human genome show that there's a strong possibility that blacks and Jews—and perhaps even the wily Chinese—are partially human, sharing some genetic characteristics with Whites*, said Reform KKK Grand Exalted Cyclops Darrell Walker, speaking from the splinter group's Birmingham headquarters. *I didn't set out to be a crusader, but we cannot blindly shut out the truth, however disturbing it may be. If we do, we are as bad as the filthy, savage blacks and Jews themselves, for as Jesus said, we have eyes but do not see.* Ibid

Pastor Fred Knox of Smyrna, GA, Grand Exalted Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, disagreed. *These liberal scums are selling out everything right and true that they profess to believe in,*

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*they do not deserve to wear the robes and hoods of a true Klansman. It pains my heart to hear such lies from the mouth of a White man.* Ibid

Stung by such criticism, Walker and his followers insist they are as committed to virulent race-hate as any God-fearing KKK member. Calling Knox's remarks *lies twisting our words to his own narrow-minded agenda.* He said his group's motives are pure. Ibid

*People need time, you can't erase deeply held beliefs just like that. He may as well expect the whole Aryan community to magically achieve widespread literacy, presto, overnight,* said Grand Dragon Joseph Hamm, a noted moderate. Ibid

*The Ku Klux Klan is a white supremacist hate group that has operated in the U.S. since the 19th century. While it is often thought of as an ugly manifestation of Jim Crow era racism that died out decades ago, recent events — namely, the endorsement of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump by a former KKK leader — remind us that the organization's white nationalist ideology is still embraced in certain parts of the country. The Southern Poverty Law Center estimates that there are 190 active KKK groups with between 5,000 and 8,000 Klan members in the U.S. "Here's How Big the KKK Really Is Today" ATTN: [www.attn.com/stories/6255/how-big-kkk-is-2016](http://www.attn.com/stories/6255/how-big-kkk-is-2016). Accessed 2 March 2018.*

*This is a hate group that masks its member in white hoods and robes — the symbolic attire that has historically enabled its base to commit acts of violence against black people under the veil of anonymity — so exact numbers are hard to come by. While the KKK of 2016 isn't nearly as influential or brazen as it was at its peak in the 1920s (when it had 1.5 to 4 million members, according to a study in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*), it continues to attract sympathizers who subscribe to its xenophobic, political agenda.* Ibid

*Just because the Klan's numbers are very small, and their activities have primarily been limited to an occasional gathering or leafleting, doesn't mean that individuals who have been in their orbit can't act violently and commit an attack within the United States,"* Brian Levin, the director of the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State

University, San Bernardino, told CNN. *That is the biggest threat now from groups like the Klan.* Ibid

The number of hate groups in the U.S. rose for a second straight year in 2016, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center. *The radical right was energized by the candidacy of Donald Trump*, the SPLC said in a February 2017 news release. The July 2017 rally in Charlottesville was authorized by officials in Virginia and more than 200 state and local police officers patrolled the scene. The city said 23 people were arrested. "Disturbing photos of the modern-day Ku Klux Klan" CBSNEWS, [www.cbsnews.com/pictures/the-klk-today/](http://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/the-klk-today/). Accessed 23 April 2018.

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*The K.K.K., as reprehensible as it may be, is protected by the First Amendment, they have a right under the Constitution to say what they want to say*, said Sergeant Wyatt during a Klan rally in Southern California. "Three Stabbed at Ku Klux Klan Rally in Southern California" *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, [www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/us/three-stabbed-at-ku-klux-klan-rally-in-southern-california.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/us/three-stabbed-at-ku-klux-klan-rally-in-southern-california.html). Accessed 11 March 2018.

The KKK is, now, an old group with modern strategies. In June 2015, Dylan Roof, a white supremacist who was sympathetic to the KKK, carried out a shooting in a church in South Carolina, killing 9 persons. The fact that led to protests against racism. *This is not the same Klan as was 50 years ago, or, you know, or the 1800's. this is certainly a different Klan giving so many different factors. They use social media now, they are on Facebook, they are on Twitter*, said Johnny Milano, a photo journalist, documenting what life inside the modern KKK is really like. Stories, "The KKK's Bid To Incite A Race War" Youtube 11 December 2015, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxY-QoQ4mhA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxY-QoQ4mhA). Accessed 15 May 2018.

The KKK might be small and fragmented, but it still imposes a real threat to society as the KKK expert says: *.....marginal, isolated extremist cells themselves can become breeding grounds for unpredictable violence.* As the rest of the nation battles against racial, hatred, prejudice and hostility, the KKK remains formally on the other side. They incite a cultural war to further their gender and form a domestic threat that is close to home. Ibid

#### **4- The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKKK)**

The White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan are considered the most militant as well as the most violent chapter of the Ku Klux Klan in history. They originated in Mississippi and Louisiana in the early 1960s under the leadership of Samuel Bowers, its first Grand Wizard. The White Knights of Mississippi were formed in 1964, and they included roughly 200 members of the Original Knights of Louisiana. The White Knights were not interested in holding public demonstrations or in letting any information about themselves get out to the masses. "White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan". Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia

Similar to the United Klans of America (UKA), the White Knights of Mississippi were very secretive about their group. Within a year, their membership was up to around six thousand, and they had Klaverns in over half of the counties in Mississippi. By 1967, the number of active members had shrunk to around four hundred. Ibid

In 1974, Duke founded the Louisiana-based Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKKK). He became Grand Wizard of the KKKK. Thomas Robb followed him and changed the title of Grand

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Wizard to National Director, and replaced the Klan's white robes with business suits. Duke could receive public attention during this time, as he endeavored to market himself in the mid-1970s as a new brand of Klansman: well-groomed, engaged, and professional. Duke also reformed the organization, promoting nonviolence and legality, and, for the first time in the Klan's history, women were accepted as equal members and Catholics were encouraged to apply for membership. Ibid

It's impossible to say how many members the Klan counts today since groups don't reveal that information, but leaders claim adherents in the thousands among scores of local groups called Klaverns. Waller said his group is growing, as did Chris Barker, imperial wizard of the Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Eden, North Carolina. *Most Klan groups I talk to could hold a meeting in the bathroom in McDonald's*, Barker said. As for his Klavern, he said, *Right now, I'm close to 3800 members in my group alone. "The KKK is slowly rising again"* NEWS, [www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/the-kkk-is-slowly-rising-again/news-story](http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/the-kkk-is-slowly-rising-again/news-story). Accessed 21 February 2018.

The Ku Klux Klan has grown faster since Donald Trump's inauguration than any time in recent memory, a Klan leader has claimed. *I've been doing this for over 20 years and I haven't seen the Klan grow at the pace it's growing now*, Chris Barkertold The Independent. *I mean, it's even hard to keep track of the numbers you've got 'cause there's so many coming in. "KKK leader claims"* INDEPENDENT, [www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics). Accessed 27 February 2018.

Mr. Barker leads the Loyal White Knights of the KKK, one of the most active Klan groups in the US. Mr. Barker told The Independent that Mr. Trump's presidency had benefited his white supremacist organisation. Ibid

*When Obama became President, that's when (membership) just skyrocketed," he said. "And now that Trump is President, it seems like it's getting even better, because more whites are starting to be more proud. Ibid*

Several different Klan groups turned out for the rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, where white supremacists from around the country protested the removal of a Confederate statue. The rally, which Mr. Barker's group also participated in, was said to be the largest white supremacist gathering in the US in decades. Ibid

*A lot of white people were proud to see their people standing up for their own kind, he said of the event, in which one person was killed and dozens were injured. To me this gave whites more hope. Ibid*

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Mr Barker said the triumphant feeling came from a sense of victory over those who have deemed it "racist" to express pride in being white. *This right here has made it where (white people) feel like, 'Yes we can say it, and yes we will say it', he said. And if somebody wants to say something back, we will strike back, he added: You can't push a dog in a corner for so long – he's gonna lunge out at you. Ibid*

Ku Klux Klan activity in Mississippi, and specific White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan activity, did not stop after the Civil Rights era. In 2017, six different Klan organizations have been publicly identified in Mississippi, with three of those identified as White Knights organizations. "White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan". Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 5 January 2018, 18:20 pm, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White\\_Knights\\_ofthe\\_Ku\\_Klux\\_Klan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Knights_ofthe_Ku_Klux_Klan). Accessed 6 January 2018.

In 1989, The White Knights of Mississippi appointed Johnny Lee Clary, as its new Imperial Wizard to succeed the retiring Samuel Bowers. Clary appeared on many talk shows, including The Oprah Winfrey Show and The Morton Downey, Jr. Show, trying to build a new, modern image for the Ku Klux Klan. With the conviction of Killen in 2005, an earlier chapter of the White Knights of Mississippi came to a close. Today, the White Knights are led by Imperial Wizard Richard Green in Mississippi. Ibid

## **General Conclusion:**

The Southern Freedom Movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a necessity in the U.S.A at that time, probably because America at that same period could follow the world changes with the coming of the Industrial Revolution. As an opposition to these changes, the Ku Klux Klan Movement emerged in order to bring back the white power over the American society.

The Ku Klux Klan could gain so much power in the 1920's, when it re-emerged with six million members nationwide, attempting to define America. At the beginning of the movement, they started as a secret group of fellows who acted in darkness.

The Klan groups were most active during the Civil Rights Movement, when they presented themselves as patriots. They considered themselves a white group who defends the whites' rights, just like the Civil Rights Movement does for the Black community and it became more popular. When the Civil Rights Era came to its end, the Ku Klux Klan started to vanish.

With the coming of Obama's elections, the Klans tried to restore its power, claiming for white supremacy over the U.S.A. Now, it witnesses a new era of promoting hate. After the Civil Rights Era, it took another shape; it became legal and formed organizations which can act under the protection of the American Law.

As it marks 150 years of existence, the Ku Klux Klan is trying to reshape itself for a new era, with dreams of restoring itself to what it once was. Born in the ashes of the smoldering south after the American Civil War, the Ku Klux Klan died and was reborn before losing the fight against civil rights in the 1960s.

Klan members still gather by the dozens under starry southern skies to set fire to crosses in the dead of night, and KKK leaflets have shown up in suburban neighborhoods from the Deep South to the northeast in recent months. Now, they have more freedom; they are acting under the American Law. The movement is no more that small secret group which hides from law; it takes now the form of legal organizations with the beginning of the 2000's.

The KKK is most characterized with Nativism, Protestantism, racialism and white supremacy, which are in common with German National Socialism and Italian Fascism. It takes the racial ethnic in the South as an advantage to achieve its aims, calling for native born, protestant, and white power over the American society.

President Trump's policy over immigrants, having the old values about the superiority of the white race is the best example which proves that racism still exists in America. The Ku Klux Klan as many other white supremacist groups, symbolizes racism existence in a "Post-Racial" country.

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