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REVIVAL OF KLAN IN DETROIT SEEN IF SLUMP REMAINS

Akers of Michigan U. Fears Southern Transients Will Renew Terrorism

ATLANTIC CITY, Dec. 29 (AP).—Elmer Akers of the University of Michigan department of sociology, predicted today that Detroit would experience more vigilante movements such as the recent Black Legion if another depression set in.

He told a sociologists' convention that the 100,000 Southern whites in Detroit were largely in a "social vacuum" and, consequently, had no stake in the community.

Lack of organized social activities such as fraternal groups, and a feeling of economic frustration have caused them to take action against what they think are their enemies, he added.

"The situation," he said, "presents a kind of frontier town in which people are strangers to each other and have little feeling of responsibility for the welfare of the community. The Southern whites, with few exceptions, come to Northern industrial cities with no intention of making the North their home.

Fodder for the Legion

"A large part of them have been in Detroit many years, but few of them did not intend to go back home as soon as they made 'a lot of money.' . . . It was among the Southern whites who had been in Detroit longest and achieved lower middle-class status that the Black Legion recruited 25 to 50 per cent

of its members," he said.

The sociologist said the more pronounced physical violence of the Black Legion reflected the "Fascist tendency to substitute force for reason, the policy of liquidating the enemy."

"The violence of this outbreak of vigilante nativism," he said, "was in keeping with Fascist policies in the world today. It found in the depression the catalytic agent which precipitated into action many factors of social and economic insecurity, prejudices, fears and frustrations already present in varying degrees.

Not a Social Freak

"Above all, this vigilante order was not a freak but a natural resurgence of the perennial nativism found in most rural and small town communities of the Americans."

He said it was "possible if not probable" that certain promulgations on Communism by the Union League of Michigan set in motion the anti-radical movement in Detroit.

"A group of highly prejudiced rank-and-file American citizens," he observed, "carried out in their own way their interpretation of the example and point of view expressed by the dominant attitude and policy-forming groups in the community, of which the Union League of Michigan was a leader."

Akers' speech was before the American Sociological Association, leader of a dozen allied social science organizations meeting here.

Before another group, Professor Oliver M. W. Sprague of the Harvard School of Business Administration yesterday urged reduction of both wages and prices as a means of reviving heavy industry—especially building.

One reason industry slowed down, he indicated, was that prices were too high and the building of homes too expensive for wage earners who needed them. He made clear that prices should be cut before wages, for fear cost of materials would rise to counteract the lowering of wages.