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Re: Addendum Notes w/ Klan Terror

Had Lincoln lived definitive requirements for Reconstruction would not have been delayed for two years. More importantly most of the uncertainty, false hopes, the confusion, and the resultant bitterness that arose from Johnson's course and its subsequent repudiation. Most southerners believed from Johnson's conduct that they would have to make a few concessions on the status of the ex-slave--none on suffrage, and not even recognition of absolute equality of traditional rights before the law. Although these were imposed. . . delay fed a widespread reaction that to defeat was added "dishonor." Had there been from the beginning a consistent southern policy that satisfied majority Republican opinion, it is reasonable to assume that compliance would have been greater and opposition less widespread and ruthless.

The fight between the President and Executive wrecked much mischief in the reconstruction period. From the outset it fragmented a potential core of state leaders willing to cooperate in implementing the requirements of the victor. Had there been a clear message from the White House about the policy of restoration and what was to be expected from the South with a sustained leadership from the Presidency perhaps the policy could have gone forward behind a unified state leadership.

Instead there were state leaders who took their clues from Johnson and those who looked to Congress.

With Lincoln in office, odds for success would have been greater, but by no means assured. But he would have had the advantage of timing that was lost to the Congressional Republicans. He would never have become for white Southerners, as did the "Radical" Republicans, the symbol of the alien, the fanatic, the self-righteous and the vindictive.

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Re: Addendum notes on White Terrorism

A persistent Southern myth about the Klan was that it was composed on the white trash of the South. The actual fact was that leadership of the Klan was made up of planters, merchants, lawyers and even ministers. The pillars of white souther society were engaged in this extra-legal coercion. Some prominent Klansmen were Bedford Forrest, editors of the Raleigh Sentinel and the Atlanta Constitution. Former General John B. Gordon (Appomatox fame) and Georgia's Democratic candidate for governor. Attorney Leroy McAfee (whose nephew was Thomas Dixon).

Some prominent Southerners spoke out against the Klan. But generally the best and brightest of southern society silently acquiesced in these vigilante night-riding activities.

Republican leaders in the South were reluctant to take the necessary actions to bring this terror under control. They were hesitant to use the militia--mostly black. Arguing that it might produce a race war that would get out of control.

Governors who did have success in breaking up the Klan were Powell Clayton of Arkansas and Edmund Davis of Texas. They organized special militia forces (integrated) and declared martial law. These militia forces under former federal generals arrested known Klansmen and tried them under martial law and executed those whom were indicted.

But extreme counter-tactics like these had a negative side. Perpetuators of violence were re-imaged in the eyes of the citizenry as victims and heroes.

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Re: Addendum notes w/ White Terrorism--Chpt. 9
[Source: Belz, Emancipation/Equal Rights]

Congress enacted a series of measures to deal with the Klan terror which peaked in 1870/71. These enforcement acts were to protect blacks in their civil and political rights and to preserve the Republican party against the onslaught of white southerners who would undo Radical reconstruction.

1870 enforcement act--To implement the 15th Amendment. This was aimed essentially at state officials who obstructed qualified voters from enjoying the right of franchise. It also prohibited and punished any private citizen who tried to deny citizens from enjoying rights protected by the Constitution and federal laws.

1871 enforcement act--created a far-reaching system of national supervision of congressional elections.

These measures failed to stop Klan violence and intimidation, especially in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and South Carolina.

1871--Grant asked Congress to take further actions. The result was the famous Ku Klux Klan Act. Under this act when citizens were denied equal protection of the law and equal privileges and immunities by overt acts of violence and intimidation or by failure of state officials to uphold these rights then the federal govt. could step in. This allowed the President to suspend the writ of habeas corpus and use military force to guarantee civil rights.

Initially, the Grant administration enforced the KKK and other civil rights acts with vigor. Habeas corpus suspended in South Carolina and federal troops were called in to crush Klan actions. Thousands of suspected Klan members were arrested in the four above states and the newly created Justice department won over its cases from 1870 to 1873. A.G. ANDREW A. AKERMAN

The result was to effectively break up the Klan by 1873. White hostility took other more subtle forms.