

ral sciences as well as of the humanistic sciences in their new expression. He turns his back on metaphysics and concentrates on the philosophy of knowledge. Kant is the most notable representative of this movement.

Though the father of modern rationalism certainly cannot be blamed for the move away from Christianity, it is difficult not to acknowledge that he created the climate in which, in the modern era, such an estrangement became possible. It did not happen right away, but gradually.

In fact, about 150 years after Descartes, all that was *fundamentally Christian* in the tradition of European thought *had already been pushed aside*. This was the time of the Enlightenment in France, when *pure rationalism held sway*. The French Revolution, during the Reign of Terror, knocked down the altars dedicated to Christ, tossed crucifixes into the streets, introduced the cult of the goddess Reason. On the basis of this, there was a proclamation of *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*. The spiritual patrimony and, in particular, the moral patrimony of Christianity were thus torn from their evangelical foundation. In order to restore Christianity to its full vitality, it is essential that these return to that foundation.

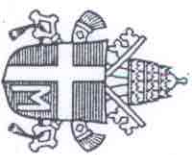
Nevertheless, the process of turning away from the God of the Fathers, from the God of Jesus Christ, from the Gospel, and from the Eucharist did not bring about a rupture with a God who exists outside

CROSSING

THE THRESHOLD

OF HOPE

by His Holiness
JOHN PAUL II



Edited by Vittorio Messori

Alfred A. Knopf
CANADA 1994

HOODED AMERICANISM

*The History of the
Ku Klux Klan*

*With a New Epilogue
by the Author*

DAVID M. CHALMERS



QUADRANGLE PAPERBACKS
Quadrangle Books / Chicago

MARCHING ON WASHINGTON

It is difficult to say when the Klan reached the peak of its power. By the time of its election successes of 1924, it was already on a greased slide downward in the Southwestern states of Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas which had been its first bastions of power. Its Louisiana realm was a shambles, California was long since past its early exuberant pinnacle, and Oregon was already out of its grasp. Klan power in Georgia had leveled off and the citizens of Atlanta were not completely unhappy to see the imperial potentates fold their robes and ship their valises off to Washington. In Kansas, William Allen White and the state charter board were cramping the Klan's regal style. While there was much power and many members still to be reaped in the Midwest and elsewhere within the Empire, the great spectacular spurts of growth that marked its progress in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, were over. The Hoosier realm was divided in uneasy balance between the Stephenson and Evans forces, and internal disruption was gnawing away at many state realms and local chapters.

The Klan had never seriously considered creating its own political party, and in the light of the history of third parties in America this was not an unwise decision. Despite temporary liaisons with the Republicans in Texas, Oklahoma, and Georgia during the 1924 elections, the Southern Klans were mainly composed of Democrats. Apart from occasional maneuvers in Oregon, Iowa, Ohio, and Maine, the Invisible Empire was Republican in the North and West.

The Northern Klansmen were unhappy enough already over Southern rule and were hardly inclined to abandon their traditional political allegiance for the opposing faith or for a new untried venture. Most Southern Klansmen were no more willing. The Klan did facilitate some interparty movement, particularly from the Democratic to the Republican ranks among the Oklahoma and southern Indiana Baptists, and the Invisible Empire usually had strength in

both camps. For the most part, however, the organization had enough trouble trying to unite its cohorts behind a fellow wearer of the robe, and it could not be counted on to deliver its vote, when it meant crossing party lines. Throughout its history, the Klan tended to muster its greatest strength in voting against people rather than for them.

Given the nature and rigidities of the Klan, what were its political possibilities and future? Ambitious politicians joined it. Others compromised with the Klan in order to survive in areas where it was strong. It commanded and secured congressional as well as strictly local patronage. The Klan became tangled in the presidential hopes of William G. McAdoo as well as in the plans of Indiana Senators Ralston and Watson. D. C. Stephenson dreamed of using the Klan as a means to ride a Republic elevator to the presidency. The Klan mystery man, Gutzon Borglum, had a vision of the Klan as the instrument of a pro-farmer, anti-tariff, Anglo-Saxon progressivism expressing the "minds of the villagers and agrarians" without foreign ideologies and in opposition to the alienism of New York and the eastern cities. However, though his ideas interested Stephenson, whose Republicanism could not allow him to consider a lower tariff, Borglum did not represent the Klan's mind and heart.

Since the Klan talked so urgently about its own vital effort in defending an endangered nation, the future of the Klan itself depended at least in part on its ability to achieve something nationally. Its role was that of a pressure and veto group. In general terms, there were three facets of the Invisible Empire apart from its unofficial function as a money-making machine for its owners. The Klan operated as a fraternal order, as a local vigilante organization, and as a resistance movement. The third role was that of defending the values of one-hundred-per-cent Americanism and was intertwined with the other two. Consciousness of oneself as a native-born, white, Protestant American was not only the major bond of cohesion, it was a call to action. The reality of the un-American menace and the success of the Klan's leadership were vital questions which inevitably drew the Klan into the national political arena and demanded performance. To fail of accomplishment would doom the Invisible Empire more to invisibility than imperium.

Although the Klan enjoyed the telling of horror stories about how Woodrow Wilson's evil secretary, Joseph Tumulty, filled the government with Roman Catholics, Harding and Coolidge stirred few such fears. Nor was the Congress itself dangerous or imperiled. The Klan's own congressional roundup for 1923 listed:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Republicans: 215 Protestants (180 of them Masons)
 7 Roman Catholics
 2 Jews
 1 Mormon
 1 Unknown

Democrats: 168 Protestants (120 of them Masons)
 30 Roman Catholics
 5 Jews

SENATE

Republicans: 48 Protestants (29 of them Masons)
 1 Mormon

Democrats: 39 Protestants (31 of them Masons)
 5 Roman Catholics
 1 Mormon

In total, hardly a menace and more than likely a friend. Although President Coolidge was to speak out unnecessarily strongly to the American Legion in favor of toleration, diversity, and opposition to race prejudice, he had given Dunning the Savannah appointment and picked a judge in Oregon who favored the compulsory public school bill.

The Klan's leaders were jubilant over their successes in the 1924 elections. The Imperial Wizard boarded his private railway car and made a triumphant tour of his western dominions, while Southern Klansmen gathered in Atlanta for a big Thanksgiving Day parade and a dedication ceremony on top of Stone Mountain. At the beginning of the new year, Klan potentates, joined by Senator Mayfield and Tennessee's Senator Kenneth McKeller gathered in Dyersburg, to celebrate the marriage of Klan lobbyist W. F. Zumbrunn to a Tennessee girl.

In February of 1925, the Imperial Wizard hailed the elections and the passage of the new immigration-restriction law as the Klan's most recent and important triumphs. No one represented more clearly the dominant American attitude on immigration than did the Klan. As the historian Oscar Handlin has summed it up, the philosophy that underlaid the laws of 1917-24 was that "the national origin of an immigrant was a reliable indication of his capacity for Americanization." The Klan simply made the dividing line absolute. Those who