

Fraud Laid To Former Klan Chief

By J. R. Roseberry
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A former Maryland Ku Klux Klan leader who has used a handful of names, yesterday was indicted by a grand jury on a charge of calling himself somebody else in applying for a passport.

Francis R. Edwards, also known as Francis X. Edwards and Xavier Edwards, and, until last year, either the imperial wizard of the Interstate Ku Klux Klan or the Exalted Cyclops of the United Klans of America, Inc., is charged with using the identification of Ray MacLean Williamson in applying for a passport Feb. 12, for a trip to England.

The real Williamson, an employe of the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in Silver Spring, said yesterday that he knew Edwards as a customer when he, Williamson, worked for an oil refining company last year.

Government officials said Williamson was unaware that his identification was used for the application.

Williamson said yesterday he was not aware that he was missing any identification papers, but that it was possible. He said he recalled Edwards as being an "amiable" person in their previous business dealings.

In applying for the passport, investigators said Edwards said he wanted to visit his sick wife in England. They af-



By Steve Szabo
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FRANCIS R. EDWARDS
... in passport mixup

firmed that he made the trip, but did not specify when he did so.

Edwards resigned his post with the Maryland Klan last year, saying he did not approve of the violence by some fellow Klansmen. A number of cross-burnings took place in the Laurel area in March, 1967, following announcement of his resignation.

Conviction on the U.S. District Court Grand jury charge of making a false statement in applying for a passport carries a maximum punishment of a \$2000 fine and five years in prison.

Edwards founded the Interstate KKK after leaving the Maryland Branch of the United Klans of America, Knights of KKK.

In June, 1966, he led a group of eight robed and hooded Klansmen in a march from Maryland into the District to protest the James Meredith march in Mississippi.