

A LOOK INSIDE THE INVISIBLE EMPIRE

By ROBERT SHERRILL

Mr. Sherrill, free lance writer and Washington editor for THE NATION, is the author of Gothic Politics in the Deep South and The Accidental President.

"The Klan," as viewed by Rep. John Wood of Georgia, chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee in the 1940-50's, "is an old American tradition, like illegal whiskey selling." More recently—tutored by several dozen violent deaths, several hundred beatings and floggings, and several score bombing and burnings—even HUAC has learned to take a less cavalier view of the Klan, with the result that in 1965 and 1966, a HUAC subcommittee held hearings into Klan activities. The results, though measurable by 200 witnesses and 4,000 pages of testimony, were not promising. The Committee was unable to attach its anti-Klan provision, a measure opposed by civil rights and civil liberties groups due to its ambiguity in defining a "clandestine" organization, to the 1968 Civil Rights Act. The hearings, and attendant publicity, did, however, reveal that in several southern states Klaverns were trying to revive the 1920's ghost of active Klan participation in politics.

Dragons in Tennessee, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Alabama promised to produce "Klan candidates" who would seek offices "from the courthouse up" in the 1966 elections. Except in North Carolina, these plans generally fell through. All efforts to upgrade the Klan to a legitimate political organization have failed, except in North Carolina and Mississippi and perhaps Alabama (and this is to acknowledge only the thinnest patina).

It is generally assumed that Jim Johnson, 1966 Democratic nominee for governor of Arkansas, and Lester Maddox,

Democratic nominee for governor of Georgia, were the chosen ones of the Klan, although there was no public campaigning for Johnson and only scattered Klan campaigning for Maddox. Georgia Grand Dragon Calvin Craig refused to say whether the Klan would support Maddox or Republican candidate Bo Callaway; however, here and there the word came out. About 250 members of the Baxley Klavern of the Klan were told by their leaders that Maddox's philosophy was closest to the brotherhood's. The moral to be drawn from campaigns both in Arkansas and in Georgia was, however, that the Klan and its supporters did not have the political strength to pull off a victory. (When the legislature is required to step in and save the day for the Democratic side, as happened in Georgia, it cannot be counted a Klan victory.) In no southern state does the Klan come close to carrying the statewide influence that it had in its heyday during the mid-1920's, when major offices swung on the Klan's support.

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North Carolina is the only state in the South thus far to offer the Klan the dual benefits of being accepted as both a bona-fide terroristic group and as a quasi-political movement. The Klan has offered (with, admittedly, little final success) candidates for justice of peace, state house of representatives, constable, coroner, clerk of the court, county commissioner, county board of education, and congressman. In the 1966 primaries, the Charlotte OBSERVER counted seven Klan candidates

in Gaston County, five in Rowan, and 15 in Randolph County. These counts, said the newspaper, were minimums. One of the candidates defeated at the time was Mrs. Sybil Jones, running third in a four-way race for Rowan County Clerk; she is the wife of KKK Grand Dragon Robert Jones. A man linked closely with the Joneses, James W. Davis, was elected registrar of deeds in Rowan in the general election. Davis' ties with the Klan (and his former Exalted Cyclopsship of the South Rowan Klavern) came out after he was arrested on a federal conspiracy charge in July, 1967. Davis died before fellow defendants were acquitted in the conspiracy trial.

Other known Klan candidates popped up in Franklin County where a Klansman unseated a weekly newspaper editor on the county board of education; typical of the see-saw support given to the Klan in North Carolina, however, was the defeat in the same county of the sheriff, who was thought to have Klan support. Across the state, a minimum of 30 Klansmen put their reputations on the line in the 1966 balloting—and almost invariably lost, although not always crushingly. Not always, but often. A Klansman in Guilford County ran eighth in a 10-man race for sheriff; in Mecklenburg County, a Klansman ran 12th in a 12-man race for the state house of representatives; in Forsyth County, a Klansman finished third in a four-man race for sheriff. Yet that is known as Klan territory, and because it is, it underlines the truism that an apprenticeship in terrorism is not always the best preparation for a career in politics.

Perhaps the most closely watched local race of 1966 in North Carolina was that in New Hanover County, where Sheriff Marion W. Millis was up for re-election. Millis gained national notoriety at the HUAC hearings when he admitted that he and six of his deputies had at one time not only belonged to the Klan but had stored Klan records in the sheriff's department safe. He told the congressional

investigating group that he set out to "keep an eye" on the Klan, but that things just got out of control. As a witness, he came through as something of a laughable clod and many North Carolinians of the more sophisticated sort wondered if this would hurt him in the election. His opponent—considering the fact that he had no law enforcement experience—ran a good race, especially in the urban areas (he polled 5,523 votes) but Sheriff Millis cleaned up in 21 of 29 predominantly rural precincts to stay in office comfortably with 6,746 votes. The rural-urban split in this race tells something of the Klan story in North Carolina. Considered somewhat typical of the quality of people who ran on the Klan ticket was E. H. Hennis, who had to campaign for the post of Guilford County sheriff in absentia, since he was in jail during the campaign serving a 90-day sentence for shooting at a boy who later married Hennis' daughter.

The debate over whether the Klan was and is a political organization resulted in some of the stormiest newspaper interviews and speeches of 1966, culminating in the resignation of Malcolm B. Seawell as chairman of Governor Dan Moore's Law and Order Committee. Seawell wanted to revoke the Klan's charter and Governor Moore was not ready to do so. Whereas the Klan is chartered in North Carolina as a fraternal organization, Seawell considers it to be a secret political and para-military organization and therefore subject to being outlawed. It is a debate which, actually, has swelled up and died down and risen again in North Carolina for nearly three generations. Details of North Carolina's failure to come to final grips with the problem are probably instructive of the muscular seizure that so often seems to grip southern politicians when they are asked to act against the Klan.

During the 1875 convention to revise the North Carolina constitution, amendments aimed at outlawing the operations of secret political and military societies in the state were added, but somehow

the laws must have been defective because, although 75 persons were arrested and convicted for the Klan brutalities that occurred in the early 1950's, it was discovered that state law did not go far enough to block the Klan. The Moore Act of 1953 was designed to define more clearly what a secret political and/or military society consists of. The law unmasked the Klan and required the Kluxers to have a regular meeting place.

The 1953 session of the legislature believed, and for good reason, that it had written laws that could easily be made the basis for prosecuting those who engaged in Klan activities. The most important wording of the new law was as follows:

"It shall be unlawful for any person to join . . . solicit members for . . . or assist in any way any secret political society . . ." (G. S. 14-12.3).

A secret society "shall mean any two or more persons . . . combined or united for any common purpose whatsoever, who shall use among themselves any certain grips, signs or password, or who shall use for the advancement of any of their purpose or as part of their ritual any disguise of the person, face, or voice or any disguise whatsoever . . ." (G. S. 14-12.1).

"The term 'secret political society' shall mean any secret society, as hereinbefore defined, which shall at any time have for a purpose the hindering or aiding the success of any candidate for public office, or the hindering or aiding the success of any political party or organization, or violating any lawfully constitutional provisions of the state." (G. S. 14-12.1).

"The term 'secret military society' shall mean any secret society . . . when members are illegally armed or . . . have for a purpose the engaging in any venture by members thereof which shall require the illegal armed force . . ." (G. S. 14-12.1).

Further, the law required that the membership lists be available (G. S. 14-12.6).

Since it is hardly any secret that the Klan uses secret signs and passwords and that its members disguise themselves in

quaint paraphernalia, the only further evidence that would appear to be needed before prosecuting under these laws would be evidence of the Klan's political activities.

This, too, was easy to uncover. The Klan's leadership makes no effort to hide its political activities. Early in the spring of 1966, J. Robert Jones, head of the North Carolina branch of the United Klans of America, held a news conference in Charlotte at which he acknowledged that political activity could endanger the Klan's charter but insisted that it was *not* a political organization; after going through this informal disclaimer, he went on to say that "survival is the first sign of life and in order to be a fraternal organization, there must be some political activity to some extent." As an example of "some activity," he told of how "last evening Klansmen hit every house in Salisbury, Spencer and East Spencer with one of Sybil's cards" (Sybil, his wife, was running for office).

With multitudinous evidence of this sort, Law and Order Committee Chairman Seawell—who, as attorney general under Governor Hodges, had insisted on obeying federal desegregation laws—demanded that Secretary of State Thad Eure revoke the Klan's charter and that Governor Moore prosecute the Klansmen for breaking the law.

Eure, who had expressed sympathy for the Klan on earlier occasions paid no heed. Neither did Governor Moore, who said, "Laws are broken by individuals, not organizations . . . There has been no finding of fact that the Klan is a forbidden secret political society . . . Mr. Seawell was speaking as a private citizen . . . On the secret angle, I notice by some of the newspapers that there were Klansmen running for office in the primary. If that was so, there's nothing secret about it."

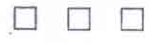
Seawell, who had been investigating the Klan for more than a year, said he had found that "many of them (the Klansmen) are paranoid and armed with everything from pistols to machine guns," with

which they often drilled; that, in his eyes, made it a para-military organization in violation of the state law. But Attorney-General Wade Burton and Deputy Attorney-General Ralph Moody expressed "grave doubts as to the sufficiency of the evidence before us to revoke the charter" and added that in their opinion, "a close examination of the materials shows that the Klan is organized on military lines. However, this related to the plan of internal administration of the Klan and its lines of authority extending from its highest officers and units to its lowest officers and subordinate units. There is no evidence before us that the Klan in actual practice is a para-military organization." The most interesting defense of the Klan was made by Assistant Attorney General Moody, who said, "I have seen copies of the Klan's secret rites and pledges. And there is nothing in there that the state could use as a basis for outlawing the Klan. In their official documents, the Klan professes very high ideals. Their actions may be something else again, but all I can go on is what is in writing." The State Bureau of Investigation reportedly had deep files of information that the attorney general's office could have gone on, but the SBI data was never made public.

Ironically, state officials who denied the para-military character of the Klan were to be embarrassed a few days later when 450 Kluxers moved into the capital square, practically on Governor Moore's doorstep, and took over. Police seemed helpless, as 50 Klan security guards strolled around the area, pushing non-Klansmen out of the way.

The activities of the Klan not only overshadow but overwhelm all other right wing activities in North Carolina. The doctors and the mill owners have their Birch Society conclaves, and the merchants have their Citizens' Council meetings, and "Let Freedom Ring" ting-a-lings its cheerfully slanderous messages in Durham, Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Raleigh, and Rocky Mount, and the National States

Rights Party is maintaining a weak but stubborn foothold in Durham—but all of this together is nothing compared to the danger of a resurgence of Klan activity.



Of all the states in the Deep South, only in Alabama has there been any notable "insider" participation in politics by the Klan. This is not a new development. In 1958 the Klan was out tearing down other candidates' posters on behalf of John Patterson, who was elected governor that year. In that election, George Wallace had strong Negro support in some areas and it was also in 1958 that, according to numerous accounts subsequently printed, he vowed to seek the right wing and Klan support.

In 1962 the Klan was working for Wallace and the Klan has been a very visible adjunct to Wallaceism ever since. In 1964, an organization known as the United Conservative Coalition of Alabama — with member groups of White Citizens' Council, Ku Klux Klan, John Birch Society, and some Republicans—working in league with Wallace, put out more than half-a-million sample ballots, headed with Wallace's warcry, "Stand Up For Alabama." The name of Congressman Carl Elliott was left off the sheet. Elliott lost.

Nor has Wallace limited himself only to the use of Kluxers in his efforts to stave off what he calls the "intrusion of the pink poodle dogs of Washington." In 1966, he appointed to the Alabama Textbook Selection Committee Jimmy C. Jones, a Birmingham pharmacist who has frequently contributed to the radically conservative weekly newspaper, the Birmingham INDEPENDENT, and who is the husband of the chairman of Birmingham's "Let Freedom Ring;" and Dr. Henry L. Lyons, Jr., pastor of the Highland Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery's largest church, and sometimes a speaker at Citizens' Council meetings throughout the South. While Dr. Lyons has never been

linked to the Klan, some of his sentiments would not be out of place in that organization. Like Senator Richard Russell of Georgia and Robert Shelton of Tuscaloosa, he, too, has said that he would defend segregation "as long as there is a breath of life left in me."

The presence of the Klan in Wallace's government again was brought to public view when Rex Whitton, then administrator of the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads, charged that Wallace was forcing consulting engineers to hire his friends as agents and that among these friends was UKA Chieftain Robert M. Shelton, Jr., who had received \$4,000 for helping a Mobile firm get a highway contract.

Asa (Ace) Carter, one of Wallace's counselors, was a well-known Klansman in Birmingham in the late 1950's and became better known after he organized a Klan-type White Citizens' Council unit. In 1957 he was confronted in a public meeting of his group by two members who objected to his handling of finances. Carter shot the men. Charges of attempted murder against him were later dismissed.

Both Carter and Shelton were in evidence during 1966 soliciting campaign money for Mrs. Wallace. According to Alabama's former attorney-general, Richmond Flowers, open solicitation for support in the legislature for certain issues was done by Claude Henley, Shelton's lobbyist. The most widely publicized pro-Klan action taken by Wallace was to hire the head of the Klan Bureau of Investigation as the state investigator of the Klan. Wallace said it was an accident.

Former Attorney-General Flowers has pointed out these other signs of Klan influence in Alabama politics: a bill to control the sale of dynamite was killed in the state senate by Wallace legislators. Al Lingo, who was head of the Department of Public Safety during most of Wallace's term, sat on the platform at a Klan rally after he became the chief policeman in the state and was introduc-

ed to the Kluxers as "a good friend." Lingo, since resigned from the state police and defeated for sheriff in Birmingham, also brought a bondsman to assist the person accused of slaying a civil rights worker in Hayneville.

In 1966, when Attorney General Flowers announced plans to investigate the Klan and called on Governor Wallace for assistance, newsmen asked Wallace how he intended to respond. "Let's move on to something important," said Wallace.

Wallace's general attitude seems to please leaders of the right. THE FIERY CROSS, the Klan's newspaper, has said: "Governor Wallace may never be president, but the psychological impact upon our enemies to this possibility is our great weapon, and we dare not let this great man fade from the national scene."

One of the editors of the Birmingham POST-HERALD observed on this point. "Have you ever seen [George] Wallace? He's terrifying. He brings out the worst in you and acts as a vehicle for all your worst impulses. The Klan has declined since the advent of Wallace. (When the United Klan met in Tuscaloosa in September, 1967, to elect Robert Shelton to a third three-year term, only 300 Klansmen showed up. Shelton had predicted 1,000.) Haters don't need to join a Klan when they have George Wallace. If you want something hated, just name it—he'll hate it for you." This reporter feels that the Klan is highly overrated as a shaper of public or political opinion because the prevailing opinion has already been shaped in the same direction by persons who would be offended to be called allies of the Klan. Klansmen are notoriously on the low end of the economic spectrum, a position that opens them to the ridicule of powerful civic leaders who, while not above using the Klan, hold it at arms length. One such leader in Birmingham recounted with laughter how a violent wing of the Klan was depleted in Birmingham by the very fact that they

had gotten into trouble and had been helped by one of the best defense lawyers in town—who charged such fees that many members were wiped out, losing homes and farms to pay him off. In its relationship with the power structure of the South, the Klan seems to operate in this kind of every-man-for-himself atmosphere. When hard luck befalls the Klan, it can expect little comfort from the chief politicians. When things are going its way, on the other hand, the Klan can anticipate its most effective gimmicks being absorbed by the power structure without an accompanying sharing of power.

In February of this year a new political party cropped up in Alabama that was thought by many to have Klan ties. Incorporated in Blount County as the "American Independent Party of Alabama," its officers disclaimed any connection with George Wallace's American Independent Party, but there was some cause to doubt the disclaimer. The chairman of the party is Gerald Copeland of Horton. Copeland, who was identified by newsmen as the head of the Klan in Blount County, has been an outspoken supporter of Wallace.

In October, 1967, speaking to a college group in Virginia, Wallace announced that he would accept the support of the Klan and of "anyone who supported my campaign."



There is very little evidence that the Klan has achieved power by governmental cronyism in Louisiana comparable to what it holds in Alabama, yet in local and district politics there are more instances of Klan issue in Louisiana than in any other southern state. I say "Klan issue" rather than "Klan" because it is not always clear that behind the issue is the reality of organized Klandom on any notable scale. It is very difficult to separate the organized dues-paying Klan from the vague, inchoate, angry, rebellious, anti-

social state of mind that seems to grip large areas of the South. The best example of this was in the James H. Morrison vs. John Rarick contest for Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District in 1966.

Rarick, a former district judge, was challenging a highly successful vote-getter as proved by the fact that Morrison had survived 24 years in Congress; if his constituents sent him back again, he was to become chairman of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee, a position from which he could scatter abundant pork barrel patronage and favoritism to his constituents. Yet Louisianians voted Morrison, a pro-Johnson moderate, out of office, and voted in Rarick, a small, trim man who likes to wear cowboy boots and adorn his breast pockets with red-white-blue hankies, and who looks upon civil rights demonstrators as "revolutionists led by Communists" and has described Senator Robert Kennedy's visit to Mississippi as "like a criminal that returns to the scene of his crime." He often bills himself as "a noted Baptist layman," but he rarely speaks at Baptist conventions and often speaks at White Citizens Council rallies and at meetings of other radically conservative organizations. However, that is a long way from proving Rarick is a Ku Klu Klansman, which is what Morrison called him in a speech on the floor of the U. S. House of Representatives on July 25, 1966, and numerous times thereafter. Rarick did not clarify the situation when he said he would withdraw from the Sixth District race if the FBI "can produce evidence that I am now or ever have been a member of the KKK," which, while seeming to be a disclaimer, was a rather empty gesture since everyone knows the FBI will release information of this sort regarding an individual only to a government agency and only in a confidential way. Rarick also filed a half-million dollar slander suit against Morrison. On the other hand, Rarick refused to shun the KKK bloc vote. When asked about it, he answered playfully that he would gladly repudiate the

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6,000 to 8,000 votes of the Klan (his estimate) if Morrison "will repudiate his CORE and NAACP bloc votes"; indeed, he added, if Morrison would cast off the NAACP, "I would not only repudiate the Klan vote but would even tell them to go to Chicago and help with law enforcement."

The battle never ceased building along these lines. Rarick's rather innocuous ten-point platform, as published, was for: "God; Constitution; People's Power Over Government; Peace in Viet Nam by Victory; More Buying Power of People's Money; Free Enterprise; A Strong Sixth District Voice; Our Sugar Farmers; Preserving Atchafalaya Basin; Telling American People The Truth."

Nothing Klannish there; nothing even racist. Yet Morrison interpreted in a different way: "Judge Rarick says he is for God and Constitution. What God? The Klan's God of violence, murder, and terror? What Constitution? The Klan's constitution of bombings and other unlawful acts?" Morrison's own newspaper ads were generously illustrated with pictures of groups of hooded Klansmen, coupled with long quotes from J. Edgar Hoover about the Klan, plus Morrison's own campaign pitch: "Your vote will help end violence and hatred, bigotry, and intimidation, burning, and bombing. We really have but three alternatives. 1. Vote for Jimmy Morrison's opponent and help the Ku Klux Klan and encourage more Klan violence; 2. Stay at home and do not vote and likewise help the Klan and encourage more Klan violence; 3. Vote for Jimmy Morrison and thereby vote against the Klan and vote to destroy the Klan."

Clearly, if the Klan issue was not the issue of this campaign, it was no fault of Morrison's. The Klan helped him by distributing pro-Rarick literature at its rallies. It also occasionally burned Morrison in effigy (as it did Congressmen Hale Boggs and Edwin Willis). The Negroes of the Sixth District also helped him draw the line in a controversial way by

giving Morrison 6,580 votes in East Baton Rouge's thirteen predominantly Negro precincts while giving Rarick 79 votes; that was in the first primary, and by delineating Morrison's bloc support, it forced him to talk even louder in the run-off about what he believed to be Rarick's KKK bloc support.

I go into these details to underscore what probably by now does not need to be underscored, that the one flammable issue brought into the race by Morrison, one of the most powerful members of the Washington-Southern Establishment, was the Klan. And he lost by 4,000 votes.

It's true that Rarick won heavily in the industrial area of North Baton Rouge, where thousands of Mississippians have immigrated to make Baton Rouge one of the fastest growing industrial cities of the South; but Rarick also led Morrison in many of the so-called silk stocking precincts in the southern part of the city. He also ran ahead in East Baton Rouge, where the state capitol building is located.

The moral of this political story is not that 85,000 Louisianians disclosed their Klan membership with their vote for Rarick, but that 85,000 Louisianians were not deterred from voting for an ultra-conservative who was known to have Klan support. In a state where the Klan was virtually non-existent until late in 1964 and where today not more than 1,500 members can be claimed by the KKK, it is more reasonable to suppose that the Sixth Congressional District Klan was more influenced than influencing. Indeed, Rarick had the endorsement of a group calling itself the "Committee for the Constitution" which represented 28 conservative organizations across the spectrum, from ultra-reactionary to reactionary.

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The Klan does as well as it does by blending with the biases of the majority of Southerners, who therefore feel obliged to defend the Klan in order to defend

themselves. In Louisiana, this attitude was strikingly illustrated in 1965 when the Louisiana Joint Legislative Committee on Un-American Activities issued a report on the Klan in which not one word was mentioned in regard to known and reported acts of violence but instead stated that, after polling Louisiana district attorneys, the committee found a "completely negative report on the question of criminal acts being performed, instigated, aided, abetted, counseled or procured by any Klan organization in the last five years." On the contrary, the report went on, there was "evidence of strong effort by practically all Klan leaders in Louisiana to negate violence and to promote political action as the basic policy of their organizations." The report concluded seriously, "much Klan activity seems to be based on the members' liking for secrecy and intrigue along with a certain Halloween spirit that is common to most Americans."

The Louisiana legislature, like most southern legislatures, is not noted for its sensitivity. But the same tolerance to the existence of a vicious fraternity was echoed a few months later (January 14, 1966) by Governor McKeithen himself (I say "himself" because McKeithen has, rightly or wrongly, won a casual reputation as a racial moderate) when he said he supported the legislature's findings regarding the Klan. "Obviously," he said, "some members of the Klan have been violating the law although I don't think that's true of all. I'd say a good percentage of the Klan is not engaged in violence. Some feel like they've got to keep this country from the Communists." Granted that not all Klansmen spend their off-hours shooting Negroes and burning churches, but there had been in the previous twelve months 28 publicized cases of bombings and arson directly connected with anti-civil rights activity in Louisiana, plus twenty-two known cases of shooting, which apparently had left no powerful impact on the thinking of Louisiana's top politicians.

Of course, it may not really matter, except as formal identification, whether the terror is done by dues-paying Klansmen or merely—as historians may more generally describe this Dixie art—"persons of the Philadelphia-Bogalusa school of extremism." Robert G. Rester, city attorney of Bogalusa, denied in his appearance before HUAC that he had ever been grand titan of the Original Knights of the KKK; he would not testify beyond that. Robert Stallings, a Bogalusa bank officer, refused to say whether he had been a member of the financial committee in one Klan group. While it may be of some academic importance to know if top officials of that exhausted town were actually members of the Klan, the point of primary importance in the Bogalusa story is that the entire town hall power structure went along with the demands of the Klan, and the governor and legislature of the state saw nothing disastrous in the results.

Happily, Louisiana offers not only this example of a town that was overrun by the very small percentage who actually belong to the Klan; it also can boast of a town that refused to turn its politics over to such a group. This is Denham Springs. Klansmen in that small town tried to drive to the wall businessmen who treated Negroes even with the old-fashioned patrician decency. Klansmen harassed Clarence Snelling, one of Denham Springs' most respected citizens, for hiring a Negro janitor. Early morning telephone calls, dead skunks tossed on top of his business establishment, boycott leaflets listing his name—they gave him the works. Clyde W. Johnson, operator of a Frosty Inn Drive-In, was another who had trouble. Since passage of the Civil Rights Act, he had been serving Negroes. Tough whites would drive in, wave guns through the window of their pickups, sip a 10-cent Coke for hours and talk rough to his employees.

That was the atmosphere backgrounding the municipal election of 1966. But the people of Denham Springs were sick of

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it all. Just before the vote, a local minister wrote a piece for the paper entitled, "How will the Klan Run Denham Springs?" The citizens decided it wouldn't run the place at all. They defeated every candidate suspected of having the support of the Klan. Mayor Allen Scivicque had been elected in 1964—when there was no Klan issue—by a margin of only 39 votes. But in the 1966 election—in which the Klan question became the issue—Scivicque, opposed by the Klan, won by a vote of 1,041 to 654.

After the election, Denham Springs was rewarded with an insight that is given only to the strong. "By their own admission after the election," one citizen said, "they [the Klan] didn't have but 17 members inside the city limits. Before the election you'd have thought they had 1,700. Personally, I think the election knocked them in the head out here."



Unlike the situation in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi, a known alliance with the Klan is likely to harm a politician in Georgia, unless he at least goes through the formality of shunning it.

In the 1966 Democratic gubernatorial contest between Ellis Arnall and Lester Maddox, it was just generally taken for granted that Maddox was the Klan's candidate. Speeches were made on his behalf at Klan rallies, where pro-Lester bumper strips and placards were also distributed. Maddox was sensitive enough to the feelings of most Georgians to know that if he could not go so far as to repudiate Klan support, at least he must try to share the mud. So he accused Arnall of being a life-time Klansman. For Georgians who remembered how Arnall, as governor in 1946, had crushed the Klan of that day, it was an accusation difficult to believe. But the point of the episode is that Maddox felt called upon to try to drag Arnall under the Klan umbrella, too.

In Georgia politics, it is not a good place for one man to be caught all alone. (In fact, it wasn't a good place to be caught even twenty years ago, the first time Arnall was accused of being a Klansman by a political opponent.) The Klan knows this, too. Although Klan Czar Shelton not only says publicly he is solidly behind Wallace, to the point of soliciting funds for his various campaigns, Shelton's counterpart in Georgia, Calvin Craig, knew better than to help hang the label of Kluxmanship around Maddox's shoulders. The Georgia Klan refused to endorse Maddox or Republican Bo Callaway in the general election.

This is not to say that to be known as a Klansman is death in Georgia politics; it is only to risk losing that marginal bloc that teeters between orthodoxy and rebellion. For example, KKK leader Craig failed in his try to be elected to the Fulton County (Atlanta) Democratic Executive Committee in 1966; but he didn't lose by much. He received 3,200 votes in the Fourth Ward, which was only 272 votes under the winner. In a race that close, it is not even certain that it wasn't personality or something else than Klan membership that made the marginal difference.

When poverty administrator Sargent Shriver turned down Craig's bid for appointment to a local OEO community action board, the Grand Dragon's use-worn retort was that President Johnson's whole anti-poverty program was an idea stolen from a "copyrighted book of an international Communist Jew," anyway. The Model Cities idea is apparently of acceptable origin, however, so acceptable, in fact, that Craig got himself elected to the project's six-member biracial Executive Board. He will represent one of the half-dozen Atlanta neighborhoods to be rebuilt in 1968. More recently Craig announced he was resigning from the Klan amid much speculation that he will run for Sheriff of Fulton County.

As soon as he had received the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, Gov. Maddox appointed a former law partner

of James R. Venable, Imperial Wizard of the National Knights of the KKK, to be vice chairman of the Georgia Democratic Executive Committee. Does this indicate Klan influence, or merely the influence of what Atlanta Mayor Ivan Allen described as the "rabble of prejudice, extremism, buffoonery, and incompetency?" The presence of Venable's ex-partner could not be interpreted one whit differently from the appointment of James H. Gray, publisher of the Albany DAILY HERALD, as the party's state chairman; Gray has no known Klan credentials or even indirect affiliations, but he was the unsuccessful candidate in the earlier Democratic primary of Roy Harris, president of the White Citizens' Council of America.

Although the Klan's efficiency is well demonstrated in organizing murderous kidnappings or highway shootings, it is futile to attempt to measure its "influence" within a society where great masses of non-Klan, church-going, tax-paying, law-abiding people hold and have for years held identical political and social views with those preached by the Klan. Roy Harris, that clever little master of political deceit, knew what he was talking about, because after a lifetime in Georgia affairs he had discovered the practical limits of respectability: "Some people think the nigger is beneath their dignity," he told me cheerfully, speaking briskly around a cheap black Tampa cigar. "They talk Constitution but they look at the nigger question. They talk state's rights but they mean nigger. The nigger question will never be a dead issue. Some issues never die."

For more than three years, Senator Talmadge, who used to treat the "nigger question" rather openly, has not even obliquely mentioned it; instead, he incessantly talks of mobs in the streets. Neither Lester Maddox, who gained national notoriety with his pistol and axe-handle threats to Negroes, nor Bo Callaway, once a close associate of Talmadge back in the "nigger question" days, even

hinted at the existence of such a thing in their campaigns for the governor's seat; instead, both dwelt heavily on anti-federalism. If there is any interpreting to be done, apparently Georgians know how to do it. But in any event, there is no sign that the Klan set the tone of this last important election. Further evidence of the impotence of the Klan in statewide races was the fact that Peter Zack Geer, Georgia's lieutenant governor, who had developed a reputation over the years of speaking the harsh anti-Negro language beloved by many rednecks and all Klansmen, was defeated by George T. Smith, a moderate.

It is the white-collar haters who keep Georgia in hot water; the John Birch Society - "Let Freedom Ring" - White Citizens clique that, for example, took control of Americus and crushed every voice of moderation, literally driving out some of the town's leading citizens who had seemed inclined to negotiate with their Negro neighbors.

It is to this crowd, more than the Klan, that Maddox forges his philosophical cuffs. "The Let Freedom Ring" message that so infuriated the Georgia American Legion by chiding it for favoring the importation of Communist merchandise—this message was beamed from business property of Maddox. So was the "Let Freedom Ring" message opposing certain tobacco companies for using Yugoslavia tobacco as a mix.

"Camel-Tempo-Winston-Salem Red tobacco. Don't inhale 'em."

It may be a nutty limeric, but it's better than a flogging.



Periodically, leaders of Mississippi proclaim that the Klan has either died out altogether or been suppressed beyond recognition, and almost invariably these claims are offset by new Klan violence. In the closing months of 1967, local officials said the Klan was moribund in the Jackson area. Yet within the last eight

months there have been at least a dozen bombings—including two synagogues and a rabbi's home—burnings and shootings in the Jackson and Meridian areas, all of which look like Klan work. The last outbreak (as of this writing) came on June 30, 1968, when a Klansman—Thomas Albert Tarrants III, 22, was caught carrying a box containing 29 sticks of dynamite, toward the home of a Meridian businessman (a Jew) who had helped raise money to re-build bombed Negro churches. Tarrants who had once been a cell-mate of Sam H. Bowers, Imperial Wizard of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, tried to fight the lawmen off with a sub-machine gun, but was felled by ten bullets. Mississippi officials, embarrassed by the revival of violence, say it could happen anywhere.

The nice people of Mississippi are convinced that the Klan has no significant influence on public opinion and politics. Lt. Gov. Carroll Gartin, whom this reporter talked with a few weeks before his death, was looked upon in Mississippi politics as a moderate of sorts. "There is no room in Mississippi for black power or white bullies," he once said in a fairly good statement of whatever moderation can be found in Mississippi; it can be translated as signifying a deep yearning for a return for the way things were before the civil rights movement, without attempting violently to restore the old order. Gartin was frequently identified in the northern press as typical of the "new" Mississippi politician. This was his opinion of the influence of the Klan:

"The Klan doesn't have so much molding influence. Public opinion reacts in favor of the Klan. The KKK profits from the so-called white backlash; our people have had a bellyfull of dictatorial bureaucracy. The Klan appeals to the person with less education. It has more of a frontal attack, although not all Klans are that way. A politician could denounce the Klan in Mississippi and survive; it isn't that powerful. The Klan knows I disagree with it. I believe you should do things in the

light, but at the same time there are some good people who believe its end justify its means. [His emphasis supplied with sympathetic nods.] The great overwhelming majority of the Klansmen will obey the law. A lot of my friends—and I don't deal in the past—believe that the KKK is the right organization to cope with what a lot of us feel is the encroachment of federal government. There are other people who feel that the Citizens' Council is the right organization through which to deal with federal encroachment. There are others who feel that other organizations are the right organizations. *It's sort of like one person saying that the Masonic Lodge is best, another that the Presbyterian church is best. One appeals to the less educated, the other to the sophisticated, but that is not saying one is bad and the other is good.*"

[Emphasis supplied.]

Gartin himself was a member of the Citizens' Council, as was just about every important state official in Mississippi at one time, but claimed in this interview that he was no longer active. He considered the Citizens' Council to have been "very effective" in opposing civil rights.

It is plain from his remarks that this "moderate" was no thundering opponent of the Klan and that he, in fact, considered himself in a kind of casual alliance with the Klan against a common foe. Ironically, his attitude toward the Klan seemed to be, in fact, more tolerant than that of Sen. James Eastland, the *bete blanc* of the civil rights movement, who frequently and publicly accused his 1966 Republican opponent, Prentiss Walker, of being the candidate of the Klan, with the intimation (if not the statement) that this was bad. This could be justified on the basis of campaign strategy, of course; since most Klan followers already were inclined to suspect Eastland of liberal leanings, the senator could not hope to win many of them back but he could, by linking the Klan with his opponent, hope to claim for his own the washed middle-class and the planters who make up the

large majority of Mississippians and who deplore the aesthetics of midnight murder in the mud. (In 1964, Eastland was playing the other side, sending out a letter saying that the United Klans and Knights of the KKK are **not** on the Attorney General's list and are thereby worthy of good citizens' attention.)

The Klan's efforts to influence political affairs are almost consistently crude. Although it certainly has enough standing in Mississippi to permit its officials to take public positions on political issues, the Klan usually uses its old system of after-dark threats, with no remarkable success. For instance, early in 1966, the Klan strewed lawns in Greenville, Mississippi, with single-page mimeographed papers calling for the election of officials "who have the guts to stand up before the public and say, 'I am for the white race of people.'" No names were mentioned but the broadside opened with a reference to the fact that the mayor and the city fathers had met with the NAACP and Head Start officials. The Klan also complained that white people had been discharged from their jobs in some local factories for belonging to the Klan, and claimed that the vacated jobs were given to NAACP members and COFO agitators. Chamber of Commerce officials said all the charges were lies. Insofar as this kind of midnight distribution of slanderous leaflets must make an irritable atmosphere in which even politicians who want to do better must have more trouble carrying through their good resolutions, to this extent the Klan has some success in small towns. But since it is all but scientifically established that no white official in Mississippi is anything but pro-white and anti-NAACP, one would be hard-pressed to conclude that a Klan leaflet barrage had any effect in changing local political thinking.

A sustained barrage, coupled with a widespread, successful recruiting drive, would be something else. Such a situation arose in Laurel, the capital of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. (The

White Knights, strictly a Mississippi organization, have been active in these counties: Jones, Forrest, Covington, Smith, Jasper, Wayne, Newton, Neshoba, Webster, and Calhoun. At one time they claimed 800 members in Jones County (Laurel), but newsmen and lawmen in the region—while acknowledging the possibility of that as a one-time figure—are unanimous in their estimation that recently the Klan has "lost a lot." Some say the White Knights are now inoperative under that name.)

Recent court and grand jury decisions in Laurel are said to have been directly influenced by the Klan, although sometimes the influence was of a negative sort. Much of this is rumor that cannot be supported. For example, it is widely assumed in Laurel that one of the local judges threw out a case against a city official because the charges had been trumped up by the Klan. The judge was reportedly opposed to the Klan because his opponent in a recent race had been supported by the Klan. Thus Klan "influence" of one sort or another is thoroughly intertwined in local politics.

Laurel Mayor Henry Bucklew's problems with the Jones County Grand Jury are believed by the mayor and his supporters, including executives of the local newspaper, to stem from Bucklew's opposition to the Klan. In October, 1965, Bucklew offered a \$1,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of persons for the burning of any church, house, or business or for shooting into a residence. At the time he made the offer, he said that "99 out of 100 Mississippians do not believe in bombings, or shooting into homes." Even assuming that this was no effort at a practical estimate it is not a comforting thought that a Mississippi insider would suggest—even rhetorically—21,000 of his fellow citizens (Mississippi's last census showed 2,100,000 residents) are, if not Klan members, fully capable of participating in the most robust Klan exercises. Bucklew's undisguised nervousness at the time he offered the reward is sig-

nificant. "What I am about to say could mean the end of my political career," he said, before announcing the reward, "or its actual beginning." If he felt the pro-Klan sympathies to be strong enough possibly to endanger his political career, he also felt his life in danger. "I'll speak now, knowing that my life might be in danger from a crack-pot on either side of life's main stream." He has been threatened with a tarring and feathering; he believes he has been spared the actual attempt "because you can trace feathers."

Eleven months later, a grand jury indicted Bucklew for "false pretense" involving a gift to Magnolia Boys Town, though no money was missing. The town was divided over the question of whether the Klan was so thoroughly represented on the grand jury as to make the indictment simply harassment. Bucklew's announcement of the reward was made over television at the burning peak of Klan activities in that area. The Klan put out a letter saying Bucklew had been a member of the organization but had broken away because he wanted money. Bucklew retorted that he had never belonged to the Klan.

Bucklew believes the Klan has a strong influence on public opinion, though not a determining influence on any issue where feeling is sharply divided. The Klan has boasted in the Laurel area that "if you join, you will never be indicted; if you are indicted, you will never be convicted." Bucklew and others believe this is a safe boast to make, since Klan membership is wide enough to assure good chances of at least one member getting on a jury. In the Laurel area, the mayor believes the Klan can sway 40 per cent of the people; statewide, he would put it at 20 per cent. Officials and newsmen interviewed elsewhere in the state, however, believe Bucklew is influenced by his own troubles to set an excessively high figure. All agree that some state legislators, especially those from South Mississippi, are not unsympathetic to the Klan. State Rep. Billy Joe Lee of Lawrence

County (Southeast Mississippi) refused to confirm or deny a House Un-American Activities Committee report that listed him as an officer of the White Knights.

Another victim of the Klan's infamy attack through newsletters has been J. W. West, editor and publisher of the Laurel LEADER-CALL, a newspaper that has won a number of professional awards for courageous reporting (it was bombed on May 8, 1964; no arrests were made). One of the recent newsletters given to this reporter by West reads:

THE CITIZEN-PATRIOT

A Newsletter dedicated to the Truth and the Christian Civilization . . . "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty." II Cor. 3,17. The most vicious and disruptive Mayoralty election within the memory of the oldest residents of Laurel has finally passed, leaving hurt and bitterness in its wake. Regardless of how one may feel regarding the qualifications and personalities of the various candidates, there can be no doubt that the prime mover of the chaos and confusion, which was introduced into the mayor's race, was none other than the chief agent of and for communist propaganda in Laurel, J. W. West.

The good-natured, tolerant, Christian citizens of Laurel should realize that there can never be any real peace or tranquility in the conduct of our public affairs as long as this alien intruder, West, is in a position to disrupt our local harmony. If he is not out campaigning against private property, he is agitating against our local form of municipal government; if he is not encouraging and subsidizing the blackamoors to rise up and demonstrate, he is stirring up hatred and animosity in our local

elections. Agitation, dissention, (sic) propaganda; heating and stirring the pot of public affairs to the boiling point. These are standard methods of communist subversion, and J. W. West is past master at their application. He takes the freedom of the press and uses it as an unbridled license to work against the dignity and stability of our community life. J. W. West is a highly trained communist, well versed in the art of destructive propaganda. He has presumed to insinuate his revolutionary programs here upon us, because of his imagined superiority which his intellectual training gives to him. In this connection, it would be well if we would all turn to the Second Chapter of the First Book of Corinthians, to understand what Satanic Plans these communists such as West and his associates in Washington, New York, and Montreal have in store for us.

A local newspaper is undoubtedly a convenience, but when it is in the hands of a cunning and brilliant agent of Satan such as J. W. West, it is a real and positive danger to a Christian community.

THE CITIZEN-PATRIOT is calling once again for a widespread rejection on the part of the general population of Laurel and Jones County, of J. W. West and his foreign-controlled communist propaganda organ, the Laurel LEADER-CALL. We are asking all honest citizens and merchants to cancel their subscriptions and their advertising in this dangerous institution. The subversion of our community is too high a price to pay for the meager information which they provide. As long as the operation of the Laurel LEADER-CALL is continued on the present

basis, the communists have a beachhead here in Laurel, from which they can expand into another Selma March or Bogalusa Demonstration. Let us ask ourselves, "Is it really worth it?" Is not the peace and dignity of Laurel worth more to we (sic) citizens and our children than the continued operation of J. W. West and his communist propaganda mill?

To cancel your subscription, Dial 428-0551 (office), or 428-0397 (home). Do it now, won't you please?

LAUREL NEEDS A
LOCAL NEWSPAPER.

That may seem a bit crude, but efforts to sway public opinion through broadsides of this quality have more impact than sophisticates from larger cities might suppose. West claims that the Klan has done "everything they could to wreck this paper. They've sent letters to barbershops, beauty shops, merchants saying I was linked to the FBI and things like that. They've put out the same kind of scurrilous sheets about Jewish merchants in Hattiesburg. I think some people who don't know me are influenced.

"It's difficult to go up and down the street saying 'did you see the damn letter' and add 'I never belonged to anything but the Kiwanis Club.' We have a lot of people with limited education who believe what the Klan circulates."

The effectiveness of the Klan is mainly evidenced in arousing spite toward vulnerable civic leaders — as incumbent mayors and newspaper publishers are notably vulnerable—rather than in swaying an election. The basic independence of Americans, even southern Americans, is seen in the fact that while many of them may join the Klan in the perverse pleasures that arise from an orgy of spleen, they will not go so far as to follow the

recommendations of the Klan in an election. It appears that for most people, even in such a troubled community as Laurel, the long-range welfare of the community is considered above the momentary thrill of individual pique. Thus, in the election preceding these interviews, the Klan had not been at all effective. Only one man with the Klan's support was elected, and it is not at all certain that he wanted the organization's backing. The same thing can probably be said for the success—fractional or total—of Klan candidates throughout the South—the Maddoxes and the Jim Johnsons—that while the Klan may have supported them, this was not the reason for their getting as far as they did.

Angered by Washington and by the appearance in Mississippi of civil rights workers, many substantial people of Laurel actually went through the tedious ceremony necessary for joining the Klan, but it was not long until they saw that this was a profitless indulgence. Most of them, according to those this reporter talked with, have long since resigned from the membership they took out a year or two ago. The Citizens' Council, which had been strong in Laurel, lost all its upper-middle class members to the Klan for a time, but now the Citizens Council is reviving again. The attorney who represents the Klan in Laurel is helping to revive the Citizens' Council. Merchants were influenced to join the Klan because they thought it would throw business their way. Professional men were sometimes influenced by the idea that the Klan was a legitimate expression of regional unrest. Subsequent acts of violence changed their minds irrevocably.

Mississippi has other emotional groups. At Corinth, Mississippi, the PTA was attacked by "Let Freedom Ring" — one of the very few signs of LFR activity in the state. Another of the small hate groups is the Association of Christian Conservatives (ACC), which can at its peak depend on a turnout of 100 to a rally. At last report, Elmore Greaves of Madison County

was president. Greaves is reportedly also one of the key men behind the Americans for the Preservation of the White Race in Mississippi (APWR). Typical of the activities of both the ACC and Americans for the Preservation of the White Race in 1966 was a rally at which John Rarick was the principal speaker, and the topic, not clearly defined, seemed to revolve around the treachery of some Southerners. Senator Eastland and Governor Paul Johnson were denounced as being too moderate. The APWR had earlier mailed out a leaflet describing Senator Eastland's "sipping pink tea with Bobby Kennedy." The leaflet also offered a cartoon of Eastland shaking hands with Senator Kennedy. Eastland's support of the Kennedy nominee to the federal bench, Francis X. Morrissey, aroused considerable protests from this Mississippi faction. Speakers for these groups will frequently strike hard at the theme, "We shall never forget Oxford," an allusion, of course, to the civil disturbance at Ole Miss which President Kennedy and then Attorney-General Robert Kennedy had a prominent role in attempting to subdue.

The Association for the Preservation of the White Race is so rickety, splintered and scattered that it is difficult to determine all its officers or the source of its funds or the scope of its membership. One picks up only random names.

For example, Mrs. Ralph Ainsworth, 26, a Jackson schoolteacher, was shot to death by police last June when she was caught in what lawmen said was an effort to dynamite the home of a Jewish businessman. In her purse were membership cards for the Ku Klux Klan and the APWR.

Typical of the APWR activities was the "Operation Locust" launched early in 1966 to buy from merchants who had been boycotted by the NAACP in Fayette. It was reportedly fairly successful, drawing customers from as far as Alabama and Louisiana. Despite such passing successes, the APWR does not have much public acceptance: when the Ole Miss law school invited Senator Robert Kennedy to

speak in 1966 (it later invited a Klan official to balance the program), the APWR announced that it would stage a protest rally at the university, but the Ole Miss Student Senate voted opposition to the preservationists' visit and successfully turned it away. The vote was 38 to 15.

The dissident groups appear to survive by lending each other members. The same faces show up at rallies sponsored by different groups. Thus when there was a "conservative Rally" on the Rankin County courthouse grounds, present were executives of the APWR, the Association of Christian Conservatives, the New Orleans Citizens' Council, and the Klan. Speakers included Brandon Mayor R. D. Morrow, Jr. who welcomed the group; Fred Ross, former director of the Mississippi Department of Welfare; the Rev. A. C. Everett of Whitworth College in Brookhaven; and State Circuit Judge O. H. Barnett of Carthage. These are respected names, even if they represent the fourth and fifth rung of politics. This is important to bear in mind, for at the same time these men were alluding to the "dictatorship" in Washington and upbraiding "churches that teach integration," Klansmen were distributing their literature through the crowd with the quasi-approval of the speakers.

Around Jackson, state officials almost unanimously denied that the Klan was of any influence on them, although they allowed as how it might be an influence on somebody else. Most state officials said they had never heard of the APWR. Everyone interviewed defended the Citizens Council and saw it as regaining strength. The National States Rights Party, judging from the pervading ignorance of its existence, seems to have no foothold in Mississippi whatsoever. William B. Street, state editor of the Memphis COMMERCIAL APPEAL, whose staff of stringers and his own thorough knowledge of Mississippi politics puts him in a uniquely strong position to judge, says he is inclined to agree with state officials who discount the Klan's political influence, ex-

cept in certain pockets, such as around Natchez and in the Southeastern section. He puts the Klan count at 500 for the United Knights and 2,500 for all other Klans; of these 2,500 he believes 90 per cent would be White Knights. Street guesses that the Klan could "scare up," in several senses, about 10,000 votes around the state. There are, of course, innumerable hunting and fishing clubs with a Klan-like perspective.

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On August 19, 1966, Robert M. Shelton, imperial wizard of the UKA, showed up in Star City, Arkansas to proclaim that the Klan is "getting in a position in Arkansas when it can use its power and influence to help elect a governor. We've done it in Alabama."

This estimate of their strength was certainly an imperial bit of wizardry, for while Jim Johnson's survival in the Democratic primary was properly hailed as a victory for the stand-pat segregationists, it was not measurably influenced by organized, formal Klansmanship.

Johnson was against so many things that he was bound to strike some responsive chord in many people. A flickering of flame was seen among Citizens' Councilers during his campaign, flaring up highest when Mississippi's ex-Governor Ross Barnett came to speak in the state and proclaim that it was absolutely essential to elect Johnson governor and George Wallace president; on the platform with Barnett was William I. Simmons, head of the Citizens' Council. There was no question but that the Council was working for Johnson, but there was no indication that the Council had the Klan as its ally in this effort.

In day-to-day politics in Arkansas, Klan influence is too small to measure.

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The Virginia Klan, like the Klan everywhere, is troubled internally by its hawks and doves—those who feel the Klan is

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not tough enough, and those who shun force.

Virginia began in 1965 to see the Kluxmanship of Robert Shelton's fraternity seeping over its southern boundary. Since then Virginia's "Southside" region, well under the influence of the Carolinas, has become an impressive (not in numbers but in spirit) enclave of the KKK. Most counties of Southside Virginia reportedly have klaverns. Other activity has been reported around Newport News-Hampton, Portsmouth, and Chesapeake. Klaverns are reported as far west as Franklin County and as far north as Fairfax. Ninetenths of the Klan's strength will be found in a triangle spreading down from Richmond to a base 100 miles broad on the Virginia-North Carolina border. In the past two years, there have been more than 200 rallies; 70 crosses were legally burned at Klan rallies at 30 localities; 80 crosses were burned on public or private property without permission, which is the definition of an illegal burning; two or three Negroes have been beaten, two Negroes shot, at least two Negroes shot at, a white couple (sympathetic to Negroes) shot at and their car destroyed; one church was bombed and many bomb threats voiced; many threatening phone calls were made; a brick was tossed through the plate glass window of a Negro business; thousands of pounds of Klan leaflets were distributed.

The responses varied. Police, both local and state, did their duty with far greater eagerness than had characterized their efforts on some occasions in the past during civil rights disturbances. Four men were arrested for one of the beatings; several young men were convicted for illegal burning of crosses; there were several arrests for the illegal display of Klan posters on public utility poles in Richmond. On the whole, officials of such organizations as the NAACP and of the Virginia Council on Human Relations had high praise for the conduct of the police.

Not all politicians took prompt and vigorous anti-Klan positions. A resolution condemning secret racist organizations did not pass the Virginia legislature. Nor was Gov. Mills E. Godwin, Jr., as thorough in his condemnation of the Klan as Negro leaders asked him to be; eventually he came out with a declaration that the use of the fiery cross as a symbol of terror "must be stamped out," which he accompanied with a reward of \$1,000 for information leading to the conviction of lawbreakers.

Some critics claimed that Gov. Godwin's 20-minute meeting with Grand Dragon Marshall Kornegay and Charles M. Elders, Jr., of South Hill, Kornegay's Grand Klaliff, gave status to the Klan even though following the meeting (in January, 1967) Gov. Godwin proclaimed his belief that the Klan is "obnoxious." Civil rights advocates said the state's chief executive by giving audience to the leaders of an organization that is, at best, quasi-legal, seemed to convey to Klan activities a diplomatic recognition that they did not have before. Also it provided Kornegay with a podium from which to state his contempt for the governor and others who represent the law in Virginia. After meeting with Godwin, he said that if he could lease the property next to the governor's mansion, "I would burn a cross there myself."

Coincidental with Gov. Godwin's first denunciation of the Klan was his announcement that no further laws for the curtailment of Klan activities were necessary. Civil libertarians have not all condemned the governor for this, however, pointing out that anti-extremist laws have a way of turning out to be double-edged, often cutting those they were supposedly set up to protect. On the Virginia books already was a law which states: "It shall be unlawful for any person or persons while masked or unmasked to place or cause to be placed anywhere in the Commonwealth of Virginia any exhibit of any kind or to commit or cause to be committed any act with the intention of in-

timidating any person or persons, and thereby preventing them from doing any act which is lawful, or causing them to do any act which is unlawful."

Is the circulation of Klan leaflets an intimidating act? Is the burning of a cross under all circumstances intimidating? If not, under what circumstances precisely is it intimidating? Is the display of a KKK bumperstrip an intimidating act? With the constitutional guarantees of free speech omnipresent, a cautious governor in a traditionally cautious state may be excused if he appears more cautious than militant devotees of other constitutional rights would like.

A strong denunciation of the Klan, as a lever for turning public opinion against it, seems to have been the dearest wish of civil rights advocates during the six or seven months when the Klan membership spurted upward in the latter half of 1966, and Governor Godwin's answering that request—at last—may have been the weapon they wanted, in lieu of stronger state laws.

Godwin appointed a 50-man committee of Virginia legislators, businessmen, and educators who, early in 1967, came in with their report on the Klan, and advice on how to deal with it. The group's advice to "stand firm" was backed with a 10-page legal brief of existing laws that could be applied to the suppression of the Klan.

Anti-Klanism was also strengthened in the autumn of 1966 when the Richmond City Council passed a resolution stating that the Klan would not be welcome to establish its headquarters there. Subsequent threatening telephone calls to moderate members of the City Council seems to have swung the sympathies of Virginia officialdom more enthusiastically against the Klan than any number of church bombings might have done; the Establishment does not like to have its own attacked.



South Carolina is not fertile soil for

the seeding of most hate groups. "Let Freedom Ring" rings forth in a few scattered cities, but the National States Rights Party, although its national headquarters is just across the border in Augusta, Georgia, has had no success.

In 1952, there was an ugly outbreak of floggings and kidnappings in the area overlapping southeast North Carolina and northeast South Carolina. When Judge Clawson L. Williams sentenced 63 Klansmen at Whiteville, North Carolina, to varying terms as a result of these crimes, he said: "The day has not come in North Carolina when a man has to barricade himself in his home with the setting sun." Between 1952 and 1954, there were 101 convictions in that area.

Those sentencings took the starch out of the bedsheets for a while, but by 1957, people in both North and South Carolina were beginning to wonder if some sections of the two states were not well on their way to such terror as would require sundown barricades. The fiery crosses were commonly in evidence by 1956 in both Carolinas. For the first year and a half, the talk was vigorously against the U. S. Supreme Court, certain newspapers, the Catholic Church, Jews, the NAACP, and labor unions — in other words, the usual Klan repertoire — but violence was not publicly advocated. Then threatening phone calls began, including one to Mayor Henry Savage of Camden, South Carolina, who was given a week to recant derogatory statements he made about the Klan (He didn't). Then in mid-1957, the tone changed drastically. A mob of white men chained and flogged a Negro near Greenville in the presence of his wife and the children of a white neighbor who rented from the Negro and who had left the children with the Negro while he visited his sick wife in the hospital. (Four men were convicted for the beating.) Now the Klan started talking openly of killing Negroes who tried to get into white swimming pools and of mustering 50,000 men to keep Negroes out of schools. With national

attention attracted to the region's mischief (LOOK magazine, etc.) South Carolina's leaders made varying responses. Some newspapers (such as THE PIEDMONT in Greenville) said talk about a Klan revival was "nonsense" and that "the Klan in South Carolina is good for laughs," while most important politicians were quick to voice their disdain. Gov. George Bell Timmerman, Jr., said he thought the revival of the Klan was a Communist-inspired plot to "mislead southern people and to smear South Carolina officials like myself." The next year, in 1958, Lt. Gov. Ernest F. Hollings "emphatically" disavowed any support from the KKK in his campaign for governor. Even at the level of municipal officials, some cities threw up blocks to the spread of Klanism. Camden, South Carolina, for example, required its police and firemen to take an oath that they were not members. These efforts at all levels of officialdom apparently were successful because it was five years before much was heard from the Klan again.

Then, in 1963, there were reports of a statewide movement to revive the Ku Klux Klan under a front organization known as the "Majority Citizens League." After what appeared to be a bona fide political movement among some Klan units—in their support of Strom Thurmond for the 1964 Democratic senatorial nomination—Justin Finger of the Atlanta office of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith said he thought "the Ku Klux Klan is attracting a higher cut of people these days, a better class." Judging from the greater tolerance to the Klan shown by some high public officials, this apparently was true. When Barry Goldwater made an appearance in South Carolina late in September, 1964, sitting behind him on the speaker's platform was none other than Bob Scoggins, Grand Dragon of the Knights of the KKK. (Republican Party officials explained by saying they turned a number of invitations over to L. Maurice Bessinger, a Columbia restaurant owner who was active in the

white Citizens' Council and led the Wallace-for-president drive in that area. But Bessinger denied having anything to do with it: "This sounds like a conspiracy to smear me. I have nothing to do with the Ku Klux Klan.") The next year, 1965, Secretary of State O. Frank Thornton said the Klan might be doing business illegally. "What constitutes doing business is a little hazy," said Thornton, "but recruiting and accepting fees sound like doing business to me." But his suggestion for an investigation brought no warm response from Governor Robert E. McNair, who said he hadn't heard anything about the Klan doing any business in South Carolina. The Charlotte OBSERVER'S Columbia bureau chief, Ted Shelton, noted at the time that "McNair is showing an unusual disinterest in the re-emergence of the KKK. . . ."

Perhaps one reason top politicians were turning the other way and pretending not to see the Klan resurgence was that the night-riders were getting a few important organizational seats in the standard political parties, although not with the open approval of those parties. In fact, when it was discovered that the vice chairman of the Chester GOP organization was not just a Klansman but an official of Klandom, he was asked to resign his GOP post. Grand Dragon Scoggins subsequently claimed that several GOP county chairmen were his men, but, of course, he did not elaborate. The Klan marches and rallies that abounded throughout 1965 culminated in a status achievement when Klan officials marched to the state capitol building and had their photo taken there. Perhaps because these high Klansmen preferred to operate within the shadow of the capitol rather than in a cow pasture, Chief J. P. Strom of the State Law Enforcement Division drew the same conclusion drawn earlier by ADL's Finger, that the KKK is attracting "a higher type membership" than it once did.

Nevertheless, Strom was not so impressed by the cleaner faces that he let them operate without the close super-

vision of his lawmen. Many newsmen and other observers in South Carolina believe that the law enforcement of Strom and some sheriffs did more to inhibit the Klan's violent nature than the politicians of South Carolina who are not on record as having spoken out firmly against secret violence-prone organizations during the last couple of years.



The Klan's hour of glory in Florida was in the St. Augustine rioting of 1964, and since then its mark upon the body politic has been mostly erased by time and boredom. Florida has never been good soil for the Klan, not even—surprisingly enough—in the Panhandle area, an area which in many ways seems a southern extension of Alabama, South Georgia, and Mississippi, and whose allegiances are to the Deep South rather than to the sunny, sophisticated hedonism of the lower half of the state. (There has been some activity around Tampa and Ft. Lauderdale, but hardly enough to merit notice.) One measure of the Klan's strength out of the past might be the showing of Bill Hendrix in two gubernatorial elections. Hendrix, over the years Florida's best known Klansman, ran for governor in 1952 and received 11,208 votes out of 725,000; he ran again in 1960 and received 8,517 out of 900,000. Today he would receive no more than 1,000 votes, mostly from the only stronghold of the Klan in Florida, that drainage point in the northeast corner, around Jacksonville and St. Augustine, which has a riff-raff exchange program with Klan elements from Stone Mountain, Georgia. UK Wizard Robert Shelton promised a recruiting drive in Florida during 1966, but evidence of it cannot be found. There were rumors that UK Dragon Robert Jones of North Carolina was going to try to make Florida his turf as well, giving Shelton personal competition, but Shelton denies that there is any rivalry over Florida, and judging from the lack of Klan expansion there, this is probably true. Shelton may have 500 or

600 members in Florida, though law enforcement officials doubt it; Venable's outfit may have a hundred or so in Florida, but no more; Jason Kersey's old home-grown United Florida Ku Klux Klan may have 400 or 500 members, but lawmen doubt that they are paying dues regularly; and besides that, there are some club-size groups such as the Militant Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and the United Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, both so small as to be undiscoverable.

THE KLAN AND ITS ALLIES

One reason for the Klan's perpetual frailty and instability is its failure to strike up good working relationships with other right wing organizations. The more sophisticated right wingers (such as the Birchers) disdain the Klan, while the roughneck right wingers who have given their allegiance to other organizations (such as the National States Rights Party) are usually jealous of the Klan's historical status. Nowhere in the South did I find a single person who believes the Klan and the Birch Society are, at best or worst, anything but casual and accidental collaborators. Memberships overlap very slightly and some of the broad goals are the same, but almost never is there anything so formal as collaboration.

There have been two striking exceptions. There is close cooperation between the Klan and other groups in the conservative complex of Alabama, top Klan officials have said publicly. The National Committee for an Effective Congress reported cooperation between the Klan and the John Birch Society in supporting Republican candidate John Grenier for Senator John Sparkman's seat, for example. The other notable exception was in Florida, especially during the St. Augustine trouble in the summer of 1964, when there was a test-tube demonstration of the close association of the Klan and the National States Rights Party. Earlier, bombings of an editor's home and a Jewish temple in Miami were believed to

be the work of the NSRP, an organization whose presence is usually marked with explosions, but the public ties were knotted in Jacksonville and in St. Augustine, where NSRP leaders J. B. Stoner and Connie Lynch held almost nightly harangues to urge the Klansmen on. Since then, however, the state attorney general's office and state police have moved in on Stoner and Lynch and have made Florida seem much less attractive.

Nashville, like most of Tennessee, prefers to do its hating under non-Klan labels. "Let Freedom Ring," for example, does a right smart business, and is supported by people who are also high in the local John Birch Society and in the right-wing portion of the Republican Party. Between those three organizations there is considerable interlocking. For instance in 1966, among officers installed in the newly organized Robert Taft Republican Women's Club were Mrs. Sam Porter, first vice president, and Mrs. L. D. Prowell, second vice president. The club had an estimated 70 members. Mrs. Prowell is the wife of the L. B. Prowell in whose dental laboratory was at one time located the telephone answering service for "Let Freedom Ring." Mrs. Porter is the daughter of Tom Anderson, a well known writer of far right philosophy and a national director of the John Birch Society. Anderson's position is indicated by the fact that he has called the Nashville TENNESSEAN, a moderate-conservative paper, "one of the foremost leftist papers in the nation." Mrs. Porter is herself a life member of the John Birch Society, according to her mother, Mrs. Anderson. Charles Taft, the late Senator Taft's brother and a liberal Republican, immediately repudiated the new club, saying his brother would never have taken the kind of attitude expressed in the "Let Freedom Ring" telephone calls or the public positions of the Tom Andersons. This did not seem to deflate the ladies. The right-wing Republican movement in Nashville is, indeed, strong and was credited with winning control of the

local party in 1966.

The ladies of the JBS-GOP-LFR hold their meetings sometimes in the Green Hills branch of Fidelity Federal Savings and Loan Association, a far cry, to say the least, from the dung-filled fields where the KKK burns its crosses. The idea of cooperation between one level of society in Nashville, and the other, seems just as remote as the bank from the cow pasture.

In all Tennessee, only one report was heard of cooperation between the Birchers and the KKK. A Memphis Klan leader was named as in the Conservative Coalition that contributed to the publication of "information" about candidates in the August, 1966, election. The contribution was made in the name of the White Rescue Service.

The "need" for the Klan in Arkansas, as elsewhere, has declined sharply as nicer organizations have stepped in to take up the labor. The John Birch Society has established several chapters of TACT—Truth About Civil Turmoil—in Arkansas (including the employment of a full-time coordinator). It made the standard disclaimers of racism. But it is believed, by such astute observers as some of the editorial staff of the Arkansas GAZETTE, that ex-Klansmen moving up in Arkansas' increasingly affluent society will now gravitate to these more socially acceptable organizations. The John Birch Society, especially in the South, bases its appeal to people "on the way up," which in this region, the most impoverished in the nation, means something as modest as those who can now afford two bedsheets.

Even more dehydrated in Arkansas is the National States Rights Party, which has had an almost comic opera existence in that state. In 1964, the NSRP held its state convention in the home of Thomas J. Bardin. The handful of delegates had hoped to certify Kennedy Hurst as gubernatorial candidate. Hurst, who operates a grocery store, had said in August that "I won't put out no steam until September,

but by that time, I'll know which way the wind is blowing and I'll really start puffing." But in September he withdrew. That left the NSRP meeting in state convention without any state candidates. Nevertheless, life did not depart altogether. By mid-1966 the NSRP was being heard from again, this time in the person of Norman K. Anspach, 20, "central Arkansas organizer," who said he had come to the state to "revitalize" the party which, he acknowledged, "has fallen into disrepair." To let Arkansans know where he stood, he immediately denounced the late George Lincoln Rockwell, head of the American Nazi Party, as a Jew-lover. "He says he's anti-Semite," Anspach said, "but yet he's had Jewish lawyers. The National States Rights Party is the most extreme anti-Semite group in the country." In such tragi-comic ways do the splinter groups of the hateful right operate in Arkansas. If one scratches around, one may turn up other groups, such as the Patriotic Party in Little Rock, made up of conservatives who want to establish a third party in the United States. But these organizations have virtually no following, no standing within the community, no resources, no recordable past, and apparently no future. Arkansas traditionally takes its segregation straight, on the rocks, without the dilution of organizations.

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When George Lincoln Rockwell, the Fuhrer of the American Nazi Party, was gunned to death in Arlington, Virginia, in 1967, the nation was given some insight into the trivial structure of this organization. On Rockwell's body was the entire treasury of the ANP—less than \$100. Headquarters for the Nazis was a beat-up frame house in Arlington. Rockwell couldn't even afford to own a washing machine, and was patronizing a commercial washeteria at the time he was murdered. The Nazis had always lived hand-to-mouth, mooching off wealthy eccentrics with little success. Arlington was

their headquarters most of the time, but hoping for a change of luck, Rockwell toyed with the idea of moving to Dallas, Texas, a couple of years ago.

He claimed to have a large group of followers there; police said there were fewer than 20. Only half-a-dozen were identified; the rest, if they exist, supported him with money only. Nazi activity was stepped up in Dallas in November, 1964, with some accompanying activity in Houston, but it died down in both places and did not return until the spring of 1966. Rockwell spoke at Rice University to one of the "colleges" (350 heard him; 200 were turned away for lack of room) and was challenged by a student to a debate. The debate of the anti-Rockwellites was handled by the head of the Socialist Forum, and it was a bad show all the way round. Rockwell said on that occasion that there was no connection between Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan. "Our goals are pretty much the same, but the Klan is horrified at the thought of getting mixed up with us." At one time Rockwell kept an attache in Houston. He is not believed to have one iota of influence in Houston. One slender tie was found between the Klan and the Nazis. Jerald Walraven, Klan recruiter, sent out a broadside trying to link THE WORKER with the Houston CHRONICLE. A Houston radio station, KTRU, paid him to appear on the air and the radio station got the check back cancelled by Rockwell.

The Nazis were not exactly welcomed to Dallas. Dr. Robert Morris, one of Dallas' better-known right wing leaders, was stirred to say that the Nazi Party "must be working for the Reds" because of its activities at race riots. The Nazis tend to confuse an atmosphere that is dominated by Birchism with an atmosphere conducive to Nazism. Dallas, which ranks tenth in Birch membership in the nation, did not appreciate the confusion. To the extent that it could do so, the Dallas establishment ignored Rockwell. When he tried to get arrested by break-

ing a new ordinance making it unlawful to incite a riot by deprecating any group's ethnic origin (he picketed, with the usual sign, the building in which the Anti-Defamation League is quartered) only a handful of curious passersby took notice and there was no arrest.

The Nazi Party probably died with Rockwell. When he started on his anti-Jew, anti-Negro career in the 1950's, he got nowhere. Then he adopted the Nazi emblems and was such a showman that he always got good headlines for his activities, even though at its strongest, the party never represented more than three dozen persons. It takes a kind of genius to attract national attention from that size base, and there is nobody left in the ANP with talent, much less genius. At an anti-draft rally held in Washington in October, 1967, five Nazis turned up to heckle, and the next day at the peace march on the Pentagon, 22 Nazis showed up to oppose the peaceniks (a fight developed, in which several Nazis were beaten up), but despite this—for them—"strong" turnout, the Nazi movement is clearly declining swiftly.

In 1966, the Patriotic Party cropped up in Texas, but with a minimum of success. Howard Helms, a 26-year-old Dallas sales representative, was named the six-state area chairman for the Party, which he said would try to "infiltrate" the Democratic and Republican parties to unseat their present "communist control," but there did not seem to be an overabundance of infiltrators to rely on. For a meeting called by Helms for his followers in Texas, Louisiana, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, he announced his expectations of 300 to 500 participants. Instead, 75 showed up. At the same time over the country, other regional meetings were reportedly being held, the site of the southern regional meeting being Montgomery. Undismayed by the slim turnout (because he was unaware of it; he spoke by leased wire from Washington) the chief speaker, Robert B. DePugh

of Norborne, Missouri, better known as the national coordinator for the Minutemen organization and the guiding spirit behind the Patriotic Party, rallied his men to look forward to 1972 when they would pin their presidential hopes on, he said, either Reagan or Thurmond. Patriotic Party leaders deny there is a close association with the Birch organization, but they acknowledge some overlapping membership. They expect to pull members from the Ku Klux Klan and the Constitution Party. Helms claims that his group was responsible for the defeat of urban renewal proposals in Fort Worth, Corpus Christi, and Denton, Texas, but the assault from the right was much wider than any one organization. Acting chairman for the Patriotic Party in Texas, Charles Martin of Fort Worth, announced that it is now gathering intelligence information on Communists and their sympathizers in the Fort Worth-Dallas area. (The Patriotic Party is the "political arm" of the Minutemen "resistance.")

Strangely enough, one of the smallest hate groups in America is led by two of the most important and persuasive crowd manipulators—J. B. Stoner, an attorney, and the Rev. Connie Lynch, who was a fruit picker before he got the call to the pulpit. Where they go, fire and pestilence follow. The violence of the racial dispute in St. Augustine, Florida, did not really hit its peak until their arrival on the scene. At numerous places in the South where the National States Rights Party has operated, bombings have occurred, although FBI investigations have failed to show a direct tie between the two. On July 17, 1965, two hours after an NSRP rally on the courthouse steps in Anniston, Alabama, a Negro was shot and killed by white nightriders. A white man, who employed Stoner as his attorney, was convicted of second degree murder. Stoner, the Rev. Lynch and other members of the NSRP were in Bogalusa, Louisiana, during its most violent era. In Missouri, according to the St. Louis POST-DISPATCH

(June 20, 1965) several small groups of businessmen in Wellston and South St. Louis have formed an alliance with the NSRP, to block further racial advances. Some Maryland officials credited the inspirational talks of the Rev. Lynch in Baltimore with helping to defeat open housing in 1966. Lynch helped stir things up in Milwaukee in 1967.

When Stoner and Lynch zero in on an already troubled spot their influence over the rabble is without dispute much more measurable than any other racist haranguers in America, including Robert Shelton, head of the United Klans of America. Shelton is a rather spiritless speaker who quibbles around the edge of uttered hatred. Rockwell, the late head of the American Nazi Party, made many of the same anti-mankind statements that are the stock in trade of Stoner and Lynch, but Rockwell's reputation for clowning undermined his intended effect. Stoner and Lynch stand high and apart in the pantheon of violent racist demagogues today—combining the same Marquis de Sade sense of humor that one commonly finds among Klansmen* with the sincere advocacy of armed violence that is more commonly associated with the Minutemen. At a meeting in Anaheim, California, in 1966, the Reverend Lynch said, "Hell, yes, I believe in violence. If you're not going to defend the Constitution it's not worth the paper it's written on." In an issue of the WHITE MARYLANDER, a publication of the Maryland NSRP, readers were advised, "Right now, begin to build up a good private arsenal. Many fine surplus military weapons are available at low cost in the area. There should be at least three good weapons to each white household."

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A robust eagerness to bruise and shock normal sensibilities is apparently one

characteristic of the NSRP which gives it special impact. Whereas the Klan frequently claims to be a law-abiding, constructive fraternity, the NSRP doesn't bother trying to persuade anyone that it has any such hallmarks. Another source of its power is its hatred of the Jew, a characteristic that finds a following among many lower middle class citizens who, like old-time Populists, might be willing to strike up a rough alliance with the Negro but can never be free of their hatred of "the Wall Street-Jewish conspiracy." Although the NSRP advocates sending Negroes to Africa, its real venom is reserved for the Jew, whose tool it says the Negro is. Its anti-Jewishness apparently explains in part its gaining passing support from some members of the business community who ignore the Klan.

These features of the NSRP enable it to operate with the kind of sudden thrust that pays off with action where spirits are ready to be inflamed. Yet, as we have already said, the NSRP seems incapable of retaining members. At the height of its productively evil labors in Birmingham in 1963 and 1964, the NSRP was not believed to have more than 150 to 200 hard-core members. Two hundred persons attended the NSRP's national political convention in Louisville in 1964. At state party conventions, no more than 20 to 30 ever show up. This reporter's survey of hate groups in eleven southern states found not one clue to a greater following today than in the past. In each state, lawmen, and the leaders of the ADL and other interested groups said they had no knowledge of significant NSRP membership. Most said they knew of no membership in their state.

The question, of course, arises as to how the organization supports itself. Columnist David Lawrence, in 1963,

*This reporter has attended rallies where the most prized sally of the night was something to do with "serving up nigger stew." The NSRP has distributed to barbers a circular with the legend, "Barbers don't be a Bigot! You Can Cut Nigger Hair!" Under this is a before and after picture; before shows a Negro with a head, after shows only a grisly stump of a neck.

28 asked the question in such a way that officials of the NSRP sued him. He accused them of getting their money from the Communists. And, oddly enough, the same ties were seen by the John Birch Society after two officials of the NSRP were cleared by the U. S. Supreme Court in a freedom of speech case. Briefs in their behalf were filed by the NAACP, the ACLU, and the Justice Department. An unsigned editorial in the JBS publication observed: "We don't recall the ACLU, the NAACP, or the Justice Department coming to the rescue of General Walker when he was illegally incarcerated in a mental hospital. But two degenerate professional agitators with fat FBI files, the contents of which would make your hair curl, go scot-free to continue agitating for the Party. Which Party? You can guess." The Birch Society was also sued, but after an apology was issued, the suit was dropped.

The finances of the NSRP are not so elaborate as to qualify for a deep mystery. Records filed with the secretary of the U. S. House of Representatives show that the NSRP spends about \$40,000 a year and takes in about \$35,000, although Stoner denies they operate in the red. Most of its operating revenue apparently comes from the sale of subscriptions to its publication, *THE THUNDERBOLT*, of which an estimated 25,000 are regularly circulated, though not that many to paying customers.

Headquarters for the NSRP now are two small, very run-down rooms in a downtown office building in Augusta, Georgia. I interviewed Stoner there.

Stoner claims that other hate organizations have lost membership in the South as a whole, but the NSRP (of which he is counsel and vice president) is growing rapidly. He will not show his membership files (which were stuffed under the couch he was sitting on) so there is no way to verify this; judging from the shabby and impoverished look of his office, and the none-too-stylish attire of Stoner himself, if membership is climbing the dues are

going elsewhere.

Stoner credits the success of the National States Rights Party to the fact that "we are a white racist extremist organization . . . we take an anti-nigger stand. Some Klans we work with and some we don't. The ones we don't are controlled by the FBI."

He says the NSRP never cooperated with George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party because Rockwell "cooperated with the FBI. He has admitted under oath that he has given information to the FBI since 1954. He phoned me in 1966 and suggested I cooperate with the FBI and get them off my back. I told him to go to hell."

While the NSRP has some Birch members on its rolls, it does not cooperate with the JBS because the latter recruits Negro and Jewish members.

Stoner believes it is "best for all organizations not to coordinate their work too closely. We've participated in unity meetings—no luck. The more right wingers meet, the more they split. We've got Birch members, Citizens Council members, and Klan members. But we mostly go it alone. We're heading into a period of racial revolution, and we're geared for that better than the others." From time to time, bitter disagreements have occurred not only between NSRP and JBS and NSRP and the Klan, and NSRP and the Nazis, but also between NSRP and Kent Courtney's Conservative Society of America. The NSRP thrives on fusses. It has notably fussed with the Minutemen.

Stoner claims some credit for the good showing of Lester Maddox in Georgia and Jim Johnson in Arkansas in 1966. "We'd kick anybody out who didn't vote for Maddox," he said. *THE THUNDERBOLT*, party organ of the NSRP, instructed members to vote for Maddox. (The ADL says the NSRP mailed out Maddox literature, too.) Stoner was indignant with Bo Callaway, Maddox's opponent for governor, because "the Callaway family has given millions of dollars to niggers." Stoner

claims that "indirectly we could swing 20,000 votes in Georgia", an estimate which some calmer observers believe is roughly five to ten times too high. The NSRP's support of Jim Johnson must be taken on faith. All evidence at the time this reporter passed through Arkansas indicated that the organization was virtually moribund. Stoner admitted the NSRP had nothing to do with the victory of Congressman John Rarick in Louisiana.

In 1966 the NSRP had four candidates running for city commissioner, school board, and state legislature in Alabama; none won. In Jacksonville, Florida, they claimed a candidate who polled 13,600 votes—2,500 short of making the run-off—in a race for the state legislature. Jacksonville has been one of the NSRP's strongholds, from which it operated conveniently in stirring up St. Augustine.

Strangely, while Stoner admitted strong support for Maddox and Johnson, he had only a "no comment" response to queries about support for Wallace.

Perhaps because the NSRP's business is disseminating abrasive passions, its own organization has over the years been worn down by internal feuding. The United White Party was organized by Dr. Edward Fields, a chiropractor, in 1957. In the spring of 1958, it changed titles, becoming the NSRP. Stoner has been working with the NSRP since then. At that time, headquarters were in Indiana, but with the future of racial unrest beckoning from Birmingham, Stoner and Fields moved there, in 1960. Two years later the NSRP absorbed another organization, the National White Americans Party, and Robert Bowling of the latter organization (who was later arrested for allegedly stealing from parking meters in Atlanta) became one of the NSRP's top organizers. Jerry Dutton, NSRP's former national youth leader, has a number of arrests on his record, including an arrest and conviction for giving false information to police, something that happened in 1963 when he called the Birmingham police and re-

ported that two Communists were at the NSRP headquarters trying to take over. The "Communists" were FBI agents.

In 1964, the NSRP lost these imaginative officers—Bowling, Dutton, and half-a-dozen others—in a rift growing out of, they said, their conviction that Dr. Fields had a "defeatist attitude" and "had no intention of organizing an actual political party capable of winning control of America away from the Jews." (Later they changed their story, saying they quit the NSRP because one of its leaders had an illegal sex life.) They promised, in their new organization, the American States Rights Party, to take some legislative seats in 1966.

They didn't. In fact, the American States Rights Party, which subsequently changed its name to the National White American Party, a revival of one of the old names that merged with the NSRP, is in very bad shape. Jerry Dutton ran for the Alabama legislature; he lost. He tried to get permission to set up a booth at the State Fair and was turned down. A typical meeting of the NWAP will bring out, at most, 15 to 20 people. The NWAP national headquarters, in Birmingham consists of two typewriters (one, if it makes a difference, of German manufacture) and a small printing press, set up in a house. Its publication, the WHITE AMERICAN, comes out sporadically. For lack of funds, it missed publication for five months running. Needless to say, the NWAP shapes no public opinion except that of its two dozen members.

Such propaganda as it does circulate fits best into the category of quasi-pornographic; e.g., Night Riders written by Bud Gordon, identified by the NWAP as a former Birmingham newspaper reporter and special assistant to the State Department of Public Safety. The booklet is advertised as containing 66 pictures "you will never forget" —"64 pages and 66 pictures that will shock even the most hardened right wing patriot." Mrs. Viola Luizzo, who was slain in the aftermath of the

Selma march, does not come off too well in the booklet.

NWAP marchers were arrested on March 20, 1965, in a Montgomery march for "desecration of the Confederate flag" (their armband shows a criss-cross somewhat similar to the Confederate flag, with a thunderbolt in the middle). This arrest, which was blamed on Governor Wallace, left them permanently cool to him. Evidence of their lack of public support came with the disclosure by the organization's executive committee that the WHITE AMERICAN had been cancelled out of three different printing companies. The organization exists on less than \$4,000 a year.

The National States Rights Party is a mighty force compared to the National White Americans Party, yet it too suffers from chronic and extreme deficiency of funds and from a wavering, sometimes almost skeletal, membership. Politicians ordinarily give its support a wide berth. In 1960, it nominated Gov. Orval Faubus and Adm. John Crommelin as its presidential and vice-presidential candidates, and put them on the ballot in Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, Delaware, Tennessee, and Florida. That was the high point of its dabbling in national politics. Faubus did not at the time repudiate the NSRP's nomination, though he later called "silly" its position regarding the Jew, after which officials of the NSRP repudiated him in turn, calling him a "part of the old, corrupt, two-party system . . ." Its showing during the 1960 campaign is the basis for the NSRP's claim to be the largest third party. It polled a quarter million votes in 1960, but to claim that number it had to add on the Louisiana

States Rights Party results—which accounted for three-fifths the total—although the LSRP was a separate movement.

Since then, as a political force, the NSRP has been all but lifeless. Its old favorite, Admiral Crommelin, a perennial candidate for something in Alabama, got 114,000 votes in 1966 in his race for the United States Senate. The 114,000 reflects no NSRP strength, however, but only some of the strength of the right wing, which viewed Crommelin as a kind of crusty mascot.

About a year ago, Dr. Fields returned to his old baliwick in Birmingham for a meeting in the Thomas Jefferson Hotel. Thirty people showed up. An outsider who attended the meeting said, "When you looked at the people, their position in life, the disappointments written all over their faces, you could almost feel sorry for them." In Alabama, once its kingdom of splendid terror, the NSRP now has no influence at all, and if not there of all places, much less than nothing in other southern states. But this is speaking on a continuing basis. When racial trouble breaks out, the spokesmen for the NSRP can be expected to show up and to operate effectively. They are masters of *ad hoc* violence.

While the Klan has a larger membership, Stoner believes the National States Rights Party has a greater impact. The reason, he says, is that "the Klan doesn't keep its members occupied. They meet and talk. They march around a little. Hell, that isn't enough. These men get restless. They want action. And the NSRP gives it to 'em." That's one insider's analysis of the present decline of the KKK.