

## Book Reviews

*The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915-1930.* By Kenneth T. Jackson. *The Urban Life in America* Series. Edited by Richard C. Wade. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967. Pp. xv, 326. Tables, figures, notes, note on sources, index. \$7.50.)

The most recent addition to the new *Urban Life in America* series is the revised doctoral dissertation of one of Richard Wade's graduate students at the University of Chicago. In a scholarly and illuminating fashion, Jackson devotes the greater part of his book to a detailed description of Klan composition, activities, and influence in nine major American cities: Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Indianapolis, Knoxville, Memphis, and Portland. By employing a variation of the case study method, the author reveals the considerable influence of the urban Klans in both state and national organizations and makes a strong case for his assertion that the city klansmen provided most of the leadership, resources, and the essential dynamics of the movement. The typical urban Klan member is characterized as a lower middle-class, blue-collar worker who had less education and community status than his country counterpart and came from a neighborhood whose residential stability was threatened by European immigrants and Negroes moving from farm to city and from South to North. The author's research leads him to the conclusion that the Klan was "not a reaction against the rise of the city to dominance in American life," but "rather a reaction against the aspirations of certain elements within the city" (p. 245).

Despite his efforts, however, Jackson's work does not seriously challenge the commonly accepted view that the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920's was essentially an expression of the decline of rural America and its value system in the face of the rising modern, industrial society found in the cities. To suggest that the Klan was not rural in its mentality simply because it was active and influential in several carefully selected cities, which are not representative of the entire nation, is neither logical nor justified.

Although rich in descriptive detail and well written, the case studies are, like much Klan literature, somewhat disjointed and often filled with inconsequential facts which do little to support the author's case. While the book's documentation is generally handled in a careful, scholarly fashion, there are occasional lapses when certain critical statements are not supported. For example, the assertions that 500 of the 1,300 delegates to the 1924 Indiana State Republican Convention were loyal to Grand Dragon David C. Stephenson (p. 155) and that the Klan elected the governor and a majority of the state legislature (p. 156) would seem to require some form of substantiation.

These criticisms are somewhat mitigated by the many problems encountered in attempting to penetrate the mysteries of the Invisible Empire. The dearth of source material, which is largely the result of the secrecy of the order and the reluctance of individuals to divulge information about their

association with a thoroughly discredited organization, makes Klan research a very difficult and frustrating experience.

The most valuable portion of the book is the brief but perceptive concluding section which presents the central findings of the study. Another outstanding feature is the annotated bibliography—one of the most exhaustive compilations of Klan primary and secondary sources.

The spadework done by Jackson is an important contribution to Klan literature and prepares the way for more intensive work on the subject. Some of the author's contentions, such as his assertions that there is a significant correlation between urban population growth and Klan success, that economic philosophy was not an important Klan concern, and that urban klansmen were in the main not recent rural migrants, will require further probing before they can be accepted as valid. A definitive history of the Klan in the city remains to be written inasmuch as many questions are left unsettled, unfocused, or unraised.

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*The Frontier against Slavery: Western Anti-Negro Prejudice and the Slavery Extension Controversy.* By Eugene H. Berwanger. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967. Pp. viii, 176. Notes, note on sources, bibliography, index. \$5.95.)

In his introduction the author states: "This book reveals that prejudice against Negroes was a factor in the development of antislavery feeling in the ante-bellum United States" (p. 1). He amasses irrefutable evidence to support this thesis in his study, which deals with the states of the Old Northwest plus Iowa, California, Oregon, and Kansas.

Berwanger shows that anti-Negro sentiment became more pronounced in the years from 1846 to 1860, the same period in which the controversy over the extension of slavery became most acute. He demonstrates that in all the states and territories under consideration opposition to the expansion of slavery and proposals to exclude free Negroes were linked and were often advocated by the same groups. Many Republican leaders emphasized that they opposed slavery in the territories because they wanted to preserve those lands exclusively for white men. In Iowa a popular campaign slogan was: "WE ARE FOR LAND FOR THE LANDLESS, NOT NIGGERS FOR THE NIGGERLESS" (p. 131).

Probably the most striking contribution of the book is its demonstration that emigrants from the older states of the Middle West carried their racial attitudes to the new territories of the West. Thus the story of Indiana and Illinois was repeated in Iowa, California, Oregon, and Kansas, where the settlers showed themselves to be both antislavery and anti-Negro. In every case proposals to legalize slavery were rejected; but in every case proposals to exclude free Negroes were adopted or at least seriously considered. In