

(Klan Organizes in Michigan)Macomb County Meeting

One of the biggest demonstrations ever held by the revived and rapidly growing Ku Klux Klan in Macomb County was staged among a eerie setting of white-hooded men and flaming crosses which towered 50 feet in height Saturday night at Norton Grove, located a mile north of the village of Washington on Van Dyke avenue.

The blazing crosses, symbol of the Klan which is said to be feverishly enrolling members in this county, were etched in crimson against the summer moonlight night, creating a beacon which drew throngs of curious motorists to the scene, creating a traffic jam on the busy highway.

The meeting site is ideally suited for large gatherings, being popular for church picnics and fraternal outings. Beside it is centrally located for Klansmen converging from Detroit, Oakland County and St Clair County. Gatekeepers masked in their white regalia with white crosses marked upon the breasts of their white robes were heard to audibly identify the steady stream of cars being diverted from Van Dyke avenue, bumping across a railroad track, and through the rustic guarded entrance.

For newcomers to the meeting place, a white-hooded Klansman stand near the highway, bearing in his hand a giant lighted torch, which throws a spreading reddish beam.

(Admittance was by Klan membership card or a yellow visitor's card).

The meeting bore witness to the fact that the Ku Klux Klan is meeting signal success in its new drive for membership. Begun at regular intervals in the spring, the meetings at that time boasted modest attendance, with curiosity being the obvious bait. Saturday's night's meeting, however, bore an important speaker's slate, with Grand Dragons and Kleagles from Ohio and Indiana present.

Americanism is the keynote sounded by the leaders, who delivered impassioned tirades against "foreign and subversive elements." Today the Klan is riding again, selling itself to the public as the "guardian of the real American institutions, and bulwark against the menace of Communism", just as it rode under the banner of "caucasian supremacy and anti-Catholicism" in the past.

Methods of Recruiting

How the Klan musters its membership is portrayed clearly by the methods employed with hugh success in Warren Township where it is reported nearly 1,000 members have been enrolled.

Klan organizers are said to circulate through civic, social, political and fraternal clubs, lining up possibilities ~~of~~ for membership. Members of these clubs ~~are~~ then quietly "sound out" prospective Klansmen, with religious affiliation being the primary question. Anti-Catholic sentiments are considerably toned down by organizers, although the bias is thinly veiled.

So-called one-hundred-per-cent Americanism is a necessary qualification, and political sentiment is learned and digested.

Soon after the unsuspecting citizen has been listed and studied by Klan organizers, he receives thru the mail a small yellow "visitors card", and an invitation to attend the next Klan meeting. The card bears only a serial number, and the signature of a fictitious organization.

Failure to take advantage of the "opportunity" to join the Ku Klux Klan is followed by Klansmen. The prospective member hears that the Klan is the bulwark against radicalism and is a front line of defense against un-Americanism. They infer that failure to join makes the citizen suspect, so far as his socio-religious beliefs are concerned.