

Summary

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“ Rank-and-File Radicalism within the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s” By John Zerzan Summary The article about the characteristics of the Ku Klux Klan group, which was a violent movement against the non-natives. It is evident that racism was the main contribution of this group that led to its formation in the early 1920 (Zerzan, n. p). This made the group an effective organ with its membership spreading across the US. The author indicates that the Klan participated within the cities from where nativism was more rampant. However, it is also suggested that the Klan was not entirely violent since it also advocated for social privileges. Its emergence started during the economic depression period in which the peasant farmers wanted to force up the cost of cotton. Their intention was to prevent the sale of cotton until the intervention of the government authorities to increase the prices. As a result, the Klan warned the warehouses and other stores to stop operating, pending decisions from the government (Zerzan, n. p). In this regard, it is apparent that the Klan had campaigned for economic restoration and improvement of welfare.

I think the Klan received enjoyed massive support in the Southern where its leadership had influence among the citizens. Economic and social issues were the motivations of the people to join the movement, enabling the group to gain prominence among the low-income workers. For instance, some veterans wanted compensation after the World War 1 after observing the treatment of soldiers from other countries. This implies that the Klan consisted of a diverse membership that had a common agenda with different implementation modes.

However, the poor living standards, social injustices and inequality were among the elements that causes friction within the group. This is because

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some members thought that the Klan focused on political and economic issues without considering their personal welfare. For instance, the poor white sympathizers did not want their black counterparts to join the movement. They thought it was a way of empowering the black to stop working in the plantations. This caused friction between the two groups, leading to racist battles. The moral intolerance in the groups dissolved their missions, which weakened the labor movements across the country. The article further indicates that the other aspect of the Klan was its contribution towards eliminating gangs of organized crimes. This was evident in Oklahoma and Indiana, where criminal cases were enhanced to terrorize the locals. The radical nature of the members led to the establishment of civil movements and labor associations (Zerzan, n. p). The author uses examples from other literature to indicate the outlook of the activist groups. It is evident that the organizational ability of the Klan was different in the various states where racism was rampant. This created tension that disrupted peace during elections since the group fronted candidates for the elective seats. The article incorporates the views of different researchers who took part in the collection of materials concerning the formation and disintegration of the different sections of the Klan. This is because of the general analysis of the group and its objectives from the initial stages in the 1920's. The author also claims that the Klan members were part of the elected personalities to advocate for the improvement of welfare (Zerzan, n. p).

Work Cited

Zerzan, John. " Rank-and-File Radicalism within the Ku Klux Klan of the

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