THE LONE STAR CONSPIRACY: RACIAL VIOLENCE AND KU KLUX KLAN TERROR IN POST-CIVIL WAR TEXAS, 1865-1877

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PREFACE

Texas experienced relative peace within its boundaries during the Civil War. Once the war ended, with General Robert E. Lee's surrender to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, for the Lone Star State the real war began. Racial tensions, experienced during the great conflict between the Blue and the Grey, emerged with renewed vigor. Vehemently, the same angry forces which had preyed on their enemies, either real or imaginary, struck again. Prior to 1865 whites targeted European and Mexican immigrants and Unionists for violence. Those same whites had kept black slaves in check despite emancipation. After 1865 Anglos transferred their hatred and aggression to all who were not ex-Confederates, white Southern Democrats, or "true" Texans.

Presidential Reconstruction established a provisional government (June 19, 1865) and military occupation (August 20, 1866) for the Lone Star State. Federal officials forced Anglos in Texas to accept full and immediate freedom for blacks instead of gradual and limited emancipation, which most white Southerners favored. Denied states' rights, Texans fought back by means of covert action. With the birth of the Ku Klux Klan, the hooded disguise of the secret organization gave many white Texans sanction to intimidate, terrorize, and even murder.

By doing so they hoped to regain control of their state at least politically. Socially and economically, the Klan managed to keep the freedpeople subservient and to maintain them as a source of cheap, often free, labor.

With the introduction of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, ex-rebels called on the Klan to threaten and assassinate Union troops and bureau agents. Radical Republicans and Congressional Reconstruction added one more target for Klan destruction.

By 1868, Texas, from the Red River on its northern boundary to the Gulf of Mexico and the Rio Grande on the south, experienced Klan and Klan-like terror. Klansmen and their co-conspirators murdered thousands of blacks, Mexicans, European immigrants, loyalists, and federal troops and agents. Despite army efforts to rid Texas of crime, the military proved ineffective as a policing agent. State delegates and legislators were too strongly divided among themselves to enact any positive measures to deal with the lawlessness or the plight of the freedpeople. The violence continued long after the final draft and acceptance of a state constitution and the readmission of Texas to the Union in 1870. Known Klan membership in 1872 still numbered 15,000 to 20,000.

Even after the Republican governor, E. J. Davis, had been replaced by the Democrat, Richard Coke, in 1874, Klaverns still continued their nightly ghostly raids. The killing continued throughout 1875 and 1876. With the compromise of 1877, human rights and civil liberties for Texas minorities, especially for blacks, would be only a vision for which to hope and dream for years to come.

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And I would be remiss if I failed to acknowledge my family. My parents, Edwin and Martha Clayton, have never wavered, and my parents-in-law, Herscel and Ada Barnhill, held true. My surrogate parents, Ernestine Fancher and her late husband, Jack, have kept me going through it all. And my precious son, William, has provided the final incentive. My thanks as well to my husband, John Barnhill, the typist.

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CHAPTER I

SETTING THE STAGE

Scholars of Southern history such as Charles William Ramsdell and E. Merton Coulter maintained that secret societies promoting white supremacy during the era of Reconstruction, particularly the Ku Klux Klan, were prominent only in the regions of the deep South. According to these interpretations, states such as Texas, located on the outer perimeter of the South, had no problem with Klan violence. Further, these historians discounted and simultaneously denounced the "armed organizations" which identified themselves as Ku Klux Klan, claiming that only those who belonged to the secret society formed by General Nathan Bedford Forrest were true Klansmen. With this narrow definition historian Allen W. Trelease disagreed.[1]

In his book, White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction, Trelease--a noted authority on the history of the Ku Klux Klan--recognized the existence of that group in post-Civil War Texas. More important, Trelease defined exactly what constituted Klan activity. Any group, regardless of name, which practiced terroristic measures--physical, psychological, or both--was Ku Klux Klan.[2] Also involved in the "conspiracy" were all whites who aided and abetted the secret societies. Many Anglos, who themselves were not members of any Klavern, nevertheless supported Klan activities, both privately and publicly. Others, usually out of fear, refused to take

any legal action against Klan violence and intimidation. On this basis Trelease stated that "at least twenty (Texas) counties were involved in Ku Klux terror."[3] Trelease argued also that Klan activity terminated in Texas by 1868. However, more recent and in-depth research reveals that Trelease, although he properly defined the nature of the problem, failed to recognize the magnitude and the duration of Ku Klux Klan activity in Texas.

Not only did Trelease underestimate the geographical dimensions of the terror, but he also failed fully to measure its longevity. In 1866 seven counties in eastern and central Texas experienced Klan violence. By 1867 that figure had quadrupled to twenty-seven counties, an increase of 292 percent. The zenith of Ku Klux Klan terror in 1868 brought a further broadening of activity, the number of affected counties growing by 444 percent to thirty-nine. By December of 1868, 39.7 percent, a full fifty-four of the one hundred and thirty-six counties of eastern and central Texas, suffered disruptions characterized by Klan methodology and tactics. To establish their control of an area, often Klansmen infiltrated the political and economic spheres of Texas society through the use of violence and intimidation. These were the most common ways of achieving and maintaining power. But not every Klansman sought power. In some cases Klansmen simply became violent for the sake of violence itself. The reign of Klan terror continued throughout the course of Reconstruction and for at least four years thereafter, a longer post-Reconstruction duration alone than Trelease identified in all. Evidence proves that some Klaverns were active even past 1870, the year which marked the readmission of Texas into the Union and officially ended Reconstruction in that state.[4]

A phenomenon such as the extreme unrest which Texas endured for nearly a decade after the close of hostilities could not possibly spring full blown from even the bitterness and frustrations of a narrow defeat. Rather, causes lay in the structure of society in the Lone Star State prior to the Civil War. To understand adequately the origin of Ku Klux Klan activity in Texas, it is first necessary to describe attitudes and conditions in Texas during and after the war, conditions which led to an increase in racial tensions within the state.

In 1860 only 5 percent of the population lived in small towns or cities. The main urban centers in this period were Austin, Galveston, Houston, and San Antonio. Capital investment reached only $3.2 million. Nine hundred and eighty-three businesses employed 3,449 people. Even in urban centers agriculture dominated. Most of the jobs created dealt with the handling and processing of raw materials.

Cotton ruled Texas. In the boom years of the 1850s, cotton production increased by more than 600 percent, from 58,161 bales in 1850 to 431,463 bales in 1859. Exports from Galveston in 1865 totaled $9,691,751, of which $9,669,515 came from the shipment of cotton. Despite the profits, there were two disadvantages to having cotton as the main cash crop. First was the depletion of the soil's mineral content by the fluffy fiber. Farmers in Texas had not yet learned the secret of rotating crops to replenish the elements taken from the earth by each particular commodity. Growers used the same land for the same crop repeatedly until productivity became virtually nil. When the fields reached that stage, planters merely acquired new land, and the cycle began again. Acres of once fertile soil in eastern Texas were left barren and deserted. That was the common pattern throughout the

South as vast amounts of land became desolate.[5]

The second drawback to cotton culture was the large workforce it required. Anglo-American settlers first introduced slavery into the region long before the Union granted Texas statehood. Non- or anti-slaveholding immigrants from Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois settled the northern counties. The population in the frontier region consisted of only a small percentage of slaves in relation to the large white population. The German counties north of San Antonio were abolitionist. The largest concentration of slaves per capita was in southeast Texas along the Brazos, Colorado, Sabine, and Trinity rivers. In that area the geography most resembled other slave-holding Southern states. Also, with the state's railroad system in this region, producers had easier access to markets, primarily through Galveston, the focal point of Texas trade.[6]

The state government attempted to resolve many of the major concerns faced by Texans in the pre-Civil War era. Property taxes remained low for the most part. There was no bureaucracy which assessed the land. Rather, assessment depended on the discretion of the landowners. This gave them the opportunity to under-assess or forget to assess the land as they chose.

The state legislature also provided a sure labor supply by passing bills which insured an adequate workforce, slave labor. Officials created additional statutes which established a police force to control the slaves. This action further safeguarded the interests of the landowners.

With land and labor under control, the key issues became transportation and credit. Transportation, or the lack of it, proved

detrimental to the agricultural sector during the antebellum period. The high costs of shipping severely cut into the margin of profit that existed. A large amount of liquid capital was needed to sustain the farmer between harvests. As the supply of reserve cash diminished, credit purchases increased, compounding the problem more. Merchants charged an exorbitant annual interest rate of 10 to 12.5 percent for most items bought on credit. In an attempt to solve the problems, state legislators channeled federal funds earmarked for one purpose into budgets intended to handle more immediate issues. For example, in the 1850s Texas received $2 million from the federal government for the development of a public school program. State officials used the money instead as a means to initiate a new railway system.

Prior to the war Texas existed as a largely underdeveloped backwater, the western edge of the Southern frontier. Economically and socially primitive, the state had little to lose in gambling on the success of secession, and great benefit--glory at the least--could come to those who dared.

With the advent of the Civil War, Texas joined the Confederate states on March 1, 1861. Because of the conscription law of April 26, 1862, and loyalty to the Southern cause, 50,000 to 65,000 Texans fought for the Confederacy during the course of the four-year war. By refusing to enlist on behalf of the South, Union sympathizers in Texas found their lives threatened. Nevertheless, despite growing internal racial tensions, Texas prospered during the war years.[8]

Unlike the other Southern states, which witnessed the disadvantages of daily battle, in Texas the war for the most part was remote. Enemy armies did not invade Texas, burn cities, force slaves off of

plantations, or destroy crops and farmland. In fact, the opposite was true. Harvests were plentiful, and slaves were abundant. Many slaveholders in the major zones of combat sent their slaves to Texas for safekeeping. Lifestyles in the Lone Star State remained for the most part unhampered by the war. In a sense Texas emerged from the Southern defeat as a victor. Texas never experienced a shortage of food or a lack of hard capital. However, the surrender of Robert E. Lee to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia, and the consequent collapse of the Confederacy brought about a severe change in the status quo. The primary concern centered around the question of the newly freed Afro-Americans. What degree of freedom--human, civil, and political rights--was the black to have, and how could white society guarantee the continuation of black labor?[9]

Most white Texans regarded the emancipation of the Afro-American with disfavor. Whites openly opposed granting the freedmen full and immediate civil rights. They wanted instead "gradual emancipation and compulsory labor." White Southerners were willing to accept the newly freed blacks only as a subservient group whose sole purpose was to provide menial for labor white society, as had been the custom prior to the war.[10] Only on the arrival of federal troops in the summer and fall of 1865 did Southern conservatives agree to consider such an undesirable measure as equality for freedmen.

Acting as emissary for President Andrew Johnson, General Gordon Granger, in a communique from his district headquarters at Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, in General Orders Number Three proclaimed freedom for all former slaves. He also stated that "an absolute equality of personal rights, and the right of property between former

masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor." General Granger cautioned blacks to remain docile and at their current place of residence. There was to be no travel to military installations. Furthermore, idleness on the part of freedmen would not be tolerated.[11]

The announcement by the federal military representative to Texas that "all blacks are free" had little effect on Texas society. Former slaves who, for whatever reason, attempted to leave their previous masters were returned to their former owners for "employment." Afro-Americans with no owners were put to work doing manual labor under the supervision of military personnel. This placed freedmen in the position of being intimidated not only by white Texans but also by some federal authorities sent to Texas to "help the blacks."[12]

General Granger's statement that "idleness on the part of the colored population would not be tolerated," gave white Texans their justification for further intimidation of blacks. In a conversation between the mayor of Galveston and Colonel R.G. Laughlin, Provost-Marshall General, the New York Times quoted the Galvestonian as declaring, "the negro question will turn out much better than most people in Texas anticipate."[13]

Idleness on the part of whites appeared to go unnoticed as well as unmentioned by local, state, and federal authorities in Texas. Neutral sources outside the state warned Texans and federal officials of the dangers of establishing a double standard. As one of them said, only trouble would come from making

> distinctions based upon color alone, giving white men the right to be idle as they please, but not tolerate idleness among the blacks; allowing whites to work where they please,

> but sending blacks 'home to their masters' or to the public works...[14]

Despite emancipation, the freedman was not truly free in Texas. It was only a matter of time before whites initiated black labor contracts.

On July 3, 1865, the Galveston Bulletin printed an example of a black labor contract intended for use statewide. By signing the contract the freedman agreed that not only he but his wife and minor children would work for a fixed monthly rate. The employer was to provide clothing, house-rent, food, medicine, and medical treatment. The employer had the right to deduct a fixed fee at a per-day rate for any time lost on the job by the employee or any family member for any reason other than illness. Further deductions were authorized for any family member unable to work.[15] It was not uncommon for the employer to decide that the amount of deductions exceeded the amount due to the freedman and his family. The term "slavery" now gave way to the term "contract labor."

The same situations confronted blacks in 1865 as had existed before so-called emancipation. The environment of slavery had particular strength in the area between the Neches River and the Sabine River and extended as far north as Henderson County, Texas.[16] Some Texans hoped that the establishment of a provisional government and the Freedman's Bureau in Texas would help to resolve the black man's dilemma. Those people received only further disappointment, and intimidation entered a new realm of terror.

July 21, 1865, marked the arrival of Andrew Jackson Hamilton at Galveston. Hamilton was to serve as provisional governor of Texas, an appointment which he received personally from President Johnson on June

17, 1865. Basing his opinion on the Constitution of the United States, Johnson strongly believed that the federal government had the responsibility to insure to each state a republican form of government. Hamilton had direct instructions to register voters in order to elect delegates to a state constitutional convention. The purpose of the convention was to restore civil government to the people of Texas. Having reestablished that civil government, Texas could return to the Union.

Election of delegates had three restrictions. Only those individuals who had opposed the secession of Texas from the Union prior to the Civil War could be elected to represent their respective districts. Furthermore, unless the individual in question took the oath of amnesty set forth in the presidential proclamation of May 29, 1865, the delegate-elect was ineligible. The third stipulation required the representative to have been a qualified voter as set forth by state law before secession.

It was this last clause which was of utmost significance. Under antebellum voter qualification laws established in 1837, any non-slave of one-eighth Negro blood or more was excluded from voting. This arrangement meant that the state constitutional convention would have an all white composition. Although there were some defenders of civil rights for the newly freed blacks, the white majority was still against total emancipation.

In December of 1865, an organization, most commonly referred to as the Freedmen's Bureau, "officially" came to Texas. Under the jurisdiction of the War Department, the bureau came into being when an act by the 38th Congress on March 3, 1865, formed the Bureau of

Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands.[17] The primary objective of the bureau was to safeguard the interests of the newly emancipated blacks. Freedom for the former slaves created many socio-economic problems that most white Southern Democrats were neither able nor willing to solve. White hostility led to the demise of the bureau long before the agency had a chance ever to succeed. It became the embodiment of all factors that Southerners resented most--primarily Yankee domination and the guardianship of civil rights for freed peoples by Radical Republican rule.[18]

Serving the Lone Star State as assistant commissioner for the federal agency was General E. M. Gregory, previously of Philadelphia. Gregory found no atmosphere of peaceful co-existence between blacks and whites when he arrived in Texas. Freedman had, under coercion, to sign and to work under unsatisfactory labor contracts, and they, not surprisingly, broke those contracts. Many blacks had been tricked into working without labor agreements. Whites had told the Afro-Americans that they would inherit the property on the death of their former master, now "employer." In the first fiscal quarter of 1866 only a small percentage of the approximately 8,000 blacks in Galveston County had signed legal contracts between management and labor.[19]

Knowing the significance of having the terms of employment in writing, Gregory stressed that all labor contracts must be not only signed but also registered with the Freedmen's Bureau. Furthermore, any labor agreement was to be upheld by all parties involved. Premature termination of the contract could not occur without sufficient cause. Offenders would suffer punishment for non-compliance.[20]

Gregory believed that his long term objective of a strong labor

system could not be achieved without six basic elements as its foundation. Those elements included: a shared goal or mutual interest between management and labor; a just settlement of all previous liabilities; contracts created on fair and liberal terms with prompt signatures on the part of labor; humane treatment; fair and liberal compensation; "an honest day's pay for an honest day's work"; and the extension of educational facilities to blacks.[21]

Wages of black laborers varied depending on the region. Wages of $15.00 (in specie) per month plus board occurred in areas where the labor pool from which to select workmen was plentiful. In the bottomland of the Brazos, Little Brazos, San Antonio, San Marcos, Colorado, and Trinity rivers, laborers worked for shares. Agency officials estimated some freedpeople received half of the crop after the employer subtracted expenses. In areas where workers were scarce, some planters paid the usual salary plus a bonus of $20.00 a person per season for "good colored men."[22]

Despite some improvements in the area of labor, lawlessness and murder increased in Texas in the first half of 1866. An influx of population from the major northern cities of New York City, Chicago, St. Louis, and Cincinnati further added to the disorder and unrest because many Texans viewed the newcomers as opportunists seeking to impose alien ideas while at the same time despoiling the "war ravaged state." In Galveston alone the post-war census showed an increase of 5,000 people over the pre-war figure. Local white Southerners started forming vigilance committees. Officials warned citizens not to leave their houses after dusk. Federal officials also became the target of violence. Southern white Democrats began to feel more threatened as

federal agents and Radical Republicans tried to infiltrate all areas of local and state authority. The greatest area of resentment concerned continued interference in the way local whites dealt with their black counterparts. White Texans retaliated by means of the state constitutional convention.[23]

White delegates to the state's constitutional convention of 1866--prescribed by Presidential Reconstruction--wasted no time in determining the status of black Texans. Whites allowed a freeman only to testify in court cases involving another black. Whites who had not objected prior to the Civil War to sharing accommodations with blacks found segregated railway cars a necessity. Texas legislators passed that measure mainly in retaliation against what they considered Northern interference.

With the election of the first state legislature, whites expanded the Texas black codes to include such additional prohibitions as intermarriage, voting, office holding, and jury service. Legislators passed a law requiring all jurors to be householders in the county or property owners in the state. The absence of legal protection for blacks gave whites the liberty to exercise their racist tendencies.[24]

As a consequence, crimes, both racial and political in origin, increased proportionately as the desire to maintain white supremacy became stronger. In the three years following the war, lawlessness in Texas became increasingly widespread. Writing about "unbridled crime" in Texas, historian E. Merton Coulter contended that the so-called "racial and political violence" was propaganda put forth by Radical Republican politicians and Union army officers. It was white Texans, not the freedmen, who suffered.[25] Statistics proved his conclusion to

be false. In the 977 slayings which occurred from 1865 to 1868, whites killed 421 of the 468 blacks reported murdered. Freedmen were responsible for only 5 of the 509 white fatalities. Remarked General Philip Sheridan, "Indians killing white men on the frontier caused much greater consternation than white men killing Negroes in the interior (of Texas)."[26] In this atmosphere the Ku Klux Klan was able to develop and prosper.

Formed at Pulaski, Tennessee, in May or June of 1866, the Klan was, as founder Nathan Bedford Forrest designed it, a social club for ex-Confederates. There was no thought of expanding the society. Due to the popularity of Greek in the liberal arts schools curriculum at that time, Forrest and his colleagues decided on the term Ku Klux from the Greek word kuklos meaning circle or band.[27] Thus, Ku Klux Klan was the name given to this new organization. The secret ceremonies of the Ku Klux Klan attracted many, much as ritual and secrecy attracted people to labor and social organizations of the period. Moreover, Klansmen were to uphold the lost cause of the South.

By June of 1867, the Ku Klux Klan had spread throughout the Southern states. With that expansion and the coincident growth of vigilantism, the Klan took on a new meaning. It became a terroristic organization to protect Southern white society from the "black menace." Whites feared a race war similar to the one which had occurred in Santo Domingo in the 1790s. To prevent that from happening, the Klan became one of the chief instruments to keep freedmen submissive. Groups like the Knights of the White Camellia, who belonged to the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan, existed from the Potomac to the Rio Grande by April of 1868.[28]

Through terror, intimidation, and violence, Klansmen demoralized Negroes and Radical Republicans. No one was exempt from Klan terror. Although specific reasons for terrorism varied, the general motives were political, social, and economic in nature. Politically, the Klan used every means available to stop radical rule. Klansmen canceled meetings, threatened the lives of Republicans, and kept freedmen and whites from voting any way but Democratic. The latter became a holy crusade which was Machiavellian in style--the end justified the means. Klansmen willingly used arson and murder to achieve their goals. By the time of the presidential election of 1868, the Ku Klux Klan had succeeded in undermining black support for Northern radicals.[29]

Whites used the Ku Klux Klan as a constant reminder to blacks of Afro-American social inferiority. Whipped, beaten, shot, raped, mutilated, and hanged, blacks were the target of Klan violence. The Ku Klux Klan used all of these methods to keep the black subservient. Klansmen visited freedmen for reasons ranging from walking on the wrong side of the sidewalk to talking back to a white. Furthermore, the Ku Klux Klan destroyed schools and churches which practiced desegregation.[30]

Economically, white farmers and planters used the Ku Klux Klan to patrol counties and localities to keep blacks docile and working. After having gained the benefits of cheap labor for the harvest, Klansmen drove the black sharecroppers off the land which the blacks had made fruitful. Whites then claimed that the blacks had abandoned the land. Thus, the white landlord had the right to claim the abandoned land and crops.[31]

Throughout the course of Reconstruction, the Knights of the Rising

Sun, the Knights of the Golden Circle, the Knights of the White Camellia, and the White Caps and other groups under different names terrorized Texas. From the Gulf of Mexico to the Red River, those organizations flourished. The Ku Klux Klan appeared first in 1866 in the widely separated Texas counties of Anderson, Collin, Hays, Panola, Robertson, Tarrant, and Travis. Such geographical separation was insignificant because in all areas the Texas Klan had the same social, political, and economic motives as did Klan affiliates in other Southern states.

Racial tensions were high in Anderson County. On April 2, 1866, a mob of whites disrupted and dispersed a black congregation and warned the preacher never to preach again. An inhabitant of Anderson County called Reconstruction "a life and death struggle for Southern white people to exist." The term "renegade" became synonymous with Unionist. Fluctuation of black population throughout the county caused concern. Whites feared miscegenation. Out of fear of freedmen and radicals, the Anglos of Anderson County created their own chapter of the Ku Klux Klan.[32]

Counties other than Anderson experienced Klan growth. R. D. Allison founded the Ku Klux Klan in Collin County. Allison secured a charter from Klan headquarters in Tennessee. The Collin County Klan, formed near McKinney, with 100 to 200 members, operated under this document. The group usually settled for holding mere business meetings, but "there were few occassions (sic) for overt acts."[33] Perhaps the members were more cautious than was common elsewhere.

In Hays county the Ku Klux Klan attacked black schools. At a log schoolhouse near Williamson Creek, Klansmen threatened the teacher, a

white man referred to only as Tilden, and ordered him to stay away from the blacks. Tilden quit at the close of the school year. Despite Klan pressure, Hamlet Campbell--a Northern black educator--moved to the area, rented a room, and held school for blacks free of charge.[34]

While threats normally sufficed in Hays and Anderson counties, more serious techniques prevailed elsewhere. Night-riding Klansmen were notorious in Robertson County, especially near Calvert, Texas. In the middle of the night, the hooded men awakened unsuspecting blacks and whipped them. A more favored tactic was to hang blacks by their thumbs. Some blacks received such severe beatings that they were unable to work. Because of emotional stress, others were incapable of work. Fearing for their lives, freemen refused to sleep in their homes. Instead they sought safety and shelter in the dark woods near their houses.[35]

Robertson County had no monopoly on intimidation. In Tarrant and Travis counties Klansmen also intimidated freedmen. Assaulting blacks at will, the Ku Klux Klan in the latter county was supposedly bad. Whites used the Klan to control blacks in the Fort Worth (Tarrant County) vicinity; its function was to keep the Negro docile and working. Klansmen paid special attention to those blacks who "got into devilment," which meant anything from being discourteous to whites or refusing to perform forced labor. Consequently, freedmen in Tarrant County, as did blacks throughout the South, remained extremely fearful of the hooded men on horseback.[36]

A greater increase in Klan and Klan-like violence, murder, and aggravated assault occurred in 1867. Records indicated that 411 murders occurred from March to December of 1867. There were seventy-eight additional cases in the month which followed. Fifteen new counties

reported Ku Klux Klan activities, bringing the total to twenty-two by January of 1868.[37]

Texas conservatives, conducting their battle for white supremacy, committed outrages continually toward the freemen. Blacks had no chance of justice, for local authorities refused to bring indictments against whites for terrorizing or killing blacks. This lack of local cooperation made the situation more difficult for federal troops stationed in Texas who tried to protect freedmen. They found their efforts hampered by local and state authorities who did not keep their racist attitudes a secret.[38]

Harsher black labor codes further violated the civil rights of the freedmen in 1867. Employers cheated freedmen out of wages. Those blacks who insisted on payment ran the risk of a nightly visit from the Ku Klux Klan. Not being paid properly for their labor reduced the blacks to a state of semi-slavery. Many freedmen appealed to federal officials for protection of life and property. Other blacks attempted to leave Texas. Whites murdered blacks who tried to escape or break their labor contracts. The bodies of miscreants were publicly displayed as a warning to other freedmen. Racial tension continued to intensify.[39]

By the end of 1867, then, Texas had established all of the preconditions for a Ku Klux Klan reign of terror. The states had floundered as a frontier society. The states primitive transportation system concentrated primarily in the cotton producing region--the area where secessionist sentiment ran most vehemently--not in the older, more conservative areas of European and Mexican settlement. Individuals, with Southern ancestry and sympathies predominant, comprised the

government, even in areas with strong minority communities, producing friction rather than cooperation, especially in the tension-filled years prior to the outbreak of war.

The state had repudiated equality, the Union cause, and everything Northern well before the occupation. And a "disloyal" minority had fostered the frustrations festering in the hearts of virulently patriotic Southerners, those who had seen the noble cause fall although the fight could, in their eyes, have continued indefinitely.

Texans came unpunished from the war. And they owed penance to no one. When a glorious hero of the late conflict proposed a social club, they flocked to its colors, just as they had to the stars and bars. And when, in the Texan view, the victors became vindictive, the betrayed losers responded as tradition dictated. They fought again--this time in armor less rigid, but in no lesser a cause. They donned the regalia of mystery and rode off into the night in search of the preservation of their civilization from alien concepts of equality for inferior breeds and from lesser men whom they had whipped on the fields of battle but who had stolen the victory through numbers not valor. That those degraded products of the Northern machine society could seek to impose impossible rules on the Texas agrarians proved too much to bear.

Defiance, frustration, and a still intact sense of superiority, an attitude both Southern and Western and more than the sum of the two, led Texans naturally into an organization which promised to restore all that had been taken, not lost but taken, by deceit and deception despite great and noble sacrifices for the cause. The innocuous Klan admittedly terrorized, but most of the terror would have been but prankish had not the weaklings in both the Reconstruction government and the shanties of

former slaves been so timid. Admittedly, excessive enthusiasm occasionally produced violence. But for the most part, in the logic of the twisted crusade, the Klan showed restraint.

This is not to apologize for the organization. Its guilt is palpable. However, it is essential to establish that the Klan and its imitators, in the early years of Reconstruction in Texas, lacked the virulent character--the propensity toward gratuitous brutality, heinous deviation from all civilized behavior--that came to characterize the loose congeries of organizations which ran amok, settling old scores, cleansing festering wounds from an earlier time, in the peak years. No matter that the Klan in 1866 and 1867 was irresponsible, evil, and outside the law, those were virtues in comparison to the behavior which ineffective or apathetic government, a sympathetic citizenry, and a badly overextended military allowed or abetted in 1868.

ENDNOTES

[1]Stanley F. Horn, Invisible Empire: The Story of the Ku Klux Klan, 1866-1871 (Boston: Haughton Mifflin Company, 1939), p. 284; E. Merton Coulter, The South During Reconstruction, 1865-1877 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1947) p.169; Charles William Ramsdell, Reconstruction in Texas ed. by the Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University, vo. XXXVI, no. 1, whole number 95 (New York: Columbia University; Longmans, Green & Co., agents, 1910), p. 233.

[2]Allen W. Trelease, White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. xi-xii.

[3]Ibid., p. 137.

[4]The statistics in this paragraph are based on composite maps found in this work. As established sources and government documents revealed Klan presence and activity in a particular Texas county, that area was colored in on the map. Not all counties, however, are discussed in the text. That would prove too lengthy. Focus is given instead to key areas in turmoil from Klan violence and tactics.

[5]Ramsdell, Reconstruction in Texas, pp. 11-12; Carl H. Moneyhon, Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980), pp. 4-6.

[6]Ramsdell, Reconstruction in Texas, pp. 11-12.

[7]Moneyhon, Republicanism, p. 8.

[8]Ramsdell, Reconstruction in Texas, pp. 21-24.

[9]Ibid., pp. 23-24; New York Times, September 18, 1865.

[10]Alwyn Barr, Black Texans: A History of Negroes in Texas, 1528-1971 (Austin: Jenkins Publishing Company, the Pemberton Press, 1973), pp. 39-41.

[11]New York Times, July 9, 1865.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Reprint of the Galveston Bulletin for July 3, 1865, in New York Times, July 17, 1865.

[16]Robert W. Shook, "The Federal Occupation and Administration of Texas, 1865-1870," (Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1970), p. 194.

[17]Ramsdell, Reconstruction in Texas, pp. 55-57, 72; Barr, Black Texans, p. 8.

[18]James E. Sefton, The United States Army and Reconstruction (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), pp. 41-42; Robert Cruden, The Negro in Reconstruction (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 120.

[19]New York Times, February 19, 1866.

[20]Rupert N. Richardson, Texas: The Lone Star State (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1943), p. 271; New York Times, February 19, 1866.

[21]New York Times, February 19, 1866.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Barr, Black Texans, p. 42.

[25]Coulter, South During Reconstruction, p. 117.

[26]Journal of the Texas State Convention, 1866, vol. 1 (Austin: Southern Intelligencier Office, 1866), pp. 193-196; Sefton, Army and Reconstruction, p. 92.

[27]Trelease, White Terror, p. 4.

[28]Ibid., pp. 5-8, 27.

[29]Trelease, White Terror, p. 149; Sefton, Army and Reconstruction, p. 220; Dorothy Sterling, ed., The Trouble They Seen: Black People Tell The Story of Reconstruction (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1976), p. 378; W.E.B. DuBois, Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880, Studies in American Negro Life, August Meier, gen. ed. (New York: Antheneum, 1970), pp. 676-677; Kenneth M. Stampp, The Era of Reconstruction (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965) p. 200; John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans, 4th

ed., (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), p. 263; Coulter, South During Reconstruction, p. 169.

[30]Sterling, Trouble They Seen, pp. 263, 381.

[31]Coulter, South During Reconstruction, p. 169.

[32]The Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves (Washington, D.C.: Works Project Administration, 1937-1942), pp. 4, 20, 57, 73-74, 233-234, 258.

[33]Record of Felonies Committed in Texas, 1866-1868, vol I, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C.; Charles H. Moore, "Anderson County During Reconstruction," typescript, 1932, in C. H. Moore Reminiscences, 1845-1873, Archives, University of Texas Library, Austin, TX; J. Lee and Lillian J. Stambaugh, A History of Collin County, Texas (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1958), pp. 73-74.

[34]Slave Narratives, pt 4, pp. 3-5.

[35]Ibid., pp. 232-234.

[36]Slaves Narratives, pt 1, pp. 20, 257, 259.

[37]40th Cong., 2d sess, House Miscellaneous Document No. 127, Communications from Governor Pease of Texas Relative to Troubles in That State, (Washington, D.C., 1868), pp. 2, 6-7, 8-23, 26-28.

[38]W.H. Horton to Asst. comm, Tex, Letters, Received, August 15, 1867, Bureau of Freedmen Refugees and Abandoned Lands (BFRAL), RG 105, N.A.; Charles F. Rand, sub-Assist comm, Marshall, to Lt. J.S. Kirkman, AAAG, April 20, 1867, BFRAL, RG 105, vol. 134; 40th Cong., 2d sess., House Executive Document No. 1, vol III, pt. 1, 1868, p. 684.

[39]40th Cong, 2d sess., House Executive Document No. 1, vol III, pt. 1, 1868, p. 684; Rand to Kirkman, April 20, 1867; Devoid Montgomery to Kirkman, March 26, 1867, June 13, 1867, RG 105, vol 162; February 14, 1867, RG 105, vol 134; Slave Narratives, part 3, pp. 75-78.

CHAPTER II

ZENITH

The year 1868 brought a new wave of terror to all sections of Texas as Ku Klux Klan violence reached its zenith. Sincere lawmakers attempted to reestablish civilization in the state. Their principal goal was to bring the Lone Star State back into the Union. However, despite the efforts of Unionist legislators to curtail strife, the internal situation in Texas became increasingly volatile. Strongly diverse and overeaching political, economic and social factors made it impossible for the Texas legislature, alone, to solve the magnitude of problems within the state--at least through the normal legislative channels. By the close of the year, Klan and Klan-like raids, intimidations, and murders had quadrupled. However, such acts of lawlessness were not new. Neither was racial violence. Rather, their roots lay in the years even prior to Reconstruction.

As early as 1862, non-black minority groups in Texas found themselves the focal point of strong violent acts. Criminal outrages at that time were mainly political, social, and economic in origin. Whites directed their anger toward three principal groups--the Germans, the Mexicans, and the Norwegians.[1]

Approximately 54,000 Germans had established their communities in the counties of Bexar, Bandera, Comal, Fayette, Kendall, Kerr, and Gillespie. All of these counties lay between the major cities of San

Antonio and Austin. And these counties were strongly Unionist. In the vote on the issue of whether or not Texas should join the Confederacy, these counties had voted against secession. Once Texas had formally withdrawn from the Union in 1861, German anti-secessionists formed a secret society in support of the cause which the majority of Texans had repudiated. The secret Union society of Germans served throughout its existence primarily as a forum for the expression of grievances. With the exception of an occasional letter to the governor requesting that he reconsider the question of secession, the society proved harmless. Nevertheless, "rebels" of the area did not not look favorably on the organization. Pro-secessionists perceived the Germans as traitors. In retaliation for the treasonable activity of the Germans, the secessionist patriots formed their own secret societies with the purpose of infiltrating those of the enemy and spying on the Germans. Initially, activity remained on a harmless level. However, harmless observation gave way quickly to violence, and in the Autumn of 1861 sixty Germans in the Texas wheat district met with violent deaths at the hands of rabid secessionists.[2]

Although 1861 ended on that disturbing note, the situation deteriorated from even such a low level. In 1862 violence toward German-Americans in Texas reached its peak. During that year alone secessionists and Confederate rebels were responsible for the deaths of approximately 400 Germans in the abovementioned counties. In Comal, Kerr, and Gillespie counties loyal Germans held a series of open meetings early in 1862. Rebel authorities increased their measures to suppress the anti-secessionists. Violence erupted in May of 1862 after the Germans failed in two separate attempts to take over Fort Mason at

San Antonio. With the second failure, Confederate military officials appointed a Captain Duff, a Scot, to terminate all "d___d Dutch conspiracies."[3] Leading 300 cavalrymen, Duff set out to do just that.

Arriving in San Antonio, Duff publicly declared the German counties to be under martial law. All men of enlistment age were to enroll for military duty and to take the Confederate oath. Failure to do so would result in "the pain of arrest and imprisonment." Secretly Duff and his lieutenant ordered that no prisoner be taken alive.[4]

On August 10, 1862, a group of sixty-two young Germans attempted to flee Texas. Their goal was to escape into Mexico through Eagle Pass on the Rio Grande River in Maverick County, Texas, just as A. J. Hamilton and his followers had done before them. This time, the loyalists did not succeed. Surrounded by 120 soldiers near Fort Clark on the Nueces River, the small band of refugees fell in defeat before the superior rebel force. After eight hours of battle only fifteen managed to escape. However, that any of the Germans eluded his forces enraged Duff. Infuriated, Duff and his men terrorized the German counties of Bexar, Comal, Gillespie, Kendall, and Kerr. Throughout the remainder of 1862, Duff raided--mainly at night--burning, beating, hanging, drowning, murdering, and raping. Area secessionists joined Duff in his rampages. Neither Germans nor their associates were safe.

In contrast, 1863 proved to be a relatively quiet year. From February to May 1864, however, sporadic killings resumed. But in neither year did murders attain the level that had characterized 1862.[5]

Another ethnic group non-exempt from racial violence and intimidation was the Mexican people in Texas--the Tejans. The largest concentration of Mexicans settled in the sixteen counties in the

furthermost southern tip of Texas. Still, Mexican populations could be found from border to border, from the cities of Indianola in Victoria County and San Antonio in Bexar County, both in central Texas, to Brownsville in Cameron County and El Paso in El Paso County, in south and southwestern Texas respectively.[6]

Viewed by their white neighbors as racial and social inferiors, the Tejano underwent at the hands of Anglos much the same difficulties as blacks and Germans were enduring. Tactics remained the same--nightly visits by lynch mobs and vigilantes. Historian Arnaldo De Leon claimed that the murdering of the Tejano during the Civil War and Reconstruction was so common as to be considered no crime. "Mexicans became unsuspecting victims" of the violent climate which raged in Texas from 1861 through 1877. Unfortunately, no accurate figures are available for the total atrocities committed against Mexican-Americans during this period, but a conservative judgment is that hundreds of Mexicans were murdered by lawless whites in the years of terror. White attitudes of racial superiority, when combined with the slogan, "Remember the Alamo, Remember Goliad," provided bases enough for the sanctioning of outrages and atrocities.[7]

Not only was loss of life high in the Tejano community, but loss of property reach unmeasured proportions. In the first two years of the war alone, Anglos illegally confiscated millions of dollars worth of property from an estimated 20,000 Mexican-Americans in South Texas.[8]

Local pro-secessionists also targeted Norwegian minorities for violence. These Europeans in Bosque, Henderson, Kaufman, and Van Zandt counties were the subjects of routine intimidations by area whites. Violence never reached the heights it did against the Germans, blacks,

and Mexicans. The reason for comparative civility toward the Norwegian community was probably that the whites in these counties of northern Texas outnumbered the European minority by huge ratios.[9]

If the outrages against minorities were not enough to occupy the time of area Anglos, atrocities toward whites by whites ranked high in the first two years of the war. Hundreds of loyalists met the same fate as had their minority contemporaries.

One account told of pro-secessionists in Cooke County, in the spring of 1862, murdering approximately fifty men. Confederate sympathizers hanged the loyalists in less than sixty minutes, all from the same tree. In June of 1862, rebel soldiers terrorized north Texas, killing 200 Union supporters. During the autumn of 1862, another fifty men of Cooke County died in the course of one evening for failing to denounce the Union and take the Confederate oath. Further terror spread through Cooke County during the remainder of 1862. A rebel officer, Colonel Bowland, died at the hands of a man believed to be a loyalist. Out to revenge his father's death, Bowland's son organized a gang. The younger Bowland and his crew rode throughout Cooke County, killing at random. At least eighteen people died before the rampage ended.[10]

Violence of this sort was not limited to Cooke County. In Hunt County unnamed assailants murdered a Mr. Wilson. They then stripped the body, cut it into pieces, and threw the pieces to the hogs.[11]

With the nature of violence during the first few years of the Civil War, it is not hard to understand how the Ku Klux Klan, once established in Texas, was able to reach the strength and magnitude it did in 1868. The area of Klan activity broadened significantly, well beyond the concept of the traditional elements which had produced the Klan

elsewhere throughout the South. Therefore it is probable that the factors which encouraged the growth of the Ku Klux Klan in the first two years after the war no longer applied completely. Although those elements did not disappear, their impact diminished. The Klan of 1868 was different from that of the preceding years. The change came because of three factors: 1) lack of a significant policing agency; 2) general lawlessness and the willingness of many to take the law into their own hands, i.e., frontier justice; and 3) the presence of traditional elements. This last factor was perhaps the most significant for in it resided the fundamental basis for conflict. Examples are Unionist against rebel, pro-secessionist against anti-secessionist, white against immigrants, and white against black. This is not to say that the Southern style Klan disappeared from Texas in 1868. It is, however, reasonable merely to suggest that the Ku Klux Klan offered a cover for lawlessness in that year, outlawry which may well have prevailed even had the Klan never come to the state. The targets for violence reappeared with the newly-emancipated Afro-Americans. But outrages against other groups, victims of long-standing, did not stop with the increased attacks on blacks.

The increase in crime grew proportionately with the decreased efforts of federal officials to deal effectively with the violence. This pattern was due partly to the overall size of Texas and in part to the manner in which the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands had been organized.

In 1868 a large portion of Texas remained frontier. Available troops stationed in the region were overextended in their assignments. It was their duty to defend a perimeter greater than 1300 miles. Had

state civil authorities, i.e., the governor, been more willing to use the black militia at their disposal, law enforcement might have succeeded in some areas. However, given the views of most Texans concerning the freedmen, a black in any position of authority would have proved disastrous. Governors throughout the South, not only in Texas, lived in too much daily fear of inciting a full scale race war to even consider the possibility of using the black militia.[12]

The impracticality of using that significant police force made law enforcement on behalf of the military almost impossible. The war department assigned 4,544 officers and enlisted men to Texas. Only 30 percent of that force resided in the interior. Of the 1,318 troops in the Texas interior, the military stationed 534 troops at Marshall, Texas, alone; 215 troops at Richardson, Texas; 208 troops at Austin, Texas; and 100 men at Galveston, Texas. The war department had left only 261 men to oversee affairs at the remaining eight posts in the interior.[13]

Galveston served as the center of the Freedmen's Bureau in Texas. The agency stationed its military personnel "in the most accessible and populous parts of the State." Ready communication from the interior to headquarters was non-existent.[14]

The protocol for arrests was as follows: local sheriffs and marshals could ask for a small military escort to accompany them while making arrests. If area officials could not make the arrest or declined to do so, the army had the authority to proceed on its own accord. Another avenue for arrests lay in the federal court system. The federal marshal in Texas, having received a warrant from the federal court, could request an escort be assigned by the closest post commander. The

detail would then set out for the alleged offender. That party would then be tried in federal court. Fifty percent of the cases in federal court resulted in convictions.[15]

For the most part local authorities declined to issue warrants or prosecute. Of the 5,000 homicide indictments filed by August of 1868, once conviction in the district courts resulted. As a contrast, in 1865 alone civil authorities in Houston punished one freedman to the full extent of the law--hanged by the neck until dead. Many area justices of the peace refused to hear a case involving a crime or a violent act committed against a freedman. The reasoning seemed to be that the crime, whatever its nature, was not an illegal offense because the so-called victim was a "d____d nigger."[16] Furthermore, if there were no white witnesses to the alleged criminal act, local authorities would not prosecute. Those officials considered the testimony off only black witnesses to be insufficient grounds of bring charges. Additionally, outrages against Union men or other minorities besides blacks were not considered crimes.[17]

The duty of the military as arbitrator in curtailing hostilities and decreasing crime was not an easy assignment. Soldiers and bureau agents were often the targets of criminal acts. Political assassinations were common in Texas. And whites used freedmen as bait to trap military personnel. In Hopkins County near the town of Sulphur Springs, Texas, a violent group of men known as the Bickerstaff Gang terrorized the area. They succeeded in an ambush of army troops. They achieved this victory by capturing a black man, beating him, and then letting him escape to the closest military installation. When the soldiers went in search of the Bickerstaff Gang, they rode into a

trap.[18]

Confidence of local citizens toward the military troops was undermined. In the settlement of Montgomery, Texas, in Montgomery County, for instance, bands disguised as Union soldiers terrorized the town.[19]

Bureau agents assigned to areas remote from the forts often had to stay in civilian owned and operated boarding houses. This condition created further problems. Lieutenant Gregory Barrett, Jr.'s assignment in June of 1868 was to serve as bureau agent at Tyler, Texas, located in Smith County. Barrett found himself with no place in which to reside. On moving into a boarding house, Barrett noted that all of the previous tenants left. The proprietor threatened to close the rooming house. Evicted, the agent could not find anyone else willing to rent him sleeping facilities. Therefore, his only alternative was to purchase a house, and Barrett's army pay did not cover the costs of a home plus furnishings.

Townspeople were hostile to the representative of the Freedmen's Bureau. Daily, Barrett received insults and murder threats. Local law enforcement officials refused to provide aid of any kind. In a report to his superior, Barrett stated that he was helpless to act without troops to support his actions. He could not achieve the Freedmen's Bureau's goal of a stable Reconstruction by himself. Barrett requested that army headquarters telegraph as follows: "Allright for yes" and "Yes for No." He hoped that townspeople would be led by that ruse to believe that troops were coming no matter what his commander's final

decision actually was.[20]

The situation in Tyler further intensified when the verdict of the court in a local trial resulted in a near riot. The court acquitted a black man, Johnson, of a crime. Because of this action, whites became more bitter and hostile. Outrages increased, and violence occurred daily. Night raids by the Ku Klux Klan became common practice. Ultimately twenty troops arrived to help Barrett quiet the town.[21]

The bureau agent at Paris, Texas, in Lamar County also received threats. The Marshall Texan Republican quoted the editor of the Paris Vindicator as stating that the local bureau agent had been "Ku-Kluxed."[22] Nevertheless, violence against agency officials elsewhere did not reach the level it did in Tyler.

By the fourth quarter of 1868, civil authority was powerless. The military forces in the interior were so scattered that they were ineffective as a policing agency. The counties of Henderson, Jefferson, Marshall, Rusk, Smith, and Upshur were totally out of control. Daily outrages against radicals and blacks were too numerous to count accurately. The subassistant commissioner at Jefferson requested that the area by placed under martial law.[23]

Citizens and lawmakers nationwide were shocked at the reports of "unbridled crime" that emerged from Texas. E. Merton Coulter, in his analysis of the Lone Star State during the period, is partially correct in his views. Coulter claimed that all crime in Texas was non-political and not a result of the recent war. However, his failure to recognize the atrocities being committed toward blacks and non-black minorities as criminal acts was a grievous error. According to Coulter:

It [crime in Texas] represented the growing pains of a

> frontier region inadequately policed and still encumbered by its Indians. Its crimes related to horse stealing, cattle rustling, saloon shootings, Mexican bandits, and Indian pillagings...[24]

The above statement may well have applied to the frontier regions of Texas, that is to say the southern tip, southwestern, and western portions of Texas. But even this application is blantantly prejudiced. Furthermore, no student of Texas history can claim that the abovementioned "crimes" were the only illegal acts committed in eastern and central Texas.

It has already been established that life In Texas during and after the war was anything but peaceful and safe. The year 1868 was no exception. The Ku Klux Klan had entrenched itself strongly throughout the eastern and central portions of the state by the middle of that year. Historian James E. Sefton believed there to be "some political motive" connected to the general lawlessness. A large segment of the populace joined the Ku Klux Klan. Simultaneously, county Democratic organizations sponsored barbecues which Klaverns attended on a frequent if not a steady basis. Thus, a link occurred between the Klan and southern Democrats. The army, according to Sefton, did not know the "specific motive" for Klan growth and popularity in counties throughout Texas.[25]

In a letter to the Adjutant-general of the United States Army, Brevet Major General J.J. Reynolds summarized the situation in Texas for the military year ending September 30, 1868. Reynolds believe the Ku Klux Klan existed throughout Texas. Klaverns worked both independently and in collaboration with outlaw gangs. The Klan was strongest in northeast Texas. Trelease agreed with this statement, for Trelease

placed the "nucleus" of Klan activity in Jefferson, Texas, located in Marion County. The most common activities of the Texas Klans were:

> to disarm, rob, and in many cases murder Union men and negroes, and as occasion may offer, murder United States officers and soldiers; also to intimidate everyone who knows anything of the organization, but will not join it.[26]

Reynolds blamed the Klan for most of the criminal violence in northeast Texas.

There was no civil law east of the Trinity River. The majority of civil law enforcement agents themselves were Klan members or members of armed gangs. The few that were not, the Klan forced to flee for their lives, provided, of course, that the Klan allowed them to escape at all. This condition was especially prevalent in Marion, Smith, and Van Zandt counties.

With respect to the Democratic clubs' "political meetings and barbecues," speakers from the podium at those functions named those who were targeted for Klan violence. The accused knew that they must flee or die.

The lack of adequate transportation and communication facilities "between remote points," Reynolds reported, was advantageous to the Klan and to lawlessness in general. Favorable local opinion on behalf of the Klan and armed bands was another factor allowing their existence and promoting their increase. The situation was so bad that Reynolds strongly believed that no one living outside Texas would be able to understand the depth of lawlessness without experiencing it first hand.[27]

Probably, because of its strong history of intemperance toward minorities, Texas would have experienced the degree of lawlessness that

it did after the war even if the Klan had not existed. The violence committed against Texas Germans, Mexicans, and Union men during the war was one indication that such would have been the case. Another factor was the attitudes of white Texans toward blacks. To many Afro-American would always be a slave or a subservient creature regardless of whether or not the government had granted blacks' emancipation.

Major General Henry W. Halleck, from his headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky, stated many times that outlaws rode under the banner of the Ku Klux Klan in order to give themselves a psychological edge over their intended victim. This does not mean that they had formally joined a particular Klavern, merely that the availability of the hood more than just the organization provided an additional weapon for the arsenal of wickedness, a cloak of anonymity which freed the wearer from inhibitions and added to the terror felt by the would be victim. At least a few Texans held a similar view to that of the general.

An editorial in Flake's Bulletin disagreed with the level of violence and crime as defined by Reynolds. The editor felt that lawlessness in Texas occurred on a much smaller scale than indicated by the general. However, the journalist did contend that the situation was worse than the average "native" Texan cared to admit.[28] Many Texans sanctioned that lawlessness through either tacit support or a do-nothing attitude. From Clarksville, Texas, in Red River County to Mount Pleasant, Texas, in Titus County, a ruffian by the name of Elisha Guest terrorized the vicinity. Finally the army sent troops to apprehend Guest. The military followed the outlaw to Mount Pleasant. In that town they found, to their presumed dismay, that the townspeople had

taken up arms against the army. Townsfolk were totally sympathetic to Guest. Likewise, in Bell County, area residents warned the local gang whenever army patrols approached.[29]

Other townspeople were too afraid of local outlaws to cross them. In Boston, Texas, located in Bowie County, the outlaw Cullen Baker literally controlled the town. Rumor had it that people there were too afraid to even speak his name out loud. And Trinity County, in east central Texas, was also in a state of chaos. All citizens were armed. No life or property was considered safe. And authorities were likewise afraid.[30]

The fundamental basis for violence in Texas in 1868 was the presence of elements for whom conflict had long since become traditional. Pro-secessionists, slavery supporters, anti-Reconstructionists, white Southern Democrats, or rebels--whatever the term, most were interchangeable--still remained bitter toward the anti-secessionists, abolitionists, Radical Republicans, and Unionists or loyalists. That was particularly true in 1868 with Congressional Reconstruction well under way.

John Hope Franklin, in his book From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans, felt that it was this factor above all others which caused the resurgence in violence throughout the South, not just in Texas, in 1867 and 1868. Under Presidential Reconstruction, Southern whites believed that there was hope. And the slogan, "the South shall rise again" could become a reality. When the events of Reconstruction became unbearable, they could voice their opinions to the president, who was often sympathetic. But "when Radical Reconstruction made this impossible...they struck with fury and rage."[31] In Franklin's opinion

this conflict of traditional elements was highly political in origin, a battle for "control of the South." It, in the Northern perception, involved a struggle against rebel attempts to nullify gains arising from the war. The Southern view was that the issue centered on home rule. Of course, the Southern definition of home rule contained a whites only proviso; blacks were by that same definition unfit and inept. To Southerners it was inconceivable that consideration could even be given to the notion that freedmen would be placed in such a situation.[32]

Although European and Mexican immigrants to Texas received more than their share of the atrocities committed by white terrorists, freedmen remained the target of violence. For some whites the concept of race war served as justification for the outrages. Too much influence by Northerners on blacks could only lead to trouble. Afro-Americans needed constant reminding of their natural place in life lest the blacks start believing Northern propaganda and, in their ignorance, rise against their betters. Freed or not, blacks were to be nothing more than unskilled workers in a predominantly white and fully dominant white society. Thus most whites chose to believe. If legislative measures proved insufficient or unavailable, illegal channels were available to guarantee the survival of this state of affairs.[33]

While stationed in Texas Major General George A. Custer observed that homicides against blacks occurred "weekly, if not daily." Despite the opinions of observers in the field and despite the availability of house documents, Coulter reached conclusions opposite from what an open-minded reading of the statistical evidence warranted. In his perception it was whites, not blacks, who suffered in Texas from 1865 to

1868.[34] Support by Coulter of William A. Dunning's long ago refuted theory of Southern reconstruction seemingly distorted Coulter's understanding of what transpired in the Lone Star State during the period under examination. Those older historians would have us believe that Southern whites, noble in war and dignified in defeat, had come to terms with the reality that they would have to accommodate, even sacrifice, to keep their newly freed slaves from self-harm. Further, in this view, vindictive and greedy Northerners used the ignorant blacks as a pawn in a heinous game of despoliation of the serene if devastated Southern homeland and forced the long-suffering white population with great reluctance to arise and throw off the tyrannical rule of the Northern usurpers and their ebony foils. If such were the case, then the statistics for the period in question, a time when the outrages of the Reconstruction governments should have been most blatant, must reflect that the predominance of violent acts was in fact directed against former Confederates and their sympathizers. The agents of that violence, for the Dunning and Coulter interpretation to stand, must be blacks, carpetbaggers, and other alien elements. Connivance in the activity by the military and the bureau should appear at least to a small degree. However, nothing in the evidence supports or hints at such a reality. Dunning's theory of Southern reconstruction is neither explanation nor justification for the violence in Texas in 1868. On the contrary, reports of outrages by whites against blacks were numerous.

General Reynolds, in his annual report for 1868, stated "The murder of negroes is so common as to render it impossible to keep accurate account of them."[35] Agents of the Freedman's Bureau, military personnel, journalists, citizens, and blacks themselves told of crimes

and of the Ku Klux Klan. Klaverns such as the Sons of Washington, the White Camellia, the Teutonic Band of Brothers, and the Knights of the Rising Sun patrolled various Texas regions both day and night. They ended Republican meetings and attacked government representatives. The Knights of the Rising Sun "hunted down without mercy" loyalists and Texas Germans. They committed arson, robbery, and murder. Klansmen used force and intimidation. Nothing was beyond their capacity for viciousness.[36]

In Lamar County subagent DeWitt C. Brown had his horse shot out from under him by Klansmen. Threats against him continued until Brown left Paris, Texas, shortly thereafter. In Tarrant County the Ku Klux Klan organized in 1868. More than 200 members joined. They marched through Fort Worth and roamed the countryside, committing the usual disturbances. This Klavern became so strong and so successful in threatening the Afro-Americans that many blacks, although emancipated, remained with their old masters and would not travel without passes. Freedmen caught out after dark could anticipate that the local Klansmen would beat them and return them to their "owners," provided that they remained alive. One lawmaker, Judge B. F. Barkley, tried to enforce at least a semblance of justice. Accordingly, threats against him were so numerous that he had to have military troops escort him to and from the courthouse.[37]

Some area whites did attempt to stop the Klan of Tarrant County. The motivation for this bold venture was not, however, concern for the human rights of the blacks. Rather, the goal was protection of black labor and property. Landowners had to act because conditions had become so unbearable that black workers were afraid to leave their quarters to

go to work. In retaliation for Klan disruption of his labor supply, one rancher Harris, between Fort Worth and Cleburne, took action. First he had his black and white laborers dig a trench. Then he armed the men and had them lay in ambush for the Klan, which he knew would venture his way on its routine nightly ride. When, as expected, the Klansmen entered the area, the surprise was complete. Harris and his men wounded twelve and sent the others fleeing. After that confrontation with a small band of men willing to fight back, the Klan of Tarrant County rode no more at night.[38]

In Limestone County in February of 1868, a man named "Dixie" had the reputation as a one-man Klan. In an attempt to avenge the South, he murdered all freedmen he encountered. The total number of blacks who met their death at his hands is unknown. But blacks did become so fearful of him that they slept in the woods at night. Finally an area resident, Merret Trammell, went to Waco. He returned with troops, and in a shootout Dixie was killed.[39]

Murders of blacks occurred in a widespread area by March of 1868. Armed bands calling themselves Ku Klux Klan murdered and "practiced barbarous cruelties upon the freedmen." In that one month, according to government documents, forty-two reported murders or assaults took place. The figure for criminal acts against whites, in contrast, was less than half of that number. Furthermore, in Bastrop County alone the number of unreported murders of blacks in that single month was too great to estimate.[40]

By April of 1868, Southern Democrats and white conservative Texas journalists had begun an attempt to cover up the extent, even the existence, of the Klan and its brutalities. In The Daily State Gazette

of April 17, 1868, an editorial claimed that the Klan existed only in the minds of Radical Republicans. The Loyal League, not the Ku Klux Klan, was the source of the problems in Texas. By May and June the Gazette openly admitted to the reality of the Klan. Backing the Klan's activities, the Gazette claimed that the Ku Klux Klan could stop not only the Loyal League but black domination as well.[41]

The Denton Monitor, in May, ran a similar story line pertaining to the Loyal League. The Ku Klux Klan was a trick by the Radical Republicans. It was the Loyal League, not Southern Democrats, who were in charge of the Klan. The Denton Monitor repeated the article in September of 1868.

Texas newspapers stepped up their propaganda in June. The Houston Telegraph printed that the Loyal League's goal was "to put through" all freedmen who voted conservatively. The Daily State Gazette define "put through" as to punish or murder.[42]

Simultaneously the state government, in June, finally admitted that it was powerless to handle the internal situation in Texas. In a letter to General Reynolds, Governor Elisha M. Pease declared that neither life nor property was safe in Falls County. Daily, blacks and Unionists were attacked. Pease asked General Reynolds for help. Pease further requested aid in the investigation of a murder in Johnson County.[43]

A. R. Wilson was a freedman who resided in Burleson, Texas. Very intelligent and influential among area blacks, Wilson worked as Registrar of the Court of Burleson. Wilson was kidnapped and murdered.[44]

In Hunt and Fannin counties Unionists and blacks, along with their entire families, were driven out of the area. Their tormentors

confiscated their property and possessions. In Anderson County the district attorney refused to indict criminals for assaults against blacks or unionists. Even with sworn affidavits proving a case, he declined to prosecute. If a case did reach the court, he forced the case into lengthy litigation. For example, an assault case which occurred in 1867 finally reached the grand jury in 1868.[45] Similar situations were common throughout Texas.

By means of correspondence from the Detroit Post, the New York Times published the report of Charles Haugh, subagent for the Freedmen's Bureau at Waco, who highlighted problems in his district. In Falls County unknown whites shot black laborers at one Dodson's Plantation on June 6, 1868. Unionists were murdered for "just being union men." On June 10, near Waco, a P. Mosier shot at Thornton Scott, forcing Scott to leave his own land. Mosier wanted freedman Scott's property and the crop which Scott had raised. Bureau agents apprehended Mosier. But officials later released him. Mosier swore that he was in the field shooting into the air. He was not aiming at Scott. In fact, he claimed, he did not even know that Scott was on the property.[46]

Three men--Bickerstaff, Ellis, and Boardman--went on a crime spree while traveling through Navarro County. Officials incarcerated them at Corsicana for robbing six blacks which they met on the road of all their possessions. After finding out that the three robbers had served under the Confederacy in the late war, no justice of the peace would sit as judge. After all, the victims were merely "d____d niggers," and no freedmen could testify against a white. There were no other witnesses than the parties directly involved. Released, the bandits continued their plunder of Navarro County. They shot two blacks near Spring Hill,

robbed five more freedmen and their families--forcing the women to disrobe--and stole four horses. On July 4, after shooting and robbing one Henry Carruther, Bickerstaff, Ellis, and Boardman again were again confronted by law enforcement officials. The three again went to jail but again won their release. The reason was predictable: they had robbed a "d____d nigger," and there was "only nigger evidence."[47]

In late July near Waco, whites fatally wounded Marion Chapman, a freedman. The Waco sheriff, four deputies, and bureau agent Haugh went to arrest the allegedly guilty men at Bosqueville. On their arrival, the six law enforcement officials found 150 armed men protecting the fugitives. Haugh and his associates had no choice but to retreat.[48]

These instances were only a few of the outrages Haugh reported. Unionists, freedmen, and bureau agents were constantly threatened, beaten, whipped, robbed, or murdered. Blacks did not report all such abuse to the authorities. Freedmen received warning from the terrorists not to repeat the threats and so on to officials. The whites would return the next time to kill the freedmen if the blacks gave any details to the authorities. It seemed that electing Ulysses S. Grant as President of the United States and sending General Phil Sheridan to Texas was the only way to solve the problems of the Lone Star State. At least such was the editorial comment in the New York Times.[49]

In Smith County grown men attacked black children who were on their way to Mary Stripling's school in Tyler. The assailants beat the children with clubs and threw stones. The motive for that assault was that the children failed to get off the sidewalk when whites walked past. Freedpeople were to walk in the road. Authorities closed the school after receiving several threats that the school would be burned

down with the children inside if it remained open. Furthermore, Freemen's Bureau Agent Lieutenant Gregory Barrett received a warning from cowed freedmen who feared for their lives. A full scale war would break out in the county if military officials arrested even one anti-Reconstructionist. According to the report, rebels in Tyler intended to murder "all yankees and niggers if necessary."[50]

Attacks on Freedmen's Bureau schools occurred in Williamson County also. After the burning of a schoolhouse at Circleville, Texas, on June 28, 1868, Reynolds offered a reward. He would give $500.00 for information leading to the conviction of the culprit and culprits. In Anderson County as in Williamson County, hostility to the freedmen's schools was overt. Whites there drove the organizer of a black school out of town. Once again Governor Pease had to ask Reynolds for help. If attacks on freedmen and innocent school children continued without retribution, the governor knew, freedpeople would never attain a sense of security.[51]

In Grimes and Waller counties the Klan continued their attacks on blacks and the educational system for freedmen. At Hempstead, L. S. Dickinson observed a freedman with a bruised head. Welts on his arms showed where once he had been bound. The Klan had beaten him and left him for dead. And in Navosota, according to reports, a black went crazy from fright. However, despite the abuses at least one area resident felt that some improvement had occurred in white acceptance of black education. On the other hand, in July Klansmen, this group calling itself the Knights of the Rising Sun, broke up black schools in Jefferson and outside Marshall in Marion and Harrison counties. Federal authorities sent troops to protect the school in Marshall. It remained

the only school in operation in the district.[52]

The economic factor cannot be overlooked as a reason for the amount of crime in Texas in June. Blacks were ready to harvest summer crops. By driving the freedmen off the land, usually after the hard work was complete, whites could get the profit without the exertion. Many blacks had worked with the understanding that they would receive wages at the completion of harvest. Expelling these workers would serve as another money-saving venture for whites. Blacks were not only losing their land but also their livelihood and often their yearly wages. This circumstance proved especially true in Harrison, Upshur, Titus, Rusk, and Panola counties.[53]

There was also a political motive for increased attacks on freedmen and Unionists in the late summer and early fall of 1868--the constitutional convention. Elimination of the black vote was of utmost importance. Whites in Kaufman County threatened to kill all black radicals. Hunt County whites did more than threaten; they killed Unionists and ordered blacks to leave the county. In July a riot occurred at Millican, Texas. Before it ended whites had murdered twenty-five blacks. A speaker traveling from Goliad to Victoria to appear at a Unionist meeting met with a confrontation. Whites threatened him with hanging if he dared to participate. Similar incidents occurred in Upshur, Wood, Grimes, Hunt, and Fannin counties.[54]

The city of Jefferson in Marion County was also the site of a riot. The trouble started when freedmen and loyalists held a Fourth of July celebration. Democrats were holding a "Rebel Barbecue" in honor of the holiday. The Democrats tried unsuccessfully to get blacks to join the Democratic Club of Marion County. When only thirteen freedmen appeared

at the barbecue, angry whites went in search of the other blacks. Mobs formed. They chased Unionists and Afro-Americans out of town. Whites then established patrols to guard the town. By keeping undesirables out of town, they prevented the unionists and blacks from voting for delegates to the convention.[55]

Other reports of so-called race wars filled the papers. In northeast Texas the Bickerstaff gang, along with outlaw Bob Lee, made headlines. In Paris, Texas, those outlaws put up a public notice of their mutual goal. That objective was to murder all freedmen between the Red River and Sandlin Creek. Bickerstaff and associates did not limit their campaign only to freedmen. They murdered all black women and children that they encountered. Union men also became their victims. Those whom they wounded could not get assistance. Doctors would not help either out of their own prejudice or out of fear. Sympathetic whites would not help either. They were too afraid of being labeled Unionist and winding up shot because of it. Those blacks who had weapons and ammunition ended up disarmed by whites. Blacks were totally defenseless. Consequently, the bandits drove freedpeople from their homes. Area residents, black and white alike, feared even to send letters through the mail. The local newspapers noted that "The postmasters are all Ku Klux."[56]

The Daily Austin Republican lamented that race wars prevailed even in Travis and Bastrop counties. Travis County contained Austin, the state capital. Bastrop County was adjacent to Travis County on the southeast. The Ku Klux Klan had reached even into those counties, the seat of government. Freedpeople even that close to the center of power and authority could no longer regard themselves as exempt from

violence.[57]

The situation in Tyler, Texas, became critical by the end of July. Lieutenant Gregory Barrett described Smith County as plunged into "open warfare." The whole town was armed and threatening to eradicate all Yankees in the area. When Barrett arrested a white, George Kennedy, on July 19 for the rape of a black woman, Klansmen and townspeople came to Kennedy's aid. They killed two soldiers and a clerk. Barrett barely escaped with his life. The two soldiers received critical wounds, and the clerk suffered a slight injury. Barrett pleaded for more troops. He sent his request by special dispatch. The Klan controlled the telegraph.[58]

Throughout September Barrett found himself unable to control Smith County and the surrounding area. In August Klan parties of twenty men each raided the county. No black could regard himself as safe. Klansmen shot freedpeople on sight. Conditions continued to deteriorate. The Starville Klan, headed by the Chauncey brothers and operating from that city located fifteen miles east of Tyler, terrorized the town. The locality was totally out of control for ten days. Men, women, and children were flogged. Individuals received as many as 500 lashes apiece.

Area Ku Klux Klan bodies planned a joint meeting for September 12. Barrett feared a riot. Again he sent his message of concern by letter. The enemy remained in firm control of the telegraph. Meanwhile, blacks underwent a "reign of terror."[59]

If the situation in Tyler and Smith County was not desperate enough, Bickerstaff and his gang moved into lower Hunt, Van Zandt, and Wood counties. There area Klaverns aided Bickerstaff in his barbarism.

There was, at that point, no protection at all for blacks in at least four counties around Tyler. Furthermore, the few troops which were stationed in Tyler could not be moved away from that city. Barrett was too afraid that a race riot if he redistributed his troops. By October of 1868 the situation was hopeless. Barrett no longer served as subagent as of that month. No reason was given, and the record was unclear as to whether he was transferred or murdered.[60]

Elsewhere, the Teutonic Band of Brothers aided conservative clubs in Houston to promote enrollment in those clubs of Harris County blacks. Two circles of the Knights of the White Camellia also assisted. Klaverns met weekly. However, despite those efforts, area blacks failed to be intimidated.[61]

Aside from the situation confronting Barrett in Tyler in September, the next most severe episode pertained to conditions in Jefferson, Texas. There the Knights of the Rising Sun announced the installation of their Grand Officers. They scheduled the ceremony for September 19. On that day approximately 1,500 people arrived to attend the installation ceremony. Townspeople decorated the town for the occasion. Smaller klaverns such as the Lone Star Club and the Seymour Knights attended to show their respect and pay homage to the Knights of the Rising Sun. Even blacks participated in the ceremonies.

Willis McNair, a local barber, was one of the speakers. The Texas Republican, which reported the affair, gave no details of McNair's speech. Further, it was unknown if he had been coerced into giving the talk. Or, perhaps, he did so in an attempt to pacify and appease the whites. Only speculation can be made.

Klan officers elected for the year included Colonel W. P. Saufley

as the Grand Commander. Doctor A. S. Huey became the new Vice Grand Commander. Saufley's background was a notorious one. An ex-Confederate officer, Saufley was a fugitive from the law. Federal authorities wanted him for murders committed in states other than Texas. Perfectly safe in Jefferson, Saufley was a favorite son, a pillar of the community. He also served as chairman of the self-styled Executive Committee of Marion County.[62]

September 1868 witnessed the formation of the Ellis County Klan. The Ku Klux Klan there made its nightly "ghostly" visits to Red Oak Settlement. Nevertheless, violence there did not reach anywhere near the proportions that it did in neighboring Navarro, Kaufman, Van Zandt, Wood, and Smith counties.[63]

The citizens of Van Zandt County underwent a near political war at that time. Radicals and conservatives were literally shooting it out in the streets of Canton.[64]

In Williamson County, the northern neighbor of Austin and Travis County, George Rouser organized "Democratic Clubs." Members really belonged to the Knights of the White Camellia. Statistics are as follows:

"Club 1"	Georgetown	est. Sep 13	members-101
"Club 2"	Round Rock	est. Sep 13	members- 31
"Club 3"	Florence	est. Oct 5	members- 52
"Club 4"	Willie's Creek	no date	members- 8

Back in northeast Texas, the Knights of the Rising Sun remained active. The violence in Marion County came to a peak at Jefferson, Texas because of an incident surrounding George Smith, an Unionist and black sympathizer. Freedmen helped to elect Smith as a delegate to the state's constitutional convention. While speaking at a Republican

meeting on the night of October 3, "Colonel" Richard P. Crump and his followers assaulted Smith and several blacks. In self-defense Smith wounded two of his assailants while the others fled. However, local officials arrested Smith as the perpetrator of the disturbance. Civil authorities placed him in the county jail after assuring military personnel that Smith would be safe--nothing proved farther from the truth.[66]

On the night of October 4, 120 members of the Knights of the Rising Sun, led by Colonel William P. Saufley, broke into the jail. Military officials later investigated and confirmed the murder of four prisoners--Smith and three freedmen. With this last act General Reynolds made effective immediately General Order Number 15.[67]

All civil officers with the jurisdiction to make arrests were to do so on the spot. The target was any person concealed by mask or other disguise. Reynolds also included in the directive a provision that it applied to all ranking military commissioned officers no matter their rank. On arrest, any violator was to remain in custody. The arresting officer would report the full details of his arrest to headquarters. Then he would await further instructions.[68]

Although this arrangement looked good on paper, it proved to be impractical in the field, especially in counties such as Marion and Smith. In those counties Klansmen and outlaws outnumbered all available civil and military personnel by a significant ratio. Application of the order could not occur without providing at least adequate, preferably more, manpower to back up the effort to stop violence. With no regard whatsoever for the recently enacted order, in mid-October fifty Klansmen attacked the Willis Whitaker plantation, twelve miles north of

Jefferson. The hooded men killed seven blacks, wounded three more, burned the cotton gin, and set forty bales of cotton ablaze. Whitaker, a Unionist, had settled in Marion County from Arkansas.[69]

A do-or-die atmosphere enveloped Texas by November of 1868. That month was especially important due to the presidential elections then taking place. In their efforts to stop the election of Grant, according to Coulter, the Klan merited praise. As he said:

> The political activities of the Klan, especially in the Presidential election of 1868, struck terror into Northern Radicals, for here was a direct threat to the Southern support which they had built up by their whole Reconstruction Program.[70]

If Grant had been defeated, and had the Klan and its supporters not committed the inhumane acts in the proportions that they did, then the Ku Klux Klan might have merited Coulter's praise and admiration. But Grant did become president. Northerners rejoiced. Radical Republicans felt that this event would be the turning point. Victory in Texas would be slow in coming.

Major activity against blacks occurred in Nacogdoches in late November. On the night of November 30, Klansmen there went on a terrorist spree. At least two blacks died. The "unidentified men" severely beat six freedmen. They also confiscated property. Subassistant commissioner Alex Ferguson requested troops. The situation in Nacogdoches became worse after the presidential election. Whites publicly announced their intention to dispose of Loyal Leaguers. Afterward, whites could manage and control blacks as they chose.[71]

With the coming of December, all the military and troubled citizens of Texas could do was hope that 1869 would bring relief to the troubled

state. Klansmen and outlaw gangs operating either dependently or independently of local Klaverns continued operations. Many areas remained out of control--northeast, east, central, and south central. Unionists, freedmen, soldiers, and bureau agents continued to be threatened, beaten, robbed, whipped, drowned, shot, mutilated, ostracized, and intimidated.

The economic factors had had their season. Spring and summer crops had long been harvested. Yearly salaries had long been paid. Still the violence continued.

Political factors had diminished as well. The constitutional convention, with its delegate elections in February and its sessions themselves in June, had adjourned. The presidential election of November 1868 was over. Still the violence remained.

Ex-slaveholders fought abolitionists. Rebels fought unionists. Democrats fought Radical Republicans. Whites murdered blacks, Germans, Mexicans, and anyone else who posed a threat, real or imagined, to white Southern supremacy. The violence would not end for years to come.

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER III

NO RESPITE

During 1868 and 1869 violent crimes numbered in the thousands. Throughout the South Klansmen murdered twenty thousand freedpeople--including women and children--from 1868 through 1871. Blacks, Unionists, and representatives of the law who tried to aid those suffering persecution endured over ten thousand lesser crimes. In Texas alone, friends, relatives, and other witnesses reported 384 killings from January to October 1869. J. J. Reynolds singled out the Ku Klux Klan as the primary instigator of the criminal violence in the particularly troubled counties of northeast Texas from 1868 through 1869. Despite the odds, law enforcement officials increased their efforts to decrease crime.[1]

One observer in the South declared the control of crime to be impossible. According to that source, the judicial system did as much Ku-Kluxing as did the hooded, torch-carrying men on the town streets and country roads throughout the South. Many local and state officials remained reluctant to prosecute. Reynolds was determined to stop the violence in Texas. The military continued to use its commission to rid Texas of crime. Between October of 1868 and September of 1869, the military commission reviewed fifty-nine cases. The felony under examination in each case was either murder or aggravated assault.

Acquittals outnumbered convictions by a ratio of almost two to one.[2] Despite the optimistic and enthusiastic attitudes of military leaders and modern historians--Reynolds and Sefton respectively--the picture was still bleak.

Texas reported 400 murders in the first ten months of 1868. Yet the military commissions achieved only twenty-one convictions for both murder and aggravated assault during a twelve-month period. It was clear that the removal of crime, or at least its decrease to an acceptable level, would be a long drawn out process.

As a start toward dismantling the structure of strife, General E. R. S. Canby divided Texas into twenty-eight districts. Each post was to have an individual commander and "sufficient military force." Civil and military officials were to interact. Civil law was to serve as the chief deterrent to crime. Military tribunals would take over when local authorities failed to act. The majority of posts, however, remained in the frontier region despite Canby's presumed commitment to the reduction of crime.[3]

Canby's directive, as others before it, had its problems. Before the Congressional Committee on Reconstruction, General J. J. Reynolds declared that in Texas "civil law is a dead letter." Reynolds called the Ku Klux Klan an "armed political organization." Furthermore, the group was a recognized division of the Democratic bureaucracy, sanctioned and approved by conservative leaders. According to Reynolds, crime, violence, and Klan outrages remained prevalent. Conditions in the Texas interior continued out of control.[4] Evidence from Texas seemed to support the position expressed by Reynolds.

Klansmen and white supporters of the terroristic group continued

their attacks on blacks and black institutions such as schools and churches. Near Troupe, Texas, located six miles from Jamestown in Smith County, the Klan attacked the congregation at a black church. Freedmen and their families were at Hopewell Church to listen to the sermon of the Reverend Mr. Lively, a Methodist preacher. As they left the church, the blacks found themselves confronting "a group of chivalry" which began firing into the crowd. One black died from wounds sustained in the episode. The intruders singled out other freedmen and robbed them of their clothes.[5]

Black witnesses named James Gilliam, who lived near Jamestown, as one of the assailants. Gilliam went after the three blacks who gave testimony against him. On finding one of the freedmen working in a field, Gilliam shot the freedman in the back with a shotgun. After running out of ammunition, the Klansmen shot the black man in the head from close range with a derringer.[6]

Cullen Baker and his gang continued their terrorization of northeast Texas throughout 1869. Determined to capture the bandits, authorities sent out a scouting party to find Baker and his cohorts. The scouting party consisted of two officers and six enlisted men under the command of Major Wirt Davies. The party had limited initial success, apprehending one member of the gang. Baker, however, remained at large, at least temporarily. The posse continued its search for one month in Bowie and surrounding counties. On December 23, 1868, the posse received reinforcements when ten more enlisted men and their commander joined Davies and his search party. On approximately January 1, 1869, a coalition of citizens joined the military personnel in the attempt to apprehend Baker. Heading the civilian group was John

Chamblee. To better cover the ground, the two groups split. Chamblee and his detail showed up on January 7, 1869, with the bodies of Cullen Baker and the remainder of his gang. John Chamblee and one Thomas Orr received the reward that had been put up for Baker's apprehension or death.[7]

Much the same situation confronted blacks in Texas in 1869 as had prevailed in 1868. Freedmen repeatedly fell victim to robberies. Whites claimed that the reason for the frequency of robbery against blacks was that the blacks provided easy targets. Also, rebels seemed to tire of murdering Unionists. It was more fun to run the undesirables out of town. In doing so, the ex-Confederates could not only incorporate the elements of fear and intimidation into their behavior. They could also publicly humiliate the loyalists as they chased them away. In effect, the only time that a black or a Unionist had even an approximation of safety was when a garrison of troops stood near at hand. At least that was the contention of a district attorney in the northern part of the state.[8]

Throughout the middle of 1869, the Klan continued its attacks on black schools and churches. The situation had not changed from that of 1868. In Kaufman County the Ku Klux Klan ran off the freed people then proceeded to burn the school to the ground. In Panola County, near Louisiana, local Klaverns forced blacks to flee. The reason for that action was reportedly that "the crops is (sic) made." Area civil authorities refused to do their duty.[9]

The outrages knew no geographical boundaries. In the Gulf coast county of Brazoria, freed people had no civil, religious, or social rights. They lacked, like other blacks, the protection of the law. On

September 7, 1869, Chuck Deist, Harry Mason, Harry Perkins, and "friends" went to a black church near Columbia, Texas. Columbia was a town located approximately twenty-five miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico, close to the Brazos River. The group's intention was merely to break up the meeting of the black congregation. But trouble erupted. Harry Mason told the Reverend Mr. Hardwell to cease the service. The meeting was closed. The congregation was to disband. As he spoke, Mason simultaneously drew his gun. The preacher grabbed for the weapon, and a struggle ensued. The gun discharged, striking no one. However, a freedman named Perry, standing nearby, raised his cane in defense of the Reverend Hardwell. After Klansmen told Perry to "Go to H__l," they proceeded to send him there. They shot Perry to death, his body riddled with holes. Blacks later went to the sheriff of Brazoria for aid. The sheriff responded that he had no intention of pursuing the bandits. The group which attacked the church numbered between sixty and seventy men.[10]

In 1869 Texas citizens--whites and black alike--began to redirect their grievances. Local officials would not help when problems arose. The military, although sympathetic and definitely trying to do something to deter crime, remained ineffective. Despite the reallocation of troops by army headquarters, the majority of military personnel remained on the frontier. Those in command viewed the Comanche and Kiowa as a greater problem than Klansmen killing whites and blacks in the interior. In desperation the beleaguered citizens turned to Washington, D.C.

In a letter to the secretary of the treasury, Texan George W. Hevey asked for government aid. Hevey requested that the President and his cabinet take a grave look at the situation in the Lone Star State. Law

and order there was non-existent because of

> the combined forces of so-called Conservatives, Ex-rebels, Ku Klux, Democrats, Knights of the White Camelia, and all other elements of opposition to the principles of republicanism...[11]

But help from the President by means of legislative measure would not occur until late in the spring of 1870 and throughout 1871.

On the state level, legislators were trying to resolve the problems of unrest. But those problems in Texas were numerous. The struggle was slow, and the battle was up hill.

Qualified voters had elected delegates to the state's constitutional convention under Congressional Reconstruction in February of 1868. That convention adjourned on August 31, 1868, because it had run out of funds. Lawmakers dispersed without solving the key issues. While in session politicians divided among themselves in attempts to split Texas into separate states. The lawmakers debated endlessly the issue of the ab initio (null and void) status of the secession ordinance. And a great deal of time vanished forever in the pointless chartering of railroads. Occasionally, the legislature paused to hear grievances about the lawlessness on the rampage through the Lone Star State.[12]

Essential matters failed to attract legislative attention. The primary concerns--matters such as civil rights for blacks, dependable law and order, and a state constitution which was a prerequisite for the readmission of the state to the Union--these difficult issues which most Texans wanted resolved remained, rather, backburner matters for the Texas constitutional convention.

With political chaos in the legislative body, there could be nothing else but social unrest outside of the capitol halls. Because

legislators spent three months arguing about minor details, they failed to have any positive effect on the violence outside their chambers. Had pro-black representatives forced the body to deal with the issue, in all probability by nothing more than a simple show of unity they could have had significant impact. They would have presented a unified front, one of the few solid blocs in the convention, and forced the majority to focus its diffused attention on the problems confronting the black minority.[13]

That concentration of forces failed to materialize. The convention did, however, manage to draw itself together for at least a brief moment. Appropriation of funds by a special tax allowed the deliberations of that body to continue. Delegates reconvened the first Monday in December of 1868 with sufficient funding to survive through the end of February. Bickering over the same small matters resumed. Finally, on January 30, 1869, the legislators got down to the business at hand and drafted a state constitution. On February 8, 1869, forty-five of the ninety representatives signed the document.[14]

The state constitution provided for a governor with a four year term of office. Appointments for attorney general, court judges, and secretary of the state would be made by the state's highest elected official. The constitution abolished county courts. It provided funding for a public school system by means of the sale of public land, a poll tax, and 25 percent of state tax proceeds. Public education would be provided for all children six to eighteen years of age, regardless of race and color.[15]

The efforts of A. J. Hamilton and his colleagues resulted in a black voting rights law without restrictions. According to that law, "a

person's political status should not be affected by race, color, or former condition." Although the state constitution granted black suffrage, enforcing the provision would prove to be another matter entirely.[16]

In November of 1869, Texas held elections. The people voted in favor of adoption of the constitution. The election also gave the gubernatorial seat to E. J. Davis, a Radical Republican. Republicans also held the majority in both houses of the legislature.

On January 8, 1870, Gerald J.J. Reynolds swore in the duly elected officials on a provisional basis. Reynolds convened the legislature of February 8 of the same year. The state legislature body promptly ratified the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution of the United States, due process and the right to vote, respectively. Morgan Hamilton and J. W. Flanagan received the Texas Senatorial positions. On March 30, 1870, President Grant accepted Texas as in compliance with the requirements for readmission. No longer were the governor, senators, and representatives provisional. All authority in the state once again fell to civil officials' jurisdiction as Reynolds formally transferred the responsibility on April 16, 1870.[17]

For the first time in years, the circumstances for the Lone Star State looked favorable. At least the situation looked favorable for white Texans. Wrote the Union Houston:

> Reconstruction has come to an end at last. There is no Andy Johnson 'policy,' no Trockmorton 'Confederate record,' no Jack Hamilton 'rebel coalition' in the present programme. Let the people of Texas rejoice. 'Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.[18]

But for the freedpeople intimidation, terror, and violence remained widespread. It did not simply magically vanish in 1869 although, for

Texas, the zenith year of Klan terror was 1868. According to James Sefton in The United States Army and Reconstruction, the greatest period of Ku Klux Klan membership throughout the South was in 1870 and 1871. Further, Robert W. Shook contended in his article "The Federal Military in Texas, 1865-1870" that 1870 to 1874 was a period of lawlessness and violence unsurpassed by an time before it.[19]

Despite the decrease in the number of press reports of Klan attacks, the level of violence remained relatively the same. Conservative or Democratic papers such as Flake's Daily Bulletin reversed their earlier claims about the existence of the Ku Klux Klan. Flake's had previously reported the heroism of the Knights of the White Camelia. However, by April of 1870 the newspaper was denying even the existence of the secret organization. Flake's claimed that the "White Camelia died laughing after Serious Democrats killed it with a joke."[20] Perhaps the premature reports of the Klan's demise came about because the Klan went under ground. However, the greater probability was that, with tacit support from whites, the Klan was merely a cover for violence. That violence would have existed with or without the appearance of a recognized organization such as the Ku Klux Klan and would have continued whether or not its front organization remained in existence. The reason for the seeming disappearance of the hooded organization was relatively insignificant. Of more import was the reality that Klan-like violence continued with the support and sanction of the white Southern community.

The United States Congress in 1870 finally started to develop serious measures to deal with the Klan throughout the afflicted states. General Alfred House Terry spoke to Congress. Stated Terry:

> The entire United States Army would be insufficient to give protection throughout the South to everyone in danger from the Klan.[21]

Terry's solution to the problem was to take one state which was particularly troubled by the Klan and concentrate all efforts in that area. By doing so, authorities could "make an example" of Klansmen in that locale. Concentration of attention had a second benefit, aside from bringing some degree of control to the affected state, in that it would serve as a warning to Klaverns in other states that their actions would be tolerated no longer. A third virtue of the plan, according to Terry, was that it would encourage the victims. Oppressed targets of Klan and Klan-like terror could start to rid themselves of their fear. By showing the cowed populace that the Klan was not invincible, the eradication-by-concentration program would free the people to testify against the Klan without undue concern for the consequences.[22]

In May Congress passed the first legislative act intended to terminate Klan violence. According to that law, any person or persons using intimidation or any other method to interfere with or otherwise inhibit any individual from exercising his right to vote would be heavily penalized. Furthermore, it was illegal for a group of two or more to join efforts in order to intimidate or conspire. It was a felony to ride on private property or public roads in disguise. The determination of guilt and the punishment would be under the jurisdiction of federal rather than state courts. The army was to assist every federal marshal or commissioner, on request, to enforce the law. The President had available to him military force for use as he deemed necessary.[23]

The private sector decided to reorganize itself. Individuals

reestablished Loyal Leagues throughout Texas in 1870-1871. These peaceful organizations were identical to the earlier clubs which first appeared in Texas in 1867. The league had goals including the providing of a common front against violent foes and the giving of better service to the freedpeople. The Loyal League sought to educate blacks with respect to basic human rights and civil liberties. Area Conservative Clubs viewed the proceedings with consternation. In one instance, H. C. Hunt formed a Loyal League in Smith County. Hunt put all of his energies into the success of the League. Tyler, Texas, had been a center of turmoil under the auspices of Barrett and the Freedmen's Bureau. Although both violence and the visibility of the Ku Klux Klan had diminished in the intervening months, Hunt lived in constant fear of a Klan revival. Hunt had no intention of giving the Ku Klux Klan back the advantages it had enjoyed in its heyday during 1867 and 1868. Hunt and his colleague, Silas D. Wood, worked positively, keeping negative factors at a minimum.[24]

Elsewhere the leagues flourished. W. M. Waddell established two Loyal Leagues. The first was at Palestine in Anderson County. The second was at Athens in Henderson County. Waddell claimed that the loyal people of those counties were not safe. Waddell further contended that Cherokee County, adjacent to Anderson County on the eastern border, was "in the hands of the Klux." Likewise, Lamar and Marion counties also formed Loyal Leagues. Loyalists of Lamar County based their headquarters at Paris, Texas. Their compatriots in Marion County set up operations at Jefferson.[25]

State representative C. D. Morris observed activities in Jefferson. He reported that the Loyal League had great strength in that town. A

high percentage of blacks participated. However, more than 200 freedmen worked on land in the southern part of the county. Those people remained totally isolated from politics and state and local events. Morris organized those blacks and got them to attend league meetings regularly.[26]

In 1871 the federal government passed legislation to stop the Ku Klux Klan and Klan-like violence. In February of 1871, Congress enacted a law providing for more direct federal supervision of Congressional elections. Further, Congress passed three new laws in April of the same year. According to the first, it was illegal to discourage an individual from the holding of public office, testifying in court, or serving on a jury, if the means of discouragement was intimidation. Secondly, the president had the power to send in unlimited numbers of military personnel to any troubled area. This provision applied to instances when turmoil and violence had become so severe as to obstruct federal laws and justice, and civil authorities could neither control nor stop the trouble at hand. Thirdly, the law provided that the president could suspend the right of habeas corpus in areas of such upheaval.[27]

Many whites in 1871 paid little attention to the legislation which the nation's legislative body enacted. After all, it was a long way from the national capital to the small, rural towns of Texas. The whites in those towns did, however, pay attention to the goings-on of the local Loyal Leagues, meetings, and encouragement to "uppity" blacks. In Gonzales County, for instance, John Wesley Hardin, later to achieve fame if not distinction in a similar line of work, declared open warfare on the freedmen, "Yankee mob rule and misrule in general." He shot and

killed two black state militiamen. Then he got serious, going on a rampage against those whom he had placed on his list of targets.[28]

Bastrop County also experienced a renewed wave of terror. The Ku Klux Klan surged through the county, committing outrage after atrocity. They burned black schoolhouses, whipped teachers, and beat those who attended the schools. They found the parents of the students, then beat those parents for daring to send their children to school.

In the resurgence of Klan violence, even Germans were not safe. The Klan of Bastrop County sought out the European immigrants and their descendants. Klansmen subjected the Germans to the same outrages--intimidation, terror, and murder--as their black counterparts endured.

Whites in the county, along with area officials, supported the local Klavern. The Bastrop grand jury refused even to indict anyone. Conveniently, there proved to be a lack of evidence. Local Republicans, including Governor E. J. Davis, objected to the findings of the grand jury, but to no avail.[29]

Klansmen burned black schools in Calvert, Texas, in Robertson County. In Hill County at the town of Towash on October 21, 1871, yet another black school burned to the ground. Hill County had difficulty in acquiring qualified teachers and retaining them. White opposition was quite strong. Threats were continual, and once the schoolhouse had burned no one would rent space for the resumption of classes.[30]

Providing a backdrop to the resurgent Klan in Texas, the state's Republican party became increasingly preoccupied with its own survival, probably to the detriment of its efforts to squelch the violence. From 1866 until 1870 Republicans had little to worry about. In the former year the rapidly conservative States rights Democrats had lost control

of their party to "moderates," the faction more inclined to forget the past and work with the new majority party. However, a postwar influx of unrepentant rebels from elsewhere in the South swelled the ranks of the Democrats. Most of the newcomers proved to be attuned to the platform of the states' right wing, and the diehards regained control of the Democratic party. Worse for the Republican hopes was the fact that the new immigrants moved into areas which had previously been black Republican strongholds, becoming in some instances the majority of the county's population. Republicans tried to whiten their liberal party, even making some effort to reestablish the link with the moderate Democrats. By trying to attract white support, the party managed primarily to alienate blacks and bosses who saw their patronage threatened and ambitions thwarted. Furthermore, the resurgent Democrats ran an effective campaign in 1871, charging corruption, an excessive tax burden (Davis had had to spend large amounts, at least in comparison to pre-war governmental expenditures, for his system of public schools and his state militia and police force), and abuse of power. More important, the Democrats proved proficient at intimidating potential voters at the polling places. The Democratic onslaught, coupled with Republican divisiveness and disharmony, produced an astounding reversal. The Democrats swept all four of the state's Congressional races and so intimidated the Republican-controlled state legislature that the lawmaking body switched to a conservative program, repudiating the liberal governor. Although the Republicans still controlled the state government, the tide had shifted. The Democrats were poised to rise again on a platform of states' rights and limited government.[31] When the people spoke against the state policing power and services to

blacks, they sent a clear message to their neighbors in the Klan.

As previously stated, historians such as E. Merton Coulter and Charles W. Ramsdell denied the existence of Klan activity in Texas. Rupert Norval Richardson at least recognized the existence of the Klan in the Lone Star State. But he viewed it as basically a non-violent organization. In Richardson's view, the Texas Klan was totally separate from the Klan found in the regions of the Old South. The goal of the Lone Star Klan was to oppose the Loyal Union League. The Klan's mode of operation, according to Richardson, consisted of threats and intimidation. His implication seemed to be that those "threats and intimidation" were relatively harmless. However, he did acknowledge that, "Like all such organizations the Klan got beyond the control of responsible leaders at times and there was bloodshed."[32]

Nevertheless, despite his apology for Klan irresponsibility, Richardson did not recognize the existence of the Klan in Texas after 1867, mid-1868 at the latest. Allen W. Trelease more correctly evaluated the Ku Klux Klan's presence in Texas. He situated the main Klavern, the Knights of the Rising Sun, in its Jefferson (Marion County) headquarters. However, he erred in arguing that the Klan, despite sporadic outbursts in various areas of the Lone Star State, "virtually disappeared at the end of 1868."[33] No one recognized Klan activity, Klan enrollment, or Klan-like violence in Texas in the year 1869 or later. Evidence suggests otherwise.

On January 29, 1872, James P. Newcombe wrote a letter. Newcombe served as Secretary of State for the Great State of Texas. The addressee was the Honorable Job E. Stevenson, Washington, D.C. The secretary of state declared that the Ku Klux Klan was still active in

Texas. Newcombe defined the Klan as a "regular organized Ku-Klux organization." He claimed to know that membership was 15,000 to 20,000 men. He also reported that state legislatures had enacted laws providing for more forceful enforcement. Crime was decreasing rapidly. More cases appeared daily on court dockets. More important, those cases resulted in more convictions. In Newcombe's opinion, provided that civil and federal sovereigns "encouraged and protected" the loyalty of Texas, "patriotism and duty" would prevail.[34]

Lawmakers continued to claim that crime was decreasing. Journalist and later historian alike denied the existence of the Klan. Some whites put on airs of loyalty and renewed patriotism for the Republican cause. Yet freedman participation declined. Blacks became more introverted. The freedpeople were too fearful of the Ku Klux Klan. Whites continued to keep blacks submissive by means of threats and intimidation. In the elections of 1873, the Democratic party would be victorious.[35]

In the aftermath of the Democratic victories of 1871, Davis retreated. He sacrificed the state police and relinquished his power over the state militia. However, Davis did not do so before declaring martial law in Madison, Grimes, Hill, Walker, Freestone and Limestone counties after area residents and law enforcement agents would not or could not stop the violence and bring those responsible to trial.[36] The people of Texas, already alienated by Davis's giveaway programs and desperate search for money to finance them, refused to return to the Republican column. And the trends continued: a black Republican party faced a white Democratic party with missionary zeal. Even the Germans had departed from the Republican ranks. And the national party, already split, had decided to bleach itself. A black party abandoned by its

national leadership faced certain doom at the polls. And electoral fraud and violence merely iced the cake at the Democratic victory party. The aftermath of the elections of 1873 and 1874 came as little surprise. Texas resumed its place in the Democratic column, and those who had placed the Republican usurpers into the seats of power had best beware. The final blow for the Republicans came when federal intervention came not on the behalf of the beleaguered governor but in support of those who unseated him.[37]

With the Democrats back in control and with a national government showing diminishing interest in the Reconstruction crusade for black equality, the mission of the Klan had prevailed. Accordingly, tranquillity should have returned to the Lone Star State. However, despite those who would argue that the Klan sought only to throw out the carpetbaggers and scalawags or those who would contend that the Ku Klux Klan had ceased to operate years earlier, even in the early years of Democratic Texas the pattern of violence, intimidation, and terror persisted.

ENDNOTES

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[2]A minister in Alabama as quoted in Sefton, Army and Reconstruction, p. 221; also, Sefton, p. 193.

[3]New York Times, February 7, 1869.

[4]Testimony of J.J. Reynolds before the Reconstruction Committee, Washington, D.C., February 24, 1869, as reprinted by the New York Times, February 28, 1869.

[5]Tyler Index, March 20, 1869, clipping in "Report of Scouts, Indian Depredations and Crimes" 1867-1870, Record Group 393, National Archives.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Lt Col [ ] to AAAG, Austin, December 24, 1868, Lt Col [ ] to Lt L.V. Caziarc, AAAG 5th Military District, January 14, 1869, Jefferson Post Records, Letters Sent, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[8]42nd Cong, 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 268, p. 49; Pease Letterbooks, March 1868-February 1869, Governor's Correspondence, Archives, Texas State Library, Austin, TX.

[9]Louis W. Stevenson to AAAG C. S. Roberts, Letters Sent, Office of Asst Supt of Schools, Jefferson, April 26, 1869, Jefferson Letters Sent, vol 118; Gen Bissell to Capt Morse, Austin, August 4, 1869, Jefferson Post Records, Letters Sent, 1868-1871, RG 393, NA.

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[11]Letter, George W. Hovey to the Honorable George S. Boutwell, Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D.C., August 4, 1869, reprinted in New York Times, August 20, 1869.

[12]Rupert N. Richardson, Texas: The Lone Star State (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1943), p. 276. For further information concerning the division of Texas, see Ernest Wallace, The Howling of the Coyotes: Reconstruction Efforts to Divide Texas (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1979).

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[14]Ibid., pp. 276-277.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid., p. 278.

[17]Ibid., pp. 278-279.

[18]Union Houston, January 18, 1870, as quoted in Richardson, Texas, p. 279.

[19]Sefton, Army and Reconstruction, p. 220; Robert W. Shook, "The Federal Military in Texas, 1865-1870, "Texas Military History, VI (Spring, 1967), p. 44.

[20]Flake's Daily Bulletin (Galveston, TX), April 19, 1870.

[21]Terry as quoted in Sefton, Army and Reconstruction, p. 222.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid.

[24]H.C. Hunt, Tyler, to J.P. Newcombe, May 2, 1871, Hunt, et al, to Newcombe, May 5, 1871, Newcombe Papers, Archives, Texas State Library, Austin, TX; W. M. Waddell, Palestine, to Newcombe, July 9, 1870, Jas W. Stephenson, Paris, to Newcombe, September 7, 1870, C.D. Morris, Jefferson, to Newcombe, October 30, 1870, Newcombe Papers.

[25]C.D. Morris to Newcombe, October 30, 1870, Newcombe Papers.

[26]Ibid.

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Sterling, Troubles They Seen, p. 374; Coulter, South During Reconstruction, pp. 170-171.

[28]W.C. Nunn, Texas Under the Carpetbaggers (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962), pp. 64-65.

[29]J.C. Degress, supt of Public Instruction in TX to John Eaton, Jr, Commissioner of Ed., Washington, D.C., October 28, 1871, in Eby, Frederick, comp., Education in Texas: Source Materials (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1918), pp. 543-546; Daily State Journal, July 29, August 6, 1871, as cited by Nunn, Carpetbaggers, pp. 249-250.

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[31]Carl H. Moneyhon, Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980), pp. 152-167.

[32]Richardson, Texas, pp. 275-276.

[33]Ibid.; Trelease, White Terror, pp. 147, 185.

[34]James P. Newcombe, Austin, to the hon. Job E. Stevenson, Washington D.C., reprinted in Serial 1541, Affairs in Florida and Misc., pp. 354-356.

[35]Romey Fennell, "The Negro in Texas Politics, 1865-1874," (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, North Texas State University, 1963), p. 108.

[36]James M. Smallwood, Time of Hope, Time of Despair: Black Texans During Reconstruction (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1981), p. 150.

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CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Historian Francis B. Simkins once declared that Southern Democrats succeeded in the 1874 Texas elections due to their violent organizations. Fraud was rife. And rioting plagued many areas. But the violence in that election differed not at all from what had gone before. And it strongly resembled the disturbances which would continue even after the Democrats had gained their victory.

As late as 1876 Ku Klux Klan raids and Klan-like terror occurred in Grayson, Limestone, Van Zandt, and Wharton counties. For freedpeople in those counties, the nightmare continued. Circumstances remained the same.

Black citizens of Sherman, Texas, circulated a petition. Twenty-eight Afro-Americans signed. W.H. Irving mailed the petition with its signatures to President Grant. Irving added in a letter that the freedpeople of Sherman were both peaceful and industrious. Whites directed violence against blacks in the town of Sherman and throughout Grayson County. Both the petition and Irving attested to the state of affairs. Whites, because of prejudice, denied blacks the freedom to exercise their human and civil rights. Terrorists killed freedpeople often on the roads. No black was safe. A black minister, Professor Guilard, died by violent means. Whites murdered the man of the cloth

simply because he was black.

In Van Zandt County, S.J. Richardson was the target of ostracism and intimidation. Richardson owned the Grand Saline in Van Zandt. According to the businessman, a "combination" existed in the county which terrorized the blacks and drove them out of the region. The organization kept area proprietors from hiring freedpeople. The Klan accused Richardson of hurting the economy because of his practice of hiring blacks. Local authorities refused to do anything. The mob murdered blacks. Likewise, loyal men were not safe. The Ku Klux Klan was always disguised. In a group slaying, Klan members forced blacks to open their mouths. The disguised killers then put pistols into the blacks' mouths and fired the guns. Ex-governor Davis pleaded for federal intervention.

Klan-like raids ended in tragedy for the people of Limestone County. The terror which re-emerged in May of 1875 lasted throughout the summer. Close to fifty blacks--including innocent women and children--met with violent deaths at the hands of area whites.

Wharton County was in turmoil throughout 1876. White hatred for radicals, blacks, and anyone else who befriended the freedpeople reached an all time high. G.W. Schobey of Wharton County drew on himself the wrath of his neighbors. Townspeople hated Schobey for four reasons. First, he was a personal friend of ex-governor E.J. Davis. Second, he was a leading Republican in the area. Third, he had an extremely successful and prominent law practice. Fourth, both he and his wife taught voluntarily at the local black school. On January 29, 1876, two men murdered Schobey. An investigation into Schobey's death took place. Andrew J. Evans, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas,

attested that foul play had figured in the death of G.W. Schobey. The investigation further revealed that the motive for the murder was "hatred for radicals." One of the investigating officers was William J. Phillips, U.S. Marshall at Galveston. Phillips tried to capture the unnamed murderers. It was the marshall's professional opinion that arrests of the felons would be impossible without military support. County officials refused to indict the killers due to fear of retaliation. The criminals had the support of the community. Witnesses were afraid to testify. Even the grand jury was afraid to issue indictments. Schobey's killers remained free.

Another traumatic chain of events focused around J.N. Bangham, a Republican. Bangham was the former sheriff of Wharton County. Friends persuaded him to run for public office. In the private sector he owned a store, and Robert Kyte served as his clerk. On election day, January 7, 1876, a mob composed of "the leading Democrats" of Wharton County forced Bangham to leave town. The mob shouted that they didn't want any "d__d radicals" in Wharton. Bangham appealed unsuccessfully to the sheriff. The "law enforcement" officer sided with the mob. He hated radicals too.

Ultimately Bangham left town. Later, he arrived in Austin, where he requested aid from Governor Richard Coke. Coke claimed that he was powerless to act in the situation. Bangham left Austin, settling in upper Wharton County on a farm near Colorado County. There he contented himself with remaining out of politics. He farmed the land with his former clerk, Robert Kyte, and opened a country store.

Serious trouble followed Bangham. On approximately August 1, 1876, "unknown" assailants murdered two black youths as they rode their horses

near James A. Frazier's store. Blacks formed an investigative group. Frazier panicked at the sight of freedmen approaching him. But the group merely questioned Frazier about who had been the last to see the boys alive. After the freedmen left, Frazier ran to his friends. Alarmed and afraid, Frazier spread the rumor that the blacks intended to return with weapons and kill him and that they had surrounded his store. A mob formed with Frazier at its head, and the precondition for a race war was set.

The whites blamed Bangham for helping to organize and arm area blacks. The mob--now Klan-like in its terrorism--shot and killed many blacks. Many of the Afro-Americans received cruel beatings before their deaths. It didn't matter that the freedmen were innocent. None were armed, and they had no intention of killing Frazier. They simply wanted to find out who had murdered the youths so that they could turn the responsible party or parties over to the authorities.

Bangham, who had been in Washington County on the night of August 1, returned to Wharton County some time later. On the night of August 27, 1876, he was shot dead. Approximately fifteen men were involved in the conspiracy to murder Bangham.[9]

By the end of 1876, Kyte too was forced to leave Wharton County. Kyte went to Austin and pleaded for help on behalf of the freedpeople of Wharton. State officials did nothing. Coke again refused to act. The courts also refused to take action. The legislature tabled a bill which called for an investigation.

At least twenty-four blacks died in the violent spree in Wharton County from August through September. During that same period only one white died--J. N. Bangham. In a letter to the state's attorney general,

former governor, E. J. Davis declared that Bangham's death was just the beginning. Whites had formed a conspiracy whose aim was the systematic killing of Republicans and blacks.[10]

By January of 1877, Texas had come full circle. The situation in the state on all levels was back to where it had been at the close of war in 1865. With the Compromise of 1877, Southern Democrats ended once and for all the Radical Republican campaign for liberal legislation which included civil and human rights. Had the powers to be formed a stronger, more positive coalition in the early years of Reconstruction, then perhaps the outcome would have been different. But they failed for three main reasons--prejudice, improper policing power, and missed opportunities.

Northern Republican lawmakers failed to realize how deep the animosities ran. White Texans held their heritage dearly. Those who fought at the Alamo and Goliad had not merely died in battle; they were martyrs to a cause. That martyrdom gave the founders of Texas the right to rule and to rule in the way they so chose. That sovereignty made no allowance for rule by outsiders--Republicans, blacks, Mexicans, or Europeans. That vanguard of the Southern Democrats established a social hierarchy, and it reinstated white supremacy. No federal law could change that, for the people of Texas would not submit.

The indecisiveness of the occupying military forces further aided in the collapse of the reconstructed South. Granted, the troops stationed in the Texas interior were in a no-win situation. White Texans did not want the "Yankees" there. And they made no effort to keep that opinion secret. Military organizations were powerless in the presence of unrest and lawlessness. Nothing could be done without going

through the customary military chain of command before a final decision or punishment could be rendered. That took days, if not weeks or months. Furthermore, there was no quick and reliable line of communication. In seasons of greatest trouble, the Ku Klux Klan or its conspirators controlled the telegraph and postal services. In many cases messages to Army headquarters had to go by special messenger. It was questionable if the dispatch could get through areas where the Klan heavily patrolled the roadsides. Most important was the fact that 70 percent of the troops were assigned duty on the frontier in west Texas, not in the eastern or central regions of the state.

Republicans missed two key opportunities. First was the use of the black militia. That branch of the military was under the jurisdiction of the governor. Since the militia could not have been used on the interior due to white attitudes toward blacks in position of power, an arrangement should have occurred whereby the black militia went to the frontier. Such a policy would have freed regular Army troops, primarily white, from their duties of watching the Indians and allowed them to police the interior, where lawlessness ran rampant. Second, had pro-black forces at the various state conventions formed a more unified front the minority in all probability could have succeeded against what was a clearly fragmented majority. State legislation backed by military strength might have diminished crime and violence. As it happened, nothing was unified except the Klan and unbridled prejudice.

ENDNOTES

[1]Francis Butler Simkins, The South Old and New, A History, 1820-1947 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949). p. 205.

[2]W.H. Irving to Pres. U.S. Grant, n.d., 1876, in 44th Cong, 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), p. 137.

[3]Edmond J. Davis, Austin, to Attorney General of the United States, January 14, 1875, 44th Cong., 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), pp. 133-134.

[4]E.J. Davis, Austin, to Alonzo Taft, attorney general, September 9, 1876, 44th Cong., 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), p. 143.

[5]Mrs. Elizabeth Schobey, Austin, to Pres. U.S. Grant, February 5, 1876, Andrew J. Evans to Edward Pierrepont, March 2, 1876, 44th Cong, 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30, (551755), pp. 134-135.

[6]William J. Phillips to Alphonso Taft, October 12, 1876, 44th Cong., 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), pp. 134-135.

[7]Robert Kyte to Alphonso Taft, December 23, 1876, 44th Cong., 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), pp. 144-146; E.J. Davis to Alphonso Taft, September 9, 1876, 44th Cong., 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), pp. 142-143; J.N. Baughman to Attorney General of the United States, January 13, 1875, 44th Cong., 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), pp. 133-134.

[8]Kyte to Taft, December 23, 1876, 44th Cong., 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), pp. 144-146.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Davis to Taft, September 9, 1876, 44th Cong., 2d sess, House Executive Document No. 30 (551755), pp. 142-143.

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APPENDIX'

Maps

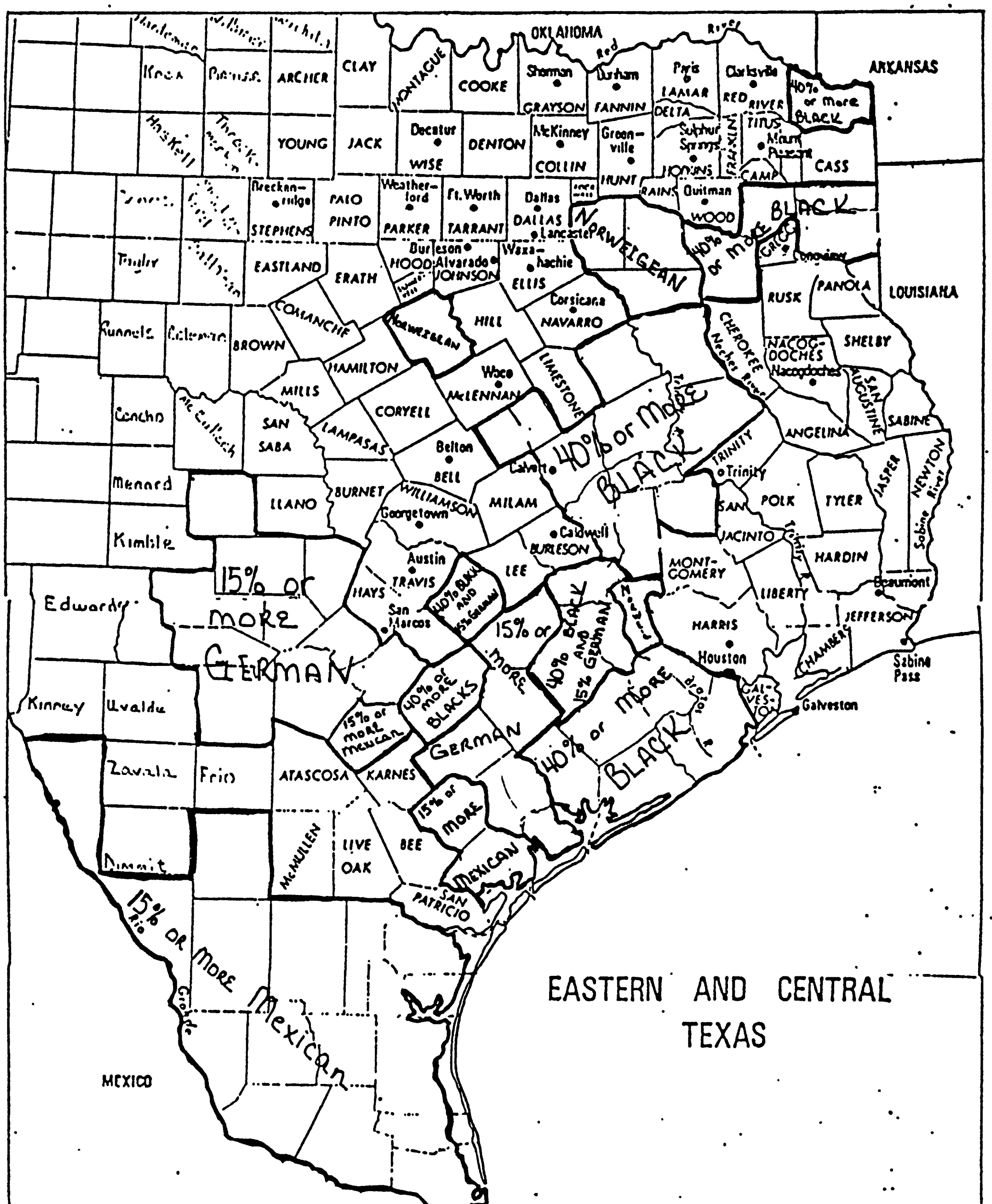

Figure 1. ETHNIC CIVIL WAR POPULATIONS

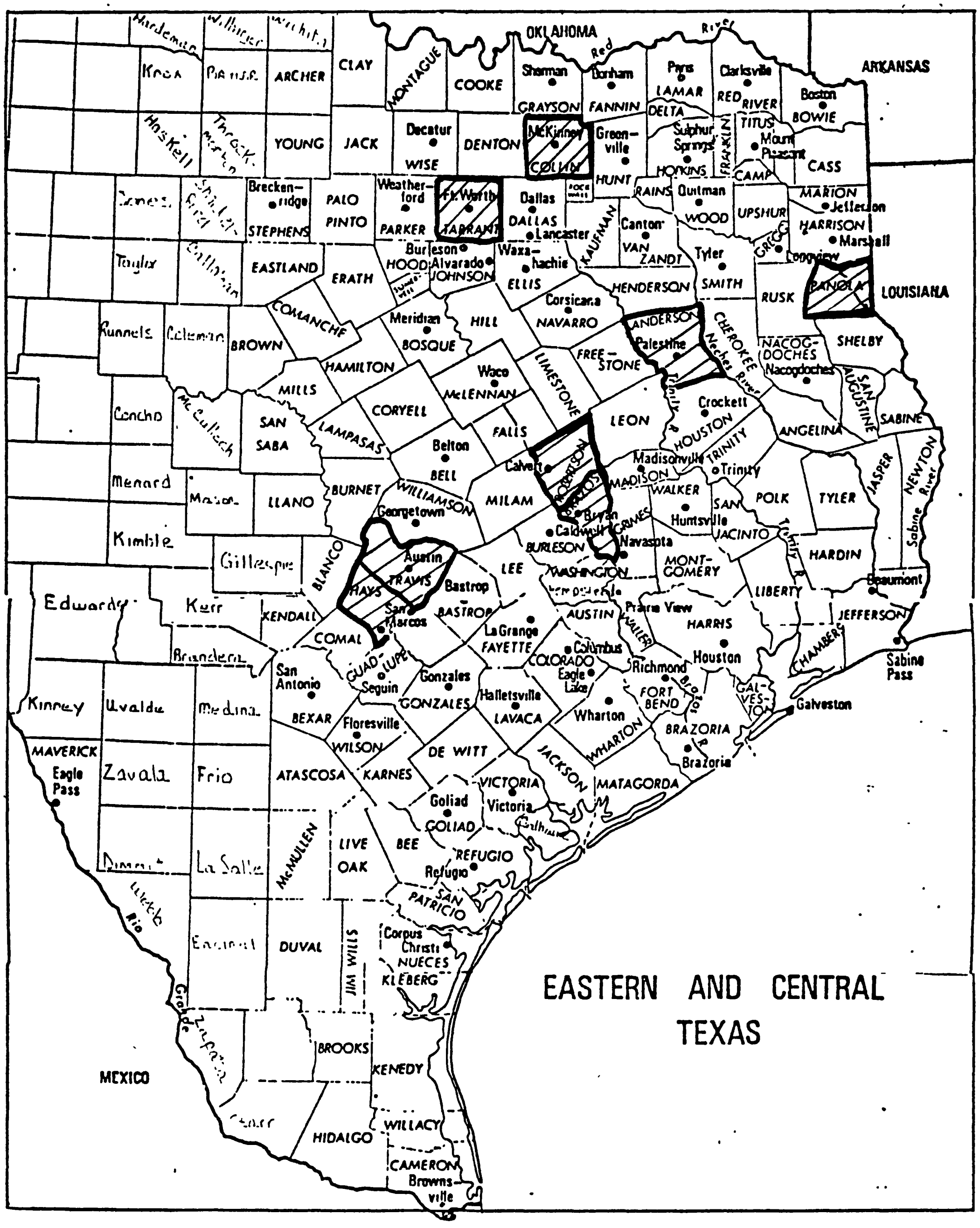

Figure 2. KU KLUX KLAN KLAVERNS FORMED IN 1866

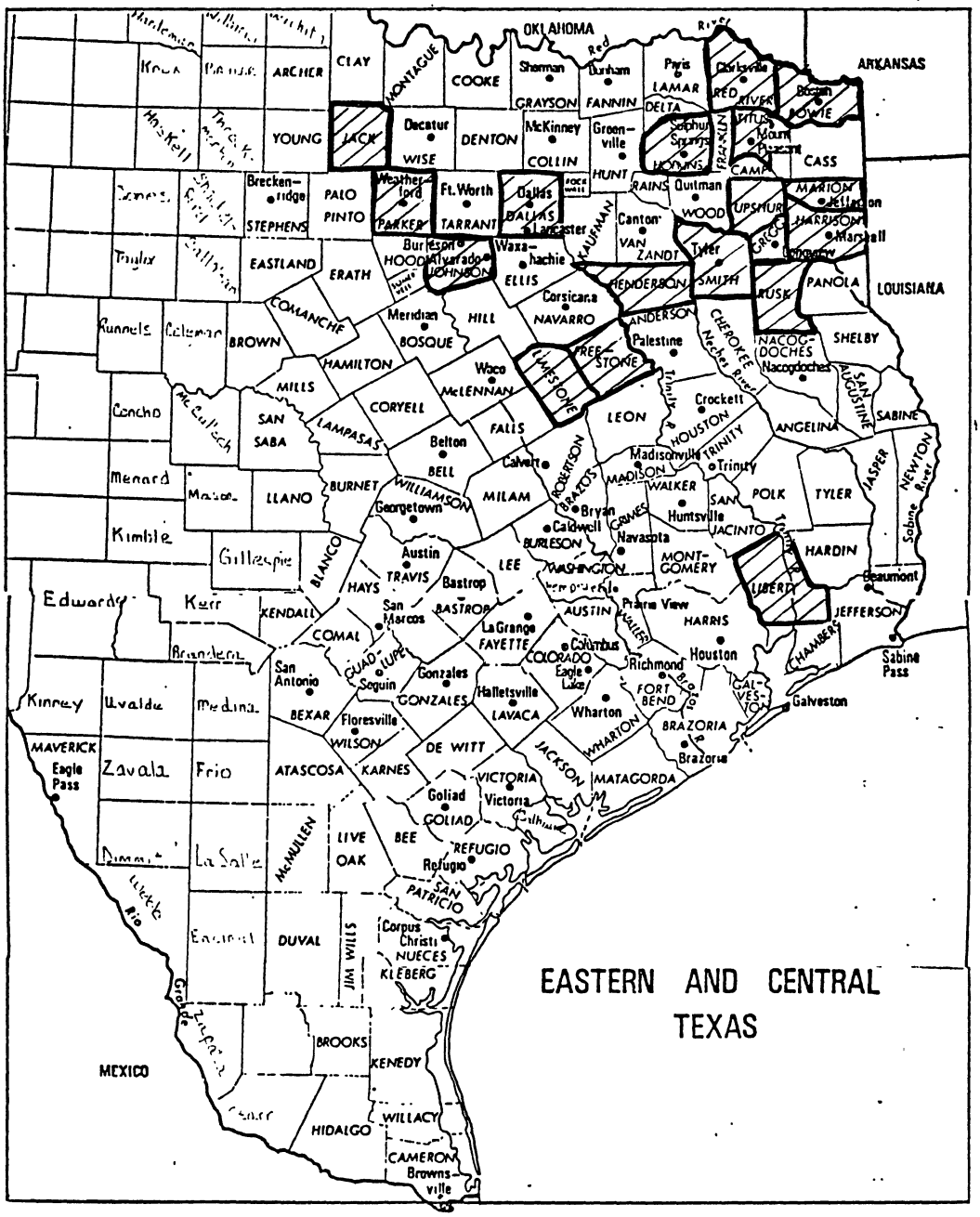

Figure 3. NEW KU KLUX KLAN KLAVERNS FORMED IN 1867

Klaverns in Jack and Parker Counties may have formed as early as 1866.

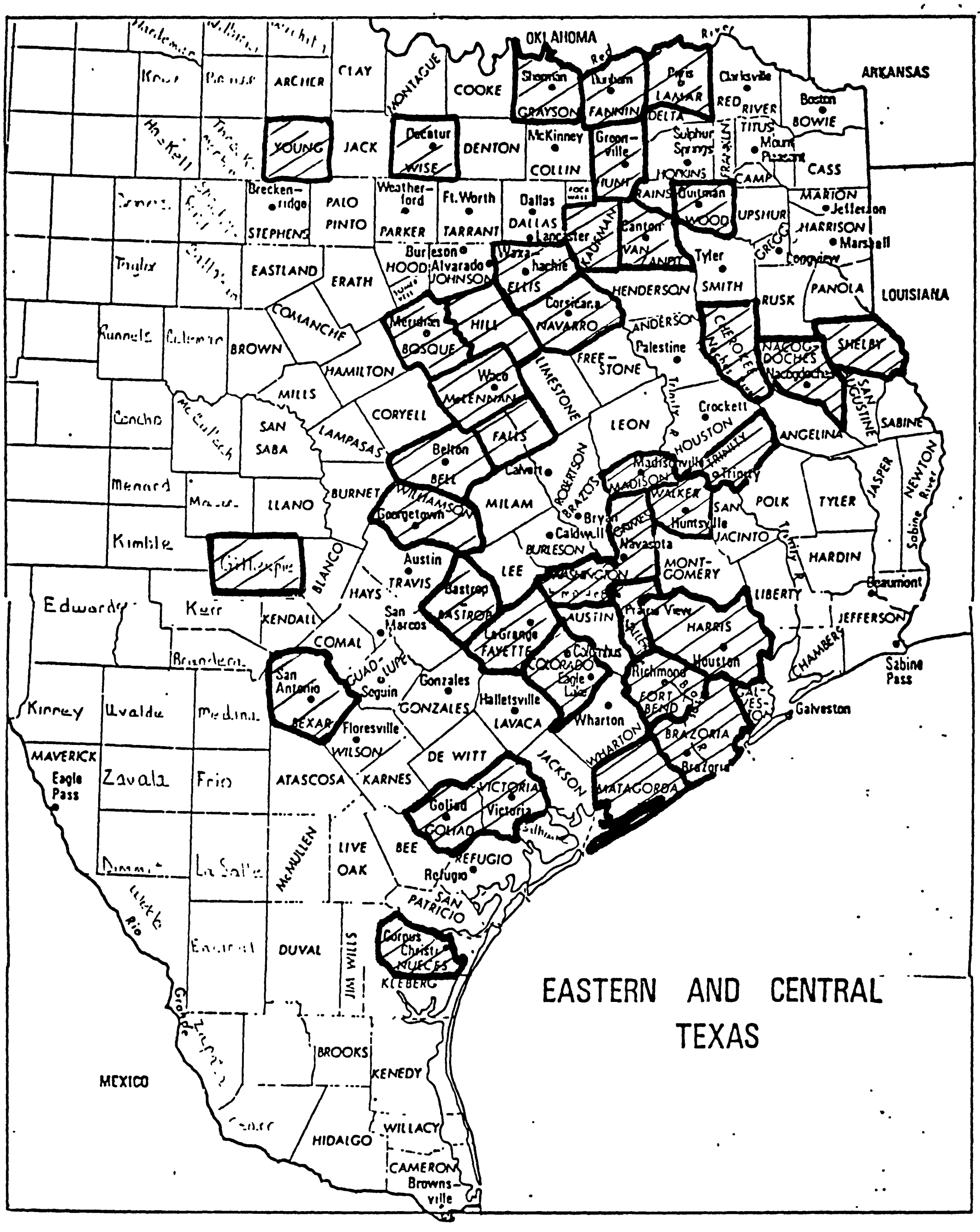

Figure 4. NEW KU KLUX KLAN KLAVERNS FORMED IN 1868

Possibly one Klavern controlled Goliad and Victoria Counties

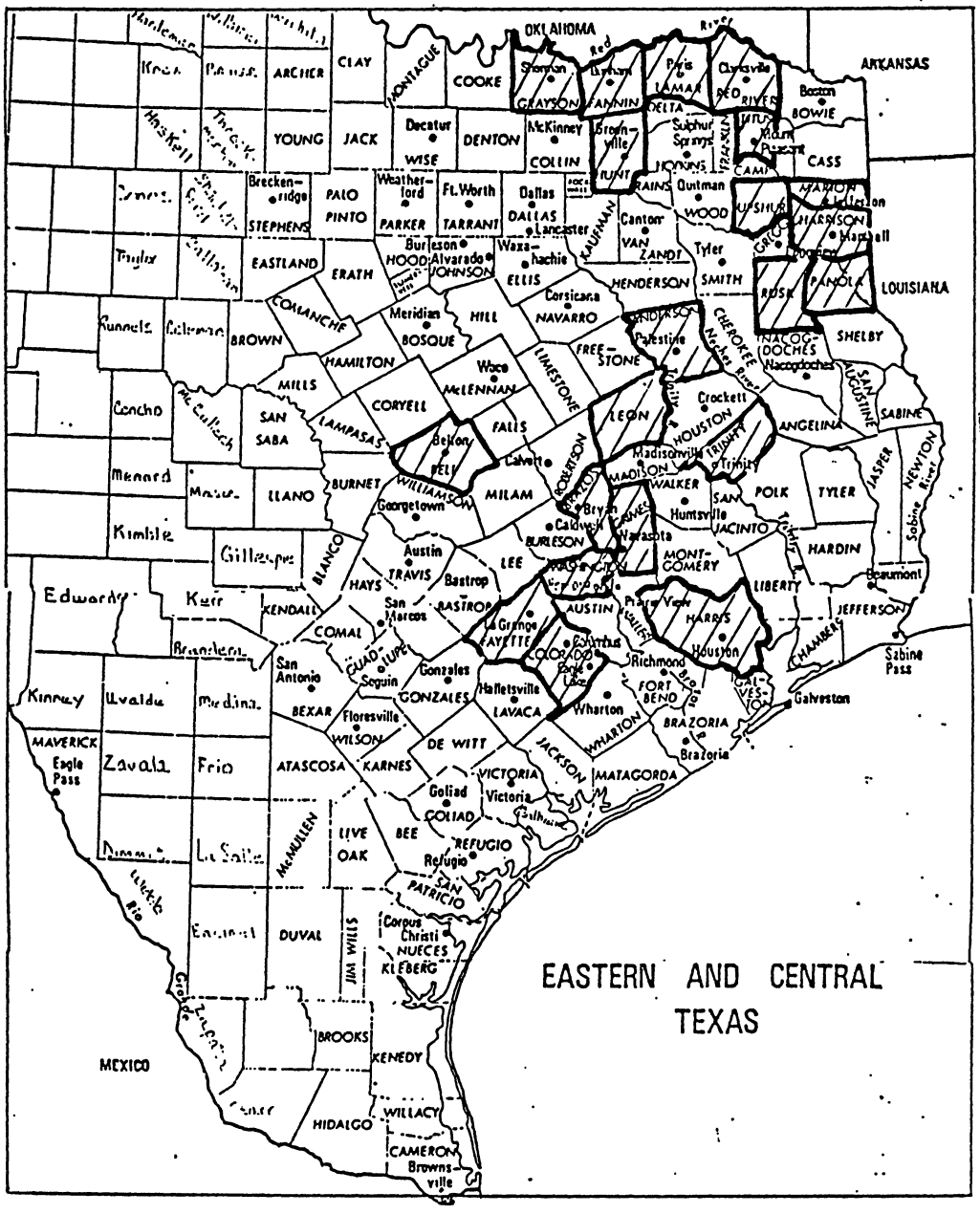

Figure 5. COUNTIES RECOGNIZED BY ALLEN W. TRELEASE

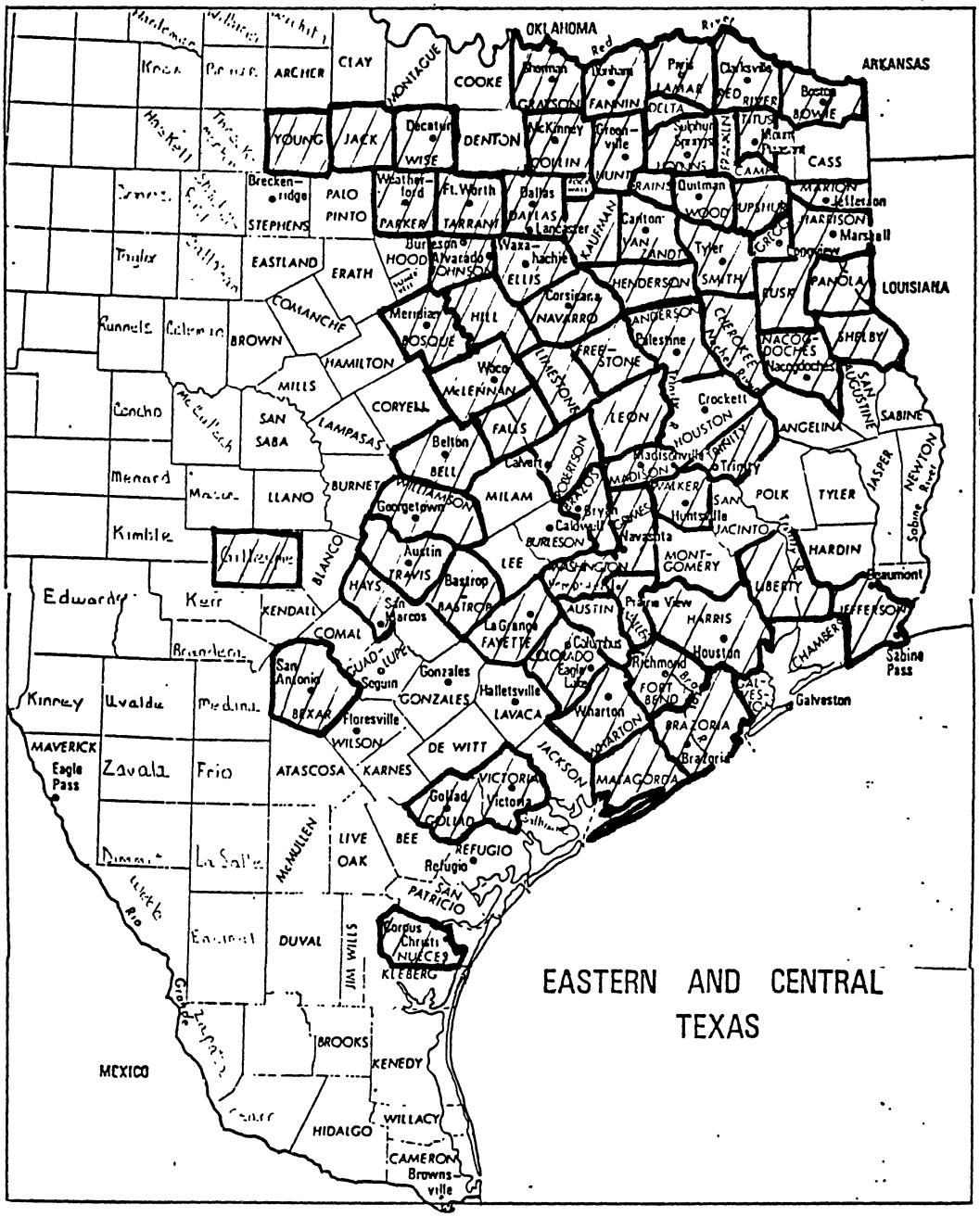

Figure 6. TOTAL COUNTY COMPOSITE OF KU KLUX KLAN ACTIVITY

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