

The Ku Klux Klan

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is a criminal organisation which was founded on the 24th of December in 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee. The founders were former soldiers of the southern states.

The name „Ku Klux Klan“ is connected with the Greek item „kyclos“ which means „circle“ in English. In the opinion of the Klansmen, black people were defeated by the whites. They strongly disliked the process when the blacks were getting more rights, so e.g. the Klansmen hindered some blacks to vote.

The methods of the Klan to reach its aims were really cruel. In some areas the blacks were so afraid, that they hadn't left their houses for some time. The Klan murdered many black people. They came in the night, took their victim to a secluded place and tortured him to death. After killing him they took his dead body and lied him down in front of his house. Then they wrote the three letters „K.K.K.“ on a place, where everyone could see them.

But originally the Klan founders don't want the Klan to be such a cruel and brutal organisation. So in 1869, four years after the Klan was founded, General Nathan B. Forrest disbanded the Klan officially. But the local groups of the Klan still fought against the blacks.

In 1871 the President demanded all illegal and secret organisations to give up and to disband themselves. After that, some Klansmen were arrested. But there were still some Klansmen, and the ideology of the Klan survived.

After the World War I the Klan was „reactivated“ in a way, by the foundation of the new „Brother Organisation“ in Georgia. Every 16 years old white, Protestant, American Man could become a member of the organisation.

That Organisation was nearly the same as the Klan. The methods were still the same, and they still thought, that the blacks must be defeated. Now also Catholics were aims of the Klan's activities.

In 1921 many people became Klansmen. The power of the Klan increased. In 1924 the Klan was on the top of its power. There were about 3 million members. But in the year 1924 there were only a few thousand members again. The Klan wasn't as powerful as in former times, but the KKK was still active. After America joined the World War II the Klan stopped most activities.

In 1944 the Klan was again disbanded, but this time because of taxes due. After the WW II the Klan was reactivated, and started again some activities against the blacks and the Catholics. But the majority of the habitants of the USA were strongly against the Klan and wanted the KKK to be disbanded again. When the leader Samuel Green died, the Klan was divided into many local organisations, which were competed with each other.

Some years later in 1954 there was a decision of the Supreme Court, which said that segregation in schools was illegal. After that decision the Klan reinforced its activities. But though that, the peace movements got more and more important, and the Klan wasn't really powerful anymore.

In the 1970es the Klan was in a way accepted again. There were about 40 thousand members. As the Klan gets more power again there were again many attacks.

But at the end of the 1980es the Klan had again only about 5000 members. Since 1995 the Klan primary attacks black churches.

Although the Klan isn't very powerful today, it still exists. And the main fact about the KKK is, that no other illegal organisation was as influential as the Klan.