

PROTESTANTS DISOWNING THE KU KLUX

THE KU KLUX KLAN has not infrequently marked its approval of certain Protestant pastors by contributing small sums of money to their churches, but it is a mistake, we are told, to think that the Klan deserves and is receiving the support of the Protestant Church at large. Much more frequently the Klan and all its works have been denounced from the Protestant pulpit. To make this all the more clear, tho the Klan is not mentioned by name, the Administrative Committee of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America recently issued a statement declaring that any organization whose membership is secret, oath-bound, and disguised, and which tends to foster racial or class prejudice, has no real right to speak in the name of the Protestant Church. As it is quoted in *The Herald of Gospel Liberty* (Christian), the statement is as follows:

"The Administrative Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America records its strong conviction that the recent rise of organizations whose members are masked, oath-bound, and unknown, and whose activities have the effect of arousing religious prejudice and racial antipathies, is fraught with grave consequences to the Church and to society at large. Any organization whose activities tend to set class against class or race against race is consistent neither with the ideals of the churches nor with true patriotism, however vigorous or sincere may be its professions of religion and Americanism.

"Evils of lawlessness and immorality, however serious, can never be remedied by secret, private, and unauthorized action. They must be handled by the State and by the recognized forces of education. For groups of individuals wearing masks and concealing their identity to pass judgment on men and women and to carry out humiliating measures of their own devising is subversive of every principle of civilized government, and undermines respect for the established agencies of law and order.

"Any body of men, unidentified and banded together to achieve in a partizan spirit the purposes of a sectional, political, racial, or sectarian group, is almost certain to fall into the very evils of mob rule against which the spirit of Christian democracy and Americanism makes vigorous and constant protest. Even if they resort to no unworthy deeds themselves, their practise of carrying on their plans in disguise, or under cover of darkness, encourages others to do likewise, and so affords the opportunity for all manner of lawlessness to be carried on with immunity from arrest or punishment. However true it is that in some communities religious organizations seek a control over municipal administration which is undemocratic and highly undesirable, yet for another body of men, secret and oath-bound, to undertake to get control is equally intolerable, even if they seek with all sincerity to wrest it from the control of other groups.

"The Administrative Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches is opposed to any movement which overrides the processes of law and order, and which tends to complicate and make more difficult the work of cooperation between the various political, racial and religious groups in the Republic. No such movements have the right to speak in the name of Protestantism, and the churches are urged to exert every influence to check their spread."

