

Klan Letter Attributed To Robert Byrd

Carl Ashard, W. Va.
April 8, 1946

Hon. Samuel Green
Box 1204
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Sir:

I am a former Kluge of the Ku Klux Klan in Raleigh County, and adjoining counties of the State having been appointed this office by Mr. J. L. Gaskin of Arlington, Virginia, in 1942.

The Klan is needed today as never before and I am anxious to see its revived here in West Virginia. I have noticed in the press statements pointing to a renewal of its activities in certain Southern States. It is necessary that the Klan be revived immediately and in every State in the Union. Will you please inform me as to the possibilities of re-building the Klan in the State of W. Va.

I am enclosing the name of a very capable American who

has seen many years of active service in the organization and one whom you could depend upon to do a "bang-up" job as State organizer in the event you should deem it advisable to re-open this activity for solicitation of membership. His name and address follows:

Beckley is ideally located for this purpose as it is in the very heart of the State's industrial area. At this time we are favored with a governor, a Senator, and a Congressman from this growing city which is in a position of strategic importance both economically and politically.

I hope that you will find it convenient to answer my letter in regard to these possibilities.
Respectfully yours
Robert C. Byrd

Shown above is a reproduction of a letter allegedly written by Robert C. Byrd, Democratic nominee for Congress, to the late Samuel Green, former Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. Byrd admitted in a public statement shortly before the primary election last May that he at one time had been a Klansman but said he dropped his membership in early 1943 and thereafter had "not been interested in the Klan." The date of the letter is April 8, 1946. Robert J. Ashworth, chairman of the Raleigh County Republican Executive Committee, produced the letter at a GOP rally held last night in the court house.

In the letter Byrd mentions the name of a man whom he is recommending to Green as a possible "organizer" for the Klan in the state. Ashworth said he deleted the man's name and address because he, Ashworth, did not wish to disclose his identity.