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Economic Growth in South Carolina and the South as a Whole

Strom Thurmond

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STATEMENT BY J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA, FOR PUBLICATION BY THE RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA "NEWS AND OBSERVER" DURING THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1948

Here in South Carolina we are positive that the South, far from being an "economic problem," instead may be called, with full truth, an "economic eldorado." Perhaps that phrase is too fanciful, but so vast are the storehouses of natural wealth now being opened in the Southern States, that the imagination can compare them only with rich veins of gold in the earth, or with the wealth of ancient kings.

In our State we are witnessing a transformation of great magnitude. In the industrial field alone, our growth is proceeding so rapidly that it leaps ahead of the statisticians. In 1947, for instance, new industrial enterprises costing $12,120,000 began operations in South Carolina. This year, new plants costing $60,000,000 are scheduled to open. And in two years' time, construction and expansion costing $120,000,000 have been scheduled.

The new era of industry, however, is merely one phase of our growth. In commerce and shipping, in agriculture, and in communications, we are forging rapidly ahead. In the fields of education, public health, and good government, our people are awakening to tremendous possibilities for improvements.

Perhaps there is truth in the statement that all our troubles are basically economic ones. If so, then the South may no longer be called "backward;" for each day brings new data of our mounting economic gains. The virgorous battle of Southern Governors for equality in freight rates, a fight that is now nearly won, is crystal-clear evidence that the South is on her feet and moving forward.

A fine illustration of the awakening interests of the Southern people may be found in recent movements toward improving the efficiency of government. In South Carolina, we have in the past year taken legislative steps leading toward reorganization of the State Government; revision of our outmoded Constitution; and reorganization of the Legislative Department.

It is my sincere hope that government, industry, agriculture,
and business in the South will continue to work together toward that "eldorado" we all seek.