

STATEMENT BY J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF
SOUTH CAROLINA, UPON ISSUING A PROCLAMATION
SETTING ASIDE MARCH 18, 1949, AS "JOHN C.
CALHOUN DAY" IN SOUTH CAROLINA. PREPARED
FEBRUARY 7, 1949.

It is fitting that South Carolina should pay tribute to the memory of one of her most distinguished sons on the anniversary of his birth. John Caldwell Calhoun, who was born at Abbeville on March 18, 1782, made for himself a lasting place in the American democratic tradition. His dedication to high principles gave new dignity to public office, and he sacrificed his own hopes for the Presidency to battle for what he believed to be the rights of his State and region.

Calhoun served for 40 years in public life, as State Legislator, as Member of Congress from Abbeville District, as Secretary of War under President Monroe, as Vice President of the United States under Presidents John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, as Secretary of State under President Tyler, and as Senator from South Carolina. In each of these positions he made outstanding contributions to the welfare of the State and the Nation.

Along with the great heroes of the revolution, Calhoun feared above all things the concentration of power over the life of the individual -- a system we have come to know as the totalitarian state.

Calhoun turned all the resources of his transcendent intellect, and the great energy of his undeviating will, toward combating the rise of absolutism as he saw it in his time. He knew, as Jefferson had known before him, that the people as individuals are powerless to defend themselves against the steady encroachments of their government -- the continual expansion of authority at the expense of freedom. He knew that

power can be overcome by power alone, and that only when the people are united and organized can they exercise the sovereignty that is rightfully theirs.

It was to protect the sovereignty of the people that Calhoun advocated the great bulwark of states' rights, a bulwark which stands today for the freedom of the individual.

Though the terms of the contest have changed, there is today and there always will be a struggle between power and liberty, between the majority and the minority, between government and the people. Calhoun taught us that every generation, each in its own way, must defend its liberties and its heritage of freedom, for it is only by constant renewal that democracy can survive.

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