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Memorandum for Governor's Conference on social security and welfare

Strom Thurmond

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Memorandum for governors' conference

June 1949

SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE

There is general agreement among many authorities on the need for a review of the old-age and survivors insurance program and of other phases of the Federal government's participation in the public welfare.

Specific proposals for extensive revision of the system, such as HR 2893 and the report of the Advisory Council to the Senate Finance Committee, are already pending. Both proposals call for broadly expanded coverage, higher benefit levels, liberalized eligibility requirements, and additional types of benefits.

No further specific legislation should be undertaken by the Congress until a comprehensive review of the entire field can be made by a legislative committee. It appears that an attempt to add to or revise the social security system without an authoritative study of its many aspects might be unsound at this time. This study should include not only the benefit formula, the coverage afforded, and the scope of protection of the system, but also contributions and financial policy.

In view of current national trends, such a study also should be made with the particular purpose in mind of providing, in our social security laws, the maximum of state management and control. Every precaution should be taken in any new legislation
to preserve our federal system, and to maintain the traditional balance among local, state, and federal levels.

In any consideration of possible revision of social security and Public Welfare legislation, two points appear to be of special worth. They are:

(1) That the Federal government should apportion its assistance to the states (in this field) on the basis of need.

Since the theory of public welfare legislation is based upon the protection of the general welfare, it is apparent that such protection may best be afforded if the states having the lowest per capita income receive the most assistance. The present formula places the least aid where the need is greatest.

(2) That every attempted revision of social security laws should tend to strengthen the insurance phase of the system, so that the need for public assistance may be rendered less compelling.

As the self-help principle of social security insurance is extended, the cost of direct benefits will be correspondingly decreased. This will not only encourage more thrift and self-reliance but will relieve the federal government of the burden for public assistance which they now bear.
PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION

It is now generally recognized that individual freedom in America will result in the common good only through the proper education of all citizens. Moreover, it is generally agreed that in a democracy, education must be kept close to the people, free of political entanglements, and free from domination by any interests which might use it for selfish ends. To this end, our state governments must assume an increasing responsibility for the policies and the means of their educational systems.

The tools and methods of education have been rightly chosen as the background for discussion by the Governors' Conference. There is no state that does not face at least some of the current problems of administration, such as proper districting, financing, the teacher shortage, new construction of buildings, and the like. In South Carolina, a recently completed State School Survey shows that our State faces many of these problems.

However, in seeking to improve the means for education in this country, we cannot afford to forget for a moment the character of that education, and its role in our future. For this reason, I want to mention briefly two problems of policy which I believe to be paramount at this time.
The first is the fact that our schools are not turning out a sufficient number of technically trained persons to supply the future needs of American industry.

A recent survey has shown that approximately three-fourths of American children now in high school must find jobs in industry if they work at all. Yet trade and industrial education comprises only 1/25th, or 4%, of our entire educational program. Obviously, our educational system is not facing up to realities.

Each year, 750,000 American youths leave high school. Three-quarters of them must enter industry, most of them with no training for it whatever. Dislocation, dissatisfaction, and inefficiency are inevitable. In many cases, high school graduates have actually acquired the belief that skilled labor is undesirable. Nothing could be further from the truth, for a skilled man is an educated man, in the true sense of the word.

I do not mean that we should detract from our liberal arts courses, but that we should add to them a more practical preparation for work. If we are to make happy citizens out of the 75% who must find jobs in industry, we must equip them to do those jobs.

The second problem of policy which I will mention briefly, is that American education must assume a more positive
attitude toward the value of the democratic way of life, if our citizens are to withstand the pressure of foreign ideologies.

We must face the fact that totalitarian states such as Germany and Russia have made extensive use of education as a weapon in the war of ideas, and also that Americans have largely neglected it. Russia today spends 8% of her income on education, compared to our 2%. More important, she is training all her children in the positive conception that the total state is the best state.

In America we are growing somewhat lax in teaching our children to acquire a militant advocacy of the doctrine of free enterprise. We often fail to teach them the manner in which hard work coupled with personal freedom have given Americans the world's highest standard of living.

Our history books have been permitted to acquire a somewhat cynical and disillusioning attitude toward American heroes and American ideals and principles. Indeed, 72% of our colleges do not even require American history as a prerequisite for entrance, and a recent survey of 700,000 college students showed that 91% of the students were not taking American history courses.

Such a condition will not produce citizens who are fully equipped to withstand the powerful onslaught of ideas that are
inimical to democratic principles.

To correct that condition, we must somehow charge our educational system with a more positive attitude toward the advantages of the American way as compared with that of the totalitarians. Otherwise we cannot hope to maintain the world leadership for human freedom which has fallen into our hands.
Today, the national government bears approximately 20% of the cost of state government. In turn, more than a third of the cost of local government is borne by the states. This trend is weakening local responsibility, curtailing local control, undermining democratic processes, and concentrating power in Washington.

It is clear that state and local governments must assume a greater degree of responsibility for needed public services, and that they must therefore have access to additional sources of revenue. State governments must cease relying on the Federal government to do things which can best be done on a state level.

To accomplish these objectives, and to strengthen our Federal system in each of its three levels, it will be necessary to coordinate federal, state, and local tax structures to reduce duplication, to induce economy, and to stabilize taxation and administration of services at their proper levels.

The most tangible attempt to approach this problem is represented by (pending) Senate Bill S.810, "To establish a national commission on intergovernmental relations." This bill, which is approved by the Council of State Governments, provides for a comprehensive study of federal-state relations leading to recommendations to Congress, to be made not later than February 1,
1952. It provides for a balanced, non-political commission which would very probably make an important contribution toward a solution of the problem.

SENATE BILL S.810

"To Establish a National Commission on Intergovernmental Relations"

Seeks to:

1) find ways to eliminate over-lapping, competition, and confusion in federal and state fiscal and tax relations;
2) co-ordinate federal and state functions;
3) allocate services properly among different levels of government;
4) reduce governmental costs;
5) develop co-operative policies and procedures.

Sets up a commission: (14)

1) 5 appointed by President, with 2 office holders and 3 private citizens; not more than 3 from any one political party.
2) 2 Senators appointed by Senate President
3) 2 Representatives appointed by Speaker.
4) 2 appointed by President from 4 names submitted by Council of State Governments.

5) 2 appointed by President from 4 city officials' names submitted by Municipal Association, etc.

6) 1 appointment by President from 2 county officials' names submitted by Association of County Officials.

Duties of commission:

1) to study these subjects—
   a) history of inter-governmental relations
   b) allocation of governmental functions
   c) geography as it affects the problem
   d) encroachment of federal on state, and state on local.

2) to report to President & Congress on findings and recommendations, by February 1, 1952.

This Act seems a desirable and necessary step toward the solution of the problem of intergovernmental fiscal relations. The tendency of local governments to depend on the federal government for support can lead to a lack of financial independence and effective autonomy.
State, and the State to depend on the Federal, and the Federal
Government to widen its tax spheres is bringing the nation closer
to centralization of power. A competent study of Federal-State-
Local fiscal relations can lead to coordination of tax structures,
so as to give local governments the maximum opportunity to finance
(and thus control) themselves.

************

The report of the Hoover reorganization commission
recommends: 1) a reappraisal of federal-state-local tax and fiscal
relations; 2) tax revision and coordination; 3) budgeting and
administration of Grants-in-Aid on Federal and state levels as
other federal and state funds are administered; 4) clarification
and systemization of Grants-in-Aid; and 5) a federal-state relations
agency somewhat similar to the S.810 commission.
MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION, REGULATION, AND SAFETY

1. Financing

There is some ground for the contention that the federal excise tax collections from highway users is too far out of line with federal expenditures on highways. The federal government collects more than a billion dollars a year in excise taxes on gasoline, new car sales, oil, tires, and accessories. In return, it appropriates less than half a billion dollars a year for highway aid to states.

Despite this policy, the United States Public Roads Administration balks at any diversion of state highway funds to other purposes. In addition, the Public Roads Administration insists on telling the states how and where they shall spend federal highway funds and state funds used to match them.

The average highway user is not only willing, but glad to pay a fair use charge for good roads. He realizes that it is a cost he must meet, like his telephone bill or his electric lights. But he would rebel if he knew that for every dollar he pays in this way, only 50 cents is being returned to him in the form of good roads.
2. Rural Roads

It is recognized that funds available for highway construction in the next few years will provide only a fraction of what is needed to develop an excellent highway system. Under these circumstances the natural assumption is that highway funds should be spent on the primary system, which constitutes only 20% of the total mileage, but which carries 90% of the traffic.

However, the primary system itself is of value only insofar as it possesses an adequate system of feeder roads. It appears evident that the United States Public Roads Administration and other Washington control agencies have not fully recognized this fact.

The need for more paved mileage of rural roads deserves more attention (on both federal and state levels). Our secondary roads are the life-lines of our trunk arteries, and they should be provided with an all-weather surfacing.

In South Carolina we have about 45,000 miles of rural roads, only 10,000 miles of which are paved. I am glad to say, however, that South Carolina recognizes the value and the need of such roads. Since World War II we have completed, or have under contract, 3,750 miles of hard surface roads which previously were dirt roads. This work is costing about $66,000,000, including bridge construction.
3. Sizes of Trucks

The importance of the trucking industry in American economy cannot be denied, and undue efforts to restrict the use of trucks will prove futile.

South Carolina is not one of those states which hold to the theory that the truck is nothing more than a menace on the highways.

We have sought to arrive at the proper regulation of and we have not restricted, the size and weights of trucks to an unprofitable operation while at the same time protecting highway safety and the condition of our roads.

We have found motor transportation a useful addition to our states economy, and many of our communities would lack any form of modern transportation service were it not for trucks.

Much has been said about prohibiting trucks on the highways which have axle loads over 18,000 pounds. We know that there is a limit to the truck axle loads we ought to permit, but we have no evidence that 18,000 pounds is the proper limit. South Carolina now has an axle load limit of 20,000 pounds, which we believe to be proper.

Although heavy trucks are doing irreparable damage to highways all over the country, our highway engineers tell me that they are not certain that it is the 18,000 to 20,000-pound axle loads which are causing the damage. Our engineers are more inclined to believe that the real damage is being done by illegally-loaded trucks carrying more than the 20,000-pound axle loads. The answer, therefore, may lie in proper enforcement of present regulations, with increased cooperation from the truckers.

The problem of truck size is not only an important one but an intricate one.

We do know that road笔记 are continually repairing that are caused by the confinement from trucks.

I feel that study and research should be made to ascertain the true facts is that intelligent action can then be taken.
4. Safety

In the field of safety, South Carolina has taken a most progressive step this year. We have adopted, almost in its entirety, Act V of the "Uniform Code on Rules of the Road."

According to data recently published, South Carolina's accident rate was 11.2 per 100 million miles of vehicle travel in 1943, as compared with a national average of 3.1. We sincerely hope that our new uniform Rules of the Road Act will improve our standing in this respect.

The 32,000 traffic deaths in the United States last year are enough to demand that every possible step be taken to reduce the toll.

By adopting uniform rules of the road designed to effect the maximum safety, every state can make an immediate contribution to safety efforts.

Florida
1. Stock Law July 1, 1950
2. due, or prop. indemnity after 1 week
### The South Carolina State Highway System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Road Mileage</strong></td>
<td>17,679.35 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary System</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stand. paving</td>
<td>2,648.84 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bit. surf</td>
<td>4,615.51 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impr. earth</td>
<td>34.09 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unimpr. earth</td>
<td>551.11 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>total pri. system</strong></td>
<td>7,849.55 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary System</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>stand. paving</td>
<td>124.79 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>bit. surf</td>
<td>1,955.30 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>impr. earth</td>
<td>70.29 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>unimpr. earth</td>
<td>7,679.50 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>total second</strong></td>
<td>9,829.28 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Federal Aid</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 30, 1947–June 30, 1948</td>
<td>$13,334,868.10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Roads and Bridges—Completed Projects</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>previous years</td>
<td>$177,412,504.29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year ending 6/30/48</td>
<td>13,357,083.18</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>190,769,587.47</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Maintenance Expenditures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year ending June 30, 1948</td>
<td>$ 8,323,315.16</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Disturbances Year Ending 6/30/48</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Surplus</td>
<td>13,605,973.31</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>52,637,535.42</td>
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<td><strong>Motor Vehicle Division</strong></td>
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<td>Licenses issued Yr. End 6/30/48</td>
<td>473,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase over prev. yr.</td>
<td>13.49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collections</td>
<td>83,792,464.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase over prev. yr.</td>
<td>14.36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Highway Patrol</td>
<td>190 offices and men</td>
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<tr>
<td>fines paid 6/30/48</td>
<td>$699,721.25</td>
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</tbody>
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