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Address to annual meeting of the South Carolina State Employees' Association

Strom Thurmond

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ADDRESS OF J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION, SEPTEMBER 30, 1949. DELIVERED BY GEORGE MACNABB.

MA. PRESIDENT, AND MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION:

It is a source of regret to me that previous engagements prevented my attending your annual meeting in person. Over many years, both as State Senator and as Governor, I have enjoyed a pleasant and profitable association with those who carry on the work of our State Government, and I have always found them to be courteous and cooperative.

On this occasion, it is a great pleasure to extend greetings and cordial good wishes from the Executive Department to each and every one of you.

By your presence at the meeting today, and by your membership in the State Employees' Association, you have signified a willingness to work together for a common cause, not only to improve your own individual standing, but to enhance the service you are able to render the State. Such organizations as yours can be effective instruments for the public good.

It is gratifying to me to learn that the South Carolina State Employees Association has increased its membership by more than 1,000 since last year. I hope your coming membership campaign will result in an even greater increase, so that the Association will continue to grow in numbers and in influence.
As Chief Magistrate of our State, I have had ample opportunity to realize that the largest share of the burden of government rests upon the shoulders of our State employees. It is their work which creates the character of the State Government, and determines its value to the people. It is true that the general public does not bear much about the many and varied duties that individuals perform. Most of our employees must carry on their activities with little hope of public acclaim. But we may all take pride in the fact that the vast majority of State activities are conducted in an effective manner. These quiet but well-performed functions make orderly government possible.

While the glaring light of publicity may never fall upon an individual employee of one of our State departments, in another sense it is always upon him. This fact becomes clear when you realize that very few South Carolinians ever come in contact with a State Department director. The public as a whole has contact with the State Government only through the employees of the various departments. Thus, each employee is, in a very real sense, a representative of the State Government as a whole.

The responsibility thus placed upon our State employees is of more consequence today than ever before. I think you will agree with that statement when you remember that South Carolina is progressing more rapidly today than at any time within the memory of any of us.
Our upward march of progress has been so accelerated in recent years that we may now look forward with full faith and confidence to the day when South Carolina will take her place among the first rank of states. In every direction — in industry, agriculture, commerce, and education — we are definitely "on the move." And in our effort to make progress, we cannot afford to underestimate the importance of a sound, stable government made up of capable, efficient, and devoted employees.

The building of a State is a task that will never be finished. As we solve old problems, new ones are bound to develop. Our job is to move along with the times, and to perform our common tasks with a maximum of efficiency and a minimum of waste. If we do so, we shall have rendered a service to our people which will be of untold assistance in South Carolina's effort to reach a happier and more prosperous time.

With every good wish,

J. Strom Thurmond
Governor