

5-2011

# Potential Conflict: The Confluence of Race And Economics During the Administration of Ernest 'Fritz' Hollings, 1959-1963

Phillip Mullinnix

Clemson University, PGMULLI@g.clemson.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all\\_theses](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all_theses)

 Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Mullinnix, Phillip, "Potential Conflict: The Confluence of Race And Economics During the Administration of Ernest 'Fritz' Hollings, 1959-1963" (2011). *All Theses*. 1116.

[https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all\\_theses/1116](https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all_theses/1116)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses at TigerPrints. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Theses by an authorized administrator of TigerPrints. For more information, please contact [kokeefe@clemson.edu](mailto:kokeefe@clemson.edu).

POTENTIAL CONFLICT:  
THE CONFLUENCE OF RACE AND ECONOMICS  
DURING THE ADMINISTRATION  
OF ERNEST "FRITZ" HOLLINGS, 1959-1963

---

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate School of  
Clemson University

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
History

---

by  
Phillip G. Mullinnix  
May 2011

---

Accepted by:  
Dr. Rod Andrew, Jr., Committee Chair  
Dr. Joanna Grisinger  
Dr. James Burns

## ABSTRACT

This work is about the administration of South Carolina Governor Ernest “Fritz” Hollings, who served as the state’s chief executive from 1959-1963. It specifically deals with his plans for industrial and economic development and how the civil rights movement and integration impacted those plans. The thesis of this work is that the Hollings administration devised a peaceful solution to racial integration that left the state’s industrial and economic development pursuits unharmed and untarnished. This work deals with the persistence of poverty and lack of development that plagued the state following the Civil War and the importance and need for development during the Hollings administration.

DEDICATION

To Mom and Dad

Your Years of Constant Support and Encouragement  
Made this Work Possible.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It would be impossible to acknowledge and thank everyone that have helped me to this point in my life and career. To those that have had an impact on my life and work that are not mentioned in these acknowledgments, I apologize but you have my deepest gratitude. In terms of the subject of this work, I owe acknowledgment to the two people that first introduced me to this topic as an undergraduate student in their South Carolina History course at Wofford College—R. Phillip Stone and Joab Mauldin Lesesne, Jr.

I would also like to acknowledge the help of the Strom Thurmond Institute at Clemson University and the Ernest Fritz Hollings Special Collections Library at the University of South Carolina. Their courteous and knowledgeable staff were instrumental in helping an overwhelmed graduate student find the appropriate sources and documents.

It goes without saying that in addition I owe a great deal of gratitude to Dr. Rod Andrew at Clemson University. His willingness to serve as my thesis advisor and answer my numerous questions about historical sources and proper formatting is greatly appreciated. I also wish to thank the other members of my thesis committee, Dr. Joanna Grisinger and Dr. James Burns. Dr. Grisinger and Dr. Andrew's meticulous editing of my thesis undoubtedly improved the finished product. I am also grateful for Dr. Grisinger's thoughtful suggestions as to what source material and secondary sources I should look at to improve my paper.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank my mother and father, as well as my entire family, for being there for me through the years and instilling in me the importance of education. Without your support this work would not have been possible.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| TITLE PAGE .....   | i    |
| ABSTRACT .....   | ii   |
| DEDICATION .....   | iii  |
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....  | iv   |
| CHAPTER  |      |
| I. INTRODUCTION .....  | 1    |
| II. THE QUEST FOR DEVELOPMENT<br>SOUTH CAROLINA AND THE AMERICAN SOUTH'S<br>QUSET FOR INDUSTRIALIZATION IN THE<br>POST-CIVIL WAR ERA ..... | 8    |
| The Move to Industrialize .....  | 11   |
| The Rise of Textile Mills .....  | 16   |
| Coming Apart: The Mill Problem and the Great Depression .....  | 22   |
| A New Beginning .....  | 30   |
| III. A TIME OF CHANGE .....  | 32   |
| Priority Number One.....   | 36   |
| A Young Aggressive Salesman for South Carolina.....  | 40   |
| Becoming Competitive .....   | 45   |
| A Threat to Economic Development .....   | 54   |
| IV. THE PROBLEM THAT COULD DERAIL PROGRESS.....  | 56   |
| A History of Violence  |      |
| Both Physical and Rhetorical.....  | 60   |
| Segregation Must and Will Be Maintained.....   | 64   |
| Fritz's Journey .....  | 69   |
| Going to the Governor's Office .....   | 73   |

Table of Contents (Continued)

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| V. A TIME FOR CHOOSING .....                    | 75   |
| Building a Framework for a Stable Society ..... | 77   |
| A Difficult Course.....                         | 81   |
| The Right Moment.....                           | 89   |
| The Result .....                                | 98   |
| VI. CONCLUSION.....                             | 100  |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY.....                               | 103  |

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The state of South Carolina seemed like the last place one would expect to see the peaceful transition from a segregated to an integrated society take place. Due to the leadership of the state's business elite and Governor Fritz Hollings's commitment to maintaining law and order and creating a stable society, this peaceful transition was possible. Part of the reason that both Hollings and the state's business class were dedicated to creating a stable society lies in the state's history of impoverishment. Before the Civil War South Carolina was one of the wealthiest states in the nation. After the war the state was one of the poorest and struggled for years to recover from the economic calamity of the Civil War. From 1865 to 1959 many governors and business leaders attempted to bring industry into the state. Most attempts failed either due to downturns in the economy or a lack of commitment to economic and industrial progress. For many contemporaries during the climactic years of the civil rights movement if the state descended into racial violence and civil unrest it would have been unsurprising.

This peaceful transition, however, was not a matter of happenstance but can be attributed to one complex point. Despite the best efforts of state and business leaders the state still lagged behind economically despite the economic boost of the New Deal and World War II. In response to the lagging economy there was an effort on the part of many state leaders to attract outside industry and capital and diversify the state's economy. Those seeking to develop the state were determined to make this the number one priority over all others—including white supremacy. For them stability and order were two

important aspects in the ability to develop the state. If preventing integration ensured stability that was their goal; if allowing integration was the best way to ensure stability that was their goal. The reason for South Carolina's acquiescence to integration can be attributed to state political and business leaders' determination to develop the state and not let anything derail this effort. This is not to say that many acquiesced to integration on moral grounds, the vehicle that motivated them to do so was economics.

While many business leaders during the 1950s and 1960s contributed to and pushed the state in a progressive direction on the question of race, the person who deserves a considerable amount of credit for leading the state through a potentially stormy confrontation between the forces of integration and segregation was Ernest "Fritz" Hollings. Though he campaigned during the late 1940s and 1950s as a segregationist during his run for the state legislature, lieutenant governor, and governor, his actions in office sought to bring order and stability to the state. Hollings sponsored an anti-lynching bill as a member of the state legislature, sponsored a sales tax that was used to improve educational facilities for both races, and as governor made it known to the head of the State's Law Enforcement Division (SLED) that racial violence would not be tolerated. Hollings was morally conflicted in regards to the question of segregation as well. As a veteran of World War II, he seemed troubled by the treatment of African-American soldiers upon their return stateside. Speaking to a group of Wofford College students in Charleston in 2005, Hollings stated that he never forgot seeing black American soldiers being forced to go to the rear of a restaurant in the South to get food

while German prisoners of war were allowed to eat inside the establishment. Upon seeing this Hollings said that he remembered thinking “that ain’t right.”<sup>1</sup>

In hindsight, Hollings’s contribution to the minimization of racial violence during his governorship, which happened to coincide with the escalation of the fight against segregation, in South Carolina seems paramount. The historical record, however, has made little mention of the connection between Hollings’s search for racial stability and his quest for economic development. In what claims to be a comprehensive work on the state’s history, Walter Edgar’s *South Carolina: A History* makes little mention of Hollings’s contribution to industrial development, instead focusing on business leaders such as Charles Daniel and their quest for development. In *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina*, Jack Bass and Scott Poole make the connection between Hollings’s quest for stability and industrial development but make the mistake of assuming that the quest for stability was a century long quest that emerged after the Civil War and not a product of the Hollings administration. As they argue, Hollings

intuitively grasped the quest for stability that had emerged as a central theme in his native state in reaction to the internalized memory of the disastrous path that had flowed a century earlier from the impulsive action that had led first to secession and then to ruin.<sup>2</sup>

Though there were lessons to be learned from the events following the state’s action in December of 1860, Hollings’s quest for stability is radically different than what preceded his term as governor. Hollings’s handling of integration in the state is only mentioned in R. Phillip Stone’s dissertation “The Making of a Modern State” and Stone and Lacy K.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hollings as quoted in Jack Bass and Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 111.

<sup>2</sup> Jack Bass and Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 113.

Ford's article "Economic Development and Globalization in South Carolina." However, an in depth study of the Hollings administration's handling of integration does not exist.

During much of the twentieth century the state was immersed in racial violence, lynchings, and violent racial rhetoric from politicians such as Benjamin Ryan Tillman, Ellison Durant "Cotton Ed" Smith, J. Strom Thurmond, and Hollings's predecessor George Bell Timmerman. While business leaders may have desired stability in order to attract capital, the state's chief executives were unwilling to lay down the banner of segregation until Fritz Hollings. Hollings understood the connection between stability and industrial development. In a speech before the state's law enforcement officers, as governor, Hollings stated

Industry naturally must have labor supply, fresh water, good transportation and port facilities, adequate electric power and ready markets. But, more than these needs, industry like any individual prepared to invest a fortune looks just not for these material things, but today, more than ever, it looks realistically for good law abiding communities for the families of their officers and employees. The Saco-Lowell Company, which recently made its decision to locate at Clemson, was not looking for labor or markets, it was establishing a research and scientific center with few employees and nothing to sell. This company wanted its engineers and scientist to have a helpful, law abiding and happy community in which to work. It was doing inferentially what our competitors are daily crying—that there was no use to locate in South Carolina; that due to segregation problems, there would be violence. After thorough examination this company found, on the contrary, that we have peace and good order, that we have excellent law enforcement.<sup>3</sup>

In making this connection between stability and development, Hollings ushered in a new era in the governor's office by shifting the governor's focus from the fight against racial

---

<sup>3</sup> [Fritz Hollings Law Enforcement Speech], [Fritz Hollings Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

integration to industrial development and shifted the state's policy from fighting integration to accepting it, begrudgingly for some, with the admission of Harvey Gantt to Clemson College in 1963. Yet, this law and order and this stability differed from the rhetoric of Hollings's predecessors.

For Hollings, law and order meant enforcing state and federal law in a way that did not create societal disruptions such as the ones that occurred in Birmingham at the hands of Bull Connor or in Oxford, Mississippi at the University of Mississippi in order to uphold the traditional racial order. It also meant challenging federal law, namely *Brown v. Board* and other challenges to segregation, in a peaceful and legal manner as opposed to fighting in the streets. What was paramount to the Hollings administration, in regards to the issue of race, was creating a peaceful and stable society that did not condone acts of racial violence committed by either side of the racial spectrum nor by state and local governmental agencies. When demonstrations did occur they were to be policed in an orderly and non-confrontational manner. Thus, the peaceful transition between two eras was not the result of a century long quest for stability but in actuality was due to the skilled political leadership of Fritz Hollings, his relationship with the General Assembly, and a business elite that in the words of one historian decided that "segregation had to go."<sup>4</sup> If the events that transpired at Clemson had occurred during the term of a Timmerman or a Thurmond it is doubtful that such a peaceful transition would have occurred and the state could have followed the path of Mississippi and Alabama in dealing with integration. Without a governor, such as Hollings, who desired stability and

---

<sup>4</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 537.

development, Gantt's admission might have been a damaging blot on the state's historical record.

This work serves to bring to light an achievement of the state's leadership, break through the bonds of stereotypical thought about South Carolina, and show that while many southern states physically resisted integration, South Carolina acquiesced once its legal options were exhausted. In doing so, this work is also complementary to the works of Matthew Lassiter and Numan Bartley and their discussion of the impact that the business classes in Atlanta and other southern states had on the integration process. In Numan Bartley's *The New South, 1945-1980*, the author contends that states such as Virginia, North Carolina, and the city of Atlanta were much more aware of the impact that the fight for integration had on the ability to attract industry and capital. According to Bartley, the "racial moderation of the business progressives aimed to achieve social stability and economic growth," yet in his work and others no mention is made of the progressive business atmosphere in South Carolina.<sup>5</sup> While South Carolina's concern with the question of race often dominated the political landscape throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the Hollings administration and the business elite can be classified business progressive. Their goal, like those of the business elites in Atlanta, Virginia, and North Carolina, was to create an atmosphere of social stability to promote economic growth. This work agrees with the premises of Bartley and Lassiter about the impact of business progressives, but highlights an event that most of them have neglected—the Hollings administration. The administration of Governor Ernest "Fritz"

---

<sup>5</sup> Numan V. Bartley, *The New South, 1945-1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 221.

Hollings can not only be classified as business progressive but it also managed to achieve social stability and promote tremendous economic growth in South Carolina. In doing so the state transitioned from an era of segregation to integration largely unscathed with the integration of Clemson College in 1963.

## CHAPTER II

### **THE QUEST FOR DEVELOPMENT: SOUTH CAROLINA AND THE AMERICAN SOUTH'S QUEST FOR INDUSTRIALIZATION IN THE POST-CIVIL WAR ERA**

During the gubernatorial election of 1958, Lieutenant Governor Fritz Hollings campaigned on a promise to attract industry to South Carolina. While in the aftermath of the Great Depression and World War II much of the country experienced an economic resurgence and return to prosperity South Carolina had not shared in this growth. As Hollings remembered, the state “had made some progress, but economically South Carolina was still very much in the ditch.”<sup>6</sup> Hollings went on to win the Democratic primary after a heated runoff against Donald Russell, the president of the University of South Carolina. Due to the state’s one party dominance, this win virtually assured a Hollings victory. Even before taking office, Hollings set about meeting with various business leaders in South Carolina and throughout the nation with the hope of attracting industry and capital to the state. As governor, Hollings managed to secure industry, capital, and jobs on an unprecedented scale. As his term drew to a close in January 1963, Hollings delivered his farewell message to the South Carolina General Assembly. In the speech, and after countless hours logged in the pursuit of state development, he stated that after the progress of the previous four years, “I began to realize that South Carolina

---

<sup>6</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: The University of South Carolina University Press, 2008), 46.

has a chance—an opportunity to succeed—to pull away from the hangover of a 100 [sic] years of poverty—to climb to the top of the ladder of states.”<sup>7</sup>

In order to understand the reason behind Hollings’s emphasis on economic development, it is important to understand the “hangover” of the previous one hundred years during which South Carolina’s attempts at economic development and industrialization were tempered by continual failure, turmoil, and persistent impoverishment. Despite Hollings’s optimism, and by his own admission, a lot of work remained to be done in 1963 in order to permanently break away from this tumultuous cycle. Nearing the end of his farewell speech he described this perpetual failure of development and stated that the early 1960s were a critical juncture that would determine the economic success or failure of the region. Hollings believed that the South had one more chance to succeed where it had so often failed; “always too little with too late—that was the demon that plagued the South. [...] we still have too little, but this time we don’t have to be too late. History has given us one more chance.”<sup>8</sup> The question of economic development and the South’s ability to compete is not just one that arose in the late 1950s and early 1960s but one that had persisted since the end of the Civil War and in turn, one that still lingers today.

While the South made some effort to industrialize in the 1840s and 1850s this effort never reached a level of maturity due to the entrenched nature of plantation agriculture in the South. In the aftermath of the Civil War and the destruction it wrought

---

<sup>7</sup> [Hollings Address to the General Assembly, Wednesday, January 9, 1963], [Ernest “Fritz” Hollings Collection Gubernatorial Papers, 1952-1963], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

upon the South, the region faced the question of how to proceed once slavery, its economic foundation, collapsed. This was the task of Republican and Redeemer governments that followed in the aftermath of the war as well as the task of subsequent governments and movements well into the twentieth century. The success of this first movement of industrialization is best measured by the fact that, seventy-three years after the end of the Civil War, the South still remained impoverished and was ultimately declared “the nation’s number one economic problem” by the Roosevelt Administration in 1938.<sup>9</sup> In order to understand the realities that Hollings faced as governor, it is important to understand the success and failures of the first industrial movement in the South that lasted from the end of the Civil War until the crisis of the Great Depression.

Much of the South’s path toward industrialization was characterized by certain distinctive features. One such feature is that state officials and local civic booster organizations led the first major push to attract industry in South Carolina and in the South. In the aftermath of the Civil War, there was a significant effort on the part of southern elites to rebuild the South; however, the region had a laundry list of challenges and problems to be overcome. The South was severely impoverished, its infrastructure lay in ruins, and its economy was crippled with exorbitant inflation. The type of industries that were at first attracted by these boosters to the region were low wage, low skill jobs. The success and failures of this movement that lasted from the conclusion of the Civil War to the Great Depression helps to explain South Carolina’s lack of economic advancement, poverty and the importance that Hollings placed on industrial development

---

<sup>9</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, quoted in James C. Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development, 1936-1990* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 1.

during the election of 1958 and his term as governor from 1959 to 1963. What follows is an overview of South Carolina and the South's attempts at industrialization which highlight the problems that persistently plagued this effort and the attempts by southern governments to deal with these problems before the global economic collapse following the 1929 stock market crash. The legacy of these failures and successes is the reality that southern politicians, including Fritz Hollings, inherited in the aftermath of the New Deal and World War II. It also suggests that the challenges and problems Hollings faced as a newly inaugurated governor in 1959 were by no means of recent origin.

### **The Move to Industrialize**

In the aftermath of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the South experienced 'home rule' once again. Part of this return to 'home rule' was the region's first serious effort toward industrialization. Due to severe poverty and a crippled economic foundation, there was a need to industrialize in order to return to prosperity and catch up with the rest of the United States. An indication of how far the South had to go in order to catch up with the rest of the Union, is apparent in the fact that of the \$47,642,000,000 of the estimated true valuation of property in the United States in 1880, the South's share was only \$5,725,00,000. This meant that the per capita wealth in the South was \$376 while the rest of the Union's was \$1,086.<sup>10</sup> South Carolina shared certain distinctive features with the rest of the region. Both were characterized by an agricultural economy and both were heavily impoverished. Due to the profits and products of slave labor, the state entered the Civil War as one of the wealthiest areas in the nation and was one of the

---

<sup>10</sup> C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 111.

poorest after the war because of the devastation the war wrought on it economically, politically, and socially.

Despite the reputation of Redeemers as “agents and allies of Northern business and financial interests who enriched themselves at the expense of their states,” who were not concerned with developing their states this description does not apply to South Carolina as William J. Cooper argues in *The Conservative Regime, 1877-1890*.<sup>11</sup> Cooper contends that the Redeemers in South Carolina were not agents of northern business and financial interests but instead were interested in attracting northern capital for developmental purposes, maintaining white supremacy and keeping state control from northern interests. South Carolina and the South Carolina Conservatives led by Wade Hampton “did not become self-serving agents and associates of Northern financial interests;” they did however recognize the state’s impoverishment and because of this “the Bourbons welcomed industry and capital yet refused to surrender all state control.”<sup>12</sup>

After Hampton and the Conservatives consolidated power in the aftermath of the 1876 election, they were confronted by the need to boost the image of South Carolina as a stable society, both financially and politically, to potential investors. In order to maintain and protect ‘home rule,’ Hampton knew that “friendly relations with the Republican administration in Washington and with Northern public opinion” was necessary to “avert the return of troops” and to “regain the trust and confidence of the North.”<sup>13</sup> The other reason for this concern with the state’s public image was the

---

<sup>11</sup> William J. Cooper, *The Conservative Regime, 1877-1890* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 14.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 18.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

recognition that no investor “wanted his capital in such an unstable region” and that in order to ensure this stability there needed to be a return to not only home rule but the “return of responsible, native whites to political dominance.”<sup>14</sup> Due to this concern for the state’s image, Conservatives did not sanction violence against blacks and their sympathizers as a way to maintain this political dominance. This is largely due to the fact that the main issue in terms of convincing the North that the South could rule itself was convincing the North that a stable relationship between whites and blacks existed in the state. Though there were instances of racial violence, Hampton “admonished his followers to refrain from violence and intimidation” and he created northern sympathy for white southerners by speaking often of “his concern for justice, stable government, and Negro rights.”<sup>15</sup> Evidence of this concern for creating northern sympathy is evident in the fact that, throughout the years of Conservative rule, the state retained the constitution drafted by Republicans during Reconstruction. This concern for public image would also surface during Hollings’s years as governor as the state developed a solution to integration and contemplated the effects a massive resistance effort would have on the ability to attract industry. This form of stability attempted by Hampton did not last after his departure from state politics. Instead, the stability that came afterwards was in the form of militant white supremacists determined to preserve the racial order.

Public image was not the only problem that the South faced during this time period: “federal banking policy, railroad freight rates, absentee ownership, reliance on outside expertise, high interest rates, cautious state governments, [and] lack of industrial

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 28.

experience” significantly hindered southern industrial growth.<sup>16</sup> South Carolina’s lack of experience in industrial matters was in part responsible for the slow growth in the textile industry. While the North developed industrially, especially in textiles, during the antebellum period, there were only a few successful cotton mills in the South; the most famous was that of antebellum industrialist William Gregg in Graniteville, South Carolina. In 1860 South Carolina “had seventeen cotton mills, only one more than in the year of Graniteville’s founding [1845]; and Graniteville remained the only significant mill.”<sup>17</sup>

Transportation and infrastructural improvements were also areas in which the South lagged behind and were necessary for industrialization as well. Before the war railroads were actually part of the state’s economic development and advancement and in 1833 the South Carolina Railroad was the longest in the world. The war, however, destroyed the railroads that were constructed during the antebellum period. In order to deal with these hindrances to industrialization and create a business friendly environment, the South Carolina General Assembly as well as the governor enacted legislation to tackle these problems and develop the state. The Reconstruction and Redeemer governments ushered in a new era of railroad building and set about to repair and replace damaged track so that by 1890 the state had over 2,297 miles of rail.<sup>18</sup>

In what became a distinctive way in which the South attempted to lure industry to the region, the South Carolina General Assembly exempted manufactures from taxation.

---

<sup>16</sup> Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 104.

<sup>17</sup> William J. Cooper, *The Conservative Regime, 1877-1890* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 118.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 117.

This policy began under Reconstruction rule and continued under the Bourbons. The 1873 legislation that exempted manufacturers from taxation absolved “any individual or association of individuals from payment of any taxes levied by state, county, or municipality upon the property or capital employed or invested in such manufacturers or enterprises.”<sup>19</sup> This exemption lasted for ten years after an industry’s initial settlement in the state or after an expansion and extension of manufacturing or improvement. The Conservative regime also began a publicity campaign to publicize and highlight all of the positive features and resources of the state. This development of a state sponsored public relations arm and tax incentives would appear again and in full force not only during the 1930s but also during Hollings’s term as governor and, with the help of the South Carolina Development Board, would become a distinctive feature of the ‘second wave’ of industrialization.

This eagerness to attract industry, however, did not signal an era of laissez-faire capitalism in the state. The belief among many elected officials was that the “public ought to maintain watch over corporations to prevent them from abusing the public trust.”<sup>20</sup> In one example, the state government under the control of the Conservative Democrats regulated the phosphate industry, which was a burgeoning industry at the time in the state, through the creation of a phosphate commissioner and special taxes that phosphate mine operators were required to pay. While the phosphate industry received a significant portion of the state’s attention, the railroads received more due to their direct impact on society and because many of the miles of railroad in the state were under the

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 120.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 125.

control of outside interests and capital. Freight rates rose during this time and in response the Conservatives created a one man railroad commissioner. Eventually in December 1882 the state legislature increased the members on the commission to three and gave them the power to set rates.<sup>21</sup> The commitment to industrial development had its limits, at least in South Carolina. Unlike the traditional notion of C. Vann Woodward that southern politicians and merchants kowtowed to northern industrialist and capitalist, the commitment to industrial development did not supersede Conservative Democrats' commitment to control and power over the state's resources and development.

### **The Rise of the Textile Mills**

While Conservative Democrats attempted to lure industry to the state through governmental incentives, two historians have argued that the Bourbon era was generally “marked by parsimonious state spending, and overwhelming focus on agriculture as the state's central economic engine, and the gradual repeal of all the changes wrought during Reconstruction.”<sup>22</sup> South Carolina, like the rest of the South, and despite industrialization efforts remained committed to King Cotton. However, while cotton may have still been king as far as being the primary cash crop of southern agriculture, it was a dying king in regards to the amount of profit that trickled down to the farmer. Taking the cotton crop yields and profit of 1873 and 1894 as indicators, the difficulty in producing a profit is readily apparent; as Woodward describes, “the farmer got less for the 23,687,950 acres he planted in cotton in 1894 than for the 9,350,000 acres of 1873. The crop of 1894 broke all

---

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 129.

<sup>22</sup> Jack Bass and W. Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: The University of South Carolina University Press, 2009), 60.

records, but the ‘farm price’ was 4.6 cents a pound compared with 14.1 cents in the panic year of 1873” which essentially means that a farmer “had to work more than twice as long for the same pay.”<sup>23</sup>

Farmers’ inability to produce a profit had a lot to do with the economic arrangement that arose in southern agriculture. In the aftermath of the Civil War and Reconstruction, southern landowners turned to the use of sharecroppers and tenant farmers as a way to extract a profit from the cultivation of their land; though they too often had difficulty producing one. This arrangement perpetuated the plantation system so that as one contemporary farmer observed, “planters were still lords of acres, though not of slaves.”<sup>24</sup> In addition to the drawbacks of this system and the poverty that it perpetuated, the credit or lien system that landowners and banks developed to support this new economic arrangement brought the region to the verge of extreme poverty and financial ruin. This credit system operated under the agreement that cotton and other cash crops were “the only security upon which the furnishing merchant would advance credit” to sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and in some cases even planters.<sup>25</sup> This arrangement forced farmers into cultivating these crops in order to obtain credit while the merchant that the farmer purchased supplies from, in addition to being the sharecropper’s debtor that he owed to the landowner, charged exorbitant prices and interest rates. This debt was on top of what he owed to the landowner. This system remained firmly entrenched due to the lack of a banking establishment throughout the South. As Woodward points

---

<sup>23</sup> C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1916* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 184.

<sup>24</sup> Henry Grady, quoted in *Ibid*, 178.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 182.

out, in 1895 there was one bank to every 16,600 inhabitants in the United States; however, in the South, excluding Texas, there was only one to every 58,130 inhabitants.<sup>26</sup>

In the midst of this turmoil within the agricultural community, textile mills arrived on the southern landscape. Despite the difficulties in the agricultural sector of the southern economy during this time period, the southern textile mills showed a remarkable ability to prosper. While there were efforts to bring textile manufacturing to the region prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, most of it had been unsuccessful or on a small scale. Just before the outbreak of war, there were seventeen cotton mills in the state; by 1883 there were twenty six and “after a recession in 1884 and 1885 cotton manufacturing began a decade and a half of astounding growth” so that by 1900 “with an invested capital of almost \$40,000,000” textiles were the state’s dominant industry.<sup>27</sup> The rest of the South also displayed remarkable growth in the development of the cotton manufacturing industry. Between 1860 and 1880 of “the three leading cotton manufacturing states of the South, North Carolina doubled the value of her output” while “Georgia tripled her antebellum record, and South Carolina quadrupled hers.”<sup>28</sup>

There were several reasons for this move toward textile manufacturing and success of cotton manufacturers during this time. After the Civil War and “despite all the problems of the cotton economy, the immediate postwar years saw a rush of

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 183.

<sup>27</sup> William J. Cooper, *The Conservative Regime, 1877-1890* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 119.

<sup>28</sup> C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1916* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 131.

entrepreneurship and new investment in interior towns” and transportation networks.<sup>29</sup>

Part of the reason for this investment in interior towns had to do with the building of local railroads which towns thought of as an extension of town building. These local rail lines connected the countryside to small towns and many of these towns helped to service the cotton crop of the surrounding countryside.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to the rise of southern towns, the southern labor market had a great deal to do with the arrival and prosperity of the textile mills in the South. While there was a growing interest in bringing the textile industry to the region during the antebellum era, this interest was sidelined by the boom in cotton prices during the 1850s, making it “the most prosperous decade in history for cotton growing,” which meant that almost all of the capital and labor resources were focused not on textiles but the cultivation of cotton.<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that prior to this boom the rate of growth of employment in southern textiles was greater in the 1840s than in the North; between 1840 and 1850 the change in employment in the textile industry was 5.99% in the South as compared to 2.49% in the North.<sup>32</sup> The South would not rival the North in the amount of growth in the textile industry again until the 1880s as it experienced a contraction in employment over the next thirty years.

The reason for the resurgence of employment in cotton textile manufacturing was the collapse of the cotton market in the 1870s. This confirms “that conditions of labor supply were crucial to the industry’s success” which means that after this collapse there

---

<sup>29</sup> Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1986), 39.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 42.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, 128.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, 127.

was an abundance of cheap labor in the South—especially that of poor whites.<sup>33</sup> Due to the fluctuation in cotton prices and the unstable nature of the sharecropping and tenant farming system, South Carolina “mill owners found a cheap and willing white labor source in the upcountry. The trials of tenant farming and sharecropping had led many white South Carolinians to consider leaving agricultural work for the first time;” furthermore mill work meant stable wages, housing, and a sense of community with other poor whites.<sup>34</sup> This abundance of white labor and the willingness of many to work in textile manufacturing, at lower wages, attracted many New England textile firms to the South. A reporter for *Outlook* magazine interviewed mill workers in and around Augusta, Georgia in the late 1890s, as described in *The Promise of the New South* the reporter

asked several mill families why they had come there. The reasons given for leaving their rural homes were widely various: ‘because we lost our plantation;’ ‘because my wife was lonely;’ ‘because the darkeys came in.’ The pervasive decline of Southern rural life created a sense of dissatisfaction and desperation among white farming families that made it easier for mill operators to find a work force.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps the most important reasons for the rise of the textile mills, aside from the abundance of cheap labor, was the rise of the booster spirit in the small southern towns and the amount of local and outside investors willing to invest capital in the southern textile industry. These investors, along with mill directors and presidents, were drawn from the commercial and merchant sectors of town people, who were for the most part not descendants of the prewar planter elite, and helped to give rise to a new class of southerners—the businessman. While the economic motive and concern for profit were

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 129.

<sup>34</sup> Jack Bass and W. Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 69.

<sup>35</sup> Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 113.

the primary concern of these investors and mill leaders, there were other pronouncements made by town boosters as to how the arrival of the mills would boost the town life and bring prosperity to the town as well. By bringing together the poor and uneducated whites in the town and surrounding rural areas, mill boosters believed that their exposure to “elevating social influences” would encourage them to seek an education, and improve in “every conceivable respect, as future husbands and wives, sons and daughters, parents and children;” and that by an exposure to churches, schools and factories “they could be improved mentally, morally, and physically, and many saved from vicious lives.”<sup>36</sup>

All of these elements created a wave of economic resurgence with the arrival and commitment of South Carolina to the textile industry. In little more than twenty years cotton textiles changed the face of the Carolina upcountry. In 1880 there were only fourteen mills in the area. However, in 1895 the state experienced a textile boom and between 1895 and 1907 61 mills were built and older ones expanded.<sup>37</sup> The years from 1907 to 1910, experienced an even faster rate of growth than over the previous twelve years. By 1910, South Carolina “was home to 167 mills that employed 47,000 operatives and ranked second only to Massachusetts as a textile-producing state.”<sup>38</sup> What is even more amazing is that local investors continued to provide the majority of the capital to create this boom and perpetuate it. Yet, despite this growth and prosperity by the late 1910s and 1920s, significant problems were beginning to emerge within the textile

---

<sup>36</sup> David Carlton, *Mill and Town in South Carolina, 1880-1920* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 78.

<sup>37</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 456.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 456.

industry and especially in South Carolina, which had committed more than any other state in the region to the industry.

### **Coming Apart: The Mill Problem and The Great Depression**

South Carolina, like the rest of the region, saw significant growth in textile manufacturing during the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century and, as the boosters promised, there was prosperity for some. However, while town boosters championed the mills as a way for economic growth and an engine for community and job growth; they had not taken into account the consequences of industrialization.<sup>39</sup> While the state and the region attempted to discover the origins and solution to the newly discovered mill problem, they also experienced a severe decline in economic prosperity during the 1920s until the complete collapse of the economy with the arrival of the Great Depression in 1929.

Despite the boosters' promises that the textile experience would be a civilizing and positive influence for the mill workers, the results seemed to be quite the contrary. The first source of the mill problem has its origins in the class distinction made between mill people and town people. The whites that moved to the mill villages were a group of people that were "proud, independent, and not used to taking orders or being regimented" by their employers, and they resented the way town residents viewed them as "lesser folk."<sup>40</sup> This distinction, however, did not just divide mill and town people but also mill operatives and successful farmers. One successful farmer's daughter "recalled that it was a disgrace to work in the mill," while Greenville operatives "noted that people crossed

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 457.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 458.

the street so as not to have to share the sidewalk with “lintheads” and “bobbindodgers.”<sup>41</sup> This distinction bred resentment among mill operatives and can certainly explain their attraction during the early twentieth-century to a demagogue like Cole Blease. Blease drove a wedge even further between the mill and town communities. He “styled himself as the champion of the lintheads [...] and he mocked respectable townspeople just as the hardworking folk of the mill village had themselves been mocked.”<sup>42</sup> In addition to this he also stressed the importance of white supremacy and the danger that blacks posed to the status of the poor whites in the mills. In turn the mill workers responded by electing their ‘Coley’ to the governor’s office in 1910 and later to the US Senate.

The Blease years provide an opportunity to delve into the two largest aspects of the mill problem—violence and poverty. As mentioned earlier, and contrary to the promises of the boosters, the textile mills did not have the intended socializing effects upon mill workers. D.E. Camak, a Methodist minister, had the opportunity to attend one of the Blease election rallies in Spartanburg during the 1912 race for governor and what he discovered shocked him.

The crowd was composed of South Carolinians of the purest ‘Anglo-Saxon’ blood, but the tornado of shrieks, yells and whistles which arose from it suggested the clamor of the abyss [...] He watched disdainfully as six Blease men parlayed two meal tickets into six barbecue plates in cavalier disregard for property rights. Most disturbing of all was the seeming lack of respect for law, civilization, even human life. ‘Wonder whut this automatic ‘ud do,’ said one, ‘if I turn’t it loose on that crowd.’ He patted his coat pocket proudly. ‘Hit’d get yer in the pen,’ replied another, ‘but Coley ‘ud git yer out.’ They all laughed.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 459.

<sup>42</sup> Jack Bass and W. Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 73.

<sup>43</sup> David Carlton, *Mill and Town in South Carolina, 1880-1920* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 2-3.

While the statistics on the amount of violence and lawlessness within the mill villages are incomplete, since record keeping did not specify the community in which a prisoner resided, there is evidence of not only a concern for the stability within these communities but also evidence that there was an element of lawlessness within them. In South Carolina, *The State* reported in 1899 that the amount of lawlessness was attributable to the mill villages.<sup>44</sup> While there was certainly a lawless element attributable to the mill community many, such as David Carlton, have argued that this is linked to the labor shortage of mill hands within the town and surrounding rural areas which forced mills and mill recruiters to obtain operatives in the Appalachian region. Regardless of the amount of violence or its origins, the violence and disorderly conduct observed by the town people, as well as events such as the Blease rally, captured their attention and that of reformers as they sought to come up with solutions to the problem.

The promise of economic prosperity that boosters made when championing the textile industry did not seem to trickle down to the average mill operative. Progressives worried about the working conditions, wages, and standard of living in the mill communities that left these operatives impoverished. The arrival of “ill-paid workers into these congested” mill villages “naturally brought a considerable amount of poverty to the very doorsteps of the townspeople.”<sup>45</sup> Due to the close proximity of mill people to the towns, many townspeople were appalled and concerned with the state of the mills and their operatives. The two most important targets of reformers were the perceived rampant

---

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 150.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 135.

use and abuse of child labor in textile mills and the effect of the mill villages on public health. Child labor was rampant in many textile mills, education seemed secondary to labor, and there was a concern among Progressives for the effects of the mill villages on public health. While the effort to limit child labor in mills was an early victory for the South Carolina Progressives in 1903, when the General Assembly declared that no child under age ten could work in the mills and by 1905 the age had risen to twelve, their more difficult victories were in the area of public health.<sup>46</sup>

The townspeople and other reformers certainly had reason to be concerned. In the early days of the mill villages many of the epidemics were isolated in the villages due to the lack of sewers and often stayed contained within the village due to their isolated location from the towns. However, as mill villages moved within town limits and in some instances the distinction between town and mill village was only the width of a street, as in Union, the threat and concern with epidemics became much greater. A measles epidemic in 1886 spread from the operatives at Greenville mills, “then one of the few commercial towns with a contiguous mill district,” spread to the townspeople.<sup>47</sup> Mill villages also became the breeding ground for small pox epidemics throughout the state as well which led to major vaccination efforts. These efforts were complicated, however, by the persistent fear of vaccination and the refusal to participate among the mill population, as well as mill officials lax enforcement of vaccinations. When mill operatives in Union “literally fought public health officials attempts to inoculate their children for smallpox,

---

<sup>46</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 463

<sup>47</sup> David Carlton, *Mill and Town in South Carolina, 1880-1920* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 153.

management supported them” while epidemics ravaged and continued to ravage South Carolina in the years to come.<sup>48</sup>

Though disease, poverty, and poor education posed significant threats to the town people and constituted a significant portion of the mill problem; the most significant aspect of the mill problem for both town people and mill owners was the threat posed by the possibility of unionization of the mill workers. A significant portion of middle class townspeople were not opposed to the idea of unions, which is evident from an orator at the 1901 Columbia Labor Day festivities; “if farmers, lawyers, bankers, merchants, dentists, drummers, manufacturers, editors, all have their organized societies [...] then why not the operatives of our factories?”<sup>49</sup> What they were opposed to, however, was the violence that often followed efforts of unionization and undermining the status quo. The possibility of mass unionization remained slim until the 1920s and the arrival of the Great Depression. Until then there were occasional sparks of massive labor resistance and labor violence, especially in the textile mills, in response to employers hiring African American labor. This threat, however, was quelled in South Carolina with legislation in 1915, which excluded blacks “from all but the most menial jobs inside the textile mills” and was “essentially a legal ratification of a system already in place.”<sup>50</sup> What the town residents desired most was stability and order, not violence and chaos. This emphasis on stability would appear once again during the Hollings in the midst of the civil rights movement.

---

<sup>48</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 466.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 461.

<sup>50</sup> Jack Bass and W. Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 69-70.

While the South contemplated how to deal with the mill problem the arrival of the Great Depression derailed their efforts and sent the region spiraling back into poverty and turmoil. For most of the United States, the Great Depression began after the October 1929 stock market crash; in the South, however, and especially in South Carolina the depression arrived at the beginning of the 1920s. The turmoil began first in the agricultural sector of the southern economy. In the run up to World War I, cotton prices stood at thirteen cents a pound and the year 1914 also saw a record crop. However, when war broke out in Europe, foreign markets for cotton dried up and prices plummeted to 6.5 to 7 cents a pound.

To combat this, South Carolina created a system of state owned warehouses that controlled the storing and marketing of the crop. When the farmer placed his cotton in these facilities he received a certificate of deposit that could be used to renew his loans at local banks.<sup>51</sup> The state also limited the amount of acreage that a farmer could use to plant cotton. These efforts mirrored the efforts of the Wilson administration's Cotton Warehouse Act. In response, prices began to rise in 1915 and, with the entry of the United States into the war in 1917, prices skyrocketed to forty cents a pound by the spring of 1920. This led to a short but profitable time in which everyone from the sharecropper to the bankers and merchants made money. With the war's end and the dried up demand for cotton, prices began to gradually fall in 1921 and by December of that year reached 13.5 cents a pound. These sagging prices in cotton also applied to other

---

<sup>51</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 480.

crops such as tobacco; in addition to this the boll weevil and several years of drought “marked the beginning of a rural depression that affected the entire state.”<sup>52</sup>

The collapse in cotton prices naturally affected the productivity of the textile industry. In the aftermath of World War I it appeared that the southern textile mills had overtaken the textile industry in New England, which began a long and protracted decline. However, Gavin Wright in *Old South, New South* contends this is not the case. While the region did overtake New England in the textile industry, the South did not experience an economic resurgence during this time but instead a depression. During this time period investment in the southern textile industry slowed down drastically. While the number of mill workers substantially increased during this time many of these workers had difficulty finding full time work, southern textile mills saw very little profit during this time or none at all, and the mills began to create rolls of spare workmen that they could use if and when they needed them.<sup>53</sup> During this time the mills attempted to use fewer workers and assign them to more looms or machinery than the number agreed as a fair assignment. This stretch out method, in addition to wage cuts, throughout the southern textile industry, created labor unrest; which resulted in strikes and walkouts that increased in the region throughout the latter half of the 1920s and early 1930s and created an unstable element in southern society.

In addition to the problems affecting agriculture and the textile industry, the “per capita income of South Carolinians dropped from \$261 in 1929 to \$151 in 1933,” cotton

---

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 482.

<sup>53</sup> Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1986), 147.

prices plummeted further to a little more than 4.5 cents a pound by June of 1932, and major banking and financial institutions began to go under in the state.<sup>54</sup> The state government seemed unable and at certain times unwilling to help mitigate the circumstances. No social safety net existed in the state because “opponents of social legislation blocked [it] on the grounds that the state’s constitution permitted assistance only for Confederate veterans, their widows, and faithful slaves;” and by 1936 the state was only one of six states without old-age pensions, “one of fourteen without assistance for the blind, and one of two with no aid for dependent children.”<sup>55</sup> To the relief of many, however, the state managed to pass relief measures that addressed these demographics in 1936. Yet, this severe poverty left local relief agencies unable to cope with the enormous needs in their areas; many counties in the state had an unemployment rate of over thirty per cent. While local relief agencies were pushed to the limit, “in rural South Carolina individuals were literally dying from hunger, and in Columbia many were on the verge of starvation.”<sup>56</sup>

Despite the tremendous efforts and promise of the promoters of the first wave of industrialization, the South found itself in similar circumstances as it did in the mid-nineteenth century. As a result of the Great Depression the agricultural and textile economies were ruined, there was massive unemployment, severe poverty, and the inability of state governments to take on the devastation that the depression wrought upon the South made them seem incompetent. In South Carolina, the Great Depression years

---

<sup>54</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 499.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 499.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 500.

can best be defined by the following trend: “banks began to close, textile mills laid off, rehired, and then laid off workers. The rural population remained trapped in cycles of debt and tenancy, and the larger towns and cities languished.”<sup>57</sup> South Carolina, despite the efforts of industrial efforts, remained a heavily impoverished agricultural state dependent upon cotton and tobacco cultivation. Increasingly, it appeared as though in order to break the cycle of poverty that plagued the South since the end of the Civil War, the region would have to diversify its economy beyond industries that merely supported its agricultural pursuits.

### **A New Beginning**

Despite this economic ruin there was an approaching economic resurgence that began in the latter half of the 1930s. During the New Deal years, southern businessmen, the Roosevelt administration, and local politicians reassessed their efforts and methods of attracting industry to the area. During this time the rulebook on southern economic development would be rewritten, massive infrastructure and internal improvements were enacted in the area as part of New Deal legislation, and the groundwork for the optimism that Hollings found in 1963 was laid.

This new era, unlike the first wave of industrialization, would see many of the promises of the first wave fulfilled but the price of this success would be one of the most distinctive features of southern society—segregation. The legacy of the first wave of industrialization is one of optimism and reality, success and defeat, profit and poverty which helped to create the reality that Fritz Hollings and other southern governors had to

---

<sup>57</sup> Jack Bass and W. Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 79.

contend with in the aftermath of the Great Depression. While many southerners believed, and they certainly could present a convincing case in 1933, that poverty and defeat were insurmountable elements of southern society the groundwork for a new society and what would eventually become the Sunbelt South was already in the process of being laid.

## CHAPTER III

### A TIME OF CHANGE

While the years leading up to the Great Depression proved to be a challenging time for the South rife with poverty and despair, the years following this economic turmoil were transformative in not only the realm of economics but also socially and politically. This second wave of industrialization is one in which southern state governments took a more proactive approach to industrial recruitment with booster organizations, active marketing and solicitation of state resources, tax incentives, and anti-union sentiment. A result of this second industrial wave is that the agricultural influence that so often influenced and shaped southern history was broken as the region became more economically diverse and industrialized. In the political realm, the South shifted away from the grassroots and populist elements that dominated politics during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Instead, there was a gradual power shift in state government from a legislature dominated by rural politicians to a more urban dominated one. Along with this shift in power, there was also shift in the perceived role of state government. For most of its history, South Carolinians feared the effects of a strong and active state government. To many, state government was according to one historian “at best a parasite, supplying the lazy and incompetent with sinecures financed by working men” and at worst a tyrannical force intruding upon the lives of citizens with regulation and taxes.<sup>58</sup> The public’s shift in the perception of the role of state governments included not only using the state legislature and governor’s office as a

---

<sup>58</sup> David L. Carlton & Peter A. Coclanis, *The South, The Nation, & the World: Perspectives on Southern Economic Development* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), 141.

vehicle for industrial recruitment and development; it also included allowing state governments to financially fund some business activities, improve education, and social welfare systems, and bring technological advancement into the state.

One reason for this change is due to the lasting effects of the Great Depression and the New Deal in South Carolina. Perhaps no other congressional delegation championed, at first, the New Deal more so than the South Carolina congressional delegation. At the time South Carolina was one of the most Democratic states in the nation with one of the most senior delegations in Congress, due to the fact that at the time South Carolina politicians were rarely voted out of office. The state's delegation applauded Franklin Roosevelt's efforts to use the federal government as a means of restoring economic prosperity. From their perspective, state's rights and laissez faire capitalism "practically ruined the Palmetto state in the 1920s," and they were convinced that Congress and the president should use all of the power of the federal government to promote economic recovery in agriculture, business, banking, labor relations, and unemployment compensation.<sup>59</sup> The result of this change in perception and support of the New Deal is that the state received an incredible injection of public works programs and the long struggling Santee-Cooper Electric Cooperative finally commenced after the construction of hydroelectric dams in the state. Other benefits that the state reaped from the New Deal were an increase in the literate population of the state due to federal adult educational programs, low-income housing construction, and an expanded Charleston Navy Yard. One of the most significant effects of the New Deal was in the rise of per-

---

<sup>59</sup> Jack Irby Hayes, Jr., *South Carolina and the New Deal* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 21.

capita net income. In 1930 South Carolina ranked forty-eighth in per-capita net income, \$233, but by 1940 the figure rose to \$281 and the state's ranking increased to forty-fifth; what is more significant than this is that it was the second highest percentage increase in the country.<sup>60</sup> Even with this increase, however, the state still had a long way to go to catch up with the national average. The result of state and federal government activity in the state during the 1930s and 1940s is that despite all of the apprehension in the past about the tyrannical effects of a proactive state government, the government during this time succeeded in improving the state's infrastructure in the midst of an economic depression.

Entering this arena of active state and federal government and its ability to produce positive changes in society was a twenty-five year old World War II veteran and newly minted lawyer from Charleston. After returning from the war, Fritz Hollings was well aware of the fact that the state and the region lagged behind the rest of the nation. Reflecting on these years in his memoir *Making Government Work*, Hollings stated that he

returned to a state that had many problems. Illiteracy was far too common. Pockets of poverty were obvious to anyone willing to see them; our civil rights inequities were beginning to be recognized; and there was no industry to speak of. Those looking for a job were headed out of state.<sup>61</sup>

After graduation and joining his uncle's Charleston law firm, Hollings initially sought to steer clear from politics. In 1948, however, at the insistence of his uncle and the law firm, Fritz entered the race for a seat in the South Carolina House of Representatives. In doing

---

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 185.

<sup>61</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 7.

so, Hollings entered this contest at a time in which many of the problems that he would eventually face as governor were coming to fruition—civil rights, economic development, educational improvement, and the improvement of the state’s image.

As a freshman member of the General Assembly, Hollings discovered the tone that would mark his entire political career. In an attempt to defuse a potentially inflammatory situation when asked by the *Charleston News and Courier* during the 1948 campaign as to whether or not he would solicit the black vote, he responded with his own question for the paper, “do you or do you not solicit Negro subscribers and advertisers to your newspaper?”<sup>62</sup> In addition to tone, he also discovered issues that he would champion during his time in the state house and governor’s mansion—education, economic development, and infrastructural improvements. After a visit to a dilapidated African American school, and as he recounted in *Making Government Work*, with Charleston’s Superintendent of Education, he was shocked at the inequity and impoverishment of not only the African American school system but the entire school system as well. In response to this problem, he was able to secure a sales tax that would go toward improvements for the entire state education system, including new school construction.

In addition to this success, during his first term he served as a member of the House Ways and Means Committee and by his second term in the Assembly elected to serve as speaker pro tempore in 1951 and 1953. These prominent positions quickly accelerated his political career as a prominent member of the General Assembly. With this advantage, Hollings entered the race for Lieutenant Governor in 1954 and won.

---

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 13.

During this time, he became one of the prominent champions for industrial recruitment because Governor George Timmerman “thought it undignified to hustle for industry.”<sup>63</sup> This meant that Hollings was oftentimes notified at the last moment that he needed to meet with business leaders and explain Timmerman’s absence. These efforts as a successful member of the General Assembly, speaker pro tempore, and his industrial recruitment activities were excellent preparation for his tenure as Governor of South Carolina. In addition to this, Hollings’s determination to make government work for the benefit of the people coupled with an awareness of the state’s economic troubles, set the stage for a new type of governor in South Carolina.

### **Priority Number One**

While the South made some economic progress in the wake of the benefits of the New Deal and since the Roosevelt administration declared the region the nation’s number one economic problem in the late 1930s, the region still had a long way to go in order to break the bonds of poverty and lack of economic diversification. As Walter Edgar describes in *South Carolina: A History*, at the conclusion of the war and with the arrival of veterans such as Hollings in state government, the county elites were on the defensive to preserve the status quo.<sup>64</sup> The floodgates for change, however, opened due to the New Deal and World War II and the amount of power the rural elites had before would gradually be lost to the metropolitan elites. These urban elites did not wish to preserve the status quo of an agricultural and textile-dominated economy and quickly worked to change the state by diversifying and strengthen its economy.

---

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>64</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 552.

The concern for economic development was not isolated to the state of South Carolina but was shared by business leaders and state governments throughout the region beginning in the late 1930s with Mississippi's Balance Agriculture with Industry (BAWI) program. This program would be the model that other southern states would follow in their feverish pursuit for industry from the 1940s and into the 1960s. The BAWI program promoted the idea that state governments could champion economic expansion as a legitimate governmental function. While the practice of granting subsidies to industries existed before BAWI, they were mostly on the local level all paid for by local booster organizations and governments. This program introduced "a system wherein the state sanctioned and supervised the use of municipal bonds to finance plant construction" in an orderly manner; this resulted in "an era of more competitive subsidization and broader state and local government involvement in industrial development efforts."<sup>65</sup>

Elements of BAWI included state subsidization of industry, industrial promotion through public relations campaigns, and the construction of buildings in which to house industries. The architect of this program was Governor Hugh Lawson White, a successful businessman in the state's lumber industry. Under this program to stimulate industrial development, Mississippi created a complex bureaucratic process to ensure a stable and business like approach in an "era of state sanctioned and supervised subsidies to new industries" as opposed to the frenzied and unorganized scramble for industry that had long dominated not only Mississippi but also other southern states as well.<sup>66</sup> Under this

---

<sup>65</sup> James C. Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development, 1936-1990* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 5.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

program, a state industrial commission of three members would authorize a community's local government to obtain land and buildings for new industry only after it determined whether to approve the community's request for a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity. In making this decision, and in turn either granting or denying a community's ability to pursue an industry, the commission looked at a variety of factors.<sup>67</sup> These factors or guidelines included a sufficient labor supply within the community to supply "one and one-half applicants for each job," bonds issued could not exceed ten percent of the community's total assessed valuation of taxable property, and the enterprise had to show a reasonable "prospect of success and would serve the interests of the locality without burdening the taxpayers."<sup>68</sup> The benefits of this program, White reasoned, would be that it would provide jobs for the state's unemployed and the additional revenue generated from property taxes and payrolls would allow the state to supply desperately needed social services to the state's citizens. When passed by the Mississippi legislature the rivalry between rural and urban politicians was readily apparent in those who supported and opposed this program. While the program passed, the overwhelming majority of those who opposed it were politicians from rural areas or farmers themselves that did not want to pay the higher property taxes that the program advocated or lose their agricultural labor supply to industries.<sup>69</sup>

While Mississippi centralized its effort to recruit industry in the late 1930s, South Carolina lacked such a concerted effort well into the latter half of the 1950s. This is not to

---

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid 15.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 15.

say, however, that the post-war governors were not concerned with economic development, it just was not their top priority. Both Governors Thurmond and Byrnes sought to recruit industry while Hollings's predecessor, Governor Timmerman, was less than enthusiastic in his efforts. While the state had success in recruiting industry during this time, "due to local boosters or simply luck," the state still had a long way to go economically.<sup>70</sup> For example, in 1949 the state's per capita income was still one of the lowest in the country, "being only about 60 per cent of the national average."<sup>71</sup> This is despite a 212.3 per cent increase between 1929 and 1949.

In his memoir *All in One Lifetime*, James F. Byrnes reflected on his efforts to attract industry to the state. Though he found it surprising that many expected him to recruit industries, Byrnes had some success in his efforts.<sup>72</sup> While all three of Hollings's predecessors—Thurmond, Byrnes, and Timmerman—had success in recruiting industry to South Carolina, economic development was not the number one priority of their administration. A lot of the focus of these three administrations was on the state's efforts to resist integration. Another limitation of the state's efforts to recruit industry was an antiquated development board. It was only in 1954 that the modern state development board, with its primary purpose of recruiting industry to the state, came into being. This seems to have helped improve the state's ability to recruit industry because Governor Timmerman's first year in office, 1955, was a landmark year for state industrial recruiting efforts. However, as he increasingly grew "weary of the demands that Charles

---

<sup>70</sup>Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 531.

<sup>71</sup>New York Times, *South Carolina Income Up*, October 1, 1950.

<sup>72</sup>James F. Byrnes, *All in One Lifetime* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1958), 411.

E. Daniel and Development Board Director Robert M. Cooper were making on him [...] as his term drew to a close, the pace of industrial recruitment slowed.”<sup>73</sup> The economic figures for his term, 1955-1959, are important to note—\$562 million in new or expanded industry and 28,000 new jobs. Timmerman’s Lieutenant Governor and successor Fritz Hollings would improve upon these figures by making economic development the number one priority of his administration and set an economic trend that continued well into the 1980s.

### **“A Young Aggressive Salesman for South Carolina”<sup>74</sup>**

The heated issue in the South Carolina gubernatorial election of 1958 was economic development and the need for industry. All three candidates made this one of the top priorities of their campaigns. In the end Hollings won the Democratic primary after an arduous campaign against Donald S. Russell, a Byrnes protégé, and in doing so became the governor in waiting due to the state’s one-party dominance. Some of Hollings’s support in the governor’s race came from business leaders such as Charles E. Daniel, a former US Senator and founder of Daniel International Construction Corporation, and John K. Cauthen, executive vice president of the South Carolina Textile Manufacturers Association and an associate of the Barnwell Ring—a powerful group of legislators that included Solomon Blatt and Edgar Brown. In a letter to a Greenville businessman Cauthen wrote on the outcome of the governor’s race that “our man [Hollings] never once deviated from his conservative standings for a good industrial

---

<sup>73</sup> R. Phillip Stone, “Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962” (Ph.D diss., The University of South Carolina, 2003), 1.

<sup>74</sup> Charles Wickenberg, “Hollings says he’ll sell South Carolina,” *Charlotte Observer*, 26 June, 1958.

climate and was not guilty at any time of demagoguery.”<sup>75</sup> In addition to the support of local businessmen, prominent state politicians seemed to support Hollings’s quest for industry and economic development. In an address to the House of Representatives at the beginning of the legislative session, Speaker Solomon Blatt made the case that “high-quality public services, including education, roads, airports, harbors, and health care facilities, were essential to attracting industry.”<sup>76</sup>

During the 1958 campaign newspaper reporters stated that Hollings portrayed himself as “a young aggressive salesman for South Carolina, ready to go” who repeatedly stated, “industry is coming South. It is now a question of which Southern state.”<sup>77</sup> After winning the primary and becoming essentially the governor in waiting, Hollings wasted no time in working to fulfill his campaign promise of being one of the state’s top industrial promoters. Before taking office, Hollings wrote to Buck Mickel, vice-president of Daniel Construction Company, Inc, in Greenville asking for advice and information that would be useful in his administration to help attract industry to the state.

In other words, if we took a trip to Kalamazoo tomorrow and there was a paper plant interested in locating in Columbia, what could one as governor expect to be asked [...] What I want to know is what are the basics that we can study up on this fall. In other words, we’ll have to employ somebody else to play the golf and drink the liquor.<sup>78</sup>

This sense of urgency and eagerness on Hollings’s part was due to the fact that in 1958, a lot needed to be done in order to make the state more attractive to industry. A

---

<sup>75</sup> John K. Cauthen to Alester G. Furman, Jr., July 16, 1958, in Charles E. Daniel Papers, Clemson University Libraries, Special Collections. Hereafter Daniel Papers, CU.

<sup>76</sup> R. Phillip Stone, “Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962” (Ph.D diss., The University of South Carolina, 2003), 9.

<sup>77</sup> Charles Wickenberg, “Hollings says He’ll sell South Carolina,” *Charlotte Observer*, 26 June, 1958.

<sup>78</sup> Fritz Hollings Letter to Buck Mickel, July 7, 1958, Daniel Papers, CU.

1950s report by DuPont's Rayon Department of suitable locations for the production of yarn lists favorable and unfavorable features, from a business perspective, of the state. While the favorable features included moderate property taxes, a favorable anti-labor record, and a significant concentration of textile industries in the state, the unfavorable features revealed how far Hollings and the state had to go to appear more favorable to industry. As the report cites, the state ranked twenty-fourth in their "Economic Rating of 38 States for the Purpose of Plant Location" and fell into their "average or questionable category for purposes of plant location" due to a high corporate income and franchise tax, a high personal income tax, and questionable fiscal trends in the state due to its debt levels.<sup>79</sup> It is unknown whether Hollings saw this report but he wasted no time as governor addressing several issues that the report cited as unfavorable business conditions.

In his inaugural address and in a speech to the General Assembly the next day, Hollings sought to address the state's fiscal problems. He stated that as governor, "our legislature will not enact an appropriation bill and I, as governor, will not sign such legislation except within the expected revenue."<sup>80</sup> The next day, in an address to the General Assembly on January 21, 1959, Hollings urged the state legislature to solve the state's budget problems. For the 1959-1960 fiscal year, the State Budget and Control Board estimated that the state would run a \$13,102,032.00 deficit on top of an almost

---

<sup>79</sup> [Plant Sites Investigated in South Carolina—DuPont 1950], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>80</sup> [Inaugural Address of the Honorable Ernest F. Hollings as Governor of South Carolina], [Fritz Hollings: In His Own Words Digital Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

fifteen million dollar deficit of the past two years.<sup>81</sup> This was despite a state constitutional requirement that the state have a balanced budget. Hollings urged the legislature to address this problem by creating a planned financial program that would meet the state's financial expenditures in the years to come. The program included a withholding tax provision on the state's income tax for all South Carolinians as well as a laundry list of other revenue generating measures that ranged from the removal of the tax exemption on the sale of coal and electricity to an increase in the cigarette tax.<sup>82</sup>

One source of revenue that Hollings refused to raise was the state sales tax rate, a rate which he helped set with legislation in 1951 that established the state sales tax for educational expenditures. He based his refusal to do so on the fact that doing so would make it one of the highest in the nation and put the state in "a bad position in the highly competitive field of attracting new industry" because the state would become a high tax state to prospective industrialists.<sup>83</sup> At the end of this address, Hollings urged the legislature to act quickly to correct the state's finances in order to attract industry. As Hollings reflected in *Making Government Work*, without the approval of this budgetary proposal "South Carolina's transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy would have been put off. To get out of the ditch, we had to demonstrate that government was fiscally responsible."<sup>84</sup> The General Assembly would soon signal its support of the governor's efforts to correct the state's fiscal problems and attract industry. After some

---

<sup>81</sup> R. Phillip Stone, "Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962" (Ph.D diss., The University of South Carolina, 2003), Chapter 9, 16.

<sup>82</sup> [Address by Governor Ernest F. Hollings to the General Assembly of South Carolina], [Fritz Hollings: In His Own Words Digital Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 49.

initial opposition from tobacco interests, and others in the state legislature, the General Assembly passed and Hollings received the budgetary proposals that he outlined in his January address in April, 1959. These budgetary measures not only solved the state's debt problems, but also led to an unexpected budget surplus during the 1960-1961 fiscal year.<sup>85</sup>

In the meantime, a joint committee had been appointed to assess the needs of the State Development Board on February 4, 1959 and to report its findings to the General Assembly by March 15, 1959. In a break with the past, the committee recommended not merely obtaining industry for the sake of obtaining industry or focus on one singular industry—such as textiles. Instead, the committee recognized the necessity of broadening the state's "economic base through the location in our State of desirable new industries."<sup>86</sup> The report also found that the state needed to spend more effectively on promotion of industry and tourism. Of the states in the region—Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia—South Carolina devoted significantly less than the other states to such promotional activities. Florida, which spent the most on promotion of industry and tourism, was the fastest growing state in the Southeast. While the committee report pointed out this fact, it did not suggest an increase of appropriations for advertising and promotion as a cure all because the state could not afford to compete at that level of expenditures. Instead, South Carolina "must like an outmanned and outequipped army, win our battles by dint of superior planning and superior tactics;"

---

<sup>85</sup> R. Phillip Stone, "Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962" (Ph.D diss., The University of South Carolina, 2003), Chapter 9, 33.

<sup>86</sup> "Report of Joint Committee Surveying the Needs of the South Carolina State Development Board," in Francis M. Hipp Papers, Personal Series, Liberty Life Insurance Company Papers, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries. Hereafter Hipp Papers, CU.

which could be accomplished with “good planning, the judicious use of a modest additional appropriation to strengthen our Development Team, the welding of our State into a coordinated campaign for industry” and a reorganization of the state’s development program.”<sup>87</sup>

The committee’s recommendations included the finding that the state should be getting a larger share of investments and industry than it was currently securing and to do this the governor should carry out his intention to serve as an industrial promoter of the state by traveling and visiting industrial prospects. The committee also recommended that the State Development Board be reorganized to include a greater representation of the state and have its staff expanded. It further found that the General Assembly should authorize the committee’s findings regarding the Development Board, encourage vocational education, and authorize the creation of non-profit corporations to facilitate the financing and the construction of new industrial buildings.<sup>88</sup>

### **Becoming Competitive**

With the approval of the recommendations regarding the State Development Board; the adoption of Hollings’s budgetary and fiscal plan, the hiring of Walter Harper, a person instrumental in the development of North Carolina’s research triangle, as the director of the Development Board; and the designation of Francis M. Hipp as chairman of the Development Board all within the first few months of Hollings’s term as governor the state was on a path to getting out of the proverbial economic and fiscal ditch that it

---

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

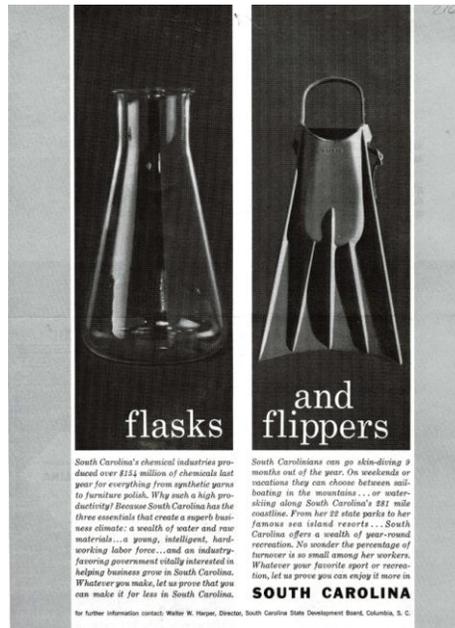
<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

had been in over the last few years.<sup>89</sup> To build upon this progress, Hollings would, over the rest of his administration, and with the help of state business leaders, pursue a course that resulted in a massive attainment of capital and industry to the state. This course included a public relations and ad campaign touting the state's natural resources and labor force in prominent newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, visiting and hosting business leaders throughout the nation and the world, and creating a top-notch technical education system all the while maintaining fiscal discipline within the state government.

As part of the industrial recruitment efforts, the state of South Carolina and the State Development Board opened an office in New York City to meet with prospective industrialist and financiers. The state launched an advertising blitz both in the nation's largest newspapers and within the state. The advertisements highlighted not only the state's business and industrial resources but its recreational possibilities as well. One of the ads, called "Flask and Flippers," targeted the chemical industry and highlighted the revenue produced by chemical companies located in the state as well as the natural resources necessary for such an industry—water resources and an educated and intelligent work force. The ad also made note of the fact that in addition to business resources, the state also contained a plethora of recreational activities that included numerous state parks and the opportunity to go skin-diving or water skiing all year round.

---

<sup>89</sup> In a twist of irony as stated by Hollings in *Making Government Work*, Harper due to a typographical error actually made more than the governor. Francis Hipp actually helped the state purchase an airplane for the Development Board for the purpose of business travel and shuttling prospective business clients to South Carolina. The plane cost \$50,000; the state paid half, and the Liberty Life Insurance Corporation paid the other half.



SC Development Ad, Francis M. Hipp Papers, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries.

Other ads, such as one in *The Union Daily Times*, highlighted Governor Hollings's efforts to attract industry to the state and champions the fact that South Carolina workers have "both the aptitude and the attitude" to operate in any type of new industry that comes to the state and competitively compete with other states as well.<sup>90</sup>

Rhetoric and advertisements in local and national newspapers were one thing but actually having the capability to produce a flexible labor pool that could be easily trained and educated in a timely manner for a prospective industry another. This was something South Carolina lacked when Hollings entered office. The groundwork for the state's technical education system began during his campaign for governor. While attending a Lutheran Church conference in Dayton, Ohio, Hollings first observed that state's technical education system and was amazed at its ability to train skilled laborers. Aware that many South Carolinians simply did not have the industrial skills required for new

<sup>90</sup> *The Union Daily Times* clipping, April 6, 1959 in Daniel Papers, CU.

industries and robust economic growth, in his memoir he stated that he decided that if elected, he was "going to get one of these programs" for South Carolina.<sup>91</sup>

State politicians shared this sense of urgency to obtain a program similar to North Carolina's and Georgia's industrial training and research centers. In a letter to State Senator Edgar Brown, Charles E. Daniel wrote of the development in North Carolina that "undoubtedly it is a program of great consequence and will result in the most beneficial effects to the state of North Carolina."<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, he wrote that the progress at the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, and the Research Triangle are "items of outstanding scientific progress in the two states adjoining us emphasize to me the terrific shortcomings along these lines in South Carolina and the great necessity of taking immediate action to do something about our situation."<sup>93</sup> This concern was the main point behind S.150, which established an advisory committee for technical training and provide appropriations therefore. One of the reasons for the establishment of this committee was that

North Carolina and Georgia have both instituted excellent trade and technical training programs and North Carolina readily admits that seventy-five per cent of its incoming industry locates there as a result of its technical training programs; [and] our [South Carolina's] existing trade and technical training facilities are doing an outstanding job with limited facilities and budgets but are not ample to fill the needs of our rapidly expanding industrial economy.<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>91</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 2008), 52.

<sup>92</sup> "Edgar Brown Papers, Letter to Edgar Brown From Charles E. Daniel Re: Research Triangle in NC: October 17, 1957", in Edgar Brown Papers, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries. Hereafter Brown Papers,

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> "S.150: A bill to Establish an Advisory Committee for Technical Training, and to Provide an Appropriation Therefore," Hipp Papers, CU.

Increasingly, state leaders realized that in order to compete with their neighbors they had to modernize their educational infrastructure.

In 1961, the General Assembly created the South Carolina Technical Education Committee.<sup>95</sup> Part of the program involved the Special Training for Employee Progress (STEP) that would provide “special training for South Carolina citizens who seek to improve their employment situation” in specially designed programs to “prepare workers for jobs in specific plants.”<sup>96</sup> Therefore the STEP program created a solution in helping state residents acquire employment and aiding industries in overcoming start-up problems. Another aspect of the state’s technical education plan involved the construction of Technical Education Centers throughout the state—the first of which was Greenville Tech, opened in 1962. These centers, however, were not entirely financed by the state. Instead, they were largely financed by local communities with the state only providing thirteen per cent of the funds related to construction while the local community, or region served, contributed the remaining eighty-seven per cent.<sup>97</sup> These centers provided educational instruction in basic fields of industry as well as designating course levels by technician, trade, and general knowledge. They were not, however, designed in a shortsighted manner because they were also created to keep state residents and workers

---

<sup>95</sup> The story behind the creation of the state technical education program is outlined in detail in Hollings’s *Making Government Work*. It is an insightful and humorous look into the nature of South Carolina politics during this time. For instance, in an effort to secure funding for the program, Hollings sent a bottle of bourbon to the Finance Committee. After the bottle arrived, the governor and the committee hashed out the funding plans over the bottle of spirits.

<sup>96</sup>[In STEP with TEC], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

up to date with technological, manufacturing, and industrial changes. Another groundbreaking aspect of these centers is that they were not segregated.<sup>98</sup>

In addition to the state technical education system, Hollings also launched the “Fifty to First Program” which was designed to take the state from fiftieth to first in education. In addition to the programs call for a state technical education system, it also called for a “major expansion of industrial arts programs in high schools.”<sup>99</sup> At the time, the high school vocational program heavily emphasized agriculture while only twenty per cent of workers were employed in this field. Clearly, Hollings’s intent was not only to retool workers in the labor force but also educate current high school students to be competitive in the labor market. This program also signaled a departure from an agriculture-dominated economy to an industrial one by deemphasizing agricultural programs.

At the same time Hollings and the state government put the state on a sound financial footing, obtained a AAA credit rating, created the infrastructure required to recruit business and industry, and supply them with a competent labor force. Hollings set out to champion and recruit industries through personal visits with business leaders as well as trade junkets. With the help of the State Development Board, state business leaders, and a willing General Assembly, Hollings could champion the state’s recent economic developments and assure industrialists that South Carolina was a business friendly community. One of his first meetings with industrialists took place before he was

---

<sup>98</sup> After consulting with several South Carolinian historians, the reason for this is unclear. It may have been an oversight or intentional but I have been unable to find evidence to support either position.

<sup>99</sup> [Executive Department Studies, Education Pg VI-13], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

even governor when he went to the Tennessee Eastman Company in late 1958. Charles Daniel also used his various business connections to talk with the heads of various corporations and arrange meetings with the governor. In a March 27, 1959 letter to Dr. Jerry McAfee, vice-president of the Gulf Oil Corporation, Daniel wrote with great interest about the news that the corporation is considering locating a refinery in the Charleston area. As a selling point Daniel highlighted the fact that,

we have in South Carolina, a new Governor, the Honorable Ernest. F. Hollings, who, incidentally is from Charleston. He is a young man, very capable and a strong friend of business [...] I would like very much to bring the Governor out to Pittsburgh to visit with you and your associates and some of our industrial friends.<sup>100</sup>

In addition to such one on one meetings and courting of particular industries, Hollings also tried some approaches that were groundbreaking and unconventional for southern governors at the time.

One unconventional approach as governor was to go on a junket to New York City in October 1959 and, with a contingent of South Carolina politicians and business leaders, meet with various business leaders. The purpose of this trip was to provide an opportunity for the governor and other key players to work together on a development program, to encourage the support of those in New York in attracting industry to the state, and to promote the state's agricultural products. This tour was not a high-pressure sale for industrialists to locate in the state; instead, the proposal specifically stated that this trip "would be purely and simply an approach to try to interest the prospects generally in the State and provide them with detailed information as a follow-up at a later

---

<sup>100</sup> Charles E. Daniel Letter to Jerry McAfee, Daniel Papers, CU.

date.”<sup>101</sup> During the three-day trip more than 130 state business leaders made over 500 calls on industrialists in New York. In addition, Governor Hollings spoke to over 375 executives at three luncheons and made personal calls on a number of industrialists as well.

However, Hollings broke all precedents in 1960 with his South American Trade Development tour. In doing so, Hollings became the first southern governor to “go abroad and personally court overseas corporations to invest in the American South.”<sup>102</sup> The purpose of this trip was to develop new markets for the state of South Carolina.<sup>103</sup> Countries visited during this trip included Argentina, Brazil, Trinidad, Venezuela, and Uruguay in September 1960. One of the selling points used with South American business leaders was the Port of Charleston; “the quick turn-around time at the Port of Charleston, the rate schedule and easy access to Mid-western markets” impressed local shipping executives.<sup>104</sup> The delegation also met with various textile executives in the area in the hopes that they could lure some of the plants to the state or at least create additional business for the state with these South American textile firms.

In addition to these regional trips, Hollings was also interested in the possibility of regional cooperation between southern states in their attempts to attract industry. For this reason, Hollings was one of only three Deep South governors to attend the Barnett Conference, also known as the Conference of Conservative Governors, in 1961. This

---

<sup>101</sup> Proposed Industrial Trip to New York, Hipp Papers, CU.

<sup>102</sup> Jack Bass and W. Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 112.

<sup>103</sup> [Ernie Wright Memo on Stated Purpose of trip to South America], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>104</sup> “South American Tour Labeled ‘Success,’” *The State*, 2 October 1960, 2-C.

conference was the brainchild of Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett. In addition to Barnett and Hollings, the other governor in attendance was Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus. While only three governors attended the conference, eight southern states sent other officials to attend. The specific purpose of this conference was for southern states to unite for economic, political, and technological expansion. More specifically these areas of expansion included:

- 1.) Expansion of the South's Economic Position
- 2.) Expansion of the South's Ties and Trade with Latin America.
- 3.) Expansion of the South's Political Power in the Nation.
- 4.) Expansion of the South's Position in Scientific and Technological Education and Research.
- 5.) Expansion of the South's Position in its Fight for the Right of Self-Determination and for the Preservation of State's Rights and Local Self-Government under the Tenth Amendment of the Constitution.<sup>105</sup>

It was the last stated goal that received the most attention from critics.

A WAGA-TV editorial in Atlanta by Duke Cook criticized Governor Barnett for showing "his true purposes when he ties these [expressed goals]" to the South's "fight for the right of self-determination."<sup>106</sup> However, the defenders of the conference pointed not to Barnett's coded goal that dealt with segregation but the opportunity for economic expansion. Georgia's Attorney General Eugene Cook fired back at Duke Cook's statements at WAGA-TV stating that during the conference there was no mention of segregation. He added "I think you will agree with me that it would be a mistake for those of us who hold responsible positions [...] to decline to discuss the pros and cons of

---

<sup>105</sup>[A program for the Consideration of Governors to be known as: "Southern Action For Expansion: S-A-F-E], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>106</sup> [WAGA-TV editorial], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

any major problems confronting the South.”<sup>107</sup> However, despite the criticism the conference received for its segregationist overtones by racial progressives it is understandable why Hollings would attend the conference due to his focus on economic development in the South. His wariness to join the fight against integration and his limited association with those resisting the process would be revealed in the following year when he refused to join Barnett, at the encouragement of many state politicians, in the fight to resist integration efforts at the University of Mississippi.

### **A Threat to Economic Development**

Despite the criticism of the Barnett Conference as a united effort to resist integration, time was beginning to run out in 1961 as to how South Carolina would handle the issue. During his first two years in office, Hollings made great strides in promoting industry and economic development in the state and repairing the state’s infrastructure and fiscal house in an effort to make the state competitively economically. In 1959, development boosters “made an average of one industry recruitment mission per week” and the results seemed to be paying off. From 1945 to 1958 capital investment in South Carolina amounted to \$917 million in new industry and \$659 million in industrial expansion with an estimated creation of 67,866 jobs. During the Hollings years, there was a total capital investment of \$843 million in new or expanded industry and 56,700 additional jobs.<sup>108</sup>

---

<sup>107</sup> [Letter from Eugene Cook to Duke Cook] [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>108</sup> R. Phillip Stone, “Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962” (Ph.D diss., The University of South Carolina, 2003), Chapter 9, 59.

There was, however, an emerging threat to this development during the second half of his term. The gathering storm that grew throughout the 1950s was beginning to turn violent in the early 1960s with the arrival of forced integration and the backlash that resulted. As this storm threatened to turn violent, one thing that Hollings promised industries—a stable, law and order society—was threatened. While Hollings previously made statements to defend segregation as a member of the South Carolina State House, as a candidate for governor, and as governor, he was quickly approaching a point in which he would have to make a decision as to whether his defense of it had any limits. The decision that he made would either secure the state’s recent economic development or set it back and potentially send the state back into an era of economic malaise. As governor, Hollings wanted to develop a policy that would not only aggressively promote economic development of the State “as a place for business to locate and invest in, but on the development of an improved product—the state—to sell.”<sup>109</sup> The height of the civil rights movement would be the defining moment that would determine whether or not the product Hollings was selling was actually the same product in new packaging or a radically different one.

---

<sup>109</sup> Lacy K. Ford, Jr. and R. Phillip Stone, “Economic Development and Globalization in South Carolina” *Southern Cultures*, (Spring 2007): 23.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PROBLEM THAT COULD DERAIL PROGRESS

As Hollings entered the governor's office in January 1959, the civil rights movement was in full swing. While it had yet to reach its climax that would come in the mid-1960s, the groundwork for potential confrontation between those who pushed for integration and those who favored the status quo had already been laid in the mid-1950s. In 1954, the Supreme Court of the United States held in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas (Brown)* that "segregation in public schools violate[d] the Fourteenth Amendment" and that "Negro children should forthwith be admitted to schools of their choice."<sup>110</sup> *Brown* combined several school segregation cases from diverse regions of the country. While the impact of the case would be felt across the country, one of the cases that was a part of the conglomeration that constituted *Brown* was *Briggs v. Elliott*.

This case originated in Clarendon County, South Carolina, where the petitioners argued that aside from the fact that the Negro schools were wholly inadequate and dilapidated for educational instruction, the "Negro children of public school age in School District #22 and in Clarendon County" by being forced to attend segregated schools were "being discriminated against solely because of their race and color in violation of their rights to equal protection of the laws provided by the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution of the United States."<sup>111</sup> With the filing of this petition and while the rest of the United States gradually confronted the issue of school segregation, the state of

---

<sup>110</sup> *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

<sup>111</sup> Petition of Harry Briggs, et al. , to the Board of Trustees for School District No. 22. 11 November 1949. Clarendon County Board of Education, L14167. South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina.

South Carolina began its protracted effort to maintain the status quo of racial segregation in 1949 with the petition of Harry Briggs that launched the case of *Briggs v. Elliott*.

The sales tax that was part of the effort to maintain this racial arrangement was the sales tax that Hollings spearheaded through the General Assembly in 1951, the revenue from which would be used for infrastructural improvements in education. While Hollings's motivation was to improve the public school system, this does seem to have been the only intention behind the support of the incoming governor, James F. Byrnes, for the tax bill. The petition filed by African American parents of Clarendon County pupils kicked off the case of *Briggs v. Elliott* in 1949 and challenged the separate but equal quality of the state's public school system. As governor, Byrnes declared in 1951 that

it is our duty [the state of South Carolina] to provide the races substantial equality in school facilities. We should do it because it is right. For me, that is sufficient reason [...] what they are entitled to, [the African American population of the state] is equal facilities in their schools. We must see that they get them.<sup>112</sup>

For Byrnes, it seems as though the idea behind his decision was that the problem with segregation in the state of South Carolina was not segregation in itself but that the state had failed to provide state citizens with their constitutionally entitled separate but equal public school facilities. If the state created an education system that was separate but truly equal, then the state would be in line with the Supreme Court's decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* and the state's segregated public school system could be preserved.

---

<sup>112</sup> James F. Byrnes, *All in One Lifetime* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1958), 407-409.

In an effort to do just that, and with the financial resources available to do so due to the newly approved sales tax, Byrnes launched his “Educational Revolution” program. Part of the program used tax revenues and state bonds to improve the state’s educational infrastructure. The state consolidated school districts and built new school buildings for both the white and black students of the state. During his four years in office and as part of the Educational Revolution program, the state spent \$124 million on new school construction and buses; black schools, however, received two-thirds of that amount though black children only made up 40 per cent of the state’s school population.<sup>113</sup> All of this effort expended on the attempt to provide separate but equal schools eventually proved to be futile. The first evidence of this futility came also in 1951 in the federal district court’s ruling in *Briggs*— while the court ruled 2-1 against the plaintiffs, Judge Waring’s dissent provided a glimpse of the Supreme Court’s ruling three years later in *Brown v. Board*. Judge Waring, in his dissent, declared that “segregation in education can never produce equality [...] segregation is per se inequality.”<sup>114</sup> Over the next twelve years, the state of South Carolina attempted to postpone the inevitable; however, the state’s attempts largely were of a legal nature and though the potential for state condoned violence existed at various points along the way it never precipitated.

All the while Hollings, along with various business leaders, was entrenched in the problem of what to do about segregation. Whether as a legal assistant to Robert Figg, Jr., the state’s head counsel during the Supreme Court’s review of *Briggs v. Elliott* in 1952 or

---

<sup>113</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 523. Interestingly, as Edgar notes, the state spent in Clarendon County, where the *Briggs v. Elliott* case originated, \$894,000 for black school construction and only \$103,000 on whites.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid*, 522.

as Governor of South Carolina, the problem of segregation was an ever present question that confronted Hollings and the state during the 1950s and 1960s. The problem posed by the forces of segregation and integration had the potential to unleash racial violence throughout the state due to the backlash of forced integration or massive resistance and hamper the state's ability to attract industry. Though economic development was Hollings's number one goal as governor, the question of integration undoubtedly was the second priority of Hollings's administration and was inextricably linked to his number one priority. Hollings also displayed the same curiosity and desire to be informed on the issue of segregation as he did about the issue of economic development. In an August 1958 letter to Robert Figg, Jr. Hollings indicated that in addition to economic development, he would also spend a significant amount of time dealing with segregation and asks Figg for clarity on the state's position on segregation and the history of that position..

It appears that the greatest issue facing my administration in the next four years will be the segregation-integration problem. As Governor I should have a complete understanding—historically, legally, and morally—of this problem. I should have a ready speaking knowledge of the various phases, and if you could attend some college and take some course, I would enroll today [...] Let's play a game like I was Roberto Rossilini's boy from Italy, had just landed in South Carolina, had no knowledge or understanding of the problem, had been assigned by La Roma Observatore to write a series of articles, and I believed in integrating with everybody [...] What I'm trying to emphasize is that I would like to begin at the beginning because the next Governor of this State should have a complete and thorough, intelligent speaking knowledge of why we segregate and we are going to continue to do so in spite of the Supreme Court.<sup>115</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> [Fritz Hollings Letter to Robert Figg, Jr. August 6, 1958], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

While Hollings entered the governor's office as an avowed defender of the racial status quo, over the next four years a gradual change occurred and in the end the state government acquiesced to the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board* due to his appeals for a "law and order" society. Just four years after taking office, Hollings declared in his farewell speech to the General Assembly that "as we meet, South Carolina is running out of courts. If and when every legal remedy has been exhausted, this General Assembly must make clear South Carolina's choice, a government of laws rather than a government of men."<sup>116</sup> To the hardliners in the Assembly who vowed to defend segregation he urged that

we of today must realize the lesson of one hundred years ago, and move on for the good of South Carolina and our United States [...] It is a hurdle that brings little progress to either side. But the failure to clear it will do us irreparable harm.<sup>117</sup>

What is surprising is that the state's acquiescence to integration was as peaceful as it was considering the state's previous actions and rhetoric on race.

### **A History of Violence Both Physical and Rhetorical**

What makes the state's peaceful acquiescence to integration surprising is its history of racial violence and strong rhetoric both in regard to the defense of segregation as well as the alleged inferiority and danger of African Americans. While Benjamin Ryan Tillman's views on segregation and race are well known, perhaps the more notorious defender of racial segregation was Governor Coleman Blease. While Blease, like Hollings, advocated law and order, his conception of this notion was nothing like that of

---

<sup>116</sup> [Hollings January 1963 General Assembly Address], [Fritz Hollings: In His Own Words Digital Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

Hollings. In fact, Blease “missed few chances to defend the practice of lynching, or, as he termed it, “the divine right of the Caucasian race to dispose of the offending blackamoor without benefit of jury.”<sup>118</sup> This tone of rhetoric defined state leadership toward the issue of race and segregation for most of the early twentieth century.

As one might expect, Blease was not the only state politician who bluntly professed his views on the issue of race. Senator Ellison “Cotton Ed” Smith also made no attempt to hide his racial views. Like Blease, Smith used race as a means to gain support among white voters in the state—especially textile mill workers who would have to compete with African Americans for jobs if they were on an equal playing field. Wilbur J. Cash in *The Mind of The South* describes Smith’s stump speaking rhetoric as “heroic and picturesque profanity” infused with “nigger-baiting as blatant and as barbarous as Blease’s own.”<sup>119</sup> While it is impossible to prove the effect that these racial diatribes had on the citizens of South Carolina, there seems to be a correlation between this rhetoric and the number of lynchings in the state and demonstrated state leadership’s approval of lynching..

During the 1910s and 1920s there was an explosion of racial violence in South Carolina. As Governor of South Carolina, Coleman Blease championed lynching and in one of the more infamous cases even congratulated the leaders of a lynch mob. In 1911 a member of the state legislature and disciple of Blease, John Ashley of Honea Path, led a lynch mob that took the life of an African-American boy: seventeen year old Willis

---

<sup>118</sup> Robert B. Everett, “Race Relations in South Carolina 1900-1932” (Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia, 1969), 9.

<sup>119</sup> Wilbur J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 251.

Jackson. The details of his lynching are grizzly; Jackson “was hanged upside down on a telegraph pole and the lower portion of his body mutilated with a fusillade of from two hundred to two thousand shots.”<sup>120</sup> Despite the plea of some leaders, Blease refused to call out the National Guard to protect Jackson before he was taken from his prison cell and wired his congratulations to Ashley after the fact. This approval of violence toward African Americans helped spark a series of lynchings throughout the state during the 1910s and 1920s.

As the number of lynchings increased in the state during the 1920s, many people were mortified at the lawlessness and barbarism of their neighbors. This violence culminated with the Lowman family’s lynching after being found guilty of shooting the sheriff of Aiken despite the fact that none of them were armed at the time. In all, two men and one woman were brutally murdered in October 1926. The state’s newspapers decried this injustice and the *Greenwood Index Journal* labeled the lynching a “saturnalia of lawlessness and brutal exhibition of contempt for our courts.”<sup>121</sup> Eventually, state leaders like Blease and Smith appeared to be representative of a less civilized era as new leaders emerged. In this new era of the 1930s and 1940s these political leaders like Smith and Blease found themselves out of touch with state and national trends. In *South Carolina and the New Deal* Jack Irby Hayes states that Senator Smith was

born into an era when cotton was king, white was supreme, and farming was the dominant way of life[.] Smith was being force to legislate for an urban nation in an industrial age that was beginning to demonstrate

---

<sup>120</sup> Robert B. Everett, “Race Relations in South Carolina 1900-1932” (Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia, 1969), 190.

<sup>121</sup>As quoted in Robert B. Everett, “Race Relations in South Carolina 1900-1932” (Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia, 1969), 206.

concern for the rights of racial minorities.<sup>122</sup>

While specifically about Smith, the quote can also be applied to Blease and the era of political leadership they represented. While state and political leaders did not embrace or advocate a radical change in the state's racial arrangement, the electorate began to choose politicians who did more than espouse the inferiority of African Americans on the campaign trail and in office. Instead, they began to elect politicians that promised to uphold the racial status quo but also support and promote measures that would not only help the nation but the state as well—specifically the New Deal.

Clearly the destructive forces of lynch mobs were on display and startled the state's leadership and citizens. This might explain the decline in the number of lynchings throughout the 1930s in the state. Furthermore the Smith and Blease years showed that though they preached law and order, this society was rife with racial violence and anything but stable. This is by no means to say that state leaders suddenly advocated racial equality; however, it seems as though they did advocate temperance in regard to racial violence. The decline in the number of lynchings during the 1930s is a testament to this temperate spirit, so much so that by the end of the decade lynchings in South Carolina were no longer common but rare.<sup>123</sup> This decline in racial violence proved to last during the 1930s to the 1960s and undoubtedly had an impact on the outcome of the civil rights era in the state and Hollings's as well as his successor's insistence on law and order and respect for the rule of law.

---

<sup>122</sup> Jack Irby Hayes, Jr., *South Carolina and the New Deal* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 34.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

## Segregation Must and Will Be Maintained

The political and social arena that Fritz Hollings entered in 1948 was drastically different from that of the previous forty years in South Carolina. While there were no state politicians who advocated integration or racial equality, the politician who condoned or even encouraged lynching and racial violence gradually lost support after the Great Depression and World War II in South Carolina. In its wake were politicians who worked to maintain the status quo of white supremacy and racial segregation under the banner of state's rights. In addition to the change in the behavior and attitude of politicians toward the issue of racial segregation, there was also a change in the attitude of the state's elite, especially the prominent business class. In Jack Bass' and Scott Poole's *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina*, the authors dismiss South Carolina's non-confrontational nature in its fight against integration as a foregone conclusion,

A quest for stability among twentieth-century whites had emerged as a central theme in response to the felt memories of the Civil War's devastation and disruptive aftermath. This provided a climate for accommodation to change. Instead of confrontation, South Carolina fought to the end in the courts but obeyed the law when it mandated change.<sup>124</sup>

While this is certainly true in hindsight, the non-violent and non-confrontational nature was not a foregone conclusion in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s and was certainly not a quest that many whites undertook during the early twentieth century. After all, the last documented lynching in South Carolina took place in 1947 with the murder of Willie Earle who was mutilated and shot to death by a posse of white Greenville cab drivers.<sup>125</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup> Jack Bass and W. Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 86.

<sup>125</sup> Eric Connor, "Memorials to Mark State's Last Lynching," *The Greenville News*, 30 January, 2011, sec. A, final edition.

In addition, racial violence was not contained to just white on black but also white on white. In 1956, the band director of the white Camden High school was flogged “by four or five hooded men who accused him of having voiced pro-integration sentiments” though he and his wife maintained that they both held segregationist views.<sup>126</sup>

In addition to actual violence there was also an allusion to potential violence in political speeches and literature if the forces of integration pushed too far. In his 1961 article in the *New York Times*, Senator Olin D. Johnston attempted to explain the achievements of the South to northerners and warn against intrusion. Toward the end of the article, Johnston commented on the issue of racial integration and the perceived agitation of the issue by the federal government and the North and hinted at the potential for trouble if the region were pushed too far.

when people of an area, such as the South, have lived for generations on a basis of separate-but-equal facilities and then are forced to turn their society upside down and reverse every practice they have ever known, trouble can be the only result.<sup>127</sup>

Contrary to what Bass and Poole write, there was a constant threat of racial violence that lurked just below the surface in South Carolina. What kept this from bubbling to the surface at the critical juncture of the civil rights movement in the state was the respect for law and order and the concern over what racial violence would do to the state’s economic development among the state’s prominent business leaders and Hollings. It was not a constant century long quest for complete stability but one that had just begun to materialize in the 1950s.

---

<sup>126</sup> “Musician Flogged Over Integration: But South Carolina Teacher Denies Fighting Segregation—Hooded Assailants Flee,” *The New York Times*, 29 December, 1956, final edition.

<sup>127</sup> Olin D. Johnston, “The Good Side of the South,” *The New York Times*, 3 September, 1961, final edition.

Elsewhere in the South, the white leadership of those states, in response to the *Brown* ruling, began to devise their own methods and routes by which they would make their last stand against the efforts of integrationists. In Mississippi, the state whose method of confrontation to integration might be considered the antithesis of South Carolina's, whites prepared for a vigilant and protracted fight against the forces of integration. One method of organizing for this fight that had its origins in Mississippi, but extended to other southern states including South Carolina, were the Citizens' Councils. Citizens' Councils were an organized group of white citizens in local communities that were committed to the cause of resisting integration through non-violent means. While they existed in other states, it was in Mississippi in which they took on a more dominant nature. Four days after the ruling in *Brown*, Judge Tom P. Brady outlined the political movement in a series of letters to Mississippi politicians that became the Citizen's Council. In these letters, the movement he envisioned "cut across all factors, political groups and embod[ied] leaders in every clique" and furthermore "all white men in every walk of life must be mustered out. It must be made their fight. If the southern states do not unify in thought and action the NAACP will emerge victorious."<sup>128</sup> Other Mississippians predicted violent retribution if the issue of integration were pushed too far. *The Jackson Daily News* predicted in an editorial that "violence and bloodshed would follow the forced integration of Mississippi schools."<sup>129</sup> Clearly Mississippi

---

<sup>128</sup> Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 19.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

expected a physical fight against integration in contrast to South Carolina's largely legal fight.

With the Court's decision in *Briggs v. Elliott* and the subsequent decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, South Carolina began to chart its path through the civil rights era. As Byrnes' attempt to create a truly separate but equal school system began to fail due to court rulings, the governor became more defiant of the federal government's attempt to integrate the state's public school system. Like other southern states such as Mississippi, Byrnes recommended in 1952 that the state legislature "submit to the people of the state at the next general election a resolution repealing the state constitutional provisions for a public school system."<sup>130</sup> This would give the legislature the ability to abolish the public school system, thus solving the integration dilemma, and potentially turning to private agencies and groups to educate the state's white children.

As the state attempted to devise a path to preserve the racial status quo and the rhetoric emanating from Columbia and elsewhere around the state grew more defiant as the years wore on, it appeared as though South Carolina could potentially choose the path of Mississippi, Alabama, and Arkansas in their fight against integration.<sup>131</sup> In 1953, the Attorney General of South Carolina, T.C. Callison, stated that "the State of South Carolina recognizes the political economic, civil and religious rights of the Negro" however "it also recognizes the absolute right of each race to control its own social

---

<sup>130</sup> "Byrnes Acts to Keep School Segregation: Asks Move by South Carolina Legislature," *The New York Times*, 9 January, 1952, final edition.

<sup>131</sup> It is important to note that while the state of South Carolina sought to preserve the segregated school system, legally no state law existed establishing a segregated school system in the state.

affairs, without any governmental regulation of any kind.”<sup>132</sup> As the 1950s wore on, the state seriously considered abolishing the state public school system and eventually went as far as banning a Billy Graham rally at the state capitol grounds. James F. Byrnes’ successor, George Bell Timmerman, Jr. campaigned, as all southern politicians did at the time, on a platform of preserving segregation. As governor, Timmerman sought to maintain that line no matter what and his administration can be categorized as one of massive resistance.

Timmerman entered the governor’s office in 1955 as the civil rights era and the push toward integration began to accelerate. While he was more progressive on issues other than race, it was the race issue that his tenure as governor is best remembered.<sup>133</sup> In his effort to preserve the racial status quo, Clemson had to “reject a \$350,000 grant from the Atomic Energy Commission because the agency required that recipients not bar any student on the basis of race, color, creed, or religion,” and he denounced those who voiced an opinion other than one that staunchly defended segregation, and “pressured the administration of South Carolina State College to fire faculty who supported desegregation.”<sup>134</sup> In addition to targeting those who supported anything but segregation, he also targeted the historically black colleges in the state and managed to have Allen University’s accreditation revoked. In doing so, however, he stirred up support among the black community for integration. He also unintentionally encouraged many African Americans to apply to the University of South Carolina School of Law since the governor

---

<sup>132</sup> “School Bias is Defended: South Carolina Aide Says Both Races Favor Segregation,” *The New York Times*, 7 June, 1953, final edition.

<sup>133</sup> Lacy K. Ford, Jr. and R. Phillip Stone, “Economic Development and Globalization in South Carolina” *Southern Cultures*, (Spring 2007): 22.

<sup>134</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 528.

attempted to close and target the faculty of all of the black higher education facilities—including the black law school at South Carolina State College.<sup>135</sup> Despite all of these attacks and attempts to preserve the status quo, Timmerman is remembered best for his attack on a Billy Graham rally. Graham in 1956 sent a letter to President Eisenhower “about his desire for progress on the race question.”<sup>136</sup> In response to what he perceived to be Graham’s integrationist views, Timmerman canceled his rally on the State Capitol grounds. As a result a crowd of “60,000 black and white spectators” gathered nearby at the Fort Jackson US Army base to hear Graham speak.<sup>137</sup>

### **Fritz’s Journey**

During this time Fritz Hollings was an up and coming state politician rising quickly through the ranks of state government. It was also during these years before the governor’s office that Fritz gave every indication that while not a hard line segregationist, he nonetheless had every intention of preserving segregation, which was a promise that any successful southern politician made during the 1950s. Privately, as he writes in *Making Government Work*, he was conflicted about the South’s racial arrangement.

One instance of this ambivalence took place upon his return stateside after his military service during World War II. During his time in the military, Hollings received a military assignment to help settle the 90<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft and Artillery Regiment, an all-black regiment from Philadelphia, in Oran. Upon his return to civilian life and run for

---

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, 528.

It is interesting to note that Dean Samuel L. Prince of the University of South Carolina stated before a legislative committee when asked why it cost \$100 per semester hour to educate black law students versus \$17 for whites, that “Gentlemen, well I’ll tell you. The price of prejudice is very high.”

<sup>136</sup> Carolyn Click, “Celebrating ‘glad spirit’ of 1958 Graham Rally,” *The State*, 26 October 2010, News-Local/Metro sec. final edition.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

office in 1948, the Democratic primary in South Carolina began to divide over the issue of whether or not to allow blacks to vote in the primary. Reflecting on his time in service and the inequality that African Americans faced after their return from war at the hands of their one time white comrades, Hollings wrote

and here we were [...] a bunch of white politicians arguing about whether we should remain in the Democratic primary or boycott it in order to avoid African American voters. I couldn't believe it [...] I took to the floor and stated my position openly.<sup>138</sup>

Upon winning election to the State House, Hollings pursued a two pronged path toward the issue of race; on one hand he promoted certain measures that were considered progressive, while at other times he promised to maintain segregation.

Clearly, Hollings was put off by the violent and harsh political rhetoric of some of his political colleagues. In contrast to his tempered response to the *News and Courier* reporter who asked him whether he planned to solicit the black vote, Hollings's contemporary Strom Thurmond was more blunt and less reserved about speaking on the issue of race; often "waxing hot and heavy for segregation because of his fears that mixing would produce what he called a mongrel race."<sup>139</sup> Despite once being referred to as "the liberal governor of South Carolina" in John Gunther's *Inside U.S.A.* in 1947, Thurmond became a staunch and vociferous defender of segregation.<sup>140</sup>

Hollings on the other hand sought not to stir the passions of the white community in South Carolina to go out and defend segregation at all costs, but instead sought to preserve law and order while at the same time attempting to preserve segregation. In

---

<sup>138</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 2008), 12.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>140</sup> Jack Bass and W. Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 103.

response to the lynching of Willie Earle, which turned out to be the state's last recorded lynching, in 1947 Hollings and other politicians sought to enact the state's first anti-lynching bill due to the "horrific scar" it left on the state's history that "showed the still-potent force of mob rule."<sup>141</sup> The ability to actually pass the bill would prove difficult. Several House members refused to listen to the debate on the measure and some, such as Blease Ellison of Lexington, announced during a session of the House that he would not sit in the chamber "with someone who makes such a proposal."<sup>142</sup> While the bill failed to pass the first year that it was introduced, it managed to pass in 1951 over the strong objections of many.

As the 1950s wore on, Hollings sought the passage of a sales tax to go toward improving the state school system for all children. In addition to such progressive measures as the anti-lynching bill and the sales tax, there were other actions that indicated Hollings's loyalty to the segregationist cause. One such example was Hollings's assistance with the state's case in *Briggs v. Elliott* before the Supreme Court. Others include statements he made as Lieutenant Governor and during his run for governor. In 1957, Hollings spoke at the Hampton Watermelon Festival in June. During the speech he railed about the intrusion of the federal government into the affairs of the South as well as the federal government's acquiescence to leftist and agitators. What is surprising about the speech, though, is its restraint. Instead of being a tirade about the superiority of whites in comparison to blacks as many, including Thurmond, made during this time, Hollings's speech is much more sophisticated and legal in nature. From his quotations of

---

<sup>141</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 2008), 26.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

Washington to Voltaire, the speech attacks *Brown v. Board* from the angle of being a ruling not based on law but on Earl Warren's "social conscience" and its perceived disregard for judicial precedence.<sup>143</sup> In regard to the decision and its lack of judicial precedent, Hollings stated

the States, in forming a more perfect Union, preserved to themselves the rights of public education. They would never have formed that Union if the thought that some day, without a change in the Constitution, the Supreme Court on the advice of a Swedish psychologist would take away this right and vest it in the United States Marshal.

He also cited Justice White's statement that "the fundamental conception of a judicial body" is one that is "hedged about by precedents which are binding on the Court without regard to the personality of its members" and concludes by stating that if the disregard for precedent that the Court displayed in *Brown* continues "we will have a government of men, and not of law."<sup>144</sup> This legal approach was a different path to the fight against segregation than some of his other contemporaries took in response to *Brown*, and it was also a concern that he would use during his time as governor to justify the state's acquiescence to the forces of integration.

During his tenure as the Lieutenant Governor and his campaign for governor, Hollings attended the 21<sup>st</sup> Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America in October 1958 in Dayton, Ohio. At the convention Reverend Arnold F. Keller, Jr. introduced a motion "asking ULCA delegates to reaffirm stands taken in 1952 and 1956 endorsing integration" and referred to "our corporate and individual guilt here through

---

<sup>143</sup> [Hollings 1957 Hampton Watermelon Festival Speech], [Fritz Hollings: In His Own Words Digital Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

sins of commission as well as omission.”<sup>145</sup> It is this reference to guilt that seems to have troubled Hollings the most and led him to adamantly oppose the motion and ask that it be tabled. Hollings stated that

I believe that the public schools are intended for education and not integration. If it is for brotherhood, if it's for advancement of the colored people, I'm for that. But if it's talk of continuing guilt and desegregation, I don't feel that guilt as a public official. We in South Carolina are proud to be laymen. We are proud to be Lutherans. But we are not going to integrate the public schools of our state.<sup>146</sup>

Though Hollings's motion to table was resoundingly defeated, it is interesting to note Hollings's measured response. Hollings either intentionally or unintentionally left himself a way out in this statement by stating that he was for the advancement of black people. During his tenure as governor it would become obvious that the only way to promote this advancement and maintain peace and order in society would be to acquiesce and allow for integration to take place.

### **Going to the Governor's Office**

Though Hollings had a mixed record on the race issue as he prepared to enter the governor's office in 1959, the civil rights movement began to heat up throughout the South during this time as well. The years of Hollings's term as governor saw the South descend into racial violence and the efforts of many southern leaders were counterproductive to the maintenance of law and order. The decisions that Hollings made during his time as governor not only would have a lasting impact on race relations in the state, but also on the ability to maintain law and order. In turn these decisions and the

---

<sup>145</sup> ["Lutherans Recall Southern Governor" Newspaper Clipping], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid

maintenance of law and order would have an impact on the governor's economic development measures—only if South Carolina could maintain law and order would its economic development efforts prove successful and potentially allow for South Carolina to “climb to the top of the ladder of states.”<sup>147</sup> His actions and of those around him, along with their commitment to law and order, would prove to be the deciding factor. The state's track record in regards to race and violence was largely negative; if Hollings were to break this cycle as the civil rights era came to fruition it would take skill and force him to walk a fine line between being a moderate segregationist and a reluctant integrationist.

---

<sup>147</sup> [Hollings January 1963 General Assembly Address], [Fritz Hollings: In His Own Words Digital Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, University of South Carolina.

## CHAPTER V

### A TIME FOR CHOOSING

During his time as a state legislator and Lieutenant Governor, Fritz Hollings had a complicated record when it came to civil rights. On the one hand he campaigned on and declared his loyalty to segregation and the maintenance of this racial arrangement; on the other hand he condemned those that advocated and carried out racial violence. As Governor of South Carolina, Hollings had to make a choice whether to take the fight for segregation from a legal and theoretical level to a physical one once the state exhausted its legal options. Hollings's desire for law and order that was evident in his sponsoring of the state's first anti-lynching bill and his reference to law and order in speeches throughout the 1950s, ultimately dissuaded him from taking the path that Governors Orval Faubus, George Wallace, and Ross Barnett took that led to an eruption of racial violence and breakdown of law and order in their respective states.

The connection between racial harmony, the importance of law and order, and industrial development is apparent in a speech that Hollings gave to law enforcement officials in 1959. In a speech largely about the difficulties that law enforcement officials faced and the ways in which the state government could assist them, Hollings mentioned the importance of a stable society to prospective industrialists.

The Saco-Lowell Company, which recently made its decision to locate at Clemson, was not looking for labor or markets, it was establishing a research and scientific center with few employees and nothing to sell. This company wanted its engineers and scientist to have a helpful, law abiding and happy community in which to work. It was doing inferentially what our competitors are daily crying—that there was no use to locate in South Carolina; that due to segregation problems, there would be violence. After

thorough examination this company found, on the contrary, that we have peace and good order, that we have excellent law enforcement.<sup>148</sup>

This awareness of the fact that industries wanted a stable society without turmoil and violence, along with the fear that racial violence would undermine this stability and therefore undermine Hollings's development efforts, explains his careful approach to the issue of segregation. In fact, the negative effect of racial violence on the ability to attract industry was already evident during this time in Little Rock, Arkansas. In 1957, before the events at Central High School, eight new plants opened in the city; after the "nationally televised confrontations between whites and blacks, it was four years before another outside corporation was willing to invest in the city. The entire state of Arkansas suffered."<sup>149</sup> Making sure this did not happen in South Carolina, however, proved difficult and developed over the course of Hollings's entire term as governor. Ultimately, the concern over what racial violence would do to the state's ability to attract industry and development allowed Hollings to convince state leaders and those that vowed to fight integration to lay down the banner of segregation and to acquiesce. In a matter of four short years the state's government moved from a position of defending segregation to one that recognized that the state had exhausted its legal options and that the time had come to yield to integration as events in Mississippi and Arkansas demonstrated for the sake of the state's reputation and its ability to attract industrial development. For Hollings, there is a gradual realization that though he was initially concerned about the destabilizing effects of a backlash against integration on law and order, that stability would be

---

<sup>148</sup> [Fritz Hollings Law Enforcement Speech],[Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

<sup>149</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 537.

compromised and law and order could break down due to a protracted defense of segregation.

### **Building a Framework for a Stable Society**

As Hollings entered the governor's office in January 1959, the possibility for racial violence was a matter of not if but when. The previous governor, Timmerman, escalated the state's fight against integration by defunding traditional black colleges, rejecting federal funds that required integration, firing professors that were not committed segregationists, and prohibiting Billy Graham from holding a religious meeting on the state house grounds due to the fact that Graham's meetings were integrated. Also during this time, the state's junior senator, Strom Thurmond, already a committed segregationist, made his stand against the forces of integration, declaring as far back as 1948 at the Dixiecrat convention that

I want to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that there's not enough troops in the army to force the Southern people to break down segregation and admit the Nigra' race into our theaters, into our swimming pools, into our homes, and into our churches.<sup>150</sup>

While Thurmond, Timmerman, and other state political leaders declared their loyalty to the segregationist cause and hinted at the possibility of even using violence to further their cause, Hollings on the other hand intended to maintain segregation in 1959 but did not condone the use violence to perpetuate it.

After winning election in November, Hollings began to outline his inauguration speech that he would deliver in January. For help writing the speech, he turned to

---

<sup>150</sup> Jack Bass and Scott Poole, *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 104.

William D. Workman, Jr., a Charleston reporter for the *News and Courier*. In a November 1958 letter to Workman about the inaugural speech, Hollings wrote

Rather than leaving everybody on the State House steps with an idea we're going to fight, like some Citizens' Council talk, I would rather leave them with an understanding of the present circumstances and a feeling that we knew what we were doing and would go to work and create a future for South Carolina in all fields. As I say, I would rather have them girded for the future than for battle.<sup>151</sup>

The reason for this, as Philip Stone states in his dissertation "Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962," is that the governor understood that South Carolina had been prosperous until the Civil War and impoverished ever since. As Hollings stated "from the Civil War until the end of World War II it was pretty dismal, and I mean to say so. It's the reason for our trouble today."<sup>152</sup> Though he desired to focus on issues other than integration in his inaugural speech, the final product by and large was devoted to the subject. The majority of the speech focused on the issue of segregation and state's rights and only a small portion dealt with the state's future. Yet, even in his defense of segregation, Hollings was able to tie this fight to the quest for development. Near the end of the speech, Hollings stated that

the businessman of our country realizes that our free enterprise system is not founded on the excesses of Northern pressure groups. He appreciates his heritage and seeks a region where the people are willing to defend that heritage [...] He comes not just for markets and climate, but because of the character of our people and state government. Public office is still a public trust. We are a stable people and we have a stable government [...] We are a law-abiding people and will not stand for violence against our churches

---

<sup>151</sup> [Hollings to William D. Workman, November 26, 1958, in Hollings file], [Papers of William D. Workman, Jr.], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

<sup>152</sup> Hollings as quoted in R. Phillip Stone's, "Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962" (Ph.D diss., The University of South Carolina, 2003), 1.

and schools. There is tolerance and understanding and good will among all of our peoples.<sup>153</sup>

While at the same time Hollings promised a defense of segregation, he also assured businesses of a stable society by dismissing racial violence as unacceptable. In order to promote this law and order society, Hollings set about laying a foundation to ensure stability. In doing so, however, he not only laid the groundwork to ensure a stable society for segregation's defense but also the groundwork for a peaceful transition to an integrated society.

After delivering the inaugural address and entering the governor's office for the first time as governor, Hollings noticed an envelope on his desk. As Hollings recounted in *Making Government Work*, the envelope was from the South Carolina Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan offering the new governor a lifetime membership in the Klan. Hollings, surprised that the group would make such an offer after his anti-lynching bill, which he figured placed him on their enemies list, returned the letter. After the day's festivities concluded, Hollings spoke with the head of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), J.P. "Pete" Strom, about the Klan. Strom stated that at that time there were 1,687 members in the Klan that SLED knew of. Then Strom told Hollings something that surprised him. According to Hollings, Strom said "I'd be glad to get rid of them but no Governor would help me."<sup>154</sup> To get rid of them, Strom told the governor that he would need money to infiltrate the Klan's membership. Hollings agreed and charged SLED with the task stating that "we have to get rid of them as quick as we

---

<sup>153</sup> [Hollings 1959 Inaugural Speech], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

<sup>154</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 44.

can.”<sup>155</sup> While there is no documentary evidence that attests to the fact that this meeting took place, there is circumstantial evidence. On March 12, 1959 SLED made a \$25.00 payment to an informant for “confidential information on KKK and attending meeting of KKK.”<sup>156</sup> Throughout 1959, SLED made other payments to informants for attending meetings and giving information to SLED. It is also important to note that during this time that SLED also paid informants to attend and divulge information regarding the activities of the NAACP. On April 6, 1959 SLED made a payment of \$50.00 for “confidential information concerning NAACP subversive activities.”<sup>157</sup> The governor’s and the state’s desire to maintain a stable society extended to both sides of the racial spectrum as well as the state’s, local government’s and citizens’ actions.

While the governor and SLED attempted to rid the state of the Klan’s presence, this path was not easy and the Klan continued to commit acts of racial violence. One instance that seems to have troubled Hollings deeply occurred in early 1959 involving Charleston’s Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy in Williamsburg County. On a visit from Roman Catholic bishop Paul Hallinan to the state capitol, the bishop asked Hollings “Governor, do you believe in burning up the Sisters of the Church?”<sup>158</sup> Stunned, Hollings asked for clarification to the bishop’s question. In Williamsburg, two nuns of the Sisters of Mercy were distributing food and clothing in the county and on one particular day

---

<sup>155</sup> Ibid, 44. It should be noted that there is no documentary evidence of this meeting; however, after consulting with the archivist at the Hollings Library, it is almost certain that the meeting did take place given both Hollings’s and Strom’s retelling of the event years after it took place. The archivists, when questioned about the meeting, stated that he felt that he was positive that the meeting had taken place.

<sup>156</sup> [SLED KKK Information Payment March 12, 1959], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

<sup>157</sup> [SLED NAACP Information Payment April 6, 1959], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

<sup>158</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 44.

visited an African American leader's home in the county for lunch and in doing so violated the unwritten rules of the South's racial arrangement. The Klan sent several of its members to the home where the sisters stayed in Kingstree, "threatened them, and after darkness set in, burned a cross in the front of their home. The cross fell on the porch and set it afire."<sup>159</sup> While the nuns were able to extinguish the fire before it destroyed the entire house, the incident left them terrified. Upon hearing the story, Hollings had the bishop retell the story to Pete Strom and sent three teams of investigators to Kingstree to investigate. While the culprits were never caught, the threats to the sisters stopped and, as Hollings states, "the Klan knew the Governor was their enemy."<sup>160</sup>

### **A Difficult Course**

While Hollings intended to maintain a law and order society and had no tolerance for racial violence, the path toward integration for the state and for the governor was a difficult course. First and foremost anyone who hoped to have a political career in the South during this time period had to soft peddle the issue of race and in most circumstances affirm their loyalty to segregation. To come out fully for immediate integration would not only have been political suicide but impractical as well since the rest of the state's political leaders, namely the General Assembly, would in all likelihood not have gone along with this motion. Also during this time the state continued to fight the Court's decision in *Brown v. Board* and as Hollings entered the governor's office in 1959 the entire public school system remained segregated.

---

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, 45.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, 45.

While he did not advocate racial violence as other southern politicians were during this time, Hollings nonetheless continued to advocate the need for segregation. In 1959, Hollings received a telegram from the state's congressional delegation requesting that he testify before the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Civil Rights along with state senator Edgar Brown; the delegation made it known to Hollings that he "could be most helpful to [their] cause if [he] could witness before the House Judiciary Committee" against the proposed stronger civil rights legislation in mid-April 1959.<sup>161</sup> Hollings complied with the invitation and agreed to testify before the subcommittee against the proposed stronger civil rights legislation. It is important to note that in his testimony Hollings took a moderate approach to the issue and expressed concern over the impact of federal legislation and policy on race relations in South Carolina. Describing the state of race relations in South Carolina as one of tolerance and understanding, Hollings stated that

We would like to continue this climate of tolerance and understanding but we cannot if the President and Congress insist on attempting to legislate away racial differences [...] Good race relations are created and can only be created by understanding, tolerance and respect. But good race relations can be disturbed by law, and today we have only to look to Little Rock to see its destruction by the so-called 'law of the land.'<sup>162</sup>

Longtime state senator Edgar Brown echoed Hollings's concern about the potential destabilizing effects of integration on southern society. Likewise, Brown also made it clear to the committee that the state intended to continue the practice of segregation in the years to come.

---

<sup>161</sup> [State Congressional Delegation Telegram To Hollings regarding Civil rights Testimony, March 25, 1959], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

<sup>162</sup> "Hollings Warns Congress About Racial Equality Legislation: South Carolina Governor is Heard By Judiciary Group in Washington," *The Augusta Courier*, 27 April, 1959.

I declare that those forces outside of the South who advocate such legislation are doing a terrible disservice to the well being of all races and all people in South Carolina when they deliberately agitate such issues [...] Oh, yes, we have insisted upon the maintenance of segregated public schools in South Carolina, and, make no mistake about it, we will continue to insist upon segregated education in whatever form it must take.<sup>163</sup>

As Hollings completed his first year as Governor of South Carolina, it was clear that as the executive officer of the state acts of racial violence committed by either the government or the state's citizens would not be tolerated by. It was also clear that the state would continue to maintain racial segregation out of a concern of the potential disruption to stability that an attempt to integrate the state's school system would create.

Throughout most of his term as governor, Hollings maintained that South Carolina had every intention of defending the state's right to segregate its public institutions in the courts. At the fifty-fourth annual Governor's Conference in Hershey Pennsylvania, Hollings made an impassioned stand against a proposed civil rights resolution submitted by Governor Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon. The resolution called for the "the right of every individual regardless of race, region, or religion to equality of opportunity in housing, employment, public accommodations, and education."<sup>164</sup> It is understandable why Hollings would adamantly oppose this resolution. To support it would contradict his previous stated position, as well as the state's position, to defend segregation. Convinced of the backlash that would result in the state from support of the resolution's position on integration and the potential for racial violence that could accompany this position, Hollings successfully filibustered this resolution. In a letter to

---

<sup>163</sup> "Edgar Brown Civil rights Committee Statement, April 1959," Brown Papers, CU.

<sup>164</sup> [Civil rights Resolution at 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Conference], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

Governor Rosellini of Washington, Hollings explained his reason for his filibuster. Concerned over the resolution's impact on the productivity of the conference and the potential to lead to southern governors' refusal to attend future conferences, Hollings explained "a substantial number of my southern brethren were prepared to walk out in a huff [over the proposed civil rights resolution]. I didn't think this would serve any useful purpose, and heretofore acted for what I thought was the overall good of the conference."<sup>165</sup> While Hollings's filibuster may have been in a spirit of magnanimity to save the future of the governor's conference, he received a lot of support from within South Carolina for his defense of segregation.

Outside of the public statements and speeches that Hollings made during his term as governor regarding the state's defense of segregation, he quietly and cautiously distanced himself from the extreme segregationists in the region. While Hollings was one of only three governors to attend the Barnett Conference, hosted by Governor Ross Barnett of Mississippi in 1961, as racial tension reached a boiling point in Mississippi, Hollings distanced himself from the Governor of Mississippi on other occasions that did not directly relate to economic development. As Governor of Mississippi, Barnett adamantly refused to allow James Meredith to enroll at the University of Mississippi in late 1962. One incident in the fight to keep Ole Miss segregated involved a confrontation at the federal building in Jackson, Mississippi. As Barnett headed into the building, thousands of white onlookers cheered him on. Inside the building, "Meredith walked up to Barnett surrounded by federal officials and U.S. marshals; he was the only African

---

<sup>165</sup> [Hollings letter to Governor Rosellini of Washington], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

American among a sea of white faces,” with television crews present and cameras rolling “Barnett’s opening line brought a roar of laughter from the supportive crowd: ‘Which one is Meredith?’”<sup>166</sup> This interaction with Meredith, however, was tame in comparison to the violence that brought embarrassment to the state rather than supportive laughter and cheers.

One instance of this refusal to associate with Barnett came when he was Mississippi’s governor-elect in 1960. The Citizens’ Council of South Carolina invited Barnett to come and speak. The council also invited Hollings to attend the meeting but he politely declined the invitation. In response to his refusal to attend the meeting the executive secretary of the Citizens’ Council of South Carolina, Farley Smith, wrote the governor. In the letter Smith wrote to Hollings that

it has been brought to our attention that in your opinion the Citizens’ Councils, by extending the invitation to the governor-elect has done something that can easily be injurious to the state and to the cause for which we and all true South Carolinians stand [...] In light of stepped up activity by the NAACP [Martin Luther King, Jr. in Columbia and Jackie Robinson’s visit to Greenville] we of the Citizens’ Councils think that the time is opportune to show the NAACP that the people of South Carolina are not asleep and are prepared to fight.<sup>167</sup>

Smith’s letter contains an awareness of the fact that Hollings was concerned with the impact of race relations on the state’s reputation and questions his loyalty to the segregationist cause by implying that all true South Carolinians stand for segregation. There is also a desire conveyed in the letter to escalate the actions of the councils to

---

<sup>166</sup> Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 15.

<sup>167</sup> [Farley Smith to Fritz Hollings], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

counter the actions of the NAACP and their fight for integration. In response to Smith's accusation that Hollings was not prepared to fight Hollings responded tersely to Smith,

I am of the opinion that you are making a mistake in having this meeting at this time and I sincerely feel that the Citizens' Council should not get in a running fight with the NAACP. I am sure that the NAACP is aware of the fact that no one in South Carolina is asleep and that we all believe in Constitutional government.<sup>168</sup>

This refusal to attend the Council's meeting and Barnett's speech would not be the only confrontation that Hollings had with the Citizens' Councils in the state. In a letter to Bessie Britton in Kingstree, SC, Hollings explains his refusal to attend another Citizens' Council meeting all the while proclaiming his support for the organization. As Hollings explains,

South Carolina is fortunate to be free of undue problems in racial relationships. I believe I can best serve all South Carolinians at this time in helping to preserve this stability and way of life by maintaining separate status as Governor without identification with any groups, regardless of how worthy may be their purposes in the field of race relations. I have high personal respect and admiration for the objectives of the Citizens' Councils and am greatly appreciative of their work in maintaining good relations between the races in our state.<sup>169</sup>

As the civil rights movement continued to heat up during Hollings's years as governor, the ability to defuse potentially damaging and explosive situations would require even greater finesse than refusing to attend Citizens' Council meetings.

Hollings's term as governor also happened to coincide with the centennial celebration of the state's secession from the Union and the start of the Civil War. While many elaborate celebrations were planned across the country from 1961-1965, the events

---

<sup>168</sup> [Hollings to Farley Smith], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

<sup>169</sup> [Letter to Bessie Britton of Kingstree, SC], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

that occurred in Charleston during the meeting of the Civil War Centennial Commission in April 1961 derailed the entire celebration. This meeting “became a test of America’s commitment to progress on civil rights.”<sup>170</sup> The confrontation occurred over whether a member of the New Jersey Civil War Centennial Commission, a black woman named Madaline Williams, would be allowed to stay at the Francis Marion Hotel that was chosen for the assembly. After some confusion as to whether she would be allowed to stay, the proprietor of the hotel allowed Ms. Williams to attend the meetings at the hotel but required her to lodge at a black hotel in Charleston. After a lot of publicity about the segregated nature of the commission meeting in the birthplace of secession, the Kennedy administration saw no alternative other than getting involved in a controversy surrounding a federally supported national commemoration.<sup>171</sup> Kennedy announced on March 23, 1961 that “because the Civil War Centennial Commission was a government body using federal funds it was his strong belief that such an agency had a responsibility to provide facilities that did not discriminate on the grounds of race or color.”<sup>172</sup> Hollings, who campaigned for and supported Kennedy’s presidential campaign in the state, carefully responded to the President’s statement. Hollings felt that “neither the President nor the governor can dictate to a hotel who it may or may not receive as guests.”<sup>173</sup> Eventually a plan was developed to relocate the meeting to the Charleston Naval Base.

---

<sup>170</sup> Robert J. Cook, *Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 94.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

This decision split the commission meeting into two groups. The official Civil War Centennial Commission meeting took place at the Charleston Naval Base. The South Carolina Confederate War Centennial Commission hosted its own luncheon at the Francis Marion Hotel. Speaking at the Francis Marion Hotel during a luncheon, James F. Byrnes stated that “too little time had passed” in order to “allow for a fitting and dispassionate commemoration of the war and its aftermath.”<sup>174</sup> Thurmond later at the meeting made a plea in his speech to allow each section of the country to be allowed to deal with its problems on its own terms. Thus, the meeting essentially became a defense of segregation and state’s rights. In many ways the battle that began in Charleston in 1861 continued during the April 1961 meeting in Charleston.<sup>175</sup> The decision that Hollings had to make was which meeting to attend—the meeting put together by southern segregationists at the Francis Marion Hotel or the meeting arranged by the federal government at the Charleston Naval Base. Even though he criticized Kennedy’s decision, maintained his support for the hotel owner’s right to choose who and who not to accommodate, and still supported segregation, Hollings attended the National Civil War Centennial Commission meeting at the naval base. Hollings’s ability to continue to take a moderate approach to the issue of segregation became increasingly difficult as the rhetoric and determination of both sides of the issue escalated in the early 1960s.<sup>176</sup>

---

<sup>174</sup> K. Michael Prince, *Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys!: South Carolina and the Confederate Flag* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 41.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>176</sup> It was also during this time that the Confederate Battle flag was hoisted atop the state capitol building in Columbia. This was not done at the request of Hollings but instead by the Chairman of the South Carolina Centennial Commission, John May, who according to K. Michael Prince in *Rally Round the Flag Boys!: South Carolina and the Confederate Flag* on page 40 was “acting in his capacity as [a] state representative, simply requested that the state agency responsible for State House maintenance add a Confederate flag to

## The Right Moment

During this time Hollings and others were concerned with how the state's image was perceived around the country and the world as well as the impact it had on the state's ability to attract industry. One incident that had the potential to be damaging to its reputation occurred when Jackie Robinson was refused service at the Greenville downtown airport cafeteria in November 1959. In response a group of African Americans staged a protest at the airport on January 1, 1960. As governor, Hollings had to decide how to respond and police the demonstration. Contrary to the images of Birmingham that eventually filled television screens across the nation, Hollings chose a measured response. According to Harry Walker, Hollings's legal assistant as governor from 1959 to 1963, the governor told Walker and the head of SLED that

we are going to enforce the laws as long as they're on the books. I am the chief law enforcement officer of the state but I want you to be sure that you understand what I mean. And he proceeded to make clear that we were going to enforce the law, it was not going to be enforced by rednecks, members of the Klan,[or] any other group other than the duly constituted law enforcement authorities. He wanted Chief Strom and I to see that the law was enforced and when he said enforced, he made it clear, enforced as it should be enforced. No undue use of force, no use of force at all unless it was necessary.<sup>177</sup>

According to Walker, in order to prevent any unnecessary force, it was customary for the governor, Walker, and Strom to arrange a meeting ahead of an announced demonstration with the leaders in the city where the demonstration was to take place. In some instances, however, there was little notice of a demonstration and not enough time for a meeting to

---

those already flying atop the state capitol." The Confederate flags in both legislative chambers were added at the approval of resolutions submitted by state senator John D. Long of Union, South Carolina during the 1930s and 1950s.

<sup>177</sup> Walter W. Harper Interview, 27 January 1999, South Carolina Political Collections, University Libraries, The University of South Carolina.

occur. One such instance occurred in Orangeburg. By the time that Strom and Walker arrived the demonstration had already occurred and the Orangeburg police had turned the fire hoses on the demonstrators and jailed them in a fenced-in yard of the court house. As Walker recounts,

It was cool and they were wet and the students were trying to throw blankets over the fence to them and some of them tried to get in the boiler room when we arrived. I called Fritz and talked with him and explained the situation and after doing so we got them inside the court house so that they would be warm and dry. We put them all in the courtroom. I knew that pretty shortly one of the civil rights attorneys would show up. I believe it was Matthew Perry [who] showed up. I knew him, he knew me, and I told him where they were and escorted him to the courtroom and left him with them. I did tell him that I wanted to know if anybody was hurt or if anybody needed assistance. We always tried to take care of people. That's the way Fritz wanted it [...] Feeling did run high in those years as we all know. I can recall seeing SLED agents actually take elected officials in hand because the elected official was trying to provoke an incident.<sup>178</sup>

This concern with enforcing the law in a controlled manner helped to prevent more eruptions of violence than what took place.

As politicians and others throughout the state were determined to fight integration during this time, many prominent business leaders were also concerned with what a protracted fight to defend segregation would do to the state's image and, like Hollings, what it would do to the state's ability to attract industry. Some of these community leaders included Greenville business and religious figures Charles E. Daniel, Alester G. Furman Jr., L.P. Hollis, and Reverend Thomas A. Roberts who met in 1961 and formed an "advisory committee that decided that segregation had to go."<sup>179</sup> This was done in light

---

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 537.

of the economic toll of Little Rock's efforts to fight integration which dissuaded any outside corporation from investing in the city for four years after the incidents in 1957. In what became the first indication that South Carolina business leaders were willing to forgo segregation, Charles E. Daniel delivered a speech entitled "South Carolina's Economic Challenge" at the Hampton County Watermelon Festival on July 1, 1961. In the speech he stated that in order to catch up with more competitive states "our state must forsake some of our old ways and aggressively outdo other states."<sup>180</sup> As the speech continued, Daniel confronted the issue of desegregation bluntly.

The desegregation issue cannot continue to be hidden behind the door. This situation cannot satisfactorily be settled at the lunch counter and bus station levels. We must handle this ourselves. More realistically than heretofore or it will be forced upon us in the harshest way. Either we act on our terms or we forfeit the right to act.<sup>181</sup>

In addition to urging the state and its political leaders to confront the desegregation issue, Daniel also discussed the economic costs of indecision on the issue.

Key employees of new plants considering South Carolina are disturbed about school conditions for their children. Most major industries have contract relations with the federal government subject to anti-discrimination laws so management is concerned about conditions which could develop within their plants. They want the goodwill of the communities. They want to accept and respect reasonable local customs and traditions yet, they must obey the law.<sup>182</sup>

Daniel also talked about the untapped potential for black employment in the state and the need to adequately educate this population so that they and South Carolina could compete for jobs. This willingness to yield to integration did not go unnoticed by *New York Times*

---

<sup>180</sup> 1961 Hampton County Watermelon festival address, Daniel Papers, CU.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

reporter James Reston. Commenting on the difference between South Carolina and other southern states, Reston began with the similarities.

Yet, even in South Carolina, where no Negro attends a single public school or state university; where the taxpayers pay academically qualified Negroes to attend universities outside the state; where it is illegal to allow Negroes to work in the same department of a factory with whites; and where there are no laws to keep anybody in school at all—even here there seems to be general agreement that the sad events of Little Rock, Ark., and Oxford, Miss., could not happen in South Carolina.<sup>183</sup>

The reason behind this, as Reston pointed out, was that South Carolina had a much more business conscious environment than Arkansas and Mississippi and everyone from the Governor to the businessmen in the state were concerned with what a protracted struggle against integration would do to the state's economy.

And the reasons given for this are interesting. For South Carolina is not convinced that the integration of the races is bad morals or bad law, but there is an increasing feeling here that it is bad business. For example, the Governor of South Carolina, Ernest F. Hollings, is not here in Columbia, SC weeping for Governor Ross Barnett of Mississippi. He is in Milan, Italy, this week talking over the possibilities of trade between the state of South Carolina and the European Common Market [...] But perhaps most important of all, South Carolina does not want to create an atmosphere of rebellion that would discourage the economic development of the state.<sup>184</sup>

By summer 1961, it was evident that combined with both a governor and business community that desired economic development and law and order, at the right moment integration would take place in South Carolina. The only question that remained was how?

---

<sup>183</sup> James Reston, "Laws, Morals and Business in South Carolina," *New York Times*, 17 October 1962, 37.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

The answer came in the form of the question over the admission of Harvey Gantt to Clemson College [now Clemson University]. The state of South Carolina began contemplating the issue of school desegregation as far back as 1951 with the formation of a fifteen-man committee appointed by Governor James F. Byrnes to seek legal means to avoid forced integration of the state's public schools. This committee was chaired and largely influenced by state senator L. Marion Gressette. While the committee recommended ways that the state could avoid integration, it first called for a referendum to determine whether or not the constitutional provision that the state have a public school system should be deleted.<sup>185</sup> This committee also urged the state to continue fighting the issue of integration in the court system. With Gantt's legal fight to be admitted to Clemson and the likelihood that the state would lose its fight to keep him from entering the school, the question became what the state would do next.

The model that Hollings could have chose was that of Ross Barnett in Mississippi after James Meredith's court ordered admission to the University of Mississippi. One historian claims that Barnett's handling of the integration of Ole Miss represents the best "example of irresponsible leadership" during the civil rights era.<sup>186</sup> Though Barnett vowed to fight the court ordered integration of the university, he privately assured Attorney General Robert Kennedy and President Kennedy that Meredith would be allowed to enter the university. The night before Meredith was supposed to enroll Barnett gave a terse speech at the university in which he declared "I love Mississippi. I love her

---

<sup>185</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 523.

<sup>186</sup> Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 42.

people. I love our customs. I respect our heritage.”<sup>187</sup> After the speech Barnett called Robert Kennedy to tell him that the deal he had made was off. In response, Kennedy federalized the Mississippi National Guard and dispatched it to Oxford. The result was pandemonium; tear gas was fired into the crowd of students that were throwing rocks, bottles, and bricks at a crowd of federal marshals. Yet, despite Barnett’s failures in his duties and responsibility for the chaos that ensued after he called off the agreement to peacefully integrate Ole Miss, the university at the end of the day on September 30, 1962 was integrated. Still, the chaos of the day had left two dead and many injured.<sup>188</sup>

As a show of support, Barnett asked Hollings to lead a convoy to Mississippi. In, *Making Government Work*, Hollings reflected on the conversation he had with Barnett, “Hollings [Barnett said], you lead a motorcade from South Carolina. If you lead one, George Wallace says he will lead one from Alabama, and we’ll show that Washington crowd how to enforce the law.”<sup>189</sup> Hollings chose not to lead a motorcade and handled the issue very carefully and in doing so received the praise of many South Carolinians. In a letter to Hollings from R. Wright Spears, the President of Columbia College, Spears wrote that he felt “that remarks made giving total support to Governor Barnett’s position were unwise;” on the other hand he felt that Hollings’s cautious response to the events in Oxford were “clear evidence of sound judgment and calm thought. Your strong convictions with reference to the observance of law and order in these days of crisis will

---

<sup>187</sup> Ibid, 43.

<sup>188</sup> Hollings sent Pete Strom to Oxford to observe the events and develop a security plan for the integration of Clemson College.

<sup>189</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 79.

continue to give the citizenry of this state great confidence.”<sup>190</sup> As the days continued toward the court ordered integration of Clemson, it became apparent that Hollings would not choose the path that Barnett chose with the University of Mississippi.

Gantt, a native Charlestonian and Iowa State University architecture student, applied for admission to Clemson in January 1962 and was naturally denied admission. In response he filed suit against the school to be admitted. According to Harry Walker, if Gantt met the qualifications that all Clemson applicants had to meet for admission, Hollings intended to make sure that Gantt was admitted.

Fritz came into my office and dropped his [Gantt’s] papers on my desk and said he wanted me to check him out and see whether or not he was qualified for admission to Clemson College. If he was, he was going to be admitted. If he wasn’t, he wasn’t going to be admitted. So, I turned to Chief [Pete] Strom, and we satisfied ourselves that he was qualified for admission, and he was eminently qualified. A few days later, I walked back across the hall and into Fritz’s office and put the papers on his desk and told him he was qualified. Fritz told me to get a hold of Chief Strom. He said down with me and with Chief Strom and he told Chief Strom just as you have stated, that he wanted him to go to the other southern states where they had attempted to integrate and find out what mistakes they had made, because he said, ‘We’re not going to make those mistakes. I want you to come back in [and] get with Harry Walker.’ And then he told me, ‘I want you to draw up a plan for the peaceful integration of Clemson College.’<sup>191</sup>

Even as South Carolina fought the integration of Clemson in the court system, Hollings knew they were going to lose and prepared for Clemson’s peaceful integration. In the meantime, Hollings and others, off the record, lined up support for this approach and encouraged reporters to prepare the state for integration. On January 9, 1962, Hollings

---

<sup>190</sup> [Letter to Hollings from R. Wright Spears, President Columbia College, November 1, 1962], [Fritz Hollings Papers], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

<sup>191</sup> Walter W. Harper Interview, South Carolina Political Collections, University Libraries, The University of South Carolina.

told reporters that before 1962 had passed “South Carolina’s legal defenses [to segregation] will fall like a house of cards. You might as well start preparing your readers for the inevitable. We are not going to secede.”<sup>192</sup> This support also included the pledges of the state’s leading business associations and business leaders including the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, the Banker’s Association, the Broadcasters’ Association, textile executives, and state senator Edgar Brown, who later stated that the “terrible business in Mississippi did make it easier to do the right thing in South Carolina.”<sup>193</sup> On January 9, 1963 the Gantt case opened in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals as Fritz delivered his farewell address to the General Assembly and prepared the state for the “inevitable.”

As we meet, South Carolina is running out of courts. If and when every legal remedy has been exhausted, this General Assembly must make clear South Carolina’s choice, a government of laws rather than a government of men. As determined as we are, we of today must realize the lesson of one hundred years ago, and move on for the good of South Carolina and our United States. This should be done with dignity. It must be done with law and order.<sup>194</sup>

As predicted, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled on January 16 that Gantt should be admitted to Clemson College. While many urged Hollings to let his successor Donald Russell handle the integration of Clemson, Hollings was determined to see that the groundwork for a peaceful integration was in place for Gantt’s admission and for the new governor, “It was my duty to do the right thing. Russell had been the cloistered president

---

<sup>192</sup> George McMillan, “Integration with Dignity,” *The Saturday Evening Post*, 16 March 1963, 17.

<sup>193</sup> Philip G. Grose, *South Carolina at the Brink: Robert McNair and the Politics of Civil rights* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 112.

<sup>194</sup> [Fritz Hollings farewell address, Jan 9, 1963], [Fritz Hollings: In His Own Words Digital Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

of the University of South Carolina [...] He wouldn't have a chance to take charge properly before having to deal with this potential explosion.”<sup>195</sup>

While many of the state's business leaders and politicians were convinced of the need to peacefully integrate Clemson University, some still vowed to fight. On January 22, 1963, as District Judge C.C. Wyche signed the order admitting Gantt to Clemson, state senator John D. Long of Union rose on a point of personal order to speak about Gantt's admission. Speaking on the issue Long stated that “it was cowardly of Clemson to admit Gantt without a fight” and that “I would prefer that my children be raised in ignorance—not knowing B from Bullsfoot—than to see them cringing and bowing before tyranny.”<sup>196</sup> As others voiced agreement with Long's sentiments, Gressette rose to speak—the man that for years created paths for the state to avoid integration surprisingly sided with those that supported the peaceful admission of Harvey Gantt to Clemson.

A lot of things happen in life [...] We have disappointments. Sometimes I feel like making a speech like my two friends made. We have lost this battle but we are engaged in a war. But this war cannot be won by violence or by inflammatory speeches. I have preached peace and good order too long to change my thinking.<sup>197</sup>

At the conclusion of his speech, the legislature rose to give him an ovation and as Long rose to take the floor again he urged members of the assembly to give the senator another ovation. With Gressette's acquiescence to the forces of integration that persuaded others such as Long to follow, it appeared that the stalwarts were convinced not to fight Gantt's admission; thus the state's resistance to integration began to crumble.

---

<sup>195</sup> Fritz Hollings, *Making Government Work* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 2008), 80.

<sup>196</sup> George McMillan, “Integration with Dignity,” *The Saturday Evening Post*, 16 March 1963, 20.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

While this were true of most of the state's political elite, SLED, Hollings, Russell and other law enforcement officials were not about to take a chance on any potential disruption during Gantt's first day at Clemson. In the "Outline of the Advance Plan of Law Enforcement Maintenance of Student Discipline and Arrangement for the Press" for implementation at Clemson for the admission of Harvey Gantt, SLED aircraft were made available for the day, detention areas for unruly observers were established on campus, and the state's goal of the day was "to avoid serious trouble."<sup>198</sup> The state government, as well as Clemson officials, were determined to not let what happened at the University of Mississippi occur at Clemson. On January 28, 1963 Harvey Gantt arrived at Clemson and was admitted without incident. In a state that was the birthplace of secession, at a school that was originally the plantation of the architect of nullification and inspiration for secession, and at a school that was in part the brainchild of Benjamin Ryan Tillman, the peaceful integration of an African-American came as a complete surprise to many throughout the country.

### **The Result**

Unlike other southern states, South Carolina chose a different path. This path was not easy but it was pursued out of a respect for law and order and out of a concern for the state's economic well being. If Timmerman were governor at this time period, it is unlikely these peaceful events would have occurred; in fact Governor Timmerman "very nearly took the state down the road Alabama and Mississippi were traveling at the time to

---

<sup>198</sup> Clemson Security Plan for the Integration of Clemson College Upon the Admission of Harvey Gantt, Daniel Papers, CU.

ultimate civil disorder.”<sup>199</sup> Hollings’s concern for law and order, and the state’s economic development, along with a business climate that supported these measures, saw the state through this critical juncture and created a hospitable business climate. The state that had concerned itself for so long with the question of race and economic development finally found an answer. The relationship between Hollings and the state’s business leaders created a “coalition of politicians and business leaders who believed economic advancement to be more important than segregation.”<sup>200</sup> This coalition and successive like minded governors strove to maintain law and order in the state as integration took place while continuing to pursue economic development. The result of this effort is that during Hollings’s years as governor the rate of investment was twice the annual rate than the previous fourteen years and by 1968 all of the state’s public colleges and twelve of its twenty-five private colleges were integrated and 14 percent of black Carolinians attended previously all white institutions.<sup>201</sup> In addition to this, the admission of Harvey Gantt signaled a shift in the state’s position from one that defended segregation to one that recognized that continuing the fight against integration was not only futile but detrimental. While racial violence still erupted in the state, most notably in 1968 with the events in Orangeburg, the state’s position on race was settled— integration was state policy and it would be enacted in a peaceful manner for the benefit of the state’s economy.

---

<sup>199</sup> Philip G. Grose, *South Carolina at the Brink: Robert McNair and the Politics of Civil rights* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 109.

<sup>200</sup> R. Phillip Stone, “Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962” (Ph.D diss., The University of South Carolina, 2003), 63.

<sup>201</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 539.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

With the peaceful admission of Harvey Gantt into Clemson College in January 1963, the question of where the government of the state of South Carolina stood on the matter of race was resolved. For the sake of stability, development, and reputation the state had chosen a path that ushered in an era of rapid growth and development. Due to this, comparatively speaking, the “peaceful desegregation process allowed South Carolina to preserve its image as a promising place to do business.”<sup>202</sup> This peaceful transition also led to numerous foreign investors investing in the state so that by the 1970s foreign investment accounted for 40 per cent of its annual industrial development; at one point there was more capital from the Federal Republic of Germany invested in South Carolina than anywhere else outside of West Germany.<sup>203</sup>

Shortly before the end of his term as governor, Hollings addressed the state in a live television broadcast. In this address he discussed the accomplishments of the past four years and highlighted the diverse new products made in the state by industries recruited to the state during his term. Products highlighted in this broadcast ranged from file cabinets produced by Art Metal, Inc. in Spartanburg to capacitors produced by the Electro-Motive Company in Florence.<sup>204</sup> One company, Conso Fastener Corporation in Union, sent an array of products produced in its plant that ranged from pleater hooks,

---

<sup>202</sup> Lacy K. Ford, Jr. and R. Phillip Stone, “Economic Development and Globalization in South Carolina” *Southern Cultures*, (Spring 2007): 28.

<sup>203</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 531.

<sup>204</sup> [Diversified Products Manufactured by New Industries Which Have Located in SC During Hollings’s Administration], [Fritz Hollings Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

venetian blind tape, and slip cover zippers. Along with these products Carl Patrick, the general manager of the plant, sent a letter to Ernie Wright on April 26, 1962 in which he discussed the business atmosphere in the state under the Hollings administration.

We were one of the first companies to locate in South Carolina under Governor Hollings's administration, and we have found it a great pleasure to work with him and his fine staff on many occasions [...] In less than two years the entire plant [which opened on September 18, 1959 with over 100 employees] was controlled one-hundred per cent by South Carolinians—Unionites to be exact.<sup>205</sup>

Yet, this friendly business atmosphere would not have been possible if Hollings had entrenched himself in the fight against integration as many southern governors did during this time period.

The path that Hollings chose during this time period was a difficult one for a person that sought higher office after leaving the governor's office. However, with the slow and methodical approach toward the issue and couching it in terms of stability and law and order instead of integration versus segregation, Hollings successfully navigated the state through what could have been a potentially damaging time period to the state's reputation and economy. Unlike previous experiences, Hollings and business leaders managed to break free of the grip of poverty on the state and finally usher in an era of outside investment and diversified manufacturing. Though racial violence occasionally arose during this time period, most notably in Orangeburg in 1968, the state government no longer tolerated acts of racial violence or stood in the way of integration.

---

<sup>205</sup> [Carl Patrick letter to Ernie Wright, April 26, 1962], [Fritz Hollings Collection], South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

The quest to recover economically from the ravages of the Civil War that began during the days of Reconstruction finally seemed to be on the right track. Over the next fifty years a succession of governors followed Hollings's path and model for economic development; as a result companies such as Michelin, BMW, and Boeing were attracted to the state. Without the leadership of Ernest "Fritz" Hollings, along with his desire for stability and industrial development, at this critical juncture of the civil rights movement in the state, it is doubtful that such success would have occurred and that the state would have been able to develop a diversified economy nor have been able to compete in the emerging global market. Though South Carolina still struggles with poverty, the problem is no longer an inability to attract investment and industry to the state or the lack of a model for success. Perhaps in the years to come, if the state enacts a program similar to Hollings's that is business friendly and invests in infrastructure and education, then perhaps the state's economy can more quickly rebound from the hurdle of the 2008 economic recession.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources:

#### Autobiography and Memoirs

Byrnes, James Francis. *All in One Lifetime*. New York: Harper, 1958.

Hollings, Ernest Fritz. *Making Government Work*. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2008.

#### Legal Documents

*Briggs et al. v. Elliott et al.*, 342 US. 350 (1952)

*Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

*Harvey B. Gantt, a minor, by his father and next friend Christopher Gantt v. The Clemson Agricultural College of South Carolina, et al.* 1962 Case No.: 4101

Petition of Harry Briggs, et al., to the Board of Trustees for School District No. 22. 11 November 1949. Clarendon County Board of Education, L14167. South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina.

#### Newspapers and Magazines

*The Augusta Courier*

*The Charlotte Observer*

*The Charleston News & Courier*

*The Charleston Post and Courier*

*The Greenville News*

*The New York Times*

*The Saturday Evening Post*

*The Spartanburg Herald-Journal*

*The State*

*The Union Daily Times*

*U.S. News & World Report*

*The Wall Street Journal*

#### Manuscripts and Collections

Edgar Allan Brown Papers, Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, Clemson University.

Walter J. Brown Papers, Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, Clemson University.

James Francis Byrnes Papers, Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, Clemson University.

Charles E. Daniel Papers, Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, Clemson University.

L. Marion Gressette Papers, South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

Francis M. Hipp Papers, Liberty Life Insurance Company Paper Collections, Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, Clemson University.

Ernest "Fritz" Hollings Papers, South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

Fritz Hollings "In His Own Words" Digital Collection, South Carolina Political Collections, The University of South Carolina.

Buck Mickel Papers, Clemson University Libraries Special Collections, Clemson University.

Harry Clayton Walker Interview, South Carolina Political Collections Oral History Project, University of South Carolina.

William D. Workman Papers, Modern Political Collections, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

## State Papers

South Carolina Department of Labor, Annual Reports, 1956-1960.

South Carolina Department of Labor, Annual Report, 1960/61-1964-65.

South Carolina Employment Security Commission, Annual Report, 1954/55-1964/65

## Secondary Sources:

Ayers, Edward L. *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Bartley, Numan V. *The New South, 1945-1980*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995.

Bass, Jack and Walter De Vries. *Transformation of Southern Politics*. New York: New American Library, 1976.

Bass, Jack and W. Scott Poole. *The Palmetto State: The Making of Modern South Carolina*. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2009.

Black, Earl and Merle Black. *Politics and Society in the South*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Borstelmann, Thomas. *The Cold War and The Color Line*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Carlton, David L. *Mill and Town in South Carolina, 1880-1920*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982.

Carlton, David L. and Peter A. Colcanis. *The South, The Nation, and The World: Perspectives on Southern Economic Development*. Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 2003.

Cash, Wilbur J. *The Mind of the South*. New York: Knopf, 1941; reprint, New York: Random House, 1991.

Cobb, James C. *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development, 1936-1980*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1982.

——— and William Stueck, ed. *Globalization and the American South*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2005.

- Cook, Robert J. *Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Cooper, William J. *The Conservative Regime: South Carolina, 1877-1890*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968.
- and Thomas E. Terrill. *The American South: A History*, vol. 2, 3d ed. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2002.
- Crespino, Joseph. *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Edgar, Walter. *South Carolina in the Modern Age*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992.
- . *South Carolina: A History*. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 1998.
- Everett, Robert Burke. "Race Relations in South Carolina, 1900-1932." Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia, 1969.
- Ford, Lacy K. and R. Philip Stone. "Economic Development and Globalization in South Carolina." *Southern Cultures* 13 (Spring 2007): 18-50.
- Grose, Phillip G. *South Carolina at the Brink: Robert McNair and the Politics of Civil rights*. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2006.
- Hamer, Fritz P. *Charleston Reborn: A Southern City, Its Navy Yard and World War II*. Charleston: History Press, 2005.
- Hayes, Jack Irby, Jr. *South Carolina and the New Deal*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001.
- Kruse, Kevin M. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Lassiter, Matthew D. *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- McNeill, Paul Wesley. "School Desegregation in South Carolina, 1963-1970." Ed.D diss., University of Kentucky, 1979.
- Moore, Winfred B. Jr., Joseph F. Tripp and Lyon G. Tyler, Jr. Editors. *Developing Dixie: Modernization in a Traditional Society*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1988.

- Prince, K. Michael. *Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys!: South Carolina and the Confederate Flag*. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2004.
- Robertson, David. *Sly and Able: A Political Biography of James F. Byrnes*. New York: Norton, 1994.
- Schulman, Bruce J. *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Scranton, Philip, ed. *The Second Wave: Southern Industrialization from the 1940s to the 1970s*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001.
- Simon, Bryant. *A Fabric of Defeat: The Politics of South Carolina Millhands, 1910-1948*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Stone, Richard Phillip. "Making a Modern State: The Politics of Economic Development in South Carolina, 1938-1962." Ph.D. diss., University of South Carolina, 2003.
- Whately, Warren C. "Labor for the Picking: The New Deal in the South." *The Journal of Economic History* 43 (Dec. 1983): 905-929.
- Woodward, C. Vann. *Origins of the New South: 1877-1913*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971.
- . *The Strange Career of Jim Crow: Third Revised Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974.
- Wright, Gavin. *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War*. New York: Basic Books, 1986.
- . "The Economic Revolution in the American South." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 1 (Summer, 1987) : 161-178.
- . "The Civil rights Revolution as Economic History." *The Journal of Economic History* 59 (June 1999) : 267-289.