My fellow South Carolinians:

Next Tuesday the Democrats of South Carolina will select the man who, as Governor, will guide the destiny of our State during the next four years. These next four years are certain to be important years in the development and progress of South Carolina.

We have just emerged from the most devastating war of all time. Along with millions of other Americans who fought to defeat the axis powers, I had hoped that our victory would seal the doom of all wars. I am not now so hopeful tonight. But I do have abiding faith and confidence in our own great South Carolinian, James F. Byrnes, who is struggling so hard to make a lasting peace. I am certain that he is carrying out the will of the American people when he stands firm against Russia in preventing the making of an unfair peace. We did not fight a war to destroy a Fascist dictatorship in order that a Communist dictatorship could spread over the world.

The troubled international situation, together with the tremendous readjustments we must make in our economy at home as a result of the war, makes it imperative that we have the most effective and efficient government possible, not only in Washington but in our own state government in Columbia.

In these trying years that lie ahead, South Carolina will need as Governor a person who has had experience in government.

There is no substitute for experience, whether in business, in our daily work, or in government. The results of the first primary prove without a doubt that the people of South Carolina intend to have in the Governor's office during the next four years a man with experience in government.
Running on my record of 25 years of public service — as a teacher, as a county superintendent of education, as a Senator from Edgefield County, as a judge on our circuit bench, and as a soldier, I carried 23 of the 46 counties in the State. My opponent led in only 14. In the remaining 18 counties I ran second in 15. These counties, scattered all over South Carolina, enabled me to lead in the first primary by over 12 thousand votes.

Since the first primary, pledges of support have come to me from thousands of friends all over the State who said they could not support me in the first primary because of hometies and other reasons but they are with me now and we are going to sweep the second primary from the mountains to the sea.

Not only are our people determined to have as Governor a man with experience but they are determined to have in the Governor's office a man who can not be dictated to by any ring, or group, or clique of individuals who want to run the state government to satisfy their own selfish desires.

As a result of the fight I made in the first primary, we have broken the back of the Barnwell ring which has so long dominated affairs of government in this state. The fact that I received such a strong vote in Barnwell County shows that the good people of that county themselves are with me in this fight to stop ring rule in Columbia. The announcement by the Speaker of the House of Representatives that he would not offer for reelection to the high state office he now holds marks the beginning of the end of the Barnwell ring. The end will come next Tuesday night when the Democrats of South Carolina put Strom Thurmond in the Governor's office for four years.
There is another ring that will meet its Waterloo next Tuesday. I refer to the liquor ring. Crowned with their fabulous profits, these liquor dealers are determined to have in the Governor’s office a man who will use the prestige of his office, and if necessary his veto power to prevent the legislature from cleaning up this liquor mess in our state.

The shameful expenditure of money in the first primary by the liquor dealers was stench in the nostril of every decent, home loving, Christian South Carolinian. Everyone knows that the liquor dealers through their henchmen have raised the largest slush fund ever raised in this state to elect a Governor. The candidate they seek to defeat is Strom Thurmond, because they know where I stand on this issue.

There must be an end to the corrupt use of money by the liquor interests of South Carolina to elect their picked candidate for Governor and also members of the legislature who will do their bidding. This evil practice which has polluted our primary this summer must be stopped by law.

One of my first official acts when I take office as Governor will be to call on the Legislature to make sweeping investigation of the use of money in this campaign, and expose to the public this attempt by the liquor dealers to control the politics of our state. With the help of the legislature next January we shall put an end to this corrupt practice.

As Governor I intend that law and order shall prevail in South Carolina. No one shall be above the law. The decisions of the courts will stand. There will be no abuse of the pardoning power. During the four years that I am in the Governor’s office, I intend to strengthen law enforcement at every turn. In this undertaking to stamp out the underworld criminal element in South Carolina I know I will have the active cooperation of the legislature.
As Governor I promise to give the people of this state a progressive administration. We are not going to turn back the clock of progress in South Carolina. We are going to move forward in doing those things which contribute most to the prosperity and happiness of all our people.

I know there are certain reactionary interests in South Carolina who are working against me. They fought every piece of legislation that our liberal Democratic administration has put into law since 1933.

In this aftermath of war these forces of reaction see an opportunity to rip from our state and national laws that legislation which has meant so much to our farmers, to those who work in our mills, and to the average man and woman in the various walks of life.

All my life I have stood for sound and progressive government. The people of South Carolina know this and that is why they gave me such a commanding lead in the first primary. The issue in this primary between reactionary and progressive government is clearly drawn.

I have been a lifelong Democrat and have always voted for and supported the nominees of the Democratic party. Because I believed in progressive government, I had the pleasure of voting for the nomination of Franklin D. Roosevelt as President in two national conventions.

When the 1944 Democratic national convention met in Chicago, I had landed by glider in Normandy with the 82nd Airborne Division and was fighting with the First Army. I was not a delegate to that convention but my opponent in this race for Governor was there as a delegate. Had I been there I would have voted for the renomination of my commander-in-chief, Franklin D. Roosevelt. For at the time of that grave crisis, when the fate of the world hung in the balance, the fighting American soldiers were praying that their great leader would be continued in office to inspire and lead them to victory.
Regardless of how much my opponent may have opposed the progressive program of the Democratic party under Franklin D. Roosevelt, he should not have permitted himself to become aligned with those seeking to defeat the Commander-in-Chief in that hour of crisis.

My opponent had gone to Chicago as a delegate from the Democratic state convention in Columbia which had endorsed the renomination of President Roosevelt. If my opponent could not carry out the wishes of the people of South Carolina then he should have stayed at home.

My opponent, of course, had every right to oppose the political philosophy of Franklin D. Roosevelt. But when he asks the Democrats of South Carolina to nominate him as Governor I think he owes to them a better explanation than he has given as to why he bolted the will of the South Carolina Democratic Convention in 1944 and voted for Harry Byrd and against Franklin D. Roosevelt.

My opponent seeks to justify his action in opposing the renomination of Franklin D. Roosevelt by saying he supported James F. Byrnes for Vice President. Now the people of South Carolina will not be deceived. They know that Mr. Byrnes was not a candidate for President. He was loyally supporting the President with whom he was serving in the White House at that time as Assistant President.

My opponent cannot mislead the people of South Carolina by such spurious and evasive statements. My opponent cannot escape the fact that he cast his ballot in the 1944 Democratic Convention against the renomination of the Commander-in-Chief and President of the United States.
We in South Carolina must ever be on guard against the return of reactionary government in this state. Let me give you just one example. Congress has authorized an appropriation of some sixty million dollars for a huge power, reforestation, and recreational development on the Savannah River. South Carolina will receive untold benefits from this development if it is developed by the federal government along the lines of the TVA.

Although several million dollars have already been expended by the federal government, the Georgia Power Company is now seeking to block this development. They have filed a petition with the federal government for the permit to build the power dam at Clark's Hill. I do not think it will be granted but if it should be it would destroy the benefits of this great development for the people of South Carolina.

As Governor I shall do all in my power to resist this effort of the Georgia Power Company to block the Savannah River development. I have always advocated and worked for the development of our power and other natural resources. As Governor I will continue to do so. I want to see the widest possible distribution of the benefits of electricity, especially to our farmers.

While I am greatly interested in our natural resources, I am, of course, more interested in our human resources.

The most important asset we have is our young people. For many years, it has been necessary for many of them to migrate to other states in order to make a living in agriculture or in industry or in business. We have been paying for the education of our young people, only to lose their talents and productive powers by their moving to other states.

We can keep our young people in South Carolina by the wise creation of jobs on our farms, in business, and industry.
During the war there was an expansion of our industrial resources. New jobs and new earning power have been created, but this is only the beginning. We must and will continue to promote the work of the state research and planning board in bringing new industries and more jobs to South Carolina.

We must continue to do all that is possible to make life and living on the farm more attractive to our young people. Certainly, the farmers must regain the prices they have received during the war because agriculture can never be profitable unless farm products bring on the market place the cost of production plus a reasonable profit.

I favor more and better farm to market roads and priorities to farmers which enable them to secure without delay rural electrification.

While we have made great strides in our agricultural development we can not lose sight of the fact that agriculture remains the backbone of the economy of South Carolina.

We must strengthen our educational system in every way possible. In this atomic age no state can keep astride of the advance of civilization without extending to its youth the fullest opportunity for education.

At this very moment our schools can not accommodate the youths of our state who are now knocking at their doors pleading for an opportunity to continue their education. We must not let our young people down. As Governor I shall strive to expand our educational facilities in order that no boy and girl of South Carolina will be denied their heritage of a good education. Especially must we provide immediately the necessary facilities to permit our veterans to participate in educational benefits of the G I bill of rights.
Time does not permit me to further discuss the details of the progressive program which I have advocated in this campaign. I have discussed this program in every county. The vote in the first primary demonstrates that the people of this state approve and favor the issues on which I have based my campaign.

In conclusion let me again assure you that when I am sworn in as your Governor, my hands will not be tied by any group. I will be free to act for the best interest of all of our people. And on my record as a public official and on my pledges for a sound, clean and progressive administration, I ask for your support in the primary Tuesday.

To the nearly 100,000 South Carolinians who voted for me in the first primary I want you to know how grateful I am for your support. I urge you not to fail to return to the polls Tuesday. You will be joined by other thousands who were not with us in the first campaign but are supporting me now. We have this fight for clean, honest, progressive and efficient government in South Carolina won. We are going to keep it won. Again I want to express my deepest appreciation for the pledges of support I have received from all over South Carolina and the fine work of loyal friends in every county.

Thank you so much and good night.