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THE HONORABLE

JAMES F. BYRNES

Governor of South Carolina

to the

North Carolina Citizens Association

RALEIGH, N. C.

Wednesday, March 14, 1951

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ADDRESS OF JAMES F. BYRNES, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH
CAROLINA, TO THE NORTH CAROLINA CITIZENS
ASSOCIATION AT RALEIGH, N. C., AT 8 P. M.,
ON MARCH 14, 1951

The people of the two Carolinas have somewhat the same ancestry and history. Throughout their history they have shown their devotion to the Spirit of Independence. It was the love of liberty that inspired them to fight at Kings Mountain and Fort Sumter. It is the love of liberty that today inspires their sons to deeds of heroism in Korea.

Their ancestors, the men and women who came to settle the province of Carolina, came not to establish a government. Their real motive was to escape government. Many of them had suffered from the exercise of concentrated power. In that day power was concentrated in a King. Power centered in a bureaucracy can be equally as despotic as power centered in a King.

As those early settlers increased in number, they realized some government was necessary and with great caution they distilled the experiences of mankind and adopted the Constitution with its Bill of Rights.

North Carolina did not ratify the Constitution until it included that Bill of Rights. They wanted to make certain that the liberty they sought in this new world should not be surrendered to any government.

Those early settlers did not teach their children to seek security; they taught them to look for opportunity.

They believed that liberty must be exercised by all individuals; that men cannot safely transfer their liberties to a few individuals to be held in trust for them.

They were right. In this world of ours men must assume responsibility for their own welfare or they will have only such degree of welfare as may be bestowed upon them by those temporarily in power.

Some people may be impatient with these views. They may regard them as old fashioned. They may argue that conditions have changed. That is true, but human behavior has not changed in its fundamentals.

The failure of a man to stand on his own feet, to assume the responsibilities of a man, and to discharge the duties of a man, will

weaken him now just as it did in the scorned "horse and buggy" days and in the early days of the Republic.

If the age of our Constitution is to be held against the soundness of its fundamental principles, then what about the age of our religion? If time invalidates truth in one field, will it not do so in other fields?

Carolínians—North and South—have believed in the fundamentals of the Christian religion and have believed, too, in the fundamentals of the Constitution of the United States. Of course, there are people in other sections who scornfully refer to the South as the "backward South" and the "Bible Belt." As long as they couple the two, I do not seriously object, for I do not believe, after all, that a people who read the Bible and humbly try to follow in the footsteps of the Master are such a backward people.

It was only a few years ago that a Commission reported to the President of the United States that the South was "Economic Problem No. 1." Some of the writers and politicians who then bemoaned our economic and politic plight, today are seeking legislation in their states to prevent the removal of industries to the Carolinas and other Southern States.

We have reason to be proud of our progress in the Carolinas. Less than a century ago, because we believed in the preservation of the rights and powers of the States under the Constitution, we were at war with other states of the Union. We suffered disastrous defeat.

At the end of four years the soldiers of the Confederacy returned to their homes having lost all save honor and spirit. They had no equipment to operate factories or to cultivate farms. They had no labor. The slaves who had previously worked our farms had been freed.

Unlike the Germans, Italians and Japanese, the defeated South received no Marshall aid. The United States Government, however, did send an occupation army, guarding the right of the carpetbagger and the freed slave to administer government. Our cry of cruelty and corruption was regarded by some in the North as the cry of poor losers, and by others, as a fate we deserved.

But, as in all history, out of adversity there came strength. By our own efforts, we made progress even in the reconstruction period. And, to the glory of Southern women, be it said, we preserved the racial integrity of the white race.

The history of the Carolinas since the period of reconstruction is the story "From Rags to Riches." It is a Cinderella story. It is a true story.

Years ago North Carolina achieved a balanced economy. You are still progressing in industry and in agriculture. In the last ten years the number of your manufacturing establishments increased approximately 70 per cent. It is amazing to learn that last year your farmers received in cash for their crops the sum of 750 million dollars.

Now what of the future? No business man can answer that question because the answer is dependent upon what government will do. What the government will do necessarily is dependent in great degree upon what the Soviet government will do. But it does not depend entirely upon that.

In time of war or of great business depression, it is necessary that unusual powers be granted to the federal government. When there is an end to war or depression, if we are to have the form of government under which we have lived and prospered for a century and a half, those powers must be returned to the States and the people.

Experience has proved that is difficult to accomplish. Human beings love power. Seldom will they voluntarily relinquish it. A man can get drunk on alcohol and recover without suffering more than remorse and a headache but the man who gets drunk on power never recovers.

Now because of war in the Pacific and the threat of war in Europe, we are conferring extraordinary powers upon the national government. We must do so. But every such grant should have a specified date for its termination. If at that time the necessity exists for its continuance, the representatives of the people in the Congress can be relied upon to extend such powers.

If, however, there is no specified date of termination, I care not what political party is in power, legislation returning such powers to the States is apt to be vetoed and would require a two-thirds vote for enactment.

I heartily favor the Administration's program to increase our military power in the air and on land and sea.

In October, 1945, at the very first meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, I learned to my great disappointment, that the Soviets seemed more interested in expansion of their territory and power than in peace on earth.

When I moved to adjourn that meeting in London without accomplishing anything, I stated that no agreement was better than a bad agreement. I realized how my statement would disillusion the peace-loving people of the United States. I realized, too, that demobilization by the point system had already taken from our army the men of experience so essential to a mechanized army.

From that day to this, I have urged an increase in our appropriations for military purposes and a decrease in our non-military expenditures. However, others equally patriotic, but grossly mistaken, believed in spending more money for non-military purposes and little money for the defense of the nation. It took Korea to waken us to a true realization of our defenseless position.

As we read the casualty lists, we know we are not engaged in a police action in Korea. We are engaged in a war. We know, too, that we are threatened with war in Europe. We must not refuse to confer with the Soviet Republic with a view to avoiding a world war, but as we confer, we must always remember that peace depends not upon what is written in an agreement but upon what is in the minds and hearts of men. The Soviets will live up to an agreement only so long as it is to their advantage to do so. And it will be to their advantage only so long as the United States is strong militarily and economically.

From my experience with the Soviet representatives at many international conferences, I know they respect only force. Therefore, we must be strong in the air and on land and sea. Our rearmament will not provoke a war but our failure to rearm might well do so.

It is my conviction that the only reason the Soviets have not started a war in Europe is because of our supply of atomic weapons.

On one of my trips to Russia I saw the damage done by German artillery and air power to Russian cities. I saw the effect that destruction had upon the minds of Soviet leaders. They realize the much greater destruction that would be wrought by our atomic weapons. They realize, too, that if we have in Western Europe an army sufficiently strong to hold their foot soldiers in check for a time, we will have available the air bases from which to fly planes that would destroy, not only their supply bases, but their production facilities.

Of course, the Soviets might likewise destroy some of our communities where are located plants producing weapons of war. Fortunately, however, our production is being decentralized. And with the protection afforded us by our air power and our navy, it will be

a long time before the Soviets, with the air bases they presently have, could do any great damage to American production.

It is the productive power of the United States upon which the free nations of the world rely for defense of their liberties. It is our productive power, as well as our atomic power, that will cause the Kremlin to hesitate to start a war in Europe. That is why we must remain economically strong.

We must not allow misguided or selfish people in our midst to do what Stalin cannot do—destroy our productive power. And the people of America must support those officials who are willing to tell the representatives of business and of labor that they cannot use this war situation to promote their selfish interests.

The Congress has freely granted the appropriations recommended in the President's Budget for military purposes. I hope that with equal enthusiasm they will reduce the amount requested for non-military programs.

In his Budget Message, the President recommended the enactment of legislation embarking upon new activities such as socialized medicine, the Branan Plan, Federal aid for education, and the Civil Rights Program, including the FEPC. I hope the Congress will just forget these recommendations.

These proposals will divide the people of the country at a time when unity is essential. Some of them would involve the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars. Others threaten local self-government and threaten also the liberties of the individual.

The people of America are willing to sacrifice even life itself to defend our liberties against communistic governments. But while making such sacrifices they do not want to have their government start on the road toward socialism.

I hope, too, that the Congress will forget the administration's Point Four, the objective of which is to elevate the standard of living of all the peoples of the world. It is appealing to think of helping all mankind. Our people will always respond to an appeal for help to any people in an emergency. But common sense tells us there is a limit to what we can do.

The taxpayers of this nation cannot adequately provide for the defense of this country, furnish military equipment to all governments that will resist the aggression of the Soviets; discharge our obligations to our veterans, the poor and the aged, and at the same time

elevate the standard of living of the peoples of all the rest of the world.

The freedom loving people of the world must remember that we fight and sacrifice to preserve their freedom as well as ours. They must remember, and we must remember, that if we fall or stumble there is no other government to which we can turn for financial help. There is no Marshall aid for us.

We will be like Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, "Alone, alone, all, all alone. Alone on a wide, wide sea. And never a saint took pity on my soul in agony."

Our people must remember, too, that government has no money except that which comes from the pockets of the people or is borrowed. If borrowed, it must be repaid either by our taxpayers or by their children, who then would be made to suffer for the folly of their fathers.

There is a vast difference between local governments borrowing to invest in schools or other improvements of permanent character and the national government borrowing to improve the standard of living of the people of the world.

The United States government now owes approximately 260 billion dollars. During the fiscal year beginning next July first, if we do not have full scale war, our debt will increase an additional 13 billion dollars unless additional taxes are levied. If we have full scale war, of course, the increase will be greater.

The market price of our bonds has been preserved by the Federal Reserve Board through its control of the issuance of currency. That is inflationary. It presents a terrific problem because if the price of our bonds should begin to drop, the holders will start to sell and accelerate the depreciation.

Facing this situation, the people who urge that we embark upon new activities costing billions of dollars should be willing to withhold their demands until we have first made secure their liberties.

Because of the Korean war and the defense program, it is essential that the government enforce war-time controls. Last July when it became apparent that we were engaged in a war in Korea, a ceiling should have been placed on prices and wages. It was not done. Now it is a difficult task.

It was not done at the beginning of World War II. When I became Director of Economic Stabilization, eleven months after we entered the war, I had the same difficult task that today confronts

Mr. Wilson and Mr. Johnston. Business men and farmers demanded increased prices. Labor demanded increased wages. Each group claimed their demands were necessary because of the increases received by the others. At my request, President Roosevelt signed the order known as the Hold-the-Line-Order.

Of course, every group complained. They howled—they threatened. All of the leaders came to see me. I had more acquaintances and fewer friends than I ever had in my life. But then, as now, if we were to halt inflation, there was but one course. That was to hold the line.

Today the government must say what it means and mean what it says. Exceptions cannot be made. Of course, there will be inequities. Inequities are a part of war. One boy is called to fight and die in Korea while another boy may live at home and make money. In time of war, if the Nation is to endure, there must be a spirit of sacrifice instead of a spirit of selfishness.

The people who are called upon to make sacrifices are not made happy by the disclosure of disloyalty of an employee of the Atomic Energy Commission and by the shocking disclosures before the Senate Committee investigating the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Worse than the loss of money is the loss of confidence in the honesty of men who have occupied responsible positions in government. There is no excuse for the existence of the organization.

Why should your government lend public funds to manufacture automobiles and fabricated houses or to build tourist hotels in Florida?

A man can borrow money from the banks and private investors provided he has character and collateral. If he does not possess them, he should not be loaned your money.

In March, 1945, I expressed this view to President Roosevelt. In his administration the RFC had been wisely administered by Jesse Jones. But President Roosevelt realized the danger. He said it had served its purpose and when peace was restored it should be liquidated. He did not live to liquidate it.

Because of the war situation, it may be necessary to make loans to a few manufacturers producing weapons of war. But these can be made by Charles E. Wilson, Defense Mobilizer, who has the confidence of the people. The Congress should promptly enact legislation to liquidate the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

I want to make clear that while I disagree with the administration about some domestic policies, I am not criticizing its foreign policies.

I heartily favor the defense program. I heartily favor the administration's policy of sending troops to Europe. I think we should accept the judgment of General Eisenhower as to the number of troops we should contribute to the Army of Freedom. I am willing also to accept his judgment that the governments of Western Europe are showing a willingness to fight for their freedom.

I would make even further overtures to Yugoslavia and to Spain. They have armies on the field, not merely on paper. I would also accept in that Army of Freedom troops from Western Germany. If Stalin should determine to make war on Western Europe, that great industrial people could not remain neutral even if they wished to do so. Western Germany will be with us or with the Soviets. I want them with us.

Upon the cessation of hostilities we promptly returned the German prisoners of war. Later France and Britain returned theirs. The Soviets failed to return approximately a million German prisoners of war to their homes. Those German soldiers are working as slaves in Russia or have died while working as slaves. They constitute a million reasons why the Germans would prefer to serve in Eisenhower's Army of Freedom.

We must say to our friends in Western Europe that if American boys are going to risk their lives in defense of Western Europe, we want them to have the help of every soldier who is willing to fight against the godless communists of Russia.

I do not believe that a world war is inevitable. On the contrary, if we remain strong, military and economically, I believe there will be no war, certainly not for a long time to come.

We must remain strong, not only militarily and economically, but spiritually. "In God we Trust" must be engraved in our hearts as well as on our coins. We must pray that the war in Korea shall come to an end. We must pray that we shall never have another World War. But if, notwithstanding our prayers and our efforts, that misfortune should come to the world, the people of the Carolinas will be found sacrificing, fighting and dying for America, the land we love.