ANNUAL MESSAGE
of
OLIN D. JOHNSTON
GOVERNOR

to the
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia, January 14, 1936
PERTINENT QUOTATIONS FROM MESSAGE

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"I believe that the will of the majority of the people should prevail at all times."

"One of the most alarming situations in the country today is the ever-increasing number of accidents and deaths on our streets and highways."

"Our people must not be burdened with taxes levied at the discretion of one man or any small group of men."
Mr. President, Mr. Speaker and Members of the General Assembly:

A year ago when I assumed the office of Governor of South Carolina, I stood before you and pledged my most earnest efforts and conscientious labors in carrying out a constructive four-year program for our great State. A whole year—one filled with many happenings—has passed and we stand today at the beginning of another session of the legislature. There is great opportunity ahead for service to our State and our people, and we must make the most of it. We should neglect nothing that will insure a continuance of the progress we are now making.

As the servant of the people of South Carolina, I shall give an account of my stewardship and make certain recommendations intended to insure the continuance of the progress we have made in the past. The State of South Carolina is in one sense a great business organization. Like every other organization, it should take an inventory at the beginning of every year to see where it stands, determine what gains have been made in the past, and what promises appear in the future. It is my intention to set before you an inventory of our accomplishments during the past year, and a prospectus or outlook for continued gains during 1936.

I promised the people a year ago that I would do all in my power to give back to them the government over which they should rightfully have adequate control. For a long time, our people have murmured against selfish and oppressive rule of the few and against the dictates of selfish minorities that have sought to further their own interests at public expense. With the co-operation of our citizens and the legislature, I have been able to make a good start in the consummation of this ambition to put the government of the people back with the people, where it rightfully belongs, and where the authority and power shall ever rest as long as democracy stands.

The beginning of this new year finds me all the more determined in my ambitions to serve the people and to carry out their expressed wishes. I shall not deviate from the rightful course I have started upon—the course of action that has been upheld by the outspoken sentiments of the people themselves. There
will be no turning back. During the remainder of my administration, I intend to stand squarely upon my convictions of what is best for the vast majority of our people and to carry out those policies that have the endorsement of the democracy of South Carolina.

South Carolina is going forward! There is no question about that. We are taking our well-earned place in the forefront of those States that are marching forward under the courageous and wise leadership of our great President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. We have profited in the past from the co-operation of the Federal Government, and we shall do so in the future. It is my firm hope that this helpful spirit of co-operation will permeate through every department of our State government and into every section and community of South Carolina where it will enliven the individual and make every citizen a more helpful and indispensable part of our scheme of living.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF LAST YEAR

During the last year, South Carolina has made a large number of progressive steps, which have already shown large benefits, and which promise even greater achievements in the future. I shall enumerate briefly these accomplishments and I am certain that each one of you will feel a just pride when you realize the extent to which this State has placed itself among the forward-thinking and forward-acting States of the Union.

The legislature last year enacted a seven-month, state-supported, school term, with increased pay for teachers. This will insure enhancement of the educational advantages given our children.

The South Carolina Aeronautics Commission, created by the 1935 legislature has already obtained for this State nearly three-quarters of a million dollars for construction of airports and other aviation developments, all of this with no expense to our taxpayers.

South Carolina farmers have already begun to feel the benefits of a state-wide Rural Electrification program, which was made possible by the last legislature. This promises a new economic and social life for the farmer and his family.

The legislature increased time off for good behavior from 10 to 20 per cent for all prisoners in the State. This law has al-
ready resulted in a strengthened morale among our prison population. Adherence by your Governor to the strict policy of not granting indiscriminate pardons has resulted in a wholesome and renewed respect for the law. The pardon racket has come to an end in South Carolina.

The Chief Highway Commissioner has been put out of office in accordance with my firm pledge to the people, and the department is now being operated by a temporary board which will be succeeded by a permanent one, the creation of which has been left to the legislature and the people.

The Workmen’s Compensation Law, created by the last legislature, is already in full force and effect and has put South Carolina among 46 States that have enacted such progressive legislation.

The new liquor law has been in force for more than seven months and although I have been, and still am, opposed to liquor in any form, I kept my promise to abide by the will of the people who voted for repeal of the dry law in our State. The present law has its imperfections and should be amended as I propose in this message. From the standpoint of State finances, the law is yielding a large sum annually.

The Board for the Promotion of External Trade, set up by the last legislature, started early last year to build up foreign and domestic markets for South Carolina products, and this work should go steadily on.

South Carolina has co-operated with the Federal Government to obtain large financial benefits, which are already visible in the shape of new buildings erected with P. W. A. funds, and has widely benefitted from W. P. A. projects in almost every community in the State. In many other ways our State has co-operated with the Federal Government to the advantage of both.

South Carolina has lived strictly within its budget during this fiscal year. During the year long-term obligations were refinanced at an interest saving that will amount to several million dollars. Money was obtained on short terms at the lowest rate in the State’s history, and about five million dollars was cut from the State’s debt by paying off short term notes and bond issues. South Carolina stands today among the first ten states in financial stability.
STATE FINANCES AND TAXATION

I recommend most earnestly that all bond issues not voted on by the people be carefully watched so that no obligations will be incurred that will work to our detriment. I hope that every member of the House and Senate will co-operate to this extent. I wish also to warn against any appropriations that will exceed our revenue. The State's financial integrity must be preserved at all costs.

I recommend an increased graduated tax on all chain stores operating in South Carolina. Because of the fact that these chain stores, through their method of merchandising, are able to escape much of the ad valorem tax, therefore, they should be made to bear a heavier privilege tax that they may not have an advantage over independent businesses. I believe that the present graduated tax can be increased without any injury to the operation of these chain establishments. Our State could thereby gain additional revenue.

The power companies should be made to carry additional tax. They merchandise the natural resources of this State, and they should bear their just proportion of the tax load. They cannot rightfully call a just additional tax a burdensome one, because they have heavily profited in the past years and are still doing so. The Duke Power Company, for instance, which operates in this State, according to newspaper reports, was able to pay off $50,000,000 in outstanding obligations last year.

EDUCATION

Education has made rapid progress in South Carolina during the past few months because of the impetus given it by the new seven-month, state-supported school term. Both common school education and higher education in our State should continue to make gains during this and succeeding years, for I believe our people and our legislators have a new sense of responsibility to the younger generation. Our school teachers are better off this year because of increased pay, but they are still underpaid insofar as their training, experience and contribution to the general welfare are concerned. I hope this condition will not always exist in our educational system.

I earnestly recommend that the legislature set up a system of free textbooks for the common schools of our State. I believe
the textbook system could be installed with absolute fairness to all by providing books free of charge to the children of the first two grades the first year, and thereafter adding one or two grades each year until all grades have free textbooks. Other forward-thinking States have found that this plan is a necessary adjunct to their educational system and that the school children who otherwise would have been deprived of an equal chance of acquiring an education have been able to progress along with their more fortunate fellow pupils. There are thousands of children in South Carolina in need of free textbooks. Our citizens would look upon this rightful contribution to the welfare of these children as an opportunity to help make them worthy citizens of our State.

The question naturally arises: How can we raise the money to finance this plan? The increased chain store tax is the answer. It would not be burdensome to the people at large, who would benefit mostly from the wise use of such added revenue.

I also recommend a general survey of the educational system of our State, a survey both of the material property and of the administrative, supervisory and teaching system. This survey, if carefully and thoroughly made under the provisions of a legislative act, would enable us to have a complete knowledge of the material plants of the State school system, the teaching load, the rate of progress by pupils, and many other facts necessary as a foundation for building our school system into a better one.

The main burden of taxation, as we all know, is not State but local in nature. Much of this tax burden falls upon the poorer school districts in the various counties of the State. Although the seven-month term is now operative in every school district, many districts are unable to supply an additional month, and thus the children have access to a term either one or two months shorter than the terms offered children in the richer districts. I recommend that the legislature enact a law providing that every county guarantee at least one month of school in addition to the state term of seven months before it can receive State aid.

Under this plan, the poorer districts would share in the provisions of the richer districts for school purposes. If the State can supply seven months, the counties can supply an additional month without any great burden on the people. If this extra
month were guaranteed, South Carolina would have an eight-month State-and County-supported school term, which would place it on a parity with any State in the Union in supplying free education to the children of that State.

I favor a more efficient and economical operation of the county school bus system for free transportation of pupils through the installation of a county-wide unit of transportation instead of the present district plan. Under the present system, school districts in most of the counties buy and operate their own busses. A county-wide system would provide savings through wholesale purchases of busses, more efficient service and economical operation, by doing away with the overlapping of routes and passengers. We should ever be mindful of the safety of school children in busses and should see to it that every bus driver is well qualified to hold his job to protect the best interests of his young charges.

LABOR

My position in favor of fair treatment for labor and of a square deal for capital is well known and needs no repetition here. By treating both the working man and industry with every possible consideration, and by aiding both with helpful legislation, the progress of our State in encouraging new industries to come here and in supporting those that have already contributed to our welfare will be greatly accelerated.

The Workmen's Compensation Law has already more than justified its enactment and it is now rendering a decided service to both the working man and his employer. The law, as the name implies, is for the benefit and protection of the working man, to see that he receives a square deal in the compensation of personal injuries incurred in his daily occupation. It likewise is conducive to fair treatment for industry and it is now attracting new capital and new industrial blood to our State.

During the operation of this law in the last few months, the need has been apparent for several amendments that will bring it into conformity with the more complete compensation acts and further safeguard the rights of both parties concerned. I, therefore, propose the following amendments to this act:

1. The elimination of the exempted classification of industry from the terms of the Act.
2. The inclusion under the terms of the Act of all industries employing more than seven employees instead of present exemptions up to 15.

3. The inclusion of a reasonable occupational disease clause.

4. The increase of disability allowance from 50 to 66 and two-thirds per cent of average weekly pay.

5. The reduction of the number of waiting days from seven to three.

6. The increase of the maximum death benefits from $5,500 to $7,500.

7. The increase of the tax on insurance carriers and self-insurers to conform the South Carolina Act with that of other States, that the South Carolina Industrial Commission be made self-sustaining.

I earnestly urge that this legislature set up a Labor Department that would supplant the present Board of Conciliation and take over all matters pertaining to labor from the Department of Agriculture. The Department of Labor would be entrusted with the supervision and administration of all labor laws and with the conciliation and settlement of industrial disputes. I believe that such a department would further strengthen the existing harmonious relations between capital and labor in this State and would provide a square deal for both in the best interests of the people at large.

I favor the enactment of a collateral law with the National Labor Disputes Act that those engaged in intrastate commerce may come under the same regulations.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The Federal Government has set up a Social Security law, part of the provisions of which became effective January 1 of this year when a federal tax was levied on employers' payrolls. To come under the provision of this law, each State must enact collateral legislation that will supply supplementary payments.

Other States are rapidly taking advantage of the provisions of the Federal Law and South Carolina must do so this year, if it shares in the full benefits. Employers and employees of this State will both lose if South Carolina has no State law or Con-
institutional provision operative in respect to providing temporary old age assistance and permanent old age benefits for South Carolinians.

FAIR LIBEL LAW

In my inaugural address last year, I asked that the legislature enact a fair and reasonable libel law. South Carolina is one of the few States that does not protect both the public and the press through such legislation. In fairness to the newspapers of this State, I strongly urge that the General Assembly enact such a law during the present session. Our State cannot afford to remain backward in this respect.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

During the past year there has been a noticeable increase in respect for law and order. Many have attributed at least a part of this increase to your Governor's firm stand against granting indiscriminate pardons. A wholesome respect for the law and knowledge that conviction means punishment are among the strongest deterrents of crime and wrong-doing.

The state-wide liquor law went into effect more than seven months ago. A law allowing the sale of any sort of liquor is distasteful to me personally, but in signing the present law I was willing to bow to the wishes of the people, a majority of whom voted for repeal. I feel it my duty, however, to suggest certain recommendations that should make the present law more workable and effective.

I recommend that the legislature, by amending the present law, should limit possession of stamped liquor to any individual to one gallon. I recommend furthermore that the law provide that no place of business other than a wholesale or retail liquor store may have stored in it any liquor in any amount whatsoever.

I recommend amending the South Carolina law to conform it with Federal statutes relating to the seizure and sale of automobiles used in illegal liquor traffic, so that officers confiscating cars in our State may sell them legally regardless of mortgages. The State law should also be confirmed to the Federal law that prohibits the use of any empty liquor bottle in the further sale of liquor. I favor a law prohibiting the granting of a license
to anyone who has been convicted of a liquor law violation, since
the 18th Amendment to the Federal Constitution went into effect.

Finally, I recommend that the law be amended so that each
municipality and county in the State be allowed to vote on the
question of whether a liquor store be allowed to operate within
its boundaries. I believe that the will of the majority of the
people should prevail at all times, and if there is any municipality
or county in the State where a majority of the people do not
want a liquor store, that sentiment, expressed at the ballot boxes,
should stand.

South Carolina has long needed a centralized state police sys-
tem to supplant its multifarious law-enforcement agencies that
have no co-ordinating scheme or central supervision. I urge
most strongly upon this legislature the necessity for creating a
unified state police system, one that will combine the highway
patrol with the Governor's constabulary, thereby saving thou-
sands of dollars annually for the State. Good roads, high-
speed automobiles, radio and increased criminal knowledge make
necessary a police system that covers the State as a whole, and
gives adequate and efficient protection to life and property of
all citizens. A state police radio broadcasting station should be
put at the disposal of this system.

Such a police system should combine with it a classification
bureau—a centralized agency that would keep complete records
of convictions, fingerprint records of all convicted persons and
other similar information by means of a card index system. We
have no state-wide bureau like this at present, although prac-
tically every other State has. Such a bureau would be of in-
dispensable help in apprehending criminals and in keeping track
of them after they are convicted. Our State needs also to pro-
vide legislation for interstate compacts concerning extradition,
State boundaries and unified criminal statutes.

HIGHWAY SAFETY CAMPAIGN

One of the most alarming situations in this country today is
the ever-increasing number of accidents and deaths on our streets
and highways. South Carolina's record in highway deaths and
accidents is one to make us all conscious of the great need for
stringent measures and an awakened public sentiment that will
destroy this stalking monster of death and destruction that
greedily clutches so many of our own people in its claws every year. The death toll of 36,500 people is this country last year has made us nationally conscious of the need for some drastic means to combat this growing menace.

In 1935, 289 persons were killed on the State highways of South Carolina and 1,080 were injured. Many more were killed in accidents on streets of our towns and cities. These figures show an increase over those of preceding years. Automobile accidents are one of the greatest contributions to our State and National death rate. There were more deaths resulting from such accidents in the United States during the last 15 years than the total number killed in the four major wars engaged in by this country. The situation is alarming—all the more so because public opinion is slow to awake to its seriousness.

During the remainder of my term in office I shall use all my personal influence and every vestige of my official power to help in the fight on highway accidents and deaths. I call upon you as legislators also to use your personal influence and official powers to help in this safety campaign. Realizing that the human element is responsible for most accidents, we should stress the need for more careful driving, obedience to traffic laws, stricter enforcement of and greater respect for these laws that promise to rid the highways of death and destruction. Education of young and old in safety measures is the one great preventive of tragedies on our streets and highways.

REORGANIZATION OF STATE GOVERNMENT

I have long advocated biennial sessions of the South Carolina legislature. The people of the State have voted on two separate occasions in favor of a constitutional amendment providing biennial sessions. I believe that the present plan of annual sessions is unwise and uneconomical. An annual sessions costs the taxpayers approximately $200,000. By holding biennial sessions, we could save that large sum every two years.

Only five States in the Union have annual sessions, and South Carolina is one of these. All the rest, save Alabama, which has a quadrennial session, have biennial sessions, which experience and sound business principles have demonstrated to be the best. I urge that this legislature give its attention dur-
ing this assembly to the provision of a biennial session for South Carolina.

I heartily urge the passage at this session of an Act submitting to the voters at the next general election the question of a constitutional amendment providing for the election of judges of the State Supreme Court and Circuit Court Judges by popular vote, and for the shortening of the terms of office of the State Supreme Court Judges.

Popular election of judges has been adopted by many of the States of the Union. It is an application of that sound and proved principle that the public receives the most speedy, efficient and courteous service from that governmental agency most answerable to it. In view of the custom now prevailing under our present system of electing judges, and of retaining them on the bench, once they are there, for life under almost any and all circumstances, and regardless of efficiency or suitability, their continuance in office being practically a mere perfunctory matter, the public certainly has all to gain and nothing to lose by taking the matter of electing its judges directly into its own hands.

I again urge upon the legislature the necessity for a constitutional amendment that would require all county supply bills to be introduced during the first two weeks of the session and to be passed during the first 30 days, and also providing that in case any county supply bill is not passed during the first 30 days of the session, that the supply bill of the preceding year automatically be retained in full force and effect. This should expedite routine business in the legislature, help keep down the length of sessions and thus save many thousands of dollars for the taxpayers.

I also urge that the legislature this year include in the annual appropriation bill a provision that in case any county does not pass a county supply bill, the supply bill of the preceding year be retained in full force and effect.

Again, I heartily recommend that all monies collected by any and all State Departments be turned over in full to the State Treasurer for deposit in one central fund. Sound business principles are the only arguments needed for this change in our financial system.
I am firmly convinced that the Absentee Ballot Act (2406. Vol. 2, S. C. Code of Laws for 1932) should be amended in the best interests of fair and honest elections in South Carolina. This law, although theoretically feasible and sound, in its application is too open to fraud and is impractical of enforcement. Other States have found the same difficulties in the enforcement of the absentee ballot law as South Carolina. I would by no means restrict any constitutional rights of suffrage, but I ask that elections in this State be freed from any taint from an abuse of this law.

AGRICULTURE

The recent decision of the United States Supreme Court invalidating the Agricultural Adjustment Act was a severe blow to agriculture in general, and especially to our South Carolina farmers, who have reaped large benefits from parity payments made to them by the Federal government. This Act has been the salvation of the farmers of America for more than two years, and has shown us that sensible curtailment of agricultural production through co-operation of the Federal Government can and will place our agriculture on a level with industries that have adequate means for regulation of production to conform with supply and demand.

Our great President is one of the best friends the farmers have ever had. Under his wise leadership, the farmers have been able to climb part of the way from the slough of depression to the broad plains of self-sustainment, with the hills of a mere solid prosperity loaming in the distance. I strongly urge upon you the need of giving every possible consideration to the betterment of our agriculture, which, after all, is the foundation stone of this State’s progress and prosperity. I am sure that every legislator realizes that improvement of agriculture means betterment of every industry and a strengthening of the fabric upon which our economic lives are sustained. South Carolina is rapidly getting into a position where it can abolish the property levy and thereby relieve the farmer, the home owner and others from a burden that in many cases is inequitably distributed.
CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

One of the most appalling situations in the State, if we look at it from a long-range viewpoint, is the waste and destruction of natural resources. I refer to the depletion of wild life, the ravaging of forests and streams and the wasting away of our once fertile lands by erosion and misuse. We have long been free spenders of the rich resources given us by nature, but the time is long past when we should have called a halt to this prodigality.

We owe it to ourselves and to generations yet unborn to conserve out natural resources by utilizing them carefully instead of wastefully and thus preserve for those who follow us their just birthright in God's creation outdoors.

South Carolina has made a start toward this end by enacting game and fish laws and by co-operating with the Federal government in a broad program of soil erosion prevention and reforestation. We now have a system of State parks that should insure recreation and outdoor vacations for many deprived by lack of funds from taking extensive tours. The legislature can aid in this conservation program by enacting from time to time such laws that will insure a permanent upbuilding of the heritage bequeathed us by a wise providence.

PENAL INSTITUTIONS

In the last year little has been done to relieve crowded conditions in our State Penitentiary and other places of confinement. Youthful first offenders are still lodged with hardened criminals at the Penitentiary, and it is impossible to segregate prisoners with communicable diseases because of the lack of space. I urge that attention be given to this condition.

I cannot too strongly urge the necessity for a State probation system which will protect both society at large and prisoners who have been turned out of our jails and penitentiaries under suspended sentences, paroles and furloughs in years previous to my administration. These men and women have been turned out upon the public with little or no resources of their own and have been left to shift as best they could. When persons with good records have found it hard to get jobs, those with criminal records have found it doubly hard to do so.
A state probation system would require the services of an expert probationist who would check up on law violations of all persons under suspended sentences, paroles and furloughs and would counsel and guide them into rightful channels of employment and righteous living. The helpful services of this probation system should extend for some specified period to every person liberated from our jails and State Penitentiary in order that he may be rehabilitated for future usefulness to his community and be invested with self-confidence and self-respect. Such a system in every State has been requested by the Federal Government to co-ordinate State efforts to prevent crime and correct criminal tendencies with the National probation system.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS

Badly over-crowding conditions at the State Hospital are being relieved by the erection of new buildings, which are being financed by P. W. A. funds. Several hundred thousand dollars is being spent in this construction work and when the program is completed that institution should be equipped to render an even more valuable service to the State.

Others of our charitable institutions are also being helped by building and additions to their material plants, which will enable them to serve better the unfortunate people of our State.

I wish to extend my heartiest commendations to the heads of these various institutions who have carried on their fine service through times that have been trying indeed. Their continued co-operation in the future will mean much to the general welfare of the State.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

Our State Institutions of higher learning are steadily increasing in enrollment and prestige. The University, Clemson College and The Citadel are undergoing extensive material additions that will insure a continuance and enlargement of their already fine services to the youth of this State. The help of the Federal Government has been invaluable in the program of advancement. Without these P. W. A. funds, our institutions could not have financed this large building program.
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

I come now to a subject that has been paramount in the minds of South Carolinians for a long time—the State Highway Department. I have maintained in the past, and I reiterate now that the Highway Department should be restricted to the construction and maintenance of roads in South Carolina. It has taken over other duties, and other business with which it has no rightful connection and has thus exercised an undue influence among the people.

The legislature should shift the license division of the Highway Department to the Tax Commission, which rightfully should have charge of this large revenue-collecting agency. The State Patrol, as I have urged in a previous statement, should be consolidated into a State Police System. With these two agencies outside its jurisdiction, the Highway Department should be able to turn more attention to building and maintaining roads, and less to political logrolling and dabbling in affairs not within the purview of that Department.

The Highway Department spends for maintenance, engineering and administration about $2,000,000 annually. This is paid out through the Highway office, and is but a small part of the money actually spent by the Highway Department. I recommend that this large amount spent for maintenance, engineering and administration be budgeted and submitted each year to the General Assembly that the people may know how and where their money is being spent.

If this be done, I am convinced that the legislature can make a saving of about $400,000 a year for the State. I have no desire to see anyone deprived of a job, but I do believe the taxpayers' money should be saved in expenditures that are not absolutely necessary. I also urge that the Highway Department be required to place its surplus cash reserve with the Sinking Fund Commission until such time as it is needed, that this money may be lent out and thus earn thousands of dollars in interest for the State.

I promised the people in my campaign for the governorship that I would lend my best effort to reorganizing the Highway Department, and I have carried out that pledge. The people have shown clearly and unmistakably their loss of faith in the past administration of the Highway Department, and have demanded a change.
I have laid the problem squarely in the lap of the legislature. It is up to you to enact new legislation, which will provide a complete reorganization of the department and which will return to the people the powers to elect their own commissioners.

I have returned to the legislature with my veto the County reimbursement acts. I denounce these Acts with all the force at my command as being among the most high-handed and inequitable Acts that have ever been passed in South Carolina. If you vote in favor of these reimbursement Acts being made into law, you will saddle an intolerable burden upon the people without their having a right to say whether they shall be afflicted with additional heavy taxes. These reimbursement Acts, disguised as they are, are nothing more than wolves in sheep's clothing. If they were a part of our law, the Highway Department would be able to place upon the very homes of our people mortgages to insure the payment of these Highway obligations.

Our people must not be burdened with taxes levied at the discretion of one man or any small group of men. Passage of these Acts would mean a continuance rather than a diminution of the large political power wielded in the past by the Highway Department. It would produce a wild orgy of reckless spending on the part of counties that would lead to disastrous consequences and mortgage the financial future of their citizens.

THREE-DOLLAR LICENSE

I have saved a vitally important discussion until the very last. I refer to the $3.00 automobile license which I have long urged, and which, I believe, the people of the State have shown in unmistakable terms that they want. The automobile license tag is primarily a means of identification, but it has become a source of revenue that has been held on to with such force that it has wandered from the original idea for which it was intended.

The people of South Carolina showed plainly that they wanted the $3.00 tag when they subscribed to my platform, which had this as one of its principal planks. Not a day has passed since I was inaugurated, that I have not had requests to lend my full support to the enactment of such a measure.

I laid facts before you in a special message at the last regular session of the legislature that proved by facts and figures that a $3.00 automobile tag in South Carolina would not decrease
revenue to the Highway Department, but instead, would raise them.

Scaling down the cost of automobile licenses would cause at first sight an apparent loss in revenue, but the experience of other States with $3.00 tags, and improved business conditions assure us that any apparent loss in revenue would be offset by the increased gasoline tax collections caused by the increased number of cars on the Highway. I predicated in my message last spring a half-million dollar gain in gasoline tax revenue. Figures on hand now, however, show that the total increase for the fiscal year will be approximately a million dollars.

It must be borne in mind that the main revenues to the Highway Department come from gasoline taxes. The average automobile owner pays a large amount in gasoline taxes to the State every year. The more cars there are in operation, the higher the total revenue for the State.

Both houses of the legislature last year placed their stamp of approval upon a $3.00 tag bill, and thereby notified the taxpayers that they did not fear any loss of revenue from its enactment. I am certain that the same sentiment obtains in the legislature this year, and that you will speedily pass this measure so the people may benefit, beginning at the expiration date of the six-month tags now in use.

CONCLUSION

The keynote of this address is one of friendly co-operation, and of determination to act in the best interest of the people of South Carolina. I am certain that each one of you wishes to lend your most heartfelt efforts to the enactment of laws that will help the people back home—the people who elected us to office and to whom we owe the fullest measure of responsibility.

A State or National government divided against itself cannot stand. Only by co-operating for the common good can we, as loyal South Carolinians, uphold the good name and the glory of the old Palmetto State and bring this beloved homeland of ours into the very first rank of States that stand for progress, a fair and square deal for every citizen, no matter how humble his station.

During the remainder of this important session, I shall extend to the legislature my earnest co-operation, advice and good will
at every turn. I ask nothing better for myself than to be allowed to serve my State and my people and I know that you are also imbued with this high ambition and same zeal for service.

With your earnest help our State government will come into its own, possessed to the absolute confidence and respect of the people and of the assurance and dignity that honest service brings to any agency of the people.

My solemn prayer is that God will guide our ship of State safely along a safe course, and that He will bestow upon us His fullest blessings in the consummation of our accepted ideal of service.

Dated at Columbia, South Carolina

This 14th day of January, 1936.