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INAUGURAL ADDRESS
of
BURNET R. MAYBANK
GOVERNOR
Delivered to the
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of SOUTH CAROLINA



AT COLUMBIA
Tuesday, January 17, 1939

PRINTED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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My Fellow Citizens of South Carolina:

I am grateful of the honor, mindful of the privilege, and conscious of the responsibility of serving you as governor.

When I announced my candidacy for governor last summer I said that I had entered into no political deals or alliances with any group, ring or faction; that there were no claims against me to be paid with political favors; that I was absolutely independent and that if elected your governor, I would come into the office free to serve the people of our State. I meant every word of that when I was campaigning, and having been elected governor, I still mean it. Today I renew that pledge and assurance to the people of South Carolina.

Some weeks ago I resigned as mayor of Charleston. I have closed up my business. When I took the oath of office today I was no longer chairman of the South Carolina Public Service Authority. I have no job other than that of being governor of South Carolina.

The time has come—indeed it's long past due—when prejudice and sectional ill feeling within the borders of the State of South Carolina should cease. The Good of the State demands this of each one of us. Each of us should banish from our thinking and our action every taint or prejudice. I ask the co-operation of all of the people in advancing the interests of South Carolina. We owe it to ourselves and our children to unite for the common good of our State.

I promise to use the office of governor to the limit of my ability to give to South Carolina four years of progressive and business-like government. I am a liberal in political thought and I am a realist. As a liberal I believe it is the duty of government to use its power and resources in assisting those who are on the lower rungs of our economic ladder in their struggle to attain the better things of life. As a realist, I know there is no short cut to Utopia; no economic security for those who are unwilling to help themselves, and that no lasting prosperity can come to our

State as a whole through efforts to pull down and wrongly injure industry, business and commerce.

It will be my constant effort to give co-operation first to those who most need the benefits of government. By benefits I mean greater opportunity for employment by bringing new industries into our State and expanding those already here. By benefits I mean expanding the markets for the products of our farm; improving farm-to-market roads and bringing the producer and ultimate consumer closer together. By benefits I mean lower priced and more general use of electricity together with all of the comforts that it brings. By benefits I mean the development and conservation of our natural resources—our forests, mineral and seashore products. By benefits I mean decent treatment of our aged poor, our dependent children and our blind—and by benefits also I mean the rigid and fair enforcement of our laws so that all will be guaranteed equal justice and protection.

In South Carolina we have all the elements necessary to make a prosperous people. I know that as a State we have been penalized for unfair federal legislation, such as freight rate differentials, and that our prosperity is to a large extent wrapped up in the national economy.

I want to say here and now that I will co-operate to the utmost with the administration in Washington, under the leadership of the president, in their efforts to solve our national problems which so vitally affect every South Carolinian. President Roosevelt has proven his interest in humanity and in the people of South Carolina and I am happy to know that he will visit us again next month, and it shall be my great pleasure as your governor to welcome him.

However, all of our troubles cannot be charged to federal action or inaction. Neither should we feel that Washington has a panacea for all of our ills. There is a vast amount of work that we can and should do at home in the improvement of South Carolina, and I accept the responsibility that devolves upon me as governor, and I am confident that the gentlemen of the General Assembly are going to meet their responsibilities with courage and determination.

And let me say that it shall also be my purpose to co-operate with the governors of the Southeast and the members of Congress from these sections in their efforts to better our conditions.

Let us all face the facts as they really exist. We have an abundant and noble heritage. My respect and love for the history of our State and those who made it is deep and abiding. Revering as we do the glorious history of South Carolina, it is the present and the future to which we must give the most concern. In all fairness let us examine the conditions that now exist in our State. Unless we fully recognize our social and economic problems there is no hope of finding the remedy and applying it so that happiness will be the part of all of our people. You cannot solve a problem by ignoring it.

The very cornerstone of good government is a sound fiscal policy. We do not have that in South Carolina today. Until we put our financial house in order we are both wasting and losing time in attaining our desired end.

What are the facts? According to the report of the Budget Commission, submitted to the General Assembly and signed by the Budget Commission, consisting of Governor Olin D. Johnston, chairman; S. M. Ward and Neville Bennett, you will find on page 13, "Indicated losses for the year 1938-39—\$2,204,583.01." This practically wiped out the surplus created over a period of years and shows an operating deficit for the year of over \$2,000,000, despite recent curtailment of appropriations to South Carolina's institutions.

The fiscal problem is therefore our primary problem and my first recommendation is therefore that the General Assembly arrange for a committee or committees of the two houses to make the necessary detailed study of South Carolina's fiscal condition and problems in order that we may know first where the State now stands, and second, what may be done to restore it to sound financial condition and to provide for the necessary functions of government at the least expense and burden to the taxpayers of the State.

There should also be created a commission that should be provided with facilities to make a thorough study of South Carolina's State and county governments reporting to the General Assembly desired reforms, consolidations and changes, which should promote the improvement of the State's governmental efficiency and effect desired savings in expenditures.

With a sound tax structure we can go forward with our program to bring new industries into South Carolina. A decen-

tralization of industries is under way in the country and I intend to utilize every facility of my office in bringing new industrial plants into South Carolina. No citizen of the State wants to see fly-by-night industries move into our State to exploit our labor or on account of liberal tax concessions.

As governor I will protect the rights of labor to the fullest extent of my power. The laboring man in South Carolina knows that during the next four years he will have a real friend in the governor's office.

The forward looking leaders of labor and capital realize that they have a community of interest from which both groups benefit and that overreaching by either results in harm to both.

With our vast natural resources, including cheap water power, our mild climate, the excellent character and fine quality of our labor, we possess the fundamental requirements to interest new industries. One of our jobs is to sell what we have to the nation.

I recommend to the General Assembly the establishment of a South Carolina board of development. I ask the Legislature to provide sufficient appropriation for a full time secretary and other necessary expenses—one of the board's activities to be the advertising of South Carolina to the nation. Upon the creation of such a board I would appoint on it public spirited men who would work with me in bringing new industries into the State.

Tourist trade spent \$5,000,000,000 last year. Less than \$30,000,000 were spent in South Carolina. South Carolina is one of six states which has no travel bureau. We have to offer what the traveling public desires to see—scenery of gardens, seashore, mountains, rivers and parks comparable with any in the nation. The more people who see our State, the better chance we have of interesting them in it. I recommend the establishment of a travel bureau as one phase of the activities of the proposed South Carolina board of development. We are proud of our industrial development and every encouragement should be given to its expansion but we must face the fact that South Carolina is primarily an agricultural state. In 1930, 50 per cent of the gainfully employed people in South Carolina were engaged in agriculture; 10 per cent in textiles; 5 per cent

in sale; 4 per cent in professional service; 2.4 per cent in saw-mills and 2.2 per cent in the building industries.

The per capita income in South Carolina in 1929 was \$261. The national average is \$740. The per capita farm income in South Carolina was \$130, compared to the State's non-farm income of \$406. Almost all of us realize that there is not much that the State government can do to increase the income of our farmers, for cotton, tobacco and other so-called money crops. So many factors involve the price of these crops that the answer is the responsibility of our national government. However, there is much that we can do to promote a better living for our farmers.

Just what is the farm picture today? 63 per cent of our farmers are tenants—40 per cent whites—60 per cent Negroes. Twenty-five per cent of all of our tenants move every year. Many will be surprised to learn that on 40 per cent of the farms in South Carolina you cannot find a single milk cow—not a hog on 32 per cent of them—and not a chicken on 12 per cent. I propose that something be done about this. I would enlist the facilities and co-operation of the Clemson College Extension Service, the department of agriculture, the newspapers, the radio, and any other agencies that can and will help in persuading our farmers of the absolute necessity of producing their own food if they ever expect to attain a desirable standard of living.

We cannot make landlords out of tenants overnight, but we can encourage both tenants and landlords to discourage tenant mobility. Some states—Oklahoma for instance—are working out a farm-leasing system designed to encourage tenants to stay on the same farms and regard them as they would their own homes. I think we can well devote some thought to such a system for this State but that naturally falls under a long range program.

The development of the Santee-Cooper, Buzzard Roost and other power projects in South Carolina will afford the State an abundant supply of low-priced electricity. It must be available not only to our urban population but to farmers as well. Progress has been made in rural electrification but South Carolina lags behind in this field.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed on a well planned reforestation and conservation program in all its various phases. The natural resources of our soil and water areas are the foundation on which we build our social and economic structure. Reforestation, soil conservation, fish and game restoration and the protection of our water supply are each important and must have our attention.

Already I have conferred with and had offers of co-operation from the United States forest service, the bureau of fisheries and other federal agencies in planning a conservation program which will enable us to develop and conserve our natural resources. I shall be happy to pass on this information to the Legislature at some subsequent date.

I need to call only one phase of this program to your attention to impress upon you its importance. Paper mills are coming into South Carolina. Timber is one of our richest resources and when we farm it like we do cotton or tobacco it will become one of our most valuable money crops. We must not permit our forest lands to be denuded and when we cut a tree, another must be planted to take its place. The paper industry in the South is just in its infancy and I want to see South Carolina receive the maximum benefit from this expanding enterprise.

According to the 1930 census, 26.9 per cent of the Negro population of South Carolina, ten years or older was illiterate and 5.1 per cent of the native white was illiterate, whereas illiteracy of the United States had been reduced to 1.5 per cent of the total population ten years and older.

No sadder sight has ever come to my eyes than to see a South Carolinian, white or black, asked to touch a pen while another signs his name. First of all let us resolve to wipe out the blot of a high illiteracy rate from our State. We must improve and equalize school opportunities in South Carolina. I hope to see as governor, as soon as the State can provide, a nine-month school term established throughout the State, and today I recommend that our rental school book system be converted into a free school book system.

Our institutions of higher learning must be expanded to take care of the needs of our boys and girls for college training.

In education we cannot stand still, because if we do, we fall backward. We must move forward.

In the campaign I declared I would use my efforts to have old age assistance payments placed back to the June average with the hope that eventually we could raise the payments to nearer the nation's average. However, it is my information, after several conferences on the subject in Washington that many of those in the Congress of the United States and some department executives are working on plans which perhaps might lead to a fairer apportionment of money for these purposes to those states whose per capita wealth prohibits their matching federal funds on a large scale. I think that before the adoption of any final plan that the General Assembly should wait until we first see what Washington is going to do in the way of benefit payments. It would perhaps be best to pass the Appropriation Bill without social security and later enact special legislation to meet these particular needs. In this way the work of the General Assembly could be expedited and time and study given in order that full protection be afforded those of our population dependent on social security.

Health and education move hand in hand. If our people are healthier, they will be happier and more prosperous, a half-sick man cannot do even a half day's work. South Carolina's basic need in this field is increased health facilities. We have only one doctor for every 1,300 people in our State. With few notable exceptions, outside of the larger cities, hospital facilities are inadequate. Many of our counties do not have adequate health departments.

During the campaign for the governorship I repeatedly stated my position on law and order. I again emphasize my statement, "There will be no bargain days for pardons and no holidays for criminals." I recommend to the Legislature an amendment to the Constitution of the State abolishing the unlimited pardon power now vested in the governor and setting up a new method of pardon procedure, which will limit the governor's authority in the field of pardons and paroles. I also recommend to the General Assembly for its consideration the establishment of a State police system, based on the merit system.

If the Legislature agrees with me and enacts the necessary legislation then it is my intention to ask our fellow South Caro-

linian, Melvin Purvis, with whom I have already consulted, to assist us in setting up such a State police system, and perhaps heading it himself, under a plan similar to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Mr. Purvis' reputation with the federal bureau, particularly in the Dillinger case, is a guarantee of what could be accomplished if our plans can be carried out.

The Constitution of South Carolina vests in the governor the responsibility for the enforcement of law yet under our present system he is not provided with adequate law enforcement machinery necessary to carry out this constitutional mandate. The first step to assure the observance of law in South Carolina, should be the establishment of a State police system on a merit basis independent of politics.

With our law enforcement agencies co-ordinated under a State police system we will then be equipped to deal with criminals and law breakers of all kinds.

Before leaving the subject of law enforcement, I want to commend the people of South Carolina for their splendid record in preventing lynchings in our State. I hope it will continue during my administration. Those accused of crimes are entitled under the Constitution to a fair deal. The record the South is making in stamping out the crime of lynching is the best answer we can give to those who would enact a federal force Bill that strikes at the very root of our dual form of government.

I have said before and repeat now, "I have no desire to be governor, except to be of service to my State." I love South Carolina from the mountains to the sea, and the only reason I am here today is because I want to see South Carolina take her proper place among the commonwealths of this nation. If I can make a worthwhile contribution in attaining that end, I will be satisfied.

Believing as I do in constitutional government, I recognize the three branches of our government and the definite spheres in which they are to operate under our Constitution. I will not seek to infringe on the prerogatives of the legislative and the judicial branches of the government. The executive branch of government during my administration will ask nothing more than co-operation in attaining objectives for the good of all.

I know all that we hope to accomplish in the economic and social development of South Carolina cannot be realized in a day, nor a month, nor a year. But it is my firm conviction and belief that with the executive and the legislative branches working in harmony, with everything we do designed to advance the common good that together we can hasten the day when we will have a new South Carolina—a united citizenship proud of its past, confident of its present, and determined to succeed—a citizenship alert to the possibilities of the future because the children are better prepared to take up the responsibilities of life, equipped with healthy bodies and trained minds imbued with a respect for law, accustomed to the wholesome things of life, and unwilling to tolerate the unwholesome—whenever and wherever they meet it.

Today I have assumed the responsibility of the governor's office because the majority of my fellow citizens so willed. Four years from now I will be turning over the affairs of this office to another of your choice and returning to private life. On that day I hope to have your confidence and respect because of your belief then that I have used the four years of opportunity to make South Carolina a better place in which to live.

That is my purpose, that is my aim, that is my ambition.