

THE GREATER NORTH AUGUSTA CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

January 21, 1976
Remarks by:
Governor James B. Edwards

MR. PRESIDENT, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, MEMBERS
OF THE GREATER NORTH AUGUSTA CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE . . . IT IS INDEED AN HONOR FOR ME
TO SHARE THIS EVENING WITH YOU.

THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE AREA OF OUR STATE IS
UNIQUE . . . YOUR POSITIVE CHARACTER IS THE
RESULT OF OUTSTANDING MEN AND WOMEN WORKING
TOGETHER AS INDIVIDUALS AND COLLECTIVELY AS
GROUPS SUCH AS THE CHAMBER TO MAKE A TRULY
GREAT CORNER OF OUR STATE.

AS YOUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE, I WISH TO COMMEND
THE CHAMBER FOR YOUR VITAL ROLE IN THE
ACTIVITIES OF THESE COMMUNITIES . . .
BELVEDERE, BEECH ISLAND AND OF COURSE,
NORTH AUGUSTA.

LET ME SHARE THIS STORY WITH YOU AS I SET THE
STAGE FOR MY MAIN THOUGHTS . . . IN A WARSAW
CLASSROOM, A LITTLE BOY WAS ASKED TO GIVE AN
EXAMPLE OF A DEPENDENT CLAUSE.

"OUR CAT HAS A LITTER OF TEN KITTENS," HE
REPLIED, "ALL OF WHICH ARE GOOD COMMUNISTS."

THE TEACHER, DELIGHTED WITH HIS GRASP OF
GRAMMAR AND PARTY LINE, URGED HIM TO DO AS
WELL WHEN THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR MADE HIS
ANNUAL VISIT.

NEXT WEEK, WITH THE INSPECTOR STERNLY
OBSERVING, THE TEACHER CONFIDENTLY CALLED ON
THE BOY.

"OUR CAT HAS A LITTER OF TEN KITTENS," HE
REPLIED, "ALL OF WHICH ARE GOOD WESTERN
REPUBLICANS."

THE TEACHER WAS FURIOUS. SHE CRIED, "YOUNG
MAN, THAT IS NOT WHAT YOU SAID A WEEK AGO."

"WELL," THE LITTLE BOY REPLIED HAPPILY, "MY
KITTENS NOW HAVE THEIR EYES OPEN."

TWO YEARS AGO, AS SENATOR FROM CHARLESTON COUNTY, LITTLE DID I APPRECIATE THE ROLE I WOULD HAVE AS GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA. THAT OLD SAYING THAT THE GRASS IS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE IS A FACT. IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE SOLID SUPPORT OF CONCERNED CITIZENS SUCH AS YOU, OUR STATE WOULD NOT HAVE FARED AS WELL AS IT HAS.

WHEN I TOOK OFFICE, OUR STATE WAS IN THE THROES OF AN EXTENSIVE NATIONWIDE ECONOMIC DOWN TURN. UNEMPLOYMENT WAS HOVERING AROUND 10%. . . REVENUE PROJECTIONS FOR THE OPERATION OF STATE

GOVERNMENT DID NOT TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION
THE SLOWDOWN . . . IN GENERAL, SOUTH CAROLINA'S
FUTURE WAS AT A CROSSROAD. THERE WERE NO
EASY DECISIONS TO BE MADE.

I CALLED TOGETHER THE FINEST MEN AND WOMEN
I COULD FIND TO HEAD UP MY STAFF. THE BATTLE
LINES OF ECONOMY, STATE BUDGETING, AGENCY
PROBLEMS, JUDICIAL PROBLEMS, ETC. WERE CAST
BEFORE I TOOK OFFICE.

WE SAT DOWN AND SYSTEMATICALLY OUTLINED A
PLAN OF ATTACK. THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM WAS
TO PROTECT THE STATE'S FISCAL INTEGRITY.

CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, THE GOVERNOR OF
OUR STATE HAS LIMITED POWERS . . . WITHIN
THOSE CONSTRAINTS WE SET ABOUT TO GET OUR
HOUSE IN ORDER.

WE FOUGHT FOR TIGHTER CONTROLS ON STATE
VEHICLE MANAGEMENT WHICH SAVED THE
SOUTH CAROLINA TAX PAYERS MORE THAN
\$1.7 MILLION DOLLARS.

WE OVERCAME A 10 PERCENT PLUS GROWTH
TREND IN THE NUMBERS OF STATE EMPLOYEES
THROUGH TIGHTENING OF PERSONNEL PRACTICES
AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A HIRING FREEZE
WITH A NET SAVINGS OF AN ESTIMATED \$6.3
MILLION DOLLARS.

WE CALLED FOR THE ADOPTION OF A HOME RULE
ACT WHICH WOULD GIVE THE VOTERS OF EACH
COUNTY A REAL SAY IN THE TYPE OF GOVERNMENT
THEY WOULD HAVE.

WE GUIDED THROUGH AN 8 PERCENT ACROSS THE BOARD BUDGET CUT WHICH REDUCED THE 75-76 BUDGET REQUESTED BY \$92.8 MILLION DOLLARS. FOR FISCAL YEAR 76-77, WE CONTINUED A RESTRAINT POLICY REDUCING AGENCY REQUESTS BY MORE THAN \$197.4 MILLION DOLLARS.

WE CALLED FOR THE MERGER OF THE TELEPHONE CENTREX SYSTEM AND RECONFIGURATION WHICH PRODUCED A SIGNIFICANT COST AVOIDANCE AND INSURED CONTINUED GOOD SERVICE.

WE IMPLEMENTED NEW INTERNAL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNIQUES AT A SAVINGS OF \$2.8 MILLION DOLLARS.

A FURTHER IN-HOUSE SAVINGS WAS REALIZED THROUGH THE TIGHTENING OF ENERGY CONSERVATION PROCEDURES. . . WHILE ON THE SUBJECT OF ENERGY, MAY I URGE YOU TO DO YOUR SHARE TO REDUCE THE CONSUMPTION OF ENERGY. THE UNUSUALLY COLD WEATHER HAS HIT US AT A TIME WHEN OUR SUPPLY OF NATURAL GAS IS IN EXTREMELY SHORT SUPPLY. IF WE DO NOT CUT BACK ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS, I FEAR THAT WE WILL BE FORCED TO REGARDLESS OF OUR PERSONAL FEELINGS.

THROUGH THE PROCESS OF AGENCY REVIEW, THE BUDGETS FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT WERE REDUCED BY MORE THAN ONE-HALF MILLION DOLLARS.

FINALLY, WE HAVE RECENTLY ADOPTED A NEW BUDGET PROCESS WHICH I BELIEVE WILL ENABLE THE BUDGET AND CONTROL BOARD AS WELL AS THE LEGISLATURE TO GIVE MORE DIRECT GUIDANCE TO OUR STATE AGENCIES.

YES, WE HAVE OVERCOME MANY UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES IN OUR THRUST FOR FISCAL INTEGRITY. THE STATE BUDGET HAS GROWN IN RECENT YEARS FROM \$1.1 BILLION DOLLARS TO \$2.18 BILLION DOLLARS. THE RANKS OF STATE EMPLOYEES MUSHROOMED FROM 22,788 TO AN ESTIMATED 51,000. TWO YEARS AGO WHEN I RAISED THE QUESTION, NO ONE IN STATE GOVERNMENT COULD EVEN TELL ME HOW MANY EMPLOYEES THE STATE HAD MUCH LESS ACCOUNT FOR THEIR SERVICES.

WE HAVE CONTINUED TO CALL FOR BETTER
ACCOUNTABILITY FROM OUR AGENCIES.
UNFORTUNATELY WE HAVE NO POWER OVER THE
114 SEPARATE BUREAUCRACIES. THEY ARE
BY WHAT WE USED TO JOKINGLY CALL WEEKEND
WARRIORS . . . BOARDS WHO COME TO COLUMBIA
ONCE A MONTH CAN'T PROVIDE THE CALIBER OF
LEADERSHIP WE NOW REQUIRE. THIS PROBLEM
CAN BE SOLVED BUT ONLY BY LEGISLATIVE ACTION.
THE REORGANIZATION OF STATE GOVERNMENT IS A

MUST IF WE ARE TO CONTINUE TO MEET THE NEEDS
OF OUR PEOPLE.

SCHOOL FINANCIAL EQUALIZATION IS ANOTHER KEY
ISSUE. AT PRESENT, WE ARE SPENDING 80 MILLION
DOLLARS IN STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS ON EDUCATION.
UNFORTUNATELY, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE VARIANCE
BETWEEN DOLLARS PER PUPIL BEING SPENT IN ONE
SCHOOL DISTRICT AND OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS.
THIS IS UNFAIR TO TAXPAYERS AS WELL AS TO
INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS.

WHILE EQUAL FINANCING DOES NOT INSURE EQUAL EDUCATION, IT IS A NECESSARY FIRST STEP TO ATTRACTING TOP PROFESSIONALS INTO THE EDUCATIONAL FIELD. ONCE THIS GOAL IS ACCOMPLISHED, WE NEED TO ESTABLISH HIGHER STANDARDS FOR ENTRY INTO THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

IN THIS DAY AND TIME, IT IS HARD TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT OUR SCHOOL SYSTEMS MAY NOT BE

PRODUCING STUDENTS WHO ARE SKILLED IN THE
BASICS . . . READING, WRITING AND ARITHMETIC.

THERE IS NO HOPE FOR SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC
IMPROVEMENT IF WE DO NOT HAVE THE PROPERLY
PREPARED YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN TO FILL HIGH
GRADE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. THE
DEDICATION AND WILLINGNESS OF OUR PEOPLE TO
WORK HAS NOT BEEN A QUESTION. WE OWE IT TO
OUR CHILDREN TO INSURE THAT THEY ARE PREPARED
TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE.

OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, SOUTH CAROLINA HAS CONTINUED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL SOUTHEASTERN STATES IN ATTRACTING NEW INDUSTRY. WE HAVE SEEN MORE THAN 15,000 NEW JOBS OPEN UP THROUGH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT . . . MORE THAN A BILLION DOLLARS HAS BEEN SPENT BY PRIVATE INDUSTRY IN OUR STATE FOR PLANT EXPANSION AND NEW FACILITIES . . . UNEMPLOYMENT HAS DROPPED FROM 10.2 PERCENT TO 5.1 PERCENT.

YES, SOUTH CAROLINA IS ON THE MOVE. WE HAVE
OVERCOME MANY HARDSHIPS IN THE PAST. WE MUST
SET THE STAGE FOR THE FUTURE BY CONTINUING TO
SEEK OUT THE TRUE CAUSES OF OUR PROBLEMS . . .
FIND THE BEST POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS . . . AND THEN
HAVE THE INTESTINAL FORTITUDE TO CARRY OUT
PROGRAMS WHICH WILL LEAD US TO THE ULTIMATE
ATTAINMENT OF OUR GOALS.

THERE IS NO PANACEA OR CURE-ALL . . . STATE
GOVERNMENT IS A 2 BILLION DOLLAR BUSINESS.

IT REQUIRES CONSTANT ATTENTION AND DEDICATION.
AS YOUR GOVERNOR, I PLEDGE MY CONTINUED
SUPPORT AND ATTENTION. I AM VITALLY INTERESTED
IN YOUR IDEAS AND VIEWS. IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS,
DON'T BE A SILENT PARTNER . . .

I THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE MY
VIEWS WITH YOU, AND WISH YOU MUCH CONTINUED
SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE.