

Title: Could this be the end of the beginning?

Author:

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GUEST VIEW

Could this be the end of the beginning?

In the early days of World War II, the British, standing nearly alone, suffered a number of huge defeats. And then in November 1942, they won a major victory defeating Gen. Rommel's forces in North Africa. In reporting this victory to the House of Commons, Prime Minister Winston Churchill said, "Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

I thought of these words last week as I sat in TD Arena at the College of Charleston for the memorial service on the one-year anniversary of the tragedy of the Emanuel Nine. "The end of the beginning" — perhaps this is where we are in South Carolina in our long struggle to deal with the issues of race.

For the 346 years since the first white settlers from Barbados came to what is now Charleston and brought with them their slaves, race has pretty much been the defining issue of our state and its history. A Southern sage said it best, "When race is an issue, it is the issue."

This is not the place, nor is there space to recount our racial history — or even all that has happened in South Carolina and the nation in reaction to the Emanuel Nine shooting. Thus, I'll focus on a symbol and what might represent "the end of the beginning."

The symbol is the Confederate flag that flew above the State-house dome. At the urging of Gov.

Nikki Haley and by an act of the S.C. Legislature, it came down 23 days after the shooting and 54 years after it went up to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the start of the Civil War.

In some ways, the flag coming down seems long ago — from the perspective of our long racial history, it just happened, not even one year yet.

As significant as this action by the governor and the legislature was, what was more striking to me was what I saw happen all across the state. In the two weeks after the flag came down, I happened to travel almost a thousand miles throughout rural South Carolina and I saw only five Confederate flags — before, I would have seen dozens.

The flags came down all across our state because people, on their own, took down the flag from the flag poles on their front porches and store fronts. No one told them to do it — we as the people of this state collectively decided "it's time."

And most remarkable of all, the country followed our lead. Other southern states removed the flag and corporate America quickly followed suit. Though perhaps the flag will never totally disappear, it has largely faded from sight. Where we once hardly noticed them, today we are jarred when we see one. The flag is no longer socially acceptable.

In countless conversations over the last year, over coffee and lunches, with folks black and white, old and young, I found near unanimity that something fundamental had changed, some-

thing had ended — we had turned the page.

No one would claim that South Carolina is now an oasis of racial brotherhood — but we have turned a page. No one is proposing that we put the flag back up. It's gone forever.

At the Charleston memorial service and in the countless news analysis pieces that have recently filled our state's newspapers, the overarching question that has been asked is: What now? It is only natural and right that we should seek a larger meaning out of this tragedy. This is what we, as humans, do.

And the question that most people, though not all, focus on is what will we do about guns? Within South Carolina, beyond the larger question of guns in society, many have narrowed their focus to the 'Charleston loophole' — the flaw in the current process of background checks that allowed Dylann Roof to legally obtain a gun that he should not have had. Our legislature has refused to close it or even move on other common sense measures that would make us all safer.

Our partisan divide on this issue is big and wide. At the memorial service, every Democratic elected official talked about guns — none of the Republicans did. The difference was stark.

And all of this has been amplified by the shooting in Orlando, the largest mass shooting in American history. It is clear that this was as much a hate crime as it was a terrorist attack.

No one knows where all this will lead.

But somehow deep down, I think maybe, just maybe, this could be "the end of the beginning." We did take down the Confederate flag — and virtually no one wants it back up. We have

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come together as a state in a way that no one would have imagined. As Gov. Haley said at the memorial service, "We are a great state and when we were tested, we proved it."

Change is hard and big change is even harder.

Are we moving fast enough? Will we get to where we need to

be any time soon? Should we be satisfied with the limited changes that should have happened long ago? The answer to all these questions is surely a resounding no.

But, positive change is happening.

"Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of

the beginning."

(Phil Noble is a businessman in Charleston and President of the SC New Democrats, an independent reform group founded by former Gov. Richard Riley to bring big change and real reform. phil@philnoble.com)



Phil
NOBLE

Title: **Veterans can get more taxes back under new law**
 Author: By JANET D. SMITH cvao@colletoncounty.org
 Size: 23.09 column inches
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■ VETERANS CORNER

Veterans can get more taxes back under new law

By JANET D. SMITH
cvao@colletoncounty.org

On June 7, Gov. Nikki Haley signed into law Bill H.3147 which affects veterans' tax exemptions.

Under the new law, S.C. military pay exemptions will be phased in over a period of five years. This exemption also applies to surviving spouses receiving survivors' benefits.

Under current law, veterans' retirement income tax exemption for those 64 and younger is \$3,000. Under the new law, exemptions will be \$5,900 in 2016; \$8,800 in 2017; \$11,700 in 2019 and \$17,500 in 2020.

For ages 65 and older, tax exemption is \$15,000 under the current law. Under the new law, that figure increases to \$18,000 in 2016; \$21,000 in 2017; \$24,000 in 2018; \$27,000 in 2019 and \$30,000 in 2020.

For additional information, retirees should talk with their tax preparer.

The Colleton County Veterans Affairs Office serves as a gateway to applying for benefits and services that provide financial, health care, education,



JANET SMITH

insurance, burial benefits and other forms of assistance to veterans, their dependents and survivors.

According to the latest figures, Colleton County has 3,740 veterans who are in receipt of benefits and a total expenditure of \$35,787,000.

To file a claim for benefits to get answers to questions regarding entitlements, stop by the office in the Bernard Warshaw Complex, 219 S. Lemacks St., or call 843-549-1412 to schedule an appointment. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Bring a copy of the DD Form 214 (proof of military service), dependent(s) documents and other supporting information. Eligibility for most VA benefits is based on discharge from active military service under other than dishonorable conditions.

(Janet D. Smith is the Director and County Veterans Affairs Officer)

Title: **Haley decides to attend Republican convention**
 Author:
 Size: 13.33 column inches
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Haley decides to attend Republican convention

COLUMBIA

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley has decided to attend the Republican National Convention in Ohio next month.

Spokesman Rob Godfrey said Tuesday that Haley will attend alongside S.C.'s delegation. But, unlike in 2012, she has no plans to address the convention.

The Republican governor has been very vocal in her criticism of Donald Trump. But Haley has continued to say she would support the Republican nominee. She endorsed Marco Rubio ahead of S.C.'s presidential primary.

Earlier this month, Haley said she wished Trump communicated differently because bad things result from divisive rhetoric, as evidenced by last June's massacre at a historic black church in Charleston.

Haley said then she would wait until after the legislative session to make a decision about Cleveland. The session ended last Wednesday.

In addition to Haley, S.C. Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster will attend. He will be there as a delegate. U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, U.S. Reps. Joe Wilson, Tom Rice and Mark Sanford will also be in Ohio.

Other state politicians have decided not to attend the convention, including U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, U.S. Reps. Mick Mulvaney and Trey Gowdy.

— FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS
AND THE (COLUMBIA) STATE

Title: **Trump or not, Haley to attend GOP convention**
 Author: BY JAMIESELF jself@thestate.com
 Size: 25.11 column inches
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Trump or not, Haley to attend GOP convention

BY JAMIE SELF
 jself@thestate.com

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley plans to attend next month's Republican National Convention in Cleveland, where New York billionaire Donald Trump is slated to become the GOP

presidential nominee.

Haley will attend the convention alongside the state's delegates, deputy chief of staff Rob Godfrey said Tuesday.



Haley

A critic of Donald Trump's rhetoric and policy proposals, Haley had not decided earlier this month whether she would attend the convention.

Trump won South Carolina's primary, taking 33 percent of the vote. He beat U.S. Sens. Marco

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GOP

Rubio of Florida and Ted Cruz of Texas, who finished second and third, respectively, with roughly 22 percent of the vote each.

Haley, a two-term Lexington Republican, backed Rubio in the S.C. primary. After Rubio quit the race, Haley said she would support Cruz. After Trump clinched the nomination, Haley said she will support the GOP nominee.

Speculation about Haley's prospects as a potential GOP vice-presidential candidate intensified last year after she led an effort to remove the Confederate flag from the S.C. State

House grounds. But the governor ruled out being Trump's running mate in May.

While Haley will attend the convention, some top S.C. politicians have decided not to go.

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-Seneca — who has publicly denounced Trump, vowing not to support him — will not attend. Neither will U.S. Reps. Mick Mulvaney of Indian Land nor Trey Gowdy of Spartanburg.

A spokesperson said Gowdy has not attended any conventions previously, making this year no different.

However, several high-

profile S.C. Republicans, in addition to Haley, will attend.

● S.C. Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster of Columbia — the highest-ranking S.C. public official to endorse Trump — is a convention delegate.

● U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of North Charleston and U.S. Reps. Joe Wilson of Springdale, Tom Rice of Myrtle Beach and Mark Sanford of Charleston also will be at the convention.

A spokesman for U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan said the Laurens Republican has not decided yet whether to attend.

Jamie Self: 803-771-8658

Title: **MANUFACTURERTO CREATE 36 JOBS IN GREENVILLECOUNTY**
Author:
Size: 5.58 column inches
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BUSINESS BRIEFLY

MANUFACTURER TO CREATE 36 JOBS IN GREENVILLE COUNTY

Borgeson Universal Co., a manufacturer of steering joints, is launching its first South Carolina operations in Greenville County, according to a news release from Gov. Nikki Haley's office. The new development will invest \$4.5 million in the Upstate and create 36 jobs. Founded in 1914, Borgeson Universal is a manufacturer of steering universal joints and components for the industrial, automotive, military and aerospace markets. The company is locating in a 101,500-square-foot facility in Travelers Rest.

Title: **What the new ethics laws will and won't do for our state**
 Author:
 Size: 63.08 column inches
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CINDI ROSS SCOPPE
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
THE STATE

What the new ethics laws will and won't do for our state

SEN. WES HAYES had two requests for his colleagues on Wednesday: Be kind and courteous to the candidate who had defeated him in the Republican primary less than 24 hours earlier, and pass two ethics bills that would come up for a vote that night.

Ethics reform has no better friend at the State House than Mr. Hayes, yet he was one of three senators targeted for defeat last week by a governor who claimed ethics reform was one of her top priorities. So he made a point of saying he was not asking for a victory for the governor. "I'm not particularly concerned about that," the York County Republican said. "But I'm asking to do what's right. We need to pass ethics reform. If you want to do something for me, to send me out on a good note, just pass the ethics reform. It's the right thing to do."

Six hours later, the Senate voted unanimously to pass bills allowing an independent body to investigate legislators' compliance with the ethics law and requiring public officials to tell us where they get their income.

It was all testament to Sen. Hayes' integrity, the esteem in which his colleagues hold him and, unfortunately, how much ethics reform had been watered down over the four years it has

been claimed as a priority by Gov. Nikki Haley, many state senators and most House members.

Although they allow the State Ethics Commission to investigate legislators' compliance with the ethics law, the bills the Legislature passed on

Wednesday don't give those investigators any extra tools — or resources — to do so. Nor do they increase penalties in a way that would serve as a stronger deterrent against wrongdoing.

They don't improve our campaign-finance law. The flaws in that law are legion, but the biggest one involves what's called dark money: As long as individuals and organizations act independently of the candidates, they can spend unlimited amounts of money to influence our votes without telling us where they get the money or how they're spending it.

The Legislature never seriously considered requiring officials to report the *amount* of income they receive from non-governmental sources, even in broad ranges. We need this sort of information to help us recognize when public officials might put their personal interests ahead of the public interest, and knowing the sources of income goes a long way toward accomplishing that goal. But of course it would

be better to know the amount as well.

The House tried to make public officials report the amount of income they receive from lobbyists and businesses and organizations that hire lobbyists, but the Senate absolutely refused. (Some read a provision in current law as requiring officials to report some types of income from lobbyists and lobbyists' employers, but the law does not clearly require that.) One reform advocate worries that the intensity of opposition suggests there's a lot here that we need to know about the money some senators are receiving from the people in the business of influencing their vote. I suspect she's right about that.

But the claims that the bills are meaningless — which we heard from senators who fought to make sure they weren't any more meaningful — are not just hypocritical; they're absurd. In fact, the bills give voters two significant reasons to have more trust in our government.

Under current law, public officials have to report the money they receive from the government and, in limited cases, government contractors. Under H.3186, they will have to tell us the source, although not the amount, of nearly all of their

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income. (Private pensions, IRAs, disability payments and the like are excluded.) And unlike the law that currently requires very limited reporting, this doesn't use loophole-creating definitions: It smartly defines income as anything that has to be reported to the IRS.

Also under current law, legislators investigate complaints against fellow legislators, usually in secret, so we have no way of knowing whether they're enforcing the law or protecting their colleagues. Under H.3184, a reconstituted State Ethics Commission will investigate complaints against legislators. If it decides charges should be

brought, it releases all of its evidence to the public and to the House or Senate Ethics committee, which then decides whether the legislator violated the law and, if so, sets the punishment.

The Senate insisted on allowing the legislative committee to send the case back to the Ethics Commission for further investigation — a provision many see as an opportunity to bully the commission into backing down. But that doesn't look to me like a problem, since the public still gets to see all the evidence; if anything, it's a rope with which the committees could hang themselves.

Clearly, there is much more to

be done. But House leaders are determined to do more next year to address nearly all of these shortcomings, and a lot of senators are committed at least to shining some light on the dark money.

If we don't lose any more good legislators — and Senate Judiciary Chairman Larry Martin is the main one at risk — there is a chance that we will be able to use this year's long-awaited progress as a stepping stone to more.

At least I hope so.

Ms. Scoppe can be reached at cscoppe@thestate.com or at (803) 771-8571.

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Title: **State observes Blood Donor Appreciation Month**
Author:
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State observes Blood Donor Appreciation Month

Governor Nikki R. Haley has proclaimed June as Blood Donor Appreciation Month.

Governor Haley's proclamation recognizes "blood donations of all kinds save lives in South Carolina" as she draws attention to the challenges of summer by encouraging "citizens to donate blood and ensure blood products are available for all who will need them."

Transfusion of blood and blood products help save millions of lives every year. They

help patients suffering from life-threatening conditions live longer and with higher quality of life, and it supports complex medical and surgical procedures. In addition, blood has an essential, life-saving role in maternal and perinatal care. But an adequate blood supply can only be assured through regular donations by voluntary blood donors.

To donate, contact The Blood Connection or visit thebloodconnection.org.

Title: **Haley to attend GOP convention in Ohio**
Author: ASSOCIATED PRESS
Size: 8.21 column inches
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Haley to attend GOP convention in Ohio

ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA, S.C. - South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley has decided to attend the Republican National Convention in Ohio next month.

Spokesman Rob Godfrey said Tuesday that Haley will attend alongside South Carolina's delegation. But, unlike in 2012, she has no plans to address the convention.

The Republican governor has been very vocal in her criticism of Donald Trump. But Haley has continued to say she would support the Republican nominee. She endorsed Marco Rubio ahead of South Carolina's presidential primary.

Earlier this month, Haley said she wished Trump communicated differently because bad things result from divisive rhetoric, as evidenced by last June's massacre at a historic black church in Charleston.

Title: **Bright: Haley drove voters to me**

Author:

Size: 104.47 column inches

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Bright: Haley drove voters to me

SPARTANBURG - State Sen. Lee Bright says he's gotten new supporters since Gov. Nikki Haley came to his district last week to endorse his opponent Scott Talley.

After Haley's announcement, "we had a lot of calls from people who said, 'I was undecided, but now that the governor is with Talley, we're with you,'" Bright told reporters. "That amazed me. I didn't expect that."

Bright made the remarks at a press conference Tuesday, one week before voters decide whether he or Talley will be the Republican nominee for District 12.

The hard-fought and closely watched race has become a referendum on Bright, a controversial figure viewed as a champion of conservative values by his supporters and a self-absorbed obstructionist by his critics, who now include Haley, though she endorsed him four years ago.

Appearing with Bright Tuesday were two other Republican state senators, Danny Verdin of Laurens and Kevin Bryant of Anderson, and three Republican House members, Tommy Stringer of

Greer, Mike Burns of Travelers Rest and Bill Chumley of Woodruff. They painted Bright as an unflinching conservative Christian who is sorely needed in the Senate to challenge the status quo.

"There are two things that are certain in the General Assembly," Stringer told reporters. "One is the expediency of the Republican majority and the other is the courage of Sen. Lee Bright."

"Lee's one we need to keep," Stringer said.

Also on hand to back Bright were Josiah Magnuson, who beat Rep. Doug Brannon in the Republican primary on June 14 to become the GOP nominee for House District 38, and Steven Long, who defeated Rep. Donna Hicks in the primary to become the GOP nominee for House District 37.

Talley, a Spartanburg lawyer who served four terms in the South Carolina House, said it was telling that Bright could only muster six supporters to join him at the press conference.

"One of the things that we've said throughout the campaign is

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Bright

Continued from Page 3A

he's just not an effective senator, and I think it shows by the few folks willing to come out on his behalf from the Legislature," Talley told *The Greenville News*. "You're not going to get anything passed with just six friends."

Talley also questioned why Democratic state Sen. Gerald Malloy wasn't at the press conference with Bright, since Bright voted at least 122 times with Malloy, a former president of the South Carolina Trial Lawyers Association.

Bright's controversial stances include opposing the removal of the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds and using the power of filibuster to block debate on road funding.

He created a firestorm earlier this year when he proposed requiring transgender people to use public bathrooms associated with their genders at birth instead of the genders with which they identify.

That same issue had put North Carolina at the center of a national controversy when Bright proposed the bill in South Carolina.

It didn't pass, but it made some state officials nervous that it would prompt businesses to steer jobs away from South Carolina in protest as had happened in North Carolina.

Asked about the bill Tuesday, Bright said he would continue to "do what I can

to protect the safety and privacy of South Carolina citizens."

If Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton is elected president, "you're going to need state legislatures that are going to need some backbone," he declared. "We don't need any more yes men, and Scott Talley is a yes man."

Bright, a two-term incumbent, captured the most votes in a four-way primary on June 14, though not a majority. Talley took second, setting up the runoff between the two next Tuesday.

Most of District 12 is in Spartanburg County, but a small portion is in Greenville County and includes neighborhoods along Batesville, Woodruff and

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Roper Mountain roads.



HEIDI HEILBRUNN/STAFF

Sen. Lee Bright, center, speaks during a Spartanburg press conference where a number of conservative legislators spoke in support of his campaign on Tuesday. Bright is facing Scott Talley in a primary runoff.

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