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Floyd Spence, May 5-6, 1972

Schedule of Events

- Friday 6:00 REA Coop Annual Meeting, St. Matthews -
 Calhoun County
- 8:00 Outstanding Citizen's Award Banquet,
 West Columbia
- Cayce Junior Women's Club,
 West Columbia
- Saturday 10:00 Wagons for Wagener
 Parade and Barbeque, Wagener, Aiken County
- 7:00 South Carolina Chapter of Mental Retardation
 Association Final Banquet, Sheraton - Columbia
 Columbia

Floyd Spence

Ride down with Floyd Spence from D. C. to Columbia.

How often do you do this? "Every weekend. I might have missed one or two when I was on a trip somewhere, but that's all. Living so close to Washington, the people expect you to be there to attend their meetings. My family is down there. My wife decided if she wasn't going to get to see me anyway, she'd rather stay home. And the kids are settled in school. Even if the family weren't here, I'd still come down every weekend." *If his wife had moved to DC, he said, he wouldn't see her because he's out most every meeting evening to some kind of dinner or meeting.*

He detailed his last weekend's ventures, with speeches out of state in Thomasville, Georgia (to dedicate something or other) and in Tennessee (to ROA - "a fine group to talk to") and to a "black fraternity" and to mentally retarded olympics and to another speech to ROA - talking about hectic plane schedules.

Then he talked about this weekend's schedule--mentioned that on Sunday there is to be meeting of South Carolina delegation to National Convention. "There's been some talk about electing me as delegation chairman; so I don't know as I want to be there when they elect me. I don't know. If they ask me, I'll do it, but I don't really want the responsibility of keeping the boys in one place. I'd rather be free to wander around myself."

This led to a discussion of fact that he had no competition this year. "I'm running unopposed this year. No competition in either party--a freshman Republican. It surprised me. And the other fellows in the delegation were surprised too. 'You're the only Republican and a freshmen, too, and you have no opposition,' they say, 'while we have opponents in the primary and general election.' 'And most of them do.'"

Why no opposition - "The State Chairman of the Democratic Party is an old friend of mine. He told me that the Democrats didn't seek anyone out to run against me. They thought I was doing a good job representing the people of the area, without regard to party. He thought--and I thought--that someone would probably file against me, someone looking for publicity or name recognition. But no one did. I know the state senators in the area were actually talking down any race against me, because they were afraid a race against me would hurt their chances. People must think I have some independent strength on this area that I don't know I have! Anyone who looked into the financial aspect of it probably were discouraged. The chairman of my last opponent's Finance Committee had already joined my Finance Committee. That probably made them stop and wonder. Our campaign and finances were organized and ready to go. Besides they couldn't find a tougher

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opponent than I had last time. There isn't one around. And I beat him, so that probably had some influence on their thinking." (He was going to meet socially Sunday with his campaign workers because the scheduled strategy meeting was not necessary.) Spence said later that State Dems faced with a race vs. Thurmond and races in all other House districts didn't want to *mount* one vs. Floyd. But essence of it all has to be that they think he's unbeatable.

I asked him about the last contest. "It was a tough fight. The man who ran vs. me was a Naval Academy graduate, had been in the service, had contracted polio and been discharged. He used crutches. He was a practicing attorney. A very popular person--goodlooking, articulate and well liked. He had a great dislike for Albert Watson; it was almost an obsession with him. Of course he started with 35% of the vote--the black vote. Any Democrat does. So all he has to do to win is get 15% more from the whites."

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"He wasn't interested in running again. Even last time, he wasn't as interested in running against me. He filed to run against Albert Watson before Watson decided to run for governor instead."

He talked again about the black vote as he had in Washington. "It's beginning to change, among the more educated blacks. They're beginning to say to themselves, why should I vote Democratic?"

Senator Thurmond is getting some support now from the black community--even the militant blacks. _____ from Charleston, she's a militant black--she ran against Mendel Davis--and she came out the other day for Senator Thurmond for hard practical reasons. He can get things done being close to the Nixon Administration; he can do things for blacks--and he has. I get some support from blacks--not much, but little by little it will change. When I get a letter asking for my help, I don't ask if the person writing it was black or white. I do everything I can for whoever it is. And if I know it's a black person--a militant black--I may try even harder just to show them what kind of person I am. But if someone comes to me and says what are you going to do for blacks, that's racism just as it is when it comes from the other side. And I tell them so. You can have racism in many ways. "What are you going to do for blacks" is one of them. I suppose we all have prejudices of some sort. But I try to be fair to all the people I represent."

I asked him whether or not entry of blacks into Republican party wouldn't drive whites out and I asked it not with respect to himself but with respect to Thurmond. "They may not be enthusiastic about it,--all of them,--especially the rednecks. But where else do they have to go? If they look at Thurmond's opponent, they know he will be more liberal. ~~He'll~~ have to be to keep the black vote,

So, there won't be any alternative. Besides people know what's happening in the world. They know things are changing. They may not like it but they accept it. They know that Thurmond has to get some black support in order to win. They understand."

He talked of being delegate to National Convention in 1968 and favoring Reagan. But he voted for Nixon for fear of Rockefeller. There's a formal picture of Nixon in his Columbia office-- but there's a photo of him and Agnew shaking hands. And my impression is that he's closer to Agnew--in spirit.

I asked him if he was comfortable in Democratic party when he began. "I didn't know anything else. I had met some Republicans-- at law school and at meetings I attended around the country. But the Democratic party was all there was. And all it did was run the primary. We didn't have a two-party system. We really had a no-party system. Anybody could run in the primary and there was no talk about the party. No one got up and praised the Democratic party or argued about the party. I rationalized ~~it~~ that I could vote as I wished nationally (I always voted Republican for President) and vote for what I believed in locally, ^{so} that members ~~hip~~ in the Democratic party was not a problem. But when I decided to run nationally I could no longer rationalize. For if I went to Congress I would have to vote to put people in power that I didn't agree with,

people whose views I didn't believe in. So I changed--and ran against Albert Watson who only beat me by 4,000 votes."

Why don't other Southern Democrats change-- (1) seniority - he mentioned Mendel Rivers, who praised Land and Mitchell as "best Secretary of Defense and Attorney General we ever had" - but wouldn't give up seniority. (2) can't win - "I was down in Thomasville, Georgia last weekend with my good friend Dawson Mathis. He and I eat lunch together almost every day. We think alike and vote alike. Why he even supports Nixon more than I do. He said to me, 'I have to run as a Democrat or I'll get beaten. If I could run as a Republican I would. But I couldn't win.'

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I asked why he thought he could do it in his district and others could not. Was there something about the district that made it possible. His answer was not very clear although he seemed to be trying to answer the question. (1) He almost beat Watson. (2) He had a good image among white Democrats and knew 'em all from the legislature. (3) Watson, after all, started the trend. Many Democrats thought Watson had been "opportunistic" in his switch and Floyd Spence indicated as such when he said Watson "had it all planned," and "he begged them to strip him of seniority--no, he dared them to do it." "The local Democrats got most and hence supported him."

But Floyd ^{thinks he} ~~Spence~~ has a different image among white democrats.

"They say, Floyd switched because of what he believed in. He did it

when it was unpopular, before it ~~was~~ the thing to do. We might ^{not} agree with everything he says, but we respect him for standing up for what he believes in. He's not an opportunist. I think that's the image I have among many Democrats. And of course, they know me from the legislature. We are still friends socially."

Watson now practicing law - Civil rights groups have stopped several appointments for him. Floyd Spence thinks Watson was "tagged with ^{the} racial thing unjustifiably" but that ~~more or~~ ^{none the} less he has a racist image and civil rights groups won't let him get anything in federal government--nothing that requires approval. He thinks Watson may run again but "after losing last time and having been proposed four or five times for federal positions and failing, he should wait until things settle before running again."

Have people asked you to run statewide? "Oh, yes. I tell them that I'll just wait and see what develops. I've been in the business long enough to know you can't plan for the future. You just have to be in the right place at the right time--when the opportunity comes. But who knows what opportunity will come. I'm ^{happy} ~~running~~ where I can, ^{am} so I'm planning to stay where I am as long as I can, and build up seniority. And hope that someday the Republicans might become the majority party. But I don't ever see that happening the way the County is going now." He then went on to say it might happen if the situation arose that USSR got weapons superiority over US so great that

people rose up in anger. "Then the doves would become hawks and the hawks would become vampires." And the cry for blood would get so great, presumably, that Republicans would ride in. Interesting vision of a kind of national guilt search just the opposite of one liberals indulge in re Nixon and Viet Nam. Both somewhat bloodthirsty, I think, on the ends of spectrum.

Floyd Spence told story of demonstration at Capitol last week. "There was and Ellsberg and Kuntsler and they were having an anti-war demonstration, praising the Viet Cong and North Viet Nam and criticizing the US--the sort of thing they could never do in North Viet Nam. But they don't think of that. They were having a field day--and I was standing off to the side watching. Well, they were handing out assignments--you go to such and such congressman's office from 2 - 3 o'clock and you go to so and so's office from 5 - 6 o'clock. Representative Burke of Florida - a real hard-nosed, no nonsense fellow, ^{who} ~~he~~ ^{damn} came from up North, retired and ran for Congress--he called out and said for them to send someone down to his office and he walked off. One fellow with a long beard came over to me--he didn't know I was a Congressman--and he asked 'Say, who was that man?' I said, 'Well, I don't know who he is but I've heard that just last week he beat up two demonstrators who went to his office, and hurt them pretty badly.' And a lady who was standing nearby cocked her ear and I said it so she could hear it,

"I even heard tell that he shaved a woman's hair all off one time, too." "So you'd better be careful about sending any protestors down to his office." Well, they didn't want any of that. You know they all want to be leaders with the bull horn but when it comes to getting hit on the head, that's a different story. The fellow that was with me and I laughed. Of course, I was just cutting up. I was standing there with my hands clasped hard behind my back. I was afraid that if anybody came near me carrying the American flag flying upside down, there was no telling what I might do. When it comes to my country, I can get pretty emotional myself. I had to release my emotions somehow, and that's why I was cutting up." Went on to talk in this vein about how a knock on the head might cure some of this demonstrating, but admitting to some puzzlement about the whole thing.

At lunch when I asked Jere Ratcliffe why Floyd had no opposition, he said "If you put everything together and did a profile of this district, Floyd would come about as close to that profile as anyone possibly could."

What were elements in the profile? (1) "Patriotism--I won't say it's a hawkish constituency, because that's not quite right. But it's the most patriotic, flagwaving constituency I know of. People go all out for national defense--Fort Jackson is a very important part of the district...the veterans' organizations are the most powerful interest groups in the district. So much so that

they spread out into and intertwine with the state and federal employees groups. (2) Anti unionism - "We don't have any strong unionized labor. If we did, there might have been more pressure on the Democratic party to run a campaign against Floyd--or anyone who votes vs. the unions, as Floyd does; that's an important thing about the district--it has so little unionized labor. That will provide a change--but slowly." (3) Anti welfare and (4) Reduce taxes.

Other interest groups he mentioned: postal employees, state and federal employees, farm coops - farmers more individual than organized. Did n't mention industry--but talked a lot about industry as progressive force--sees this area and South Carolina generally as changing. Carolina Eastman, Allied Chemical and GE plus several small electronic plants--a nice diversified industries.

When we got off the plane, I met Jack Grant of WCOS, local radio station. I asked him about Floyd Spence appeal. "He gets right down to people. His door is always open. He's not an 'I'm the Congressman, who are you' type of person. And he has the women's vote sewed up. They love him."

When he sees a woman he says "hi hon." ~~But~~ Floyd Spence clearly sees himself as something of a lady killer. His preoccupation with clothes was evident. Jack Grant was meeting him to give him 4 suits of clothes he had bought for him. "Floyd saw a suit of mine and went ape over it so I helped him pick out 4 of them." Then when we got to

the office, FS had already called in to say that 2 pairs of pants were missing! He started out the day in a white corduroy suit! Lord knows what he'll have for the evening.

Jere was in scouting - sent to South Carolina - met FS via scouting - helped in all campaigns 1962 and after - sent to Florida - told Floyd he wanted to come back to SC and "put down roots." FS hired him. Jere says he knows people in all counties and all little towns in district through his scouting experience. "I deal with the same people in politics as I did in scouting." Said he got to know "power structure" of little communities.

FS attentiveness to district is evident in change of staff from Watson. Watson had 1 girl in Orangeburg and 2 girls in Columbia. FS has girl in Orangeburg, 2 in office plus an AA, Jere. "Floyd wanted someone who would do some moving around the district. He wanted to keep in close touch."

Sign "Welcome to Cayce - Cayce Adopts ^{Army} 1st Cav. in Viet Nam". Jere told me that evening that at one time the sign used to read something like "more little league teams play here than anyplace else in the county. When we left the women's club meeting in the evening a little league game was going on across the street--at 9:45-- under a professional set of lights.

On the way down to St. Matthews REA meeting, Floyd and Jere talked office business and there was little to involve me. I just

watched as we drove over gently rolling country with few houses in sight. Four-lane highway through oak and pine areas with an occasional farm.

When we got to St. Matthews and were nearing the Coop, he said, "I've always carried Calhoun County. And it's over 50% black. It's a funny thing. It's just a little county, but the few people who are for you are an aristocracy. They are good stock and can hold their own with anybody. The Senator from this county is a good example. He's Chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the State Senate and one of the most respected people in the state in his field. He has made it, so to speak, and from this little town." The first thing he noted as we drove in was that "This is where Harry Dent comes from.

He's made it a long way from this little old country town." I thought of Bobby Baker! *He also noted that first time he ever came to St. Matthews, he went to a show where ~~Bob~~ Tubbs, country singer and Billy O'Dell, baseball pitcher endorsed him. "Neither of them knew ~~from~~ who I was or had ever met me, but that the kind of endorsement that helps here."*

The meeting was in the S. C. Army National Guard Armory - the refreshment tent outside, the voting tables set up outside, for election of Board of Directors. It was the most grass roots kind of meeting I have ever seen, I think. Poor and not so poor, black and white--all consumers of REA electricity, all voting. The blacks tended to gather on the outside of the crowd and they tended to sit on one side of the hall. But this was by no means absolute. I saw very little black-white conversation, however. Floyd talked and moved from group to group, but I did not see him move to one single black

group or black person--except the black policeman who was directing traffic at the entrance. And here, he stuck out his hand and said, "I'm Floyd Spence" and shook the policeman's hand, but no one was around at the time. Jere told me earlier in the day that this was strong Wallace country. But when I asked Jere if a policeman^{frican} could politick among both blacks and whites at this meeting, he said 'yes'. Mr. Zeigler, Thurmond's opponent was standing around not doing much and Jere said, "If I were in his place, I'd shake every black hand in sight. I'd shake white hands, too, but if I had to choose, I would make sure of the blacks first." Jere's view was that the whites talking to Zeigler were just being nice and would vote Thurmond; whereas the blacks were Zeigler's major constituency.

Floyd Spence's speech to the crowd (of 500-1000 people, I'd say) was a good example of trying to build identification and trust. He began with 2 jokes--one about preacher and county church--revival meeting--man with devil's suit on (from masquerade party - drunk)--comes into church with lightening bolt in background, everyone frightened. One woman sees the devil coming toward her and says, "I know I've been a member of this congregation for 40 years, but I want you to know I've been on your side all the time." (Big laugh). FS says "I want you to know that I've been on your side all the time. I've always carried Calhoun County. You sent me to

Washington and if it wasn't for my friends here, a country boy like me wouldn't be in Washington." "It's pretty strange up there for a country boy like me and it can go to your head. I went to the White House one time. Imagine, me from over here on Lake Murray going to the White House with the President. Shortly afterward I was invited back to breakfast. Well I reckoned I was getting right important, two meals at the White House, sure enough, until one of the officials there came over, put his arm around me and said 'Joe, how are things down in Arkansas?' Well, that keeps things in perspective."

His speech was very much to the effect that ~~possible~~^{terrible} things are going on up there in Washington--the demonstrations, the people tearing down the county, carrying the Viet Cong flag, but that there are some people up there doing something for them, trying to protect the county. "We have a coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats that are trying to do what's right for the county. I have friends from Alabama and Mississippi and Georgia that I meet with and we are trying to do what you want us to do. If we weren't up there working for you this county would be in a lot worse mess than it is."

"You wouldn't hardly believe the things that are going on up there in Washington. And I wouldn't have believed it either if I hadn't seen it."

He kept talking about problems and saying "I can't understand it and you couldn't understand it either if you were to sit in my position. We had an appropriation for the District of Columbia the other day. And you know that your tax dollars help to run the District of Columbia. There was one item in that budget for 730,000 for repairing broken windows in the schools of the District of Columbia. Can you imagine that? \$730,000 for little panes of glass like you have in this building. I can't understand it, and neither could you. Another fellow got up the other day and said, 'This amendment will cost only 50 million.' ~~Only~~ 50 million! How many of you have ever seen or will ever see 50 million? How many of you even know how big a container it takes to hold 50 million? That's what some of the members of Congress are doing with your money, the money you work for and send up there. There are some terrible things going on up there. And some of us are doing our dead level best to change it."

He ended by saying "I want you to know that I know all the members of your Board of Directors, that I know what you are doing and that I will help them and help anyone of you personally in any way I can."

He was introduced by Mr. Boind(?) of Board of Directors with story that when he and another REA officer were in Washington, they

went to Capitol Restaurant and the manager of restaurant, Ernst _____, "a white-haired black man" said to them, when FS went to take phone call, "Mr Spence has only been here for a year, but already he is one of the most popular members of the Congress." Every locality thinks ~~as~~ they have the greatest Congressman. Like the police chief who came up after the Women's Club dinner and said FS was "the best Congressman we could have. Maybe we could find one as good, but none any better."

Afterward he noted that it was a good crowd and half black. "You really couldn't give them a speech--just a few jokes and a few words to let them know you take a passing interest in what they are doing. They had a long business meeting to go through. Some of them couldn't hear, some were holding ^{babies} ~~banter~~, you could see them fidgeting."

"Tom Elliott was there. He's the Richland County Treasurer, a strong Democrat and, supposedly the power behind the Democrats. He was one of those active ⁱⁿ ~~opponents~~ playing down opposition to me. I saw him in the back of the ~~hall~~ and stopped my speech in the middle to say "Hi Tom" (Tom had waved back). You don't want to miss important people like that."

I asked if he saw all the people he wanted. "Probably some were there that I didn't see. I saw some on the way out. But word will get around that ^{I was} ~~you were~~ there. And people will know that ^I ~~you~~ took an interest in their affairs."

"A lot of people asked me, 'how come you got invited here, a Republican?' These people are pretty strong Democrats. Besides, my father worked for a private power company all his life. So these people never have been too enthusiastic about me. Tom Boind(?) invited me, he's an old line Republican. And he's become important locally because there's a Republican in the White House, a Republican head of REA and a Republican Congressman. If the people want something done, they go through Tom, because he's the one who can go to Washington and get it for them."

We talked about Zeigler, the U.S. Senate candidate who seemed so ill at ease. "He's a very nice fella. He's well educated - graduated from Harvard University, which isn't all that much help down here. He's a Captain in the Navy Reserve. His wife is a fine person. They are both polished. He can quote you the Bible and Cicero but he can't talk to ordinary people in language they can understand. He might be able to talk to the legislature, but even then, it would go over the heads of half of them. He has a Kennedy image down here. But he doesn't know how to move around in a crowd. You could tell he's out of his environment with these rural people."

Do you feel at home in this environment? "I feel half at home. I've been around these areas a lot. And I know a little about the things that interest them--farming for instance. You have to talk

to them about the things they are interested in and not over their heads about what you are interested in. If you do, they'll say 'why that fellow just doesn't know anything about my interests.' And you have to talk colloquially ^{the way they talk.} My wife criticizes me about my English. "I was an English major. And I tell her, 'honey, you just can't use your best college english. They'll say what's he talking about.' But if I were up in a suburban shopping center near Columbia, it would be different. You have to learn how to get along in different environments." "Why the first time I ran, there was this old man in the field picking cotton. He was about 85, down on his hands and knees. I flit out across the field to talk to him."

Jere said to me during the day that "Floyd makes his own political decisions. You don't have to program him to meet people; he does it naturally."

FS went from his discussion of talking down your nose to voters to a meeting of Congressman Devine's group. "I don't know what the name of the group is--'the good guys' or something--but we meet once a month for dinner, about 30 of us." Last week they had a Kissinger aide talk to them--and FS complained bitterly that he "talked down his nose to us" and talked about options. "They think its' just a chess game. But we're the ones who have to put our heads on the block every two years. They think we are just politicians. They talk down their noses at us and don't tell us what is going on. And we're the ones who put him where he is." (i.e., we = conservatives.)

"Why doesn't someone tell the American people why we are in Viet Nam? Why doesn't someone say, 'these North Viet Nameese are Communists and they don't believe in God?' In the South there are many Catholics and other faiths and they want to be free.' That's why we're there in the first place. Don't talk about 'the interests of our national security,' ^{and our 'options!'} What does the average American understand about that? Tell us so we can understand it." He told how Derwinski (a "Polish Republican, of all things") got up and upbraided the Kissinger aide for treating them like schoolboys. And how Devine had to call this general and apologize. FS was upset that "the cocktail hour had gone on too long" and so the Derwinski outburst rather than rational comment. Also upset that Ashbrook was running and that people assumed that since Ashbrook was doing so poorly, there was no silent majority, no conservative support. Ashbrook a poor candidate.

Sam Devine - "Real hard-nosed fella, an ex-FBI agent, a conservative, not a right winger, but a conservative, a solid citizen."

FS speech to Women's Club was a strong, conservative speech-- anti-communist, anti-Russian, pro-strong national defense, pro-American, pro-freedom vs. slavery. Punctuated by stories of how he went to different universities and battled "Mary-who knew everything" or "a Trotskyite who had a hood over his head and his hair matted over his face so that only a few patches of skin showed through," or Northwestern

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where "I was described as a Republican, conservative, member of the Armed Services Committee from the South--all bad from their point of view and a stupid politician on top of it." But he said he got a courteous, fair hearing there.

One story^{about the Northwestern fall} - "There was this little girl shaking her little seat like she had ants in her pants. I didn't know ^{what if} ~~if~~ she was signalling that we ought to get together later or what. So I asked her what she wanted and she said straight out 'What is your definition of freedom?' I said 'you must be kidding.' You, a sophomore in college and you're asking me, a stupid politician for a definition of freedom?' That broke up the group. But then I said to her, 'No, you are really serious. You don't know what freedom is, do you? Because you've never had to fight for it. You just take it for granted.'"

His speech was punctuated with comments like "I always notice the pretty girls" and as we left, a girl who had been "Miss Lexington" at one time joshed him back by saying "You have a one-track mind." He said "Can you think of a better track?" A joke which he told also was that he only had 2 vices, smoking and women. But he liked them both. Doctor told him he should quit smoking and said "Have you ever thought of it this way--Stop one and double up on the other." Women loved it.

Another example--he painted a grim picture of Soviet subs off both coasts and a time of 7 minutes for missile to get from sub to Columbia.

"You have a choice. Either you spend billions and billions for national defense or you start deciding how you are going to spend those last seven minutes^{on earth.} Unless we are strong militarily, you might as well sit under the nearest shade tree and think about something nice for 7 minutes--for me it will be girls." And then ~~he went~~ on to predict disaster unless we are strong.

Two rather subtle pieces of evidence that blacks are not his constituency at all: (1) In REA speech he used example of window-breaking in D. C. schools. Since most of the kids there are black, we can assume he's talking about the destruction brought about by black kids. His audience was, by his estimate 'at least half black.' Either he thought they wouldn't put 2 and 2 together or he was just not conscious of what he was saying, or he thought the whites would get the message and didn't care about blacks--any way you look at it, he was not being sensitive to his black constituents. (2) In the Women's Club speech, with 2 black students in the audience, he talked often about people in communist countries as "slaves" and called us, by contrast, free. He said "no one in this country has ever had to fight for his freedom; we may have had to fight to maintain it, but then only a very few of us. We have always had our freedom and we take it for granted." To be sure, he was talking about military battles for freedom, but the rhetoric was very different than it would be if he were appealing to blacks. He would not stand there

and say how free we have been always, how no American ever had to fight for freedom and how only slavery is communism. He just doesn't think about the blacks in a very sensitive way. Not as a group. But he helps them individually.

Excerpts from speech:

"It tears up my insides to see people tearing down this country-- the greatest country in the world has ever known."

"If the skinniest little kid on the playground at recess had a great big sucker, don't you think pretty soon some bigger kid would come along and take that sucker, just because he had the power to do so? And don't you think that if the police chief over there had that sucker, that there would be no way anyone could take it away from him--not even for a lick? That may be bad but that's the way it is in the world and that's the way it always will be. The enemy, Russia, is preparing to do us in one way or another; and if we are weak they will do us in. That's what the Japanese thought at Pearl Harbor. They attacked us because they thought we were weak."

It was curious to hear him adopt the refrain "We have to reorder our priorities: by which he meant more national defense!

"AT the end of World War II, we could have said to every nation in the world, do as we say or we will wipe you off the face of the earth. We had the military power to do just that. We were the

strongest nation the world has ever seen. If we were the kind of a nation that our critics now say we are--that these demonstrators say we are--we would have done just that. But we didn't; because that's not the kind of a country we are. We helped our enemies and helped them to rebuild their economy."

Again the story of people carrying the Viet Cong flag. "There were some people carrying the North Viet Nam flag. Why if they went to North Viet Nam and carried the American flag, they'd be shot dead on the spot. And here they are standing up for a country like that. And running down the country that allows them to protest. I don't understnad it. When I see people like that, I wonder if this country is worth saving."

Talk about people who gave lives for freedom and how the protestors "are so ungrateful."

"Bryan ^{Doro's} ~~score~~ conservative voting ^{score} ~~record~~ is getting lower and lower. He wants to run for Governor and he has to get the black vote. Members of the delegation have been shaking their heads and saying 'What's happening to old Bryan.'"

Lindsey
do not.

On way down to Wagener on Saturday a.m. as we got to the edge of the district close to Aiken County, I asked FS whether these would be stronger supporters of his than the people back in the other part of Lexington County. I noted that the county (Lexington) was quite

Rund ones

diverse. "They would be fairly good supporters, but a lot of the rural people are strong Democrats. Of course, you find some of these old fellows out here are pretty independent. The people in this part of the country aren't as strong Democrats as the state officeholders back in Columbia. But they aren't as strong supporters of mine as people like those in Whitehall--a suburb of Columbia--the people who work for GE and Allied Chemical. Most of them moved here from out of state. I'm strongest back in that part of the country. Of course among the lowest paid workers there, the mill workers, I don't have much strength."

On the way back I asked him what the profile of his strongest supporters would look like. "People who have finished high school and who have made something of themselves as mechanics or as secretaries,--from the female standpoint, and young married people who work in business, insurance or in industry, Middle income people, younger people, 25-35, many of whom have moved here from out of state. Also people who are from 45-60 who work in government offices, salesmen--that sort of thing. They are very strong supporters."

What do they expect of you? "Well, contrary to what people say--they say voters are issue-oriented and all that sort of thing--I don't see that people care very much about the issues or know very much about how I vote or even whether I voted on these issues--unless they have a very special interest. For most of the people I know it's more

a matter of personality. They pick out a personality whom they like, whom they think is like them, whom they have confidence in and they trust him to do what's best for them. They want someone who won't knuckle under and who will stand up for them even if no one else does. It's probably only something they've heard about him or something about the image he projects. Most voters never meet the candidate, and these name recognition surveys hurt your ego. But word gets around and somebody will tell them something about you and they learn that way. I can't figure it any other way. I have people come up to me and say so and so was just singing your praises the other day. Well, I had never met the person who was saying those good things about me; I didn't know who he was." The two-step process of communication.

As we left I asked him if he was glad we had gone to Wagener. "Oh yes, I met some people I hadn't seen in ages. And all the local officials were pleased to see me. They measure the success of their local festivals and events by how many major politicians come. If you come, you help them to make their local celebration a success. If you didn't come, the local leaders would be disappointed and their meeting wouldn't be quite as successful. It's a big thing for them. People come, as you see, from all over the state. I came and I'll get along with 'em real well."

^{Hitchcock}
 Wally ^{the} Bureau Chief of the Columbia State was there - bringing a certain amount of big city cynicism to the general hilarity. He was doing a story on Wagons for Wagener--"the greatest thing in the history of South Carolina," ~~as~~ ^{He} put it sarcastically. "I could think of a lot of things I'd rather be doing than this--the horse show this afternoon and the catfish stew tonight."

I asked Wally what he thought of FS. "I don't think he's a very savvy politician. He's not very bright. Oh, he can represent the home folks up there by voting as they want him to, but he won't start anything. He won't be a prime mover in Congress. Floyd is too crude. He's a nice looking, distinguished looking person, but as soon as he opens his mouth he's finished. He doesn't belong in Washington. He just doesn't fit in with the Washington crowd. He doesn't give South Carolina a good reputation up there. They say, 'what's that the ass hole of the nation?' You know, South Carolina has the reputation of being one of the most backward of states. ^{Floyd loves the women, and} They'll vote for him on that account."

Thurmond "the worst senator in the U. S. Senate and absolutely unbeatable. He's done more to hold back progress than anyone else in Washington, but he's the world's greatest campaigner."

Later, Wally observed, as I had, that Floyd lingered a long time with each group instead of really circulating around and shaking a

lot of hands (there must have been 2-3,000 people there). Wally saw Floyd standing in line for the Barbeque. "If old Strom were here, he wouldn't be standing in the line, he'd be at the end of the line where it begins, shaking every hand as the people get into line." I thought Floyd's lack of real hand shaking meant that he wasn't among his greatest friends. Wally chalked it up to lack of "savvy." "He talks to people who are already going to vote for him. That's a waste of time." But I think Floyd was right-- that he was just reenforcing identity at a time when he didn't need to campaign anyway.*

Later Floyd described Aiken County as "one of the strongest Republican counties in the state and one of the first, due to the AEC's Savannah River plant. All these people came in from out of state to work on the project."

On way down, Jere described the area as "redneck country" and talked of a county disc jockey - Deecom who blasted bureaucrats and had a big following in the area. "But he liked old Floyd." It was Wallace country and one man came up to us and said he was ^{working} ~~voting~~ for Wallace. Floyd came over while we were watching ^{the} parade organizing and said, looking at a 'black man on horseback'--"These rednecks have a game they call playing cowboys and nigger. Now you can go home and say you saw a black cowboy--just like they are putting on TV now."

Jere compared St. Matthews and Wagener. "As Floyd said, what you have in St. Matthews is an autocracy as far as the big farmers are concerned. These men travel all over the world and are conversant with everything that's going on. We get more passport requests from Calhoun County than from anywhere else. Wagener is redneck country. These people work very, very hard.

The soil is terrible. "You can't hardly find worse soil than this." "Sand hills covered by 'slashpine' (good for pulp and fast growing) and scrub oak or black jack." We saw some fields where slash pine had been cut and burned and fields plowed up. I said, 'for soy beans?' Floyd said, "no, you always plan watermelons or perhaps peas in new ground."

I asked him which were his hardest votes in House and he mentioned two: Education bill - that has many titles. Some of which you favor but others of which you do not. Then postal employees' benefits, i.e. legislation to increase federal government's contribution to cost of health benefits for civil servants. "They asked for bargaining rights so they could bargain for their benefits and then they came and asked us to give it to them by legislation. That's a very hard bill because you know that every rural mail carrier down the road and every postal employee knows how you voted. And you know that not one in 2,000 of your other constituents will even know there was such a bill. A vote for the bill can't hurt you and might help you. A vote against the bill can only hurt you. But the voters have sent you up there to look after their interests. They entrusted you with that responsibility. It was a tough one. Right up until the vote,

Dawson Mathis and I sat there wondering what to do--arguing back and forth. We both voted against it. That was politically unwise. One man came by and said 'I voted for it but I feel like a prostitute.' Others said, 'I see you voted vs. that bill, I admire you for it and I wish I could have, but I just can't.' I feel sorry for them, but I understand how they feel. I didn't vote like a politician; I voted my conscience. Politicians, they say, do anything to get reelected. They say that the idea of conscience is naive. But it's not so." *This last was a little ingenuous. Postal employees do not support him anyway. Vote was 238-110. So he wasn't alone. Davis, Dorn, Gettys, McMillan for; Mann, Spence vs.

A Floyd saying: "Don't step in no stump holes" "How you doin'?"

He "womaned" alot all day. * "I just had two huggins from a pair of women over there." "There's a woman bending over there-- she used to be better looking than she is now. I handled her divorce when I was practicing law. She used to come to the office and people would kid me, calling her 'Floyd's girl.' Why if I had done half the things I've been accused of, I'd be so weak I couldn't walk." "I think I'll go talk to that pretty girl over there. I'll talk to her even if she's a communist." Lots of haw, haw on this theme. He told his "doublin' up" joke to 3 elderly ladies selling trinkets at one of the booths; they laughed daintily.

I saw FS perform, but never before his strongest supports. I never had the sense that I was seeing his basic Republican - plus non-party Democratic support.

A. J. Dooley, a State Senator from Lexington County, was at the parade. "I ran against AJ when I ran for the Senate in 1966. We had been friends ever since boyhood, played on the same little league team, slept over at each other's homes. I defeated him; and when I went to Congress, he came back and won the seat. I had to endorse his opponent in that campaign, or at least have my picture taken with him. I didn't want to, but it was strictly a party thing." Jere said AJ should be a Republican, by philosophy. "I asked FS why he beat AJ. "I don't know, better known or more popular in the area, I guess." Lots of talk about not getting involved in primaries with endorsements. People want FS endorsement in primaries and open-election. "They ought not to ask me and put me on the spot. I don't want to endorse anyone. I can't win. I wish I could leave the country till after November."

"Last week in Washington we had a meeting of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce. It was a big meeting, but nobody introduced Dan Fowler. So when it came my turn to introduce my staff I said I do have one person I'd like to introduce, Dan Fowler, State chairman of the Democratic Party. Dan said, "You had to, I kept you from having any opposition."

In the evening, we went to the National Association for Retarded Children final banquet. FS did not speak but sat at the head table while State Superintendent of Education spoke. I couldn't understand

why he went. Jere said he had been active in the field in some way. But at the dinner, no one made mention of the fact. I just don't understand it except that maybe he just keeps running. It seemed to me that here was something he surely could have given up for a Saturday evening with his family.

After the dinner, he went to one of the leader's room and chatted for a while with a group of them--some old friends. Jere and I waited for a young girl who was coming over to meet him to discuss a problem. We 3 went to have coffee in the restaurant.

Floyd joined us and we sat there for about an hour talking. The girl was very pretty, in process of getting a divorce, etc., etc. For the whole time Floyd held forth on subject of sex and women--joking, telling stories, making phony passes at the girl. She enjoyed it. Not a serious word, but he did agree to help a friend of hers. Then she went back to a party she had come from.

We walked into lobby, ran into same group he had been chatting with upstairs. They were on their way out for the rest of the evening, bottle under their arms. We stood there for a good half hour with Floyd and a couple of the others trading stories. Lots of hilarity and joking. They asked us to join them. I begged off--Floyd and Jere were going with them. I thanked Floyd, Jere; and last I saw of Floyd he had his arm around two of the women in the group and they were heading for some night club. I'm pretty convinced the

the women stuff is all talk but it must be hard on his wife. She stays home.

The evening's performance was puzzling. It was the most uncongressman like period of time I had spent with any of my congressmen. FS struck me as shallow, noisy and playboyish--without dignity--just a conventioneer out on the town. Keeping no distance from these people, saying nothing serious, taking no interest in their problems. But they, too, all behaved like conventioners--which they were. I guess what struck me was that here was a congressman just hanging around on a Saturday night without much to do. Why didn't he go home to his wife? Funny. I guess most of this baloney he feeds the women is just hokum and they see it as such--his style--but it is tiresome. And it seems utterly wasted in terms of getting elected. That, I guess, is the ultimate puzzle of it all. Does he really like aimless womanizing that much? Hasn't he anything better to do? Or is he basically a playboy? It might be noted that he doesn't drink at all.

One feature of the celebration at Wagener was that campers came from all over South Carolina to attend it. These camper groups go somewhere every week and park their trailers all around town. (We watched the parade across from an encampment of "Rebel Rovers"--25-30 campers.) This is their form of entertainment. They see what's doing around the area and take off for the weekend. But it's not just to the mountains or lakes, etc, it's anywhere! The National

Camping and Hiking Association is what they belong to. They wear jackets or vests covered with patches showing where they have been and there are many groups of them. Those who have just Airstream trailers--Pack N Tow--Rebel Rousers, etc. They made up large part of crowd. (See article by Wally Hitchcock)

The shrine groups with their Honda group and their racing car group were a big attraction "Omar Temple Racers" from Columbia. Mules and wagons, horseback riders, high school bands, old cars, etc.

Of course, the Barbeque was the feature--first time I ever had barbequed hog--and there must have been 1000 people for lunch.

The master of ceremonies at evening banquet was a black minister from Greenville. FS came up afterward and said, "He's a delegate to the National Convention--a Republican. So you see, we got one too. As a matter of fact we got another one--two black men in the delegation. What do you think of that?" I said "tokenism" and he laughed and said we people up North didn't think such a thing would happen here. This man had told some very funny jokes--when I commented on that, Floyd said "They were all racist jokes. You see, he was being racist." They weren't all racist (hippie, India and Jew joke) but some were very definitely and FS resented that.

Jere said that their whole strategy was to eliminate the opposition before it formed--by campaigning hard every weekend and by gearing up their campaign organization well in advance. He says they were

financed and ready to go, and that the activists would now drift off and work for Thurmond or Nixon.

When women drawl at FS, it comes out "Flowid."

It may be that playing up to women is a southern political style that I just can't comprehend as such. After all, Strom Thurmond has made enormous political capital out of it. His new wife Nancy was in the hospital while I was there and people often expressed concern for her--also a certain amount of admiration -- even though expressed humorously--for the Senator's virility and vigor and manliness. His wife was invariably described as a beautiful girl (she's 25 and he's about 70), former beauty queen, etc. A woman last evening said, when we were standing around that "South Carolina has the two sexiest Republicans--Thurmond and Spence." If I come again, I'll have to see whether this aspect is deliberate political style or purely personal predelection on part of Spence. It may be that women here expect this kind of treatment. They do a lot of eye flapping and southern charming at you. If it's all style, then one can explain it in political terms; if not, then it is probably a personal weakness (as Wally Hitchcock seemed to imply). For a while, I took it to be style. The last evening, I began to think it was personal weakness. The problem, of course, is that if it's the former he can be an effective congressman. If it's the latter, he may be less so. I never did see any hard intelligence

in FS. The women's club speech rambled. The St. Matthews' speech was effective. But he's been invited to speak to Southern Regional Industrial Council next week and that's a very high powered outfit. I'll have to come back and see him again.

If I come back, I'd like to see him with his silent majority constituency and with a veteran's organization.

At Wagener eating lunch, Wally mentioned that DAR scholarship had gone to a black boy in one of Aiken County High Schools. "You guessed it," he said, "the DAR wouldn't even come to the award ceremony they were so upset." FS said, "That's like a white girl winning the Afro-American beauty contest."

Wally also made point that county sheriff and magistrate were political powers, that Dorn used them effectively and that he didn't think Floyd had their help--since they were all Democrats. FS said "I think most of them do support me. They help me in those little ways they can." But he was vague.

His reelection constituency is, clearly, white and goes across party identification. Any black votes he picks up are on an individual basis. I did not see him shake any black hands on a routine basis either at St. Matthews or Wagener--and the crowd was heavily black in both places. Nor did I see him stop and talk to any black groups. They are Democrats; they don't know him; and they aren't the group he's about to educate to cross party lines. He thinks of

them as less educable than whites in this regard. His primary constituency is a bit more problematical. Since I never saw him really "at home" I haven't got a good feel for that. Probably it's just what he says it is.

On the way down, he talked about changing from Democrat to Republican. "I think TV had a lot to do with it. It used to be that our delegates would go up to the Democratic National Convention and no one knew what they did. They'd come back and say, 'I talked with Adlai Stevenson. He has to talk the way he does, but don't you all worry. He's going to take good care of us.' Then television came and our people could see Governor Byrnes being forced out of the convention. You couldn't hide anything from the people anymore. And they lost a lot of their loyalty to the national party."

A note on the problem of representation. It's not the problem of representation that is at core of Congress and its performance; it's the problem of power. They do represent ~~the~~; but they don't have power! Can you have representation and power? It's the power of the House, not the power in the House that's the ultimate problem. But maybe power in the House is related to power of the House.