THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

MARIE BANKHEAD OWEN, Editor
EMMETT KILPATRICK, Co-Editor

Published by the

STATE DEPARTMENT

OF

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Price $2.00 annually: single copies, 50c

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SPRING ISSUE

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EDITORIAL

It was found that so much good material was left over from the last issue of the Quarterly it was decided to produce it in Number 1, of Volume 8, which is the current issue. The plan proposed in Number 4 of Volume 7, to use the whole of Volume 4, for other historical purposes will be carried out beginning with Number 1, of the volume, within a few weeks. The first article will be the History of Coosa County, by the late Reverend George Brewer.

In addition to the usual type of historical material relating principally to our past, the current issue carries the keynote address of formed Governor Frank M. Dixon, made in Birmingham, July 17, 1948, at the States Rights Democratic Convention, presented here on the basis of history in the making.

MARIE BANKHEAD OWEN, Editor.

Admiral Raphael Semmes, Commander of the Confederate Cruisers **The Sumter,** and **The Alabama,** oil portrait by Maltby Sykes, just hung in World War Memorial Building, Montgomery.

CONFEDERATE CRUISER, SUMTER

Commanded by Raphael Semmes

By Virginia Clay-Clopton

(This account of the Confederate cruiser, "Sumter", was found in a collection of papers prepared by members of the Virginia Clay-Clopton Chapter, U. D. C., Huntsville, Ala., and signed by the above ascribed author. The account given here tallies in substance with Semmes' account of the small vessel named in honor of Fort Sumter which had just been bombarded by the Confederates stationed in Charleston. Very recently a new book, **Rebel Radier,** based on Raphel Semmes' cruise in the **C.S.S. Sumter,** has been published at Chapel Hill, by the University of North Carolina Press. The book is composed in large part of extracts from Semmes' **Memoirs of Service Afloat,** written in the year 1869. Harper Allen Gasnell, Lieutenant Commander, U.S.N.R., has supplemented notations in the book he has brought out, the last word on the subject. Editor.)

War, and it seems the Civil War was a terrible crusible through which to pass characters! The dross drops away from the pure metal at the first touch of the fire. It must be admitted indeed that there was some little nerve required on the part of an officer of the regular Army or Navy to elect to go with his State. His profession was his only fortune, he depended upon it for the means of subsisting himself and family. If he remained where he was a competancy for life, and promotion, and honor possibly awaited him. If he went with the South a dark uncertain future was before him. He could not possibly better his condition and the struggle was hard in other respects. All professions are clannish. All men naturally cling together who have been bred to a common pursuit and this remarks his particularly applicable to the Army and Navy. West Point and Annapolis were powerful bonds to knight together the hearts of young men. Such no doubt were the feelings of the hero of whose life I sketch only in part—that from 1861 to 65.

In the winter of 1860 Raphael Semmes was stationed in the City of Washington, D.C., as the Sec'y of the Light House Board, being then a Commander in the U. S. Navy. His intention of returning from the Federal Navy and taking service with the South in the coming struggle had been made known to the delegation in the Federal Congress from Alabama, early in 1860-1.

Admiral Semmes was born in Maryland and was reared on the banks of the Potomac. In the year 1841, he came to Alabama and settled with his family on the west bank of the Perdido, removing thence in a few years to Mobile. The month of February 1861, found him still at the City of Washington as Secretary, Light House Board, performing his routine duties but listening with an aching ear and beating heart for the first sounds of the great disruption which was at hand. On February 14th, while sitting quietly with his family a messenger brought him the following telegram:

> Montgomery, Ala., Feb. 14th. Sir: On behalf of the Committee on Naval affairs I beg leave to request that you repair to this place at your earliest convenience. Your obt. servant, C. M. Conrad, Chairman.

Secession was now indeed a reality and the time had come for our great Naval hero to arouse himself. Naturally the receipt of that telegram threw his family circle into a great commotion, his wife with the instincts of a woman, a wife and a mother seemed to realize as by intuition all the dangers and difficulties that lay before him. He accepted the inevitable and forwarded the following telegram.

> Washington, D. C., Feb. 14th. Hon. C. M. Conrad, Chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs, Congress of the Confederate States. Dispatch received. I will be with you immediately. Rest. R. Semmes.

The next morning he repaired as usual to the office of the Light House Board in the Treasury building where he found Gen. John A. Dix, Sec'y of the Treasury and exofficio President of the Board. It was the duty of Raphael Semmes to present in writing his resignation as Commander of the U. S. Navy. This was officially done and dispatched to Hon. Isaac Toncey, Secretary of the Navy and upon the same day he received a reply as to its acceptance. A few days before his resignation due to the death of a lamented member of the Light House Board, Commander Semmes had been promoted from Secretary to a membership of that Board and it was necessary for him to inform the Board officially of his being no longer a member. This resignation was not even honored with an acknowledgement of its receipt. The reason could very easily be explained when

he left in the Light House Board, a South Carolinian and a Virginian, both of whom were too loyal to their places to follow the lead of their State.

Upon arriving at Montgomery Semmes' first duty was to put himself in communication with Mr. Conrad, the Chairman of the Committee of Naval Affairs, C.S.A. Several officers had preceeded him to the seat of the new Government and others were arriving. A special meeting was called for the next day in joint session of two committees — Military and Naval Affairs. The Confederate Congress was in session in the state capitol at that time to which Semmes repaired and was honored by the admittance to the floor. Every one realized the greatness of the crisis that was upon them and hence the very best men in the community had been selected to meet the emergency. Jefferson Davis had preceded Semmes to the Capitol only a few days and the next step for him was to call upon the President and assure him that his services were at his command in any capacity he saw fit to use them. Mr. Davis seemed gratified at that declaration and entered into a free and frank conversation on the subject of the preparation for defense. He explained his plan of sending Semmes back to the City of Washington, thence to New York to gather together with as much haste as possible such persons and materials of war as might be of most presisng necessity. The persons alluded to were mechanics skilled in the manufacture and use of ordinances, and rifle machinery, the preparation of fixing ammunition, percussion caps and the like. So exclusively had the manufacture of all these articles for the use of U. S. been confined to the North that we had not even percussion caps enough to enable us to fight a battle. Semmes went immediately to Washington and visited the arsenal, inspected such machinery as he thought best for his use, such as improved percussion cap machines which he found in operation. He then proceeded to New York, made a tour through the principal workshops thence to Connecticut and Massachusetts. He purchased large quantities of percussion caps in New York, and sent them by express without any disguise to Montgomery. He also made contracts for batteries of light artillery, powder and other munitions and succeeded in getting large quantities of powder shipped: On 4th of April he arrived in Montgomery, just eight days before fire was opened on Ft. Sumter. A Board of Naval Officers was already in session at New Orleans, charged with the duty of procuring as speedily as possible, some light and fast steamers to

be let loose against the enemies commercial marine. After examination of several vessels only one was accepted. It was found to be a small propeller steamer, and was condemned. Hearing this Semmes asked that the ship be given him, feeling he could make it answer the purpose. The request was at once acceded to and the Board received the ship. This is the way in which the Confederate States steamer, **Sumter**, which was to have the honor of being the first ship of war to throw the new Confederate flag to the breeze was commissioned and she was to have the name of **Sumter** conferred on her because of our first victory—at Fort Sumter. Being appointed Commander of the Confederate Navy, Captain Semmes went immediately to New Orleans to take charge and to arrange for the refitting of the ship, enlisting officers and men. Her crew as reported to the Confederate Navy Department consisted of 92 persons exclusive of officers. After long waiting and watching the Sumter ran the blockade of the Mississippi in open day light, pursued by the Brooklyn. 'Tis said by men aboard the **Sumter** that they had witnessed many beautiful sights at sea but the most beautiful of them all was where the Brooklyn let fly her sheets at once and furled in man-of-war style all her sails, and when they (the Sumter) began to gain on her pursuer. At 3:30 P.M. the chase was abandoned, the baffled Brooklyn retracting her steps to Pass a'l'Outre, the Sumter bounding on her day seaward, the sight too grand for expression. Neither did the Sumter fire a gun of triumph in face of the enemy—powder was too precious for that.

Following the Sumter if you please as she glides on and on, manned by officers that few can equal, with a Captain whose very brain seemed filled with all means necessary to command easily a fleet of numberless vessels—this little Sumter at one time condemned by experts became a monarch and from gulf, sea and ocean, proved herself almost equal to the **Alabama** so far as honor is concerned. The Sumter becoming maimed by the giving away of her boilers the Captain made for Gibraltar, hoping to have needed repairs done and to try to secure coal for the vessel. In this he was disappointed for there men refused to make repairs, or to sell coal at any price. The Sumter was not blocaded by three ships of the enemy and being impossible to coal Captain Semmes proceeded to London to consult with the Confederate Government as to his future course. Calling upon Mr. Mason the Commissioner of the Confederate States, they

decided 'twas wise to abandon the **Sumter.** It was accordingly turned over to a midshipman who was to have charge of her. Captain Semmes thus embarked for Southampton. Only a brief summary of the services of the **Sumter** can be given. She cruised six months, she captured 17 ships, and it is impossible to estimate the damage done to the enemy's commerce. In addition to this the enemy kept five or six ships constantly in pursuit of her. The expenses of **Sumter** to the government was only $2,800, about the price of the least valuable of her prizes. The **Sumter** was sold and put under an English flag as a merchant ship and was a blockade runner entering the port of Charleston. Her name was changed to Gibralter, and was finally lost in the North Sea not far from where the **Alabama** went down. Captain Semmes, arriving at Nausau, found awaiting him orders from the Secretary of Navy to return to Europe and assume command of a new ship to be called the **Alabama.** On June 19th, 1864, the **Alabama** steamed out to meet the **Kersarge** in mortal combat and before the sun had set she went down beneath the green waters. The Commander and his crew were taken off by a friendly vessel and landed on the French coast, making a short visit to the continent of six weeks in pursuit of health and rest, again proceed to London, thence embarked to the Confederate States. After arriving at Richmond, Mr. Davis appointed him Rear Admiral and given command of the James River fleet. Upon the evacuation of Richmond by his orders the fleet was destroyed. He and his men were ordered to join Gen. Lee's army, which he did and surrendered with Gen. Johnson.

REBEL RAIDER

RAPHAEL SEMMES' CRUISE IN THE C.S.S. SUMTER

Edited by

Harpur Allen Gosnell, Lt. Co., H.S.N.R.

Raphael Semmes, a great Naval Commander, master of international law and historian, in his "Memoirs of Service Afloat", published in 1869, long since out of print and hard to find even in second hand book stores, gave a fine account of the C.S.S. Sumter. Lt. Com. Gosnell has in his newly published book, "Rebel Raider", made available to students of history Semmes' story of the first cruiser to fly the Confederate flag—the Sumter. From the moment when on a Sunday morning, June 30, 1861, the Sumter slipped out of Pass a L'Outre at the mouth of the Mississippi, and escaped to sea, until her abandonment at Gibraltar where she was not permitted to buy coal, the story of her exploits surpassed any sea stories of fiction.

Before becoming a Confederate cruiser the **Sumter** had been only a small packet steamer, lying idly in the harbor at New Orleans. Captain Semmes upon deciding that he could convert the packet steamer into a cruiser, with authority from the Secretary of the Confederate Navy, equipped her with guns and gave her the glowing name of **Sumter.** She could still carry only an eight day fuel supply and could barely accomodate the hundred odd men who made up her crew. Her purpose was to drive enemy commerce from the seas and this Semmes' accomplished with the two vessels successively under his command, the **Sumter** and the **Alabama.** His route to the West Indies, along the Spanish Main, and later in the Atlantic and around Gibraltar, netted Semmes a total of eighteen Federal ships captured and 47 neutral vessels overhauled. When the commerce of the enemy learned of the activities of the **Sumter** and later of course, of the **Alabama,** many enemy ships were kept in their harbors for months at a time.

Captain Semmes was not only a man of action but possessed of a rare descriptive gift which makes it possible for readers to join with him in his adventures at sea. Lt. Com. Gosnell,

author of "Rebel Raider" has wisely eliminated extraneous material found in the original "Memoirs" and has presented Semmes' adventures in pure narrative form. He has also given a brief sketch of Semmes' life and career in the opening chapter of his book and has included a number of illustrations. Among these are pictures of the **Sumter** and some of the vessels she captured as well as pictures of the officers of the cruiser and pictures of the Commanders of some of the enemy vessels with whom the **Sumter** came in conflict. The book which has just been published at Chapel Hill, N. C., by the University of North Carolina Press, Can be purchased for $3.75 and should be added to every Southern library.

EDITOR.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

States Rights Issue Revived

There was held in Birmingham, July 17, 1948, in the City Auditorium, a convention called in protest against the Civil Rights plank of the Democratic Platform adopted in the Philadelphia Convention, on which Mr. Truman is running to succeed himself as President of the United States. Those 6,000 men and women present were ardent supporters of States Rights within the Constitution of the United States. After the gathering was organized, with Walter Sillers, Chairman, after suitable addresses of welcome with responses were made, former Governor Frank M. Dixon, of Alabama, was presented to make the keynote speech. Throughout his address Governor Dixon was enthusiastically applauded and his proposals embodied in the resolutions which were adopted when read by Mr. Horace Wilkinson, Chairman of the Committee. Hon. J. Strom Thurmond, Governor of South Carolina, was nominated for President and Governor Fielding L. Wright, of Mississippi, for Vice-President.

The Convention agreed to a follow-up meeting in Atlanta, Ga., for the next week, at which a definite name should be given to the organization and plans formulated for getting the nominees of the Convention for President and Vice-President on the Democratic ballots in other States. That meeting was held on Saturday, July 24, and the name of "States Rights Democrats" given to the organization.

Frank M. Dixon's Keynote Speech

It is an honor to be called upon to make this keynote speech to this great gathering today—an honor I deeply feel. For this is a gathering of militant followers of those democratic principles near and dear to us all.

The meeting is a continuation of the Jackson Convention which was held on May 10th, and in which nearly all of the Southern States were represented. In the resolutions of that Convention, it was provided that if Truman was the nominee of the Democratic Party, or if a platform was adopted at Philadelphia

hostile to the South, then the Birmingham meeting should be held.

You are familiar with what happened in Philadelphia. You know that the definite decision was made there by the National Democratic Party to approve Truman's actions in trying to enforce a social revolution in the South. You heard the jeers of the followers of the city machines of the North when the fine Southerners of Alabama and Mississippi walked out of that Convention. You heard the demands for the destruction of the social structure of the South coming from Democrats in sections where not one single elective public officer is a Democrat,—not even a justice of the peace. You heard the deliberate adoption of a program meant to destroy us.

Everyone in America is familiar with the history of Democratic action so far as this civil rights program is concerned. Not all are familiar with the personnel of the Truman Committee on Civil Rights. Suffice to say, without attempting to go into the various personalities, that it was a committee stacked for the purpose of rendering the report which it did, a committee biased and prejudiced in advance. Its appointment, with that personnel as if it were a committee to make an impartial investigation, was a sham and a fraud on the Ameriacn people. The report which it rendered required no deliberation—it required simply the stenographic services necessary to write down the prejudices and animosities of its members.

What is this Civil Rights report which Truman, our Democratic President, published, spread, broadcast over the country, adopted and made his program and from which he took the vicious heart for his message to Congress? Here is part of it:

First: the elimination of segregation in the public schools from grade schools through colleges. Your children are to be required to work and play in the company, with the forced association, of Negroes. Negroes are to teach them, guide them. What will that mean to your children, to your hopes for them? What will it mean in immorality, in vice, in crime? Just what it means in those slum areas of the northern cities where like conditions prevail, with results fatal to decency.

Second: the elimination of segregation in private and ultimately in denominational schools, such as Judson, Huntington, Howard and Birmingham-Southern, as to students and teachers as well. I am using local, Alabama institutions as examples, but the application is not solely to them. The effect is to be the same in all schools, boys' and girls' as well, from Maine to California. Suppose that you are determined not to subject your children to bi-racial schools, and are willing to make any sacrifice to that end. You are helpless, since even private schools are to be forced to permit Negroes to attend.

Third: the elimination of segregation in trains, busses, restaurants, theatres, beauty shops, hotels, swimming pools, ball games, churches, and everywhere else people congregate. Picture life with us, men and women, when every time we leave our homes these conditions are forced upon us. Picture the stores, the street cars, the busses, restaurants, the churches. Picture the bitterness, the racial hostility, the violence which will follow.

Fourth: the elimination of segregation in places of residence and homes. This means that Negroes can build in any neighborhood, live in any apartment house.

Fifth: the employment of Negroes in every business establishment, office, factory and store, in the same numerical proportion that the Negro race bears to the white. While the ratio is not written into the report, we well know from the operation of the wartime F.E.P.C. of infamous memory that this is the aim and that the tools of oppression will be devoted to that end. In my own County of Jefferson there are 43% Negroes, in Alabama generally 35%, in some counties 6 to 1. A department store in Jefferson County that has 100 clerks must have 43 Negroes among them; a restaurant or beauty shop employing 10 must have 4 to 5; a plant employing 1000 must have 430. If this ratio does not now prevail, then enough white employees must be fired to make it possible. How else can it be obtained? Any law office, any physician's office, comes under the law just as much and no more than any other place of business.

Sixth: there is to be an upgrading in jobs, and promotions on an equal basis, and the ratio must apply to all levels. There must be as many Negro foremen, as many department heads, as many bosses, as the ratio calls for. They are to be over whites

and Negroes alike, mixed together without regard to the wishes of anyone.

Seventh: there is to be no segregation in hospitals, either as to physicians, patients or nurses. White men and women who must necessarily use the hospitals, public and private, are to be attended by Negro physicians and nurses, as well as by white.

Eighth: all segregation in labor unions and professional associations such as the Bar Association and the Medical Association is to be done away with.

Ninth: the poll tax is to be eliminated, all Negroes to be registered to vote without regard to intelligence or capacity, and all segregation is to be done away with in the armed services.

Is all this a real threat, or is it just politics? Are these so-called democrats actually determined to destroy our way of life? I assure you that the danger is deadly in its seriousness.

The Civil Rights section of the Department of Justice is to be reorganized to enforce it. Constant police inspection and supervision, through a Federal Gestapo, is recommended, without waiting for complaints. The law is to be changed to make conviction easy. Enforcement is to be taken away from the local officials. Civil court orders, punished as contempt of court, are to supplement the criminal proceedings enforceable by the F. B. I. Criminal penalties are to be by fine up to $5,000, and imprisonment up to ten years. Every local police officer and deputy sheriff is to be subject to Federal criminal and civil laws, and under constant scrutiny.

Tax exemption privileges are to be taken away from the private and ultimately denominational schools which resist, and from the churches.

Federal grants in aid are to be taken from states or cities which resist.

Fines and jail terms are to be the part of local officials or private citizens who resist.

> This vicious program means to eliminate all differences, all separation between black and white. It so declares itself, in words. It means to create a great melting pot of the South, with white and Negroes intermingled socially, politically, economically. It means to reduce us to the status of a mongrel, inferior race, mixed in blood, our Anglo-Saxon heritage a mockery; to crush with imprisonment our leadership, and thereby kill our hopes, our aspirations, our future and the future of our children.

It seems to me to be useless to repeat the arguments as to the unconsitutionality of the proposed enactment by Congress of an anti-lynching act. Such an act was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States in the '70's, when it bore the nomenclature of the force bill. Such an act has been fought by some of the best and most distinguished Americans of other sections of the country—men of the character of President McKinley, and Senators Norris and Borah. The proposed anti-lynching act, as recommended by the Committee and as supported by Truman, goes far beyond the old iniquitous force bills. It was written patently and obviously to buy the Negro vote in the doubtful states—we of the South know that there is no lynching in the South. They of the North know it. And they also know that the race riots and the killings which have made some northern cities famous in these last few years have no duplicate in any state or city in the South.

They know, also, these who seek to create a police state, that the surest way to do it is to take over the enforcement of criminal law. Lynching is murder. There is a law in every state against it, and these laws are enforced. Bring the Federal Government into the field of local law enforcement and you have broken down one of the great safeguards of personal freedom. Break this first one, and the precedent has been laid for persecution against which no citizen is safe.

With this the program of the National Democratic Party, do we belong to it? If this is the meaning of the plank adopted at Philadelphia, are our people to remain in it? Are they to say to the nation: "All right, we don't like it, but we choose, and our people choose, to wear the shackles of this kind of clavery rather

than to break with the national democracy, rotten though it may be, and the avowed enemy of our people."

Is this civil rights program constitutional? Not under any decisions of the courts in the past, not with any court save possibly our Supreme Court as at present constituted. The Tenth Amendment to the Constitution reads as follows: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." The powers of local self government are not given to Congress, but are reserved to the states, and these include every feature of the so-called civil rights program. We are fundamentally sound in this fight, whatever the present-day politics of the doubtful states, for whose benefit we are being sold down the river.

The term "states' rights" means much more than simple theory—it means the preservation of democracy and freedom itself. The oldest form of government in the world is the highly centralized one, with all power concentrated, as in Washington. There were tyrannies in the dim mists of history. It is only with the founding of this country that democracy developed, and it came, and this country grew great, because the federal government was locked and tied down by the Constitution to the point that it could not impose its will on the people in their daily lives.

Schools are local affairs, as is the police force, the fire department, the city and county governments, the habits of the people, the building of roads, the conduct of local business, all the myriad affairs of daily life. The right to work or to loaf, to choose your vocation, and change your job, to guide the education of your children, to attend the church of your choice, to work with whom you please, to go where you choose, these are not inherent and divine rights. They are ours solely because the Federal government was denied the power to interfere with them.

In this so-called civil rights program, Truman advocates granting the power to the Federal government to invade these and all other freedoms. The program is aimed at us, of course, since it is to secure Negro votes in the doubtful states. But those leaders hostile to us will find their people, as well as we, come under such a program. They will find that their freedom as well as ours, is gone. Properly understood in all its viciousness

and danger, this program will receive the condemnation of right thinking people everywhere. We will not stand alone in this fight.

How is it possible for a man who calls himself a Democrat, for a man who is a follower of the principles which have made the Democratic Party great, to lend himself to any scheme meant to aggrandize the power of the Federal government in Washington and to permit the formation of a gestapo charged with the mission of revolutionizing the social life of the nation. The Democratic Party has been a tower of strength throughout the years in the maintenance of the personal freedoms of the individual. The Democratic Party has believed forever in the limited powers of the Federal government under the Constitution. The great men through the pages of history who have been placed in high positions by the Democratic Party have been men who were firm in their refusal to permit the seizure of power in Washington.

Government essentially is a dangerous thing. There is no truth more fundamental than that power seeks always to increase. Human nature is a compound of many things. Its sole, continuously recurring characteristic is the desire deep in the hearts of all for power. Government is a dangerous thing, and the great leaders of the past, except the military men who have been despots, the great leaders since there came into existence the theory of the rights of men, have with universal tongue cautioned the people against the danger of power in the hands of the government. This was understood and completely understood by the great founders of this Republic. It was understood and completely understood by the founders of the party of Democrats. And yet, in this day and generation, the national Democratic Party has sunk so low as to be willing to barter, for the votes of racial minorities in doubtful states, the liberties of all of us.

The term "States' Rights" is an unfortunate term. It does not express the meaning of the thought which is in our minds. In the beginning of this Republic, the states were supreme. They surrendered a portion of their power to the Federal government in order that the Union might exist. But there were 3 great bodies of rights. There were the rights which the state had over its citizens—there were the rights which the states surrendered to the Federal Government—there were the great body of rights which neither state nor federal governments ever had

over its citizens, those rights which contain personal liberty and the freedoms which make life worthwhile. When the Federal Government moves against rights which the states had, then the term "States' Rights" is applicable. When it moves against that great body outside any government to control, as it is doing now, then it becomes the enemy of every free American. That will not stop government—that thought, since government lives and thrives on power. But it behooves those of us over our citizens in a Republic still free to be on guard always against this invasion of our freedoms and to remain determined to resist to the end.

As most of Alabama knows, I have never been one of those who formented hatred between the two races. There is room for both, separate and apart. Segregation is our way of life, essential to peace and good will. There are many Negroes among us completely worthy of full citizenship, honest, decent, self-respecting and God-fearing people. They are being given the vote; they live their own lives, leaders among their own. They wish no forced association with white people; they know its consequences in bitterness and terror. They, as we, are victims of the political situation in the doubtful states, where Republican and Democrat alike offer us as the mess of pottage with which elections are to be purchased—cynically betraying their own blood and heritage for political spoils.

We are faced by facts, not theories. We have worked out a way of life, in difficult circumstances, between the two races. The Negro race has progressed further in three score years than any race in history. It has progressed because it has had the sympathetic help of the Southern white people of good will. It can continue to progress only with a continuance of that sympathetic help. That assistance is based on segregation, on keeping the races apart, a system necessary for white as well as blacks. Destroy it and chaos will result.

The question is continually asked—"What can we do? Where are we going?" This is what the convention is here to decide. We have several possible courses of action. I will mention only two. We can name a candidate for president and vice-president and recommend to the people of the several states that they elect electors pledged to those nominees. It is thought by some that this is the proper method of procedure. Another route which

can be followed is to suggest to the various southern states the selection of free electors. This is the system that we have followed in Alabama, and in the beginning of this movement, we planned that the electors from Alabama should, after the general elections in November, meet with the electors from the other southern states and agree upon a candidate for whom their votes should be cast. This was the system which was planned by the Founding Fathers of this eepublic, and this is the system which we in Alabama have wanted to follow. We are not, however, determined to follow any course that will not fit the needs and necessities of the other southern states. We are willing to go t oany length to secure unanimity of action.

Should this be a Republican year, then of course we will have accomplished nothing, save to enforce our demands for recognition in the Democratic Party. Should the party of Truman succeed between now and the general election in gaining enough strength to be a real contender, then this movement could easily become the deciding factor in the American political scene, since we would have approximately 129 electors and might easily be able to throw the election into Congress. There is not much satisfaction with Dewey among the Republican states. There is not much satisfaction with Truman among the Democratic states. Congress might easily turn to an outstanding American selected by us for the next president of the United States.

A word of caution also to those who are of the opinion that this is not a "Grass roots" movement. I have been in receipt of hundreds of telephone calls, most of them from so-called "little people", not office holders, not people of particular prominence. There is a firm conviction in their minds that they are not being properly represented by those who are in positions of authority over them. There is a feeling in their minds that the office holder is more afraid of the loss of his job and of his perquisites than he is enthusiastic for the call of the people. I have been amazed at the intensity of this action. There may be those among the occupiers of high public positions in the South who think that they can weasel their way through and weather the storm. But if I am any political prophet, our people are more aroused than they have been in many, many years, and they will repay by retirement to private life the efforts of any so-called southern leaders who hope to carry them into the camp of Harry S. Truman in the coming election.

We people of the South have had our divisions. The nation was treated to a sample of those divisions at the Philadelphia Convention, when a portion of the Alabama delegation and the Mississippi delegation in a body walked out, while other states with people just as truly Southern and as truly loyal as ours remained in their seats after the adoption of the plank approving this iniquitous so-called civil rights legislation. We have our divisions in Alabama politics, every southern state has divisions within itself in its political life. These are part of the workings of Democracy itself. These divisions, however, cease in the face of a common danger to us and to our wives and children. These divisions cease in the face of the threat to our very existence. We who are active in this movement want the help of every man and woman and child—we want all divisions forgotten. We want the strength that comes with unity. We want and we must have, if we are to have any hope of success, the men and women of the South united, determined, self-sacrificing, devoted to this common cause.

The people of the South are still a proud people, and they are determined not to submit to those who have repudiated the doctrines which have been those of Democracy throughout all the years. They are determined not to submit to those who would wreck and destroy their civilization and mongrelize our people. They are determined, thank God, to preserve the basic principles of Democracy and to prevent the establishment in this land of ours of a police state, vicious as all police states are vicious, and to prevent the end of human and personal freedom throughout this land.