

# Barkley Addresses S. C. Federation

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not believe that I have ever lost an opportunity to advance by legislation the welfare of agriculture and labor." (Applause.) By that I do not mean that I have not done the same in a different way perhaps for all other groups of our country. I helped to write the law creating the Federal Trade Commission set up in order that honest business might find a forum where it might present its grievances against dishonest business, where small business might go in order that it might be protected against big business seeking to drive it out of business in this country. Well, it was called socialistic. At that time the word had come into use because we were setting up an agency in Washington to protect honest business against dishonest business, to protect the business element and the people at large against those who were seeking to monopolize the field to drive their competitors out of business in order that they might dominate the market and dominate the people. That legislation is still in existence and it has justified its existence by attempting to keep unchoked the talents of commerce so that honest business in this country might have a fair opportunity to protect what we call free enterprise, individual efforts. The Democratic party has always been in favor of free enterprise. It has always favored initiative, individual initiative. It has favored laws that would induce men, honest men, proud men, to go into business enterprises in order that they might succeed and give employment to labor. But the Democratic party has never believed in that kind of free enterprise that gives big business or monopolists the

right freely to dominate the American people and to carry out their work. (Applause.) That has been one of the great differences between the two political parties in the United States; and I might say that I believe in the two party system coming back to politics, not as a game but as the pride of government.

We have had on the whole very good government in this country because of the two party system, because the people can hold one party responsible who can be voted into power and if it fails of its duty and betrays its people at the next election, the people can point their finger at him and say "thou art the man". Where you have a multiplicity of parties like you do in some of the European countries, where no one has a majority, where they cannot even organize their government without consolidating and combining and compromising and making arrangements between two or more political parties so that no one of them can be held responsible for conduct of the government. It has been intimately more difficult to hold public men responsible for their conduct in office. For that reason I hope the time will never come and I say that without prejudice toward anybody or group, because I take it for granted that all men who join any political movement are sincere and honest in their conviction and I would not for a moment doubt their integrity. But looking at it from a practical standpoint, knowing that the people will hold responsible those whom they elect to office, it seems to me that our political institutions have gained and are now stronger than they would have been otherwise if we had been split up into minority political organizations, so that no one could obtain a majority and no one could be held

responsible for the conduct of our government. Now, not only did the party to which I belong (I've got to mention this as a matter of political history in this country and I am not being unfair, I hope, to anybody) not only in the Clayton Anti-Trust Law, not only in the Federal Trade Commission Act, but in the Walsh-Healey Act with which you are familiar, with the Norris-LaGuardia Act which undertook to bring to termination the era of government by injunction in this country (applause) as exhibited and exemplified right by the so-called "yellow dog" contract of a previous era. Our party has been in the forefront as the pioneer on behalf of fair legislation in the field of labor. Then when the Roosevelt administration came along recognizing the fact that there was at that time a disparity between power and the enforcement and the rights, recognized by the law, between employers and employees; and in order that there might be a law on the statutes where both sides might sit down at a table with their representatives, freely chosen by them, and negotiate and arbitrate with respect to wages and conditions of labor, we passed the Wagner Labor Relations Act, which was one of the finest acts ever passed, in my judgment; and it was administered in a way that was not unfair even to those who employed labor. (Applause.) But before that I want to mention this fact, which is a matter of record. I happen to be the author of the Railway Labor Act that was enacted by the Congress of the United States. Some of you may remember the Howell-Barkley bill introduced in the Senate by Senator Howell of Nebraska and by me in the House of Representatives before I went to the Senate. We enacted a fair labor standard law

for railroad employees in this country and it had no effect on anybody else. It didn't relate to any other class of labor except railroad employees. That law has been in effect for 23 years and it has been, I believe, administered wisely. It was the fairest and is now one of the fairest labor laws ever enacted in the history of the United States; and when we began to deal with the question of modifying the Wagner Act, I felt that if we could some way or other, with the changes necessary by experience, write in substance the bill which we wrote for railway labor in this country it would be likewise administered because it set up a mediation and conciliation board to bring labor and management together without coercion, without any threats, without the denial of the rights of anybody to present his case before an impartial board set up by the government of the United States. We enacted the Wagner Labor Act almost unanimously in the Con-

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