

Germanophobic we could have easily assimilated the million or so Germans who were camping on our soil.

Couldn't they have been naturalized, given the vote, and made into good little Frenchmen like you and me? Wouldn't that have been an earlier version of the "cultural enrichment," "tolerance," and "openness to others," about which we hear so much these days? You may not like to admit it, but I know you prefer Bavarian polkas to that execrable rap "music."

Poor old boy, the people who sent you off to the wars in 1940 have certainly made a monkey out of you. Since then, neither Gaullists nor Communists have done much to preserve our people or our culture, have they? Your silence is the silence of a cuckold, but I feel your quiet rage at having been so cruelly deceived.

At your age perhaps we cannot expect to find you at our sides in the fight against this generation's occupation. But surely you will not be displeased

to see the rising power of the anti-immigration movement and of those who wish to preserve the France for which you fought. For it is we who now fight to justify your sacrifice, whose victory will ensure that the comrades you left upon the field of honor did not die in vain. ●

This is a translation of an article that appeared in issue No. 19 of the French periodical, l'Empire Invisible.

The Long Retreat

Nadine Cohodas, *Strom Thurmond*, Simon & Schuster, 1993, 574 pp., \$27.50

Strom Thurmond's political career and the capitulation of the South.

reviewed by Thomas Jackson

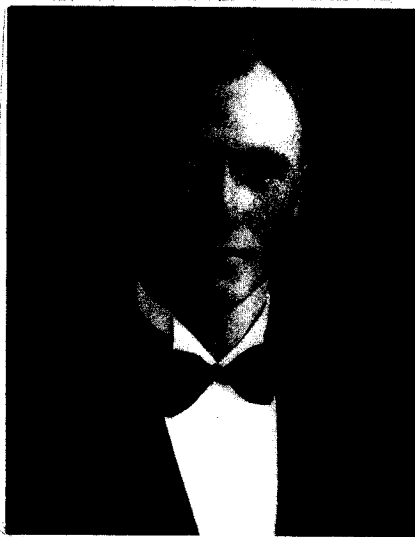
Usually, we take it for granted that knowledge and wisdom come with experience. We expect someone who lives in the forest to know more about trees than someone who lives in the desert, and a mother of six to know more about child rearing than a bachelor. Race is an exception to this rule. Whites who have never met a black person think they can give lessons in race relations to whites who have lived among blacks all their lives.

The ideal background in race relations is therefore to have lived one's life exclusively among whites. This is why Sweden and Norway—both enthusiastic supporters of Nelson Mandela—had the moral credentials to scold white South Africans about apartheid. Likewise, during what is called the "civil rights era," Northern whites felt qualified to tell Southerners they had got it all wrong and should abandon customs that were centuries old.

Curiously, the whites who have the most experience with blacks invariably bow to the pressures of whites who know nothing about blacks. They warn that the new order will be a disaster, but they comply. Decades later, their predictions are borne out, but by then all whites are so deluded and demoralized they cannot recognize

the obvious: that the new order *is*, in every respect, a disaster.

The career of Strom Thurmond, who was once a strong segregationist



Strom Thurmond in 1928.

but now votes for "civil rights" bills, is a portrait in miniature of this strange and tragic process. This biography, by Nadine Cohodas, is a carefully researched account of his political career, but because Miss Cohodas takes liberalism for granted, she never wonders why Sen. Thurmond's views changed. Aside from this silence about a question that is, for her, not a question, she has written a fair, readable, and very instructive book.

Strom Thurmond was born in Edgefield, South Carolina in 1902. His family was of upper middle-class Southern stock, and he was reared to

the good manners and generous spirit of his class. His father, William Thurmond, always had a kind word or an extra dollar for townspeople, black or white, who were down on their luck.

William Thurmond was a small-time politician in his own right. At one time he even served as campaign manager for "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman, the fiery, segregationist South Carolina governor and senator who vowed that when he got to Washington he would use a pitchfork to stick President Cleveland—"an old bag of beef—in his old fat ribs." As a small boy, already interested in politics, Strom Thurmond never forgot Tillman's advice on the importance of a firm handshake.

The young Mr. Thurmond attended Clemson College, where he was an athlete in five sports and an active club member. He practiced law for a few years, but soon turned to politics, his one true love. At the age of 26 he won his first campaign and was elected Edgefield County Superintendent. The career that then followed was typical: elections as school superintendent, town attorney, state judge, state legislator.

In his early campaigns, race was not an issue, since virtually no one criticized the prevailing racial stratification. Like his father, Mr. Thurmond simply took segregation for granted. He was cordial to all people, and he represented blacks in his law practice. If anything, he prided himself on the concern he showed for blacks, and in 1940, as a judge, decried

Ku Klux Klan violence against blacks as "the most abominable type of lawlessness." He was also vocally opposed to large-scale immigration to the United States.

In 1942, Judge Thurmond volunteered for combat duty and flew into France with the 82nd Airborne on D-day. As a sitting judge and almost 40 years old, he could easily have been exempted from service, but in those days he was a fighter.

The year after the war he was elected governor of South Carolina. Once again, the contest had no racial overtones, and he was, if anything, a progressive. In his inaugural address, he called for more education for Negroes, equal pay for women, and the right for women to serve on juries. As governor he was proud of his work to improve the lot of blacks and spoke of harmony and cooperation between the races, though always within the traditions of the South.

By the 1940s, however, South Carolina was stirring. Although blacks could vote in general elections, they could not vote in primary elections. In a state dominated by the Democratic Party, the primary was the only election that mattered, and Northern activists were stirring up black demands. As early as 1944, the state legislature had seen the need to adopt a resolution demanding that "henceforth the damned agitators of the North leave the South alone." They went on to say, "We indignantly and vehemently denounce the intentions of all organizations seeking the amalgamation of the white and negro races by co-mingling of the races . . .," and pledged "our lives and our sacred honor to maintaining it [white supremacy] whatever the cost, in war and peace."

The most palpable threat came from the single most powerful Northern agitator of all, the President of the United States. In 1948, Harry Truman integrated the armed forces by executive order, and announced a major civil rights program, including abolition of state poll taxes, integration of interstate transport, federal anti-lynching laws, and a permanent commission to enforce non-racial hiring. That same year, the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that racially restrictive property covenants could not be enforced.

Southern politicians and newspapers were virtually unanimous in opposing Truman. Gov. Thurmond, like many Southerners, opposed lynching and poll taxes but thought that these were concerns of the states and not of Congress. Federal meddling in hiring decisions, was an intrusion into private matters over which even a state's jurisdiction was uncertain. Overnight, Southerners became constitutional scholars, quoting the 10th Amendment and the doctrine of enumerated powers.

The result was a strong call for revolt against Truman's Democratic Party. For years, the party had been the unquestioned symbol of resistance against Republican Reconstruction, but "civil rights" were an outrage. Incumbent Southern congressmen and senators were, of course, the least inclined to bolt because it would have meant giving up seniority.

The "Dixiecrat" Campaign

1948 was an election year, and many Southerners resolved no longer to support a party that encouraged integration. They formed the States' Rights Democratic Party—quickly dubbed the "Dixiecrats"—and chose Gov. Thurmond as their presidential candidate. "As the governor of a sovereign state," he said in his acceptance speech, "I do not intend that the rights of my people shall be sacrificed on the block of blind party loyalty."

He was also crystal clear about the principles that would not be sacrificed: "There are not enough troops in the army to force the Southern people to break down segregation and admit the Negro race into our theaters, into our swimming pools, into our homes, and into our churches." Even Miss Cohodas concedes that his position was one of principled opposition to federal tyranny, not racial animus.

The campaign was an exercise in pure principle. Gov. Thurmond had no chance of becoming President, but he could neither support a Democratic Party that had betrayed the South nor a Republican Party that had conquered it. The Dixiecrat ticket carried only four states—Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina—but by majorities that show

just how divided the nation was. Gov. Thurmond got an overwhelming 87.2 percent of the vote in Mississippi and 79.8 percent in Alabama, and invariably received the largest number of white votes in areas with the largest black populations.

After the campaign the governor resumed his duties at the state house in Columbia, but continued to show that he was anything but doctrinaire. He appointed the first woman to the South Carolina Industrial Commission and the first black since Reconstruction to a state advisory council.

It was the courts that were doing away with segregation in ways that democratically elected officials would not.

Meanwhile, it was the courts that were doing away with segregation in ways that democratically elected officials would not. As a deliberate counterpoint to Mr. Thurmond's life, Miss Cohodas tells the reader a good deal about Judge J. Waties Waring, a South Carolinian who was an early integrationist. He came from the same stock as the Thurmonds, and described his childhood thus:

"Most of the Negroes I knew were ex-slaves and you loved them, were good to them. We didn't give them any rights, but they never asked for any rights, and I didn't question it."

Judge Waring was only in part an exception to the rule that it was only inexperienced outsiders who told Southern whites how to behave; he was deeply influenced by his Yankee wife. Once she publicly aired her views in a speech to Charleston's black YWCA, saying, "you are in the springtime of your growth when great achievements are attained." Southern whites were, by comparison, "a sick, confused and decadent people . . . full of pride and complacency, introverted, morally weak and low."

Nourished at home by thoughts such as these, Judge Waring consistently ruled to break down Southern traditions. In 1947, for example, he ruled that the Democratic Party was not a private club and that it must let blacks register and vote in primaries.

He ordered South Carolina either to admit blacks to white schools or build black schools that really were equal. (Under instructions like these, there was a period during which the state spent less than \$2 million building white schools but more than \$5.5 million to build black schools.) Judge Waring also required jurors of different races to eat meals together by explaining—falsely—that separation of jurors was a violation of law.

Judge Waring was significant for two reasons. He was one of that small band of judicial activists who overthrew generations of Southern tradition despite the massive disapproval of whites. And, unlike Strom Thurmond, he was an integrationist when it took courage to be an integrationist. Eventually, he was completely shut out of Charleston society and left with his wife to live in New York City—but not before enduring icy opprobrium of a kind that Strom Thurmond has never faced.

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court threw the South into turmoil with its famous school desegregation ruling, *Brown v. Board of Education*. South Carolina had anticipated a decision of this kind, and in 1952, voters repealed a provision in the state constitution requiring public education. The plan was to privatize all schools, if the alternative were integrated public schools.

Judges of the Waring stripe ensured that this evasive tactic would fail, but they benefited from disunion even in the South. The resolve of whites who lived among the largest concentrations of blacks was invariably undercut by the concessions of whites who lived among few blacks. It was school districts with only a handful of blacks that set precedents for integration. Also, it was the mostly-white mountain counties of South Carolina that first allowed blacks to register as Democrats. As always, those who would suffer the least from the new order were the first to submit to it.

Power in Washington

By 1955, Strom Thurmond was in the U.S. Senate, where he remains today. At that time he was still a strong fighter for the rights of states, and in 1956 he joined 18 other Southern senators in signing a

manifesto that called the Brown decision “a clear abuse of judicial power” and vowed a fight to the end against forced integration.

In 1957, Sen. Thurmond called the U.S. Supreme Court “the greatest enemy of the American people,” saying it was “nine puppets of the NAACP.” That same year, he added to his reputation as the South’s staunchest defender, when he set the record for a single-handed filibuster on the Senate floor—24 hours and 18 minutes—in opposition to a voting rights bill. He could get no other Southern senator to join him, but his determination won a flood of supporting calls and telegrams.

The very next year, Eisenhower used federal troops forcibly to integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. In fact, this was not quite as high-handed a federal maneuver as it appeared, because Arkansas Governor, Orval Faubus, had quietly agreed to integration, and the federal troops faced angry citizens rather than state troopers or the Arkansas national guard. The outcome of that confrontation might have been very different if the state governor had been a man who could spend 24 hours at a stretch on the Senate floor.

During the 1960s, Sen. Thurmond still had much of his old fire. He called the epoch-making Civil Rights Bill of 1964, “the worst, most unreasonable and unconstitutional legislation that has ever been considered by the Congress.” He opposed Thurgood Marshall’s nomination in 1967 as Supreme Court justice, pointing out that to credit him with legal victories was nonsense: “. . . a majority of the members on the Court would have so ruled [in favor of Marshall] regardless of who had been the attorney in the case.” It was in those years that one aid used to reply, when asked if he worked for the government, “No, I work against the government.”

The 1960s also saw the senator’s final divorce from the Democratic Party. He had despised John Kennedy’s platform—which he thought was pure socialism—but had too much loyalty to bolt. It was in 1964, when Lyndon Johnson picked the extreme liberal, Hubert Humphrey, as his running mate that the senator finally became a

Republican. He campaigned vigorously for Barry Goldwater who, with the senator’s help, carried five Southern States.

The next presidential campaign was a turning point in the senator’s life. In 1968, he worked tirelessly for Richard Nixon, thereby badly blunting George Wallace’s third-party campaign. Why did he oppose a segregationist fellow Southerner who was largely repeating



Sen. Thurmond in 1982.

the “Dixiecrat” campaign of 20 years previously? Miss Cohodas does not even ask the question and suggests no answers. In any case, the very next year, he hired his first black staffer, and started openly courting black voters. As so many politicians do, he appears to have put survival in office before all else.

By the early 1970s, he was explaining himself thus: “When I was governor, the laws said the races should be separated. But now the law is different, customs are different, public opinion has changed, and it’s an entirely different situation.” By 1978, he was winning campaign endorsements from South Carolina’s black mayors.

From about this point on, Sen. Thurmond’s career has been one of steady retreat. From 1980 to 1986 he was chairman of the powerful Senate Judiciary Committee, but did not wield power with anything like his old singlemindedness. (To his credit, he cut one million dollars from the committee’s annual budget, shearing away much of the bloat that his predecessor, Ted Kennedy, had encouraged.)

The new chairman started favoring voting-rights acts that would have given him apoplexy in the past. In 1982 he supported a bill that forbids even the *appearance* of discrimination, thereby outlawing at-large voting in many jurisdictions. He began to boast that in his state, 62 percent of blacks were registered to vote, whereas only 50 percent of whites were registered.

In 1983, he voted to make Martin Luther King's birthday a national holiday, and was happy to be named "legislator of the year" by South Carolina's 14 black mayors. His support for U.S. Supreme Court nominee, Robert Bork, was only tepid even

though this was the first nominee in a generation who might have understood his old views on the Constitution.

Senator Thurmond went on to vote for the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which is an artfully disguised racial quota bill (see *AR* of May, 1992). The vote in the Senate was 93-5, and he was proud to be among the ninety-three. Here was a truly changed man, but not a man prepared to admit that he had changed. As he now explains, "I don't think I've sacrificed any principle throughout my career, but times change."

Indeed, times do change, and so do people. But can even Sen. Thurmond forget the predictions he made of what federal arrogance, forced integration, and intrusive government would bring—predictions that have largely come true? Of course, for nearly 40 years, he has been on the payroll of a body he used to call tyrannical. For nearly as long, he has faced a press that heaps abuse on all his old principles and praises every step towards abandoning them. He has also grown old. Age, money and respectability are powerful forces, sometimes powerful enough to blind a man to the wisdom of his ancestors. ●

O Tempora, O Mores!

Separate but Dependent

A University of Chicago political scientist has found that 62 percent of a polling sample of blacks think the Nation of Islam's Louis Farrakhan is "a positive viewpoint within the black community." Fifty-six percent of blacks also support the idea of an exclusively black political party. They seek rights but not responsibilities. Eighty-six were opposed to the idea of an independent black nation.

Too White

According to the *New York Times*, the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce has trouble persuading businesses to move to the city because it is too white. Some corporate leaders claim they do not want to set up shop in a city that does not have enough "diversity." Michael Reagan, president of the Chamber of Commerce says, "We have a lot going for us: a growing economy, a highly educated work force. But the image of homogeneity hurts us."

Only in America

A Los Angeles striptease club called the Odd Ball Cabaret has something called the shower display, in which a naked woman bathes in view of customers. The Los Angeles Disabled Access Commission voted unanimously to force the club to make the



display area accessible by nude dancers in wheel chairs.

Chasing a Mirage

An Atlanta-area black bar association recently held a meeting to discuss the subject, "Disbarment: How to Combat the Trend Among African-American Attorneys." The audience learned that although blacks are only three percent of the Georgia bar, they accounted for 21 percent of disbarments between January, 1991 and September, 1993. The association's newsletter reported that "The presentation caused a flurry of activity and a mirage of questions."

Hillaryland

Mrs. Bill Clinton has a personal staff of 13 people. All but one are

women. Her chief of staff, Margaret Williams, is black.

Magic Runs Out for Babyface

Richard "Babyface" Jameswhite of Brooklyn, wanted for 15 murders, three rapes, and untold shootings, was finally run to ground in Stone Mountain, Georgia. The 20-year-old Mr. Jameswhite is only 5' 5" tall, but was notoriously dangerous. As *The New York Amsterdam News* put it, "even some who consorted with Jameswhite breathed a sigh of relief at news of his arrest because of his unpredictable nature. He was known to shoot at the slightest provocation." That seems to have been his problem in Georgia. Someone accidentally backed his car into Mr. Jameswhite's, and was promptly shot to death. Police made a quick arrest.

Mr. Jameswhite is said to have regularly shipped his clothes to Jamaica, to have them treated with "obeah" magic. He believed this made him impervious to bullets and invisible to the police.

Mixed Marriages Still Rare

In 1990 only about two percent of all married couples in America were inter-racial, though about four percent of all marriages that year were inter-racial. Whites and blacks are the least likely to marry outside their ra-