



David T. Ballantyne. *New Politics in the Old South: Ernest F. Hollings in the Civil Rights Era.* University of South Carolina Press, 2017. 208 pp. \$34.97, cloth, ISBN 978-1-61117-703-9.

Reviewed by J. Lee Annis, Jr.

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Commissioned by Caryn E. Neumann (Miami University of Ohio Regionals)

Ever more common in the literature of the South are accounts of how onetime segregationists navigated the torrential political waters wrought by what many of them termed the “Second Reconstruction.” In *New Politics in the Old South: Ernest F. Hollings in the Civil Rights Era*, British scholar David T. Ballantyne analyzes the evolution of the most noteworthy Charlestonian of the second half of the twentieth century from a go-along-to-get-along defender of Jim Crow practices while a state legislator, lieutenant governor, and governor into an unmistakable if acerbic foghorn for voting rights and hunger programs by the 1970s.

Throughout *New Politics in the Old South*, Ballantyne paints “Fritz” Hollings as “constructively conservative.” In chronicling Hollings’s “gradual but peaceful” departure from his homeland’s segregated past, Ballantyne finds that his attitude was scarcely affected after World War II by his service in the European theater. Upon entering the South Carolina legislature, he quickly got behind measures to increase funding for schools by raising the sales tax by a penny. He supported efforts to bring industry to South Carolina, first as a state representative, then as lieutenant governor, and finally between 1959 and 1963, as chief executive of the Palmetto State. Like many described as Southern moderates at the

time, his tone on racial questions customarily approximated one of restraint. Even so, his convergence with those dedicated to moving less gradually towards a biracial society remained limited for much of the 1950s to what historian Joseph Crespino terms “strategic accommodations” that would allow the temporary continuation of a social order he privately questioned and sensed was on its last legs. Only in the last month of his gubernatorial term, three months after an eruption at the University of Mississippi resulted in the deaths of two bystanders, did Hollings, in urging the admission of Harvey Gantt to Clemson College, publicly counsel his electorate to “learn the less of one hundred years ago,” and abandon all premises of a segregated society.

The Hollings who entered the Senate in 1967 is portrayed by Ballantyne appropriately as the precursor of a political landscape altered irrevocably by the growth of the Republican Party in the state’s cities and suburbs and even more by the addition of African Americans to the voting rolls. He traces Hollings’s reluctance to embrace national Democratic positions on the Vietnam War and school busing and his qualified support for Democratic presidential nominees Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern in 1968 and 1972. Where Ballantyne’s analyses are sharpest are on Hollings’s work on questions of particular signifi-

cance to South Carolina--Richard Nixon's nomination in 1969 of South Carolinian Clement Haynsworth to the Supreme Court, the creation of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and his several probes of various federal and state antihunger programs. The latter provides a unique opportunity to examine how Hollings created a unique image as a modern moderate to conservative Democrat, all the while accommodating the African Americans and union members who formed an ever growing proportion of his state's Democratic coalition.

With the last thirty years of Hollings's career, arguably his most impactful, confined to but 14 pages of a 149-page narrative, there remains a need for a more complete and definitive biography of this last South Carolinian to seek the presidency. Even so, Ballantyne has provided a solid discussion of how the most durable South Carolina politico of the generation that came to manhood during the Second World War evolved on issues involving race, the central reality of Palmetto State politics from its inception in the seventeenth century until the present.

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