

Go-Forward Program ^[1]

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by George W. Troxler, 2006



Kerr Scott campaign button from 1948 with his slogan "Go forward with Scott."

^[2]The Go-forward program is associated with the election campaign and administration of Governor W. Kerr Scott ^[3] (1949-53), who used the slogan "go forward" to characterize his platform and accomplishments. The phrase first appeared in his speeches and newspaper advertisements during the months prior to the Democratic primary on 29 May 1948, then more frequently during the runoff primary campaign against state treasurer Charles M. Johnson. In his inaugural address, Scott compared the state treasury surplus to a "deficit in public services" and proposed "to wipe out this deficit" with a 15-point "go-forward program" that included better roads, schools, public health services, rural telephones, and electricity.

In a December 1952 "Report to the People" ^[4], Scott again used the phrase "go forward" to describe his administration. Among the most important accomplishments mentioned in this document and cited again by Scott when he left office in 1953 were the paving of nearly 15,000 miles of secondary roads, new school construction, a statewide public school ^[5] health program, new hospital ^[6] construction and expanded public health ^[7] programs, new rural electric connections ^[8] and more than 75,000 rural phone installations ^[9], and the completion of port terminal facilities at Morehead City and Wilmington ^[10] that provided modern ports for ocean-borne commerce.

References:

John William Coon, "Kerr Scott, the 'Go-Forward' Governor: His Origins, His Program, and the North Carolina General Assembly" ^[11] (M.A. thesis, UNC-Chapel Hill, 1968).

David Leroy Corbitt, ed., Public Addresses, Letters, and Papers of William Kerr Scott, Governor of North Carolina, 1949-1953 ^[12] (1957).

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"William Kerr Scott campaign button," 1948. From LearnNC and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries, North Carolina Collection. <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/multimedia/6520> ^[2].

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