

4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708
June 13, 1988

The Honorable LeRoy Collins
100 East First Avenue
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Dear Sir,

I am an undergraduate History major at the University of South Florida. In the course of my studies, I read Thomas Wagys book entitled Governor LeRoy Collins of Florida: Spokesman for the New South. Although Dr. Wagys did thoroughly research your ascent to the governorship and presidency of the National Association of Broadcasters, I felt that his biographical work did not do justice to the progressive platform you supported during your two terms in office.

In your opinion, what aspects of your career do you think have been neglected by political biographers such as Wagys? Do you feel that enough attention was given to your push for reform in the field of education? If there is such a thing as a 'definitive' political biography, what elements would you include that have not been properly documented by biographers to date?

Given the social and political environment prior to your gubernatorial career, Florida made incredible progress during your administrations. Hopefully, future publications will be more comprehensive in scope.

Thank you for allowing me to share my comments with you.

Respectfully yours,
James A. Schnur
James A. Schnur

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June 21, 1988

Mr. James A. Schnur
4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708

Dear Mr. Schnur:

I am very grateful for your letter of June 13. And I appreciate deeply your assumption that political biography covering my career has passed over much of the substance of our State's programmatic advances during the governorship years.

I like to think that as Governor I made important beginnings in many fields that became foundations for progress coming later. I was not a Governor who fashioned only those goals that could be assured to be attainable. If there was a new way that I could see to be right, just and needed, whether or not we could attain it was not a factor to warrant not trying. I knew that if we could advance a program part way, other support would then be coming for ultimate success. If no one was willing to make a beginning the ultimate triumph would be pushed back later and later.

There was a book printed about the end of my time in office entitled Florida Across The Threshold. It was put together largely by people in our office. My own writing contributed little. But it emphasizes by subject matter, programs with which I was deeply involved. The form usually follows:

1. a recitation of campaign statements of goals in a given area;
2. my recommendations as Governor to the Legislature as to dealing with such; and
3. the results achieved by our efforts.

I think you would like to see this book and I would assume that a copy is there at the University of South Florida Library. I have copies I am saving for my children and I don't know of the availability of any others.

Please keep in touch. I want to keep our lines of communication open.

Sincerely,

LeRoy Collins

4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Fl. 33708
23 July 1988

The Honorable LeRoy Collins
100 East First Avenue
Tallahassee, Fl. 32303

Dear Sir,

I am an undergraduate History major from the University of South Florida who corresponded with you last month concerning Dr. Wagy's biography of your political career. During the Summer Term, I was enrolled in a pro-seminar course examining the role of biography in historical research. The primary objective of the class was for each student to select an individual and produce an annotated bibliographic essay of source materials and search procedures appropriate for a potential biography on the individual.

I chose you as the subject of my essay because of your incredible political achievements for both state and nation during a period in which Americans re-evaluated their beliefs on various social issues. My professor required that each class member justify their subject and the type of biography used; I strongly feel that your political career has been neglected by the academic community, with Wagy's work presenting an incomplete picture of your public life. My assignment was thus to determine which sources and collections would best suit the historical researcher of your career.

Enclosed is a copy of the final draft I submitted to my professor last week. I hope that this work satisfactorily reflects your illustrious years of public service.

Respectfully yours,
James A. Schnur
James A. Schnur

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July 26, 1988

Mr. James A. Schnur
4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708

Dear Mr. Schnur:

I am somewhat in awe of what you have done. I haven't had the time to go over the material you sent with care and deliberation, but it is apparent that your work is very comprehensive and clear.

I will be interested in hearing about the reaction of your teacher or teachers who will review your work.

Also the time will come, and I would hope soon, when we may talk over your own involvement in producing a final work.

Thank you again for your warm interest in my career, and congratulations for the splendid talent you have so effectively demonstrated.

Sincerely,


LeRoy Collins

LC/mjg

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July 28, 1988

Mr. James A. Schnur
4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708

Dear Mr. Schnur:

I have read over your submission to the University and I am deeply impressed with the quality and thoroughness of this work.

There are other sources of which you were unaware that I will discuss with you when we get together. There are files that the State keeps such as, I suppose, transcripts of press conferences. I had these often -- weekly was my target. Also I have quantities of material at home, not well organized. At my law office here I have copies of hundreds of speeches made over a long span of time and dealing with many subjects. The broadcasting (NAB) record goes beyond what anyone has written too.

Thanks again. I am anxious to learn of how your report will be graded. My own view is A+.

Sincerely,


LeRoy Collins

LC/mjg

4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Fl. 33708
1 August 1988

The Honorable LeRoy Collins
100 East First Avenue
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Dear Mr. Collins,

I deeply appreciate your responses to the bibliographic essay I submitted on July 23. Enclosed are comments from the instructor of the proseminar class, Dr. James Swanson, Associate Professor and Chairman of History. He encouraged me to use this paper as a research tool for further examination of your public career. I stated that I would be interested in continuing to research your role in shaping Florida's politics following World War II. I told Dr. Swanson that I was surprised at the lack of scholarship on your career from the institutions of our State University System. Even Dr. Wagy's biography came from the presses of the University of Alabama; a number of monographs were published at Louisiana State University. Considering the need for a re-examination of changes in Florida's political infrastructure, I wonder why only a paucity of works have come from the University Presses of Florida?

This fall I will be collecting bibliographical source materials and search references neglected in the essay (such as articles found on microfilms of the Tallahassee Democrat). I shall graduate with a B.A. in December, but wish to make preliminary assessments of helpful sources before entering the master's program at U.S.F. Perhaps after consulting with professors specializing in Southern History, I will be able to narrow the scope of my research to a particular thesis. I do have a favor to ask of you: Could I secure permission to examine your gubernatorial papers housed in Special Collections at the University of South Florida's Tampa Campus Library?

I will keep you informed of progress on my research. Again, thank you for evaluating my bibliographic essay.

Respectfully yours,
James A. Schnur
James A. Schnur

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August 24, 1988

Mr. James A. Schnur
4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708

Dear Mr. Schnur:

I had thought I had responded to your letter with the copy of the note from your professor, but my secretary says she thinks not. I apologize for this tardiness.


I was of course thrilled -- but not surprised really, with the A+ grade. You did a remarkable job on this. I am sending a copy of my copy to Mr. Robert Pittman at the St. Petersburg Times and I hope you will call him and make an appointment to talk with him. He is not only a valued advisor about my writing, but a warm personal friend.

I will be talking to him about some decisions dealing with a possible book rather soon now and I want him to have an opportunity to get to know you and what I perceive to be your fine talents. I will send him a copy of this letter.

Even leaving me completely out of the picture, I have the instinctive feeling that the two of you should know the other is around.

Thanks again, James, and congratulations on your paper. I hope I can always deserve the interest you reflect.

Sincerely,


LeRoy Collins

LC/mjg
CC: Robert T. Pittman

4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708
27 December 1988

The Honorable LeRoy Collins
100 East First Avenue
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Dear Dr. Collins,

I apologize for the delay in writing to you. During the summer, I produced an annotated bibliographic essay examining your political career for a pro-seminar at the University of South Florida. In the interim, I completed directed readings under Dr. Gary Mormino, past-president of the Florida Historical Society. I plan to submit an essay for the Society's 1989 President's Prize for Scholarship in Florida History. I intend to analyze the passage of House Concurrent Bill 174 and your response to interposition in the years following the Brown decision. Because this undertaking requires citations from primary sources, I request permission to examine your collected gubernatorial papers on this theme housed at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

My sincere congratulations on your honorary degree! I was indeed pleased to discover that you would be recognized at the commencement ceremonies during my graduating semester. The founding of the Collins Center of Public Policy was also a surprise. I believe that a nonpartisan "think tank" is doubtlessly needed to assess the problems confronting Floridians today.

I will inform you of my progress on this essay. May you and your family have a safe and prosperous New Year.

Respectfully yours,
James A. Schnur
James A. Schnur

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January 17, 1989

Mr. James A. Schnur
4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708

Dear James:

Forgive my delay in responding to your letter of 27 December 1988. It got lost between my office and home. Next time if you think of it, use my post office address as shown above.

The proper name of the legislative action on interposition was House Concurrent Resolution. Bills before the legislature lead to acts or laws. They can be vetoed by the governor. Concurrent resolutions are an expression of opinion or feeling and they don't become law. The governor has no power of veto of a concurrent resolution. Hence my novel written expression.

You have my permission to examine any of my material at University of South Florida Library and you may show them this letter if they require confirmation. Or they can call me and I will approve such. Since the retirement of Mary Lou Harkness, the person we have been dealing with in Special Collections is Jay Dobkin.

I am familiar with the prize you refer to of the Florida Historical Society. I served on their screening and approving committee last year. Good luck.

Don't overlook my hope that you and Bob Pittman at the Times get acquainted.

With best wishes always, I am

Sincerely,



LeRoy Collins



Established 1856

University of South Florida Library
Tampa, Florida 33620-5400
813/974-3815

May 5, 1989

James A. Schnur
4802 109th Street, N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33708

Dear Mr. Schnur:

It is my distinct pleasure to inform you that the Florida Historical Society has awarded your paper, "LeRoy Collins and Legislative Interposition: A Portrait of Emerging Moderation in Gubernatorial Politics," first place in the 1989 President's Prize Undergraduate Area. The prize committee made special mention of your diligent research in primary sources and the paper's readability. Please also know that this year's entries were especially competitive.

The President's Prize, a \$250 check and a certificate, will be presented at the Florida Historical Society's Annual Awards Banquet, held this year in Gainesville, May 12, 1989. We certainly hope you will be there to accept the award. Registration fees and banquet cost have been waived for you.

Please consider submitting your article to the Florida Historical Quarterly. The Quarterly is widely known for its quality and its editor, Dr. Samuel Proctor, will give it immediate attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gary R. Mormino
Chair

President's Prize Committee

GRM/njd
Enc.

P.S. Dr. Samuel Proctor's address is P. O. Box 14045
University Station, Gainesville, FL 32604

CC: Sam Proctor, Editor, the Quarterly
Paul S. George, President, FHS

4802 - 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, FL 33708
16 May 1989

The Honorable LeRoy Collins
305 South Gadsden Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Mr. Collins,

I asked Dr. Gary Mormino of the President's Prize Committee if you would be in attendance at the Florida Historical Society's Annual Awards Banquet last Friday, and was saddened to hear that you could not be present. It was an honor to be recognized in Gainesville for my exposition examining your response to legislative interposition. I hope that you found my historiography and use of your gubernatorial papers to be satisfactory. I am submitting this essay to Dr. Samuel Proctor for publication in the Florida Historical Quarterly.

Would it be possible for me to visit you at your law office in Tallahassee? I plan to enter a master's program in history at the University of South Florida this fall, and would deeply appreciate any guidance you could give me concerning research topics to pursue in Florida history. I would admire the opportunity to discuss your distinguished political career, as well as your perseverance against "pork-chopper" interests and shortsighted legislative platforms.

I am employed by the Pinellas District School Board and work at a summer school program. I do, however, have a vacation during the week of June 12-16, 1989, before classes resume. Would it be possible to make an appointment to visit you at that time?

Thank you for your continued support of my historiographic research. I shall promptly write Robert Pittman of the Times a letter of introduction.

Respectfully yours,

James A. Schnur

MEMO FROM:

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32302
P.O. BOX 1170 - (904) 224-9135

LEROY COLLINS

May 26, 1989

Dear Mr. Schnur:

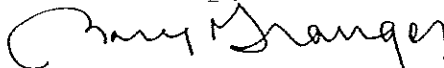
Governor Collins is out of the office today but asked that I drop you a brief note to acknowledge receipt of your letter of May 16.

The Governor was delighted to learn that you had been selected as the recipient of the undergraduate President's Prize for 1989 and was sorry that he was unable to attend the Awards Banquet this year due to a conflict in his schedule.

If you are able to come to Tallahassee during your upcoming vacation, Governor Collins would be happy to see you on Tuesday, June 13th, or the afternoon of June 12th if you would prefer. He will be going out of town on the 14th and does not expect to be back in the office until the following week.

Please call me during the week of June 5th so we can confirm a date and time. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Mary J. Granger
Secretary to
LeRoy Collins

James A. Schnur

4802 - 109th St., North, St. Petersburg,

- Please Acknowledge Receipt FL 33708
 No Acknowledgment Expected
 Do Not Return Attached

news

university of south florida

at St. Petersburg



OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT, USF, 140 7TH AVENUE S., ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33701-5016 (813)893-9160

For further information:

WRITER: Deborah Kurelik

STORY SOURCE: Nick Wynne

(813) 974-3815

USF-ST. PETERSBURG STUDENT WINS FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AWARD

ST. PETERSBURG, FLA. (May 19, 1989) -- A history paper written about former Florida Gov. LeRoy Collins won University of South Florida student James Schnur the 1989 President's Prize from the Florida Historical Society.

In "LeRoy Collins and Legislative Interposition: A Portrait of Emerging Moderation in Gubernatorial Politics," Schnur traces Collins' 6-year term as governor (1955-1961), and his evolution from a moderate segregationist to a proponent of integration. Schnur argues that Collins' leadership and stance toward integration made Florida a racially tolerant state, despite resistance by the Legislature and reaction by other Southern states against the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision which ruled unconstitutional state-enforced school segregation.

Schnur, a 23-year-old history major, is a graduate student at the USF St. Petersburg campus. He and Collins have never met, though they have corresponded.

The President's Prize is open to any undergraduate or graduate student nationwide who writes about Florida or Florida history.

"Jim did an an amazing amount of research," said Nick Wynne, executive director of the society. "He writes well, and he examined a subject that needs to be looked into more."

Schnur received \$250 in the President's Prize undergraduate area. A Georgia State University student won in the President's Prize graduate area. A five-judge panel reviewed the nominations and selected the winners.

The President's Prize program began last year after the society received a \$10,000 endowment from an anonymous donor. The Florida Historical Society was established in 1856 to preserve, protect and publicize Florida historical heritage. The society now has 2,100 members

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July 20, 1989

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Mr. James A. Schnur
4802 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708

Dear Mr. Schnur:

Mrs. Granger, my secretary who helps me far beyond the range of most assistants I have known, has shared with me your letter to her of July 14, 1989.

Rather than writing answers to your questions, I would much prefer to talk with you directly about the aspects of my leadership in which you are interested. If you can come to Tallahassee on some Monday or Tuesday, I will try to arrange my work to be with you for a major part of that day, granting that my health has not degenerated.

If you would like, please call and advise when it may suit your convenience and we will do our best at this end to adjust our schedule to meet with you.

Sincerely,



LeRoy Collins

LC/mjg

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August 14, 1990

Mr. James A. Schnur
4802 - 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33708

Dear Mr. Schnur:

The material you sent me is really extraordinary. I have never seen a work of this detail and comprehension. All my family and others I have shown it to are greatly impressed by what you have done.


I have talked with Bob Pittman about you and he agrees with all my feelings, and his own interest is probing for what may be done in the future.

We still have in old files at The Grove and under many layers of dust, much material that needs to be sent to USF Library. This is going to take expertise in understanding what should be retained and what sent down there. There is also a strong concern about what should ultimately become a permanent part of The Grove furnishings. You perhaps know that the State will acquire the house and immediate grounds for a State museum upon my wife's death. No agreement exists up to this time about the furnishings. We are very anxious for this permanent museum to be something very, very appropriate and beneficial to the public in the years ahead. A commission is expected to be set up to supervise, develop and protect.

Do you have occasions to come to Tallahassee? If so, Mary Call and I both would like to visit with you and discuss some possible planning procedures.

Thanks again for the very fine work you have done. We will always remain in your debt.

Sincerely,


LeRoy Collins

LC/mjg

CC: Robert T. Pittman

4802 - 109th Street North
St. Petersburg, Fl. 33708
21 August 1990

The Honorable LeRoy Collins
305 South Gadsden Street
Tallahassee, Fl. 32301

Dear Mr. Collins,

I deeply appreciated your kind comments in your letter of August 14. Since early July, I have reexamined the contents of the boxes located in USF's Special Collections Department. After completing a revised compilation, I intend to send printed copies to USF, the Florida Historical Society, the P.K. Yonge Library in Gainesville, the R.A. Gray Archives, and other appropriate academic libraries. In addition, I promised Dr. Nick Wynne at the Florida Historical Society that I would provide computer diskettes with this information for scholarly researchers visiting the facilities.

I would be honored to come to Tallahassee, and will promptly contact Mrs. Granger at the law office to arrange for a suitable time to visit.

Respectfully yours,

James A. Schnur

James A. Schnur



Governor LeRoy Collins and Society Member Jim Schnur, who recently computerized the Collins Collection at the University of South Florida.

SOCIETY MEMBER, JIM SCHNUR, CATALOGUES LEROY COLLINS COLLECTION

Society member, Jim Schnur, has taken the time and effort to computerize the Governor LeRoy Collins Papers at the University of South Florida. Schnur, the 1989 President's Prize winner [now the Caroline Mays Brevard Prize], has been an active scholar for several years.

The personal and political papers of Governor Collins offer researchers an interesting source for material on the post-World War II period of Florida history. The collection contains approximately 260 cubic feet of materials, including correspondence and printed materials.

Photo copies of the recently completed researcher's guide are available from the Florida Historical Society for \$5.00 [39 pages with spiral binding]. In addition, scholars with an Apple II system [at least 128K] and Appleworks 2.0 or higher may access the database of a 5 1/4 inch diskette. A revised and more thorough IBM-PC version will be available in early 1991. For more details about the computer versions, contact Jim Schnur, 4802 109th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33708-4010.

FORT MYERS HISTORICAL MUSEUM EXHIBITS

The Fort Myers Historical Museum has developed a busy schedule of activities for the next several months. The staff of the museum, which will host the 1994 Society Annual Meeting, has put together a schedule of exhibits and events that ensure a full slate for its membership until 1991.

Until November 25, patrons of the Museum will enjoy an exhibit of antique rods and reels made by well-known manufacturers like Von Hofe, Walker, and Hardy.

Beginning in early October and continuing through November, the Museum will display an exhibition of 40 color photographs by Charles Ledford. The exhibit, entitled "Ybor: City on the Edge of the Past," focuses on Ybor City, the center of the cigar industry in Florida from the 1880s to the 1950s.

On October 30, November 6, 13, and 20, the Museum will offering classes on Tole painting, which is a type of folk art designed to be applied to wooden and metal objects. Cost of the sessions is \$120 and includes instruction, paints and brushes, and other needed materials.

For more information, contact Richard Beattie at [813] 332- 5955.

LOXAHATCHEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE FLORIDA PANTHER

The Loxahatchee Historical Society in Jupiter is assisting Pete Gallagher, President of Save the Florida Panther, in his quest for historical photographs of the endangered cat. At one time, Florida counties offered bounties for dead panthers and it is possible that county records or local historical societies have photographs from this era.

Gallagher is doing research for a book on the panther and has recently submitted an article on the subject to the Seminole Tribune. Susan Clark, Executive Director of the Loxahatchee Historical Society in Jupiter, is also interested in compiling information on panthers for the library there. If you know of county archives or private collections that may provide information or photos, please contact:

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