

WHAT THE YOUNG MEN THINK

Business Progress Reflects Confidence in Midlands

By Carlton Truax

Check the year 1958 in your history book. It may be the year that Midlanders took a long look at their resources and opportunities, liked what they saw and decided that there was nothing, but nothing, that Midlanders could not do in the Midlands.

According to C. Wallace Martin, president of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce and one of the young business executives who is changing the face and feeling of the Columbia-Midlands section of South Carolina, there developed a radical and healthy change in the attitude of the people of this area towards themselves, their communities and their enterprises, during 1958.

"The people of the Midlands are dreaming big dreams these days.

"They have been sold on Columbia.

"Almost everywhere you go you find an esprit de corps that we haven't had before.

"People are saying, 'We've got a doggone good city and we've got good people. We can do anything.'"

These are some of the comments Martin made to the Columbia Record reporter as they sat in his office at Radio Station WMSC. Martin is president and general manager of this radio station and he considers the development of the radio-television industry in Columbia as one example of the dynamic potential of the Midlands.

He considers his present career in his native city a natural extension of the field of entertainment he entered when he graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1936. He began this career in the theater business here

and was instrumental in opening the Five Points Theater in 1939 and the Carolina Theater in 1941.

After a three-and-a-half year term in the United States Navy, he began looking around for opportunities in the radio field. WMSC was founded with the call letters WKIX in 1945 as the third radio station in the Columbia area.

"Now we have six radio stations, two television stations and two daily papers. All of these are apparently

enjoying economic health.

It would not have been possible in 1945 for Columbia to support these facilities. I do not feel that people, even people connected with the industry could visualize in 1945 these as even a distant future possibility. But the city has outgrown all expectations," Martin said.

He feels that this unexpected growth in the entertainment field can be paralleled

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C. WALLACE MARTIN