

STATEMENT OF J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA, ANNOUNCING THE APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO DRAFT PROPOSED MERIT PERSONNEL SYSTEM LEGISLATION, JUNE 29, 1948.

Governor J. Strom Thurmond today announced the appointment of a committee to prepare a Merit Personnel bill for the convenience of members of the 1949 General Assembly, in their consideration of this important legislative project next January.

Those named to the committee were: A. J. Hatfield, of Sumter, chairman of the State Employment Security Commission; Dr. J. C. Kinard, of Newberry, chairman of the State Board of Public Welfare and president of Newberry College; James A. Calhoun, Jr., chairman of the State Tax Commission; Pat C. Smith, Co-Director in Charge of Finance of the State Department of Education; and B. M. Edwards, of Columbia, president of the South Carolina National Bank.

Governor Thurmond pointed out that the committee is made up of representatives of both employers and employees of the State Government, with one representative of private business in the State, so that maximum fairness may be attained in preparing the proposed legislation.

"I feel that the legislation this committee will study is of the utmost importance to good government in our State," Governor Thurmond said. "It will promote efficiency in every department of our government, and will insure that honesty, ability and energy rather than political influence shall be the basis of determining factors for original employment, tenure of office, and promotion."

"The Merit Personnel System," he added, "will insure the fair and equal treatment of every State employee, and it is to be hoped that the next General Assembly will see fit to install it by law."

The Governor said a bill embodying good business

principles and methods, and seeking to overcome objections raised to other proposed legislation, will be developed by the committee he named today. Its draft will serve to assist members of the Legislature in their preparation of the completed bill.

"It was realized that the members of the General Assembly are overwhelmed with work during a legislative session," Governor Thurmond said, "and it was felt that a great deal of assistance might be rendered them through the work of a Merit Personnel Committee. This group will serve without pay, rendering a service of high importance to the State without charge. It will devote a large amount of thought and study to the matter, will study bills prepared in other States, and will give a great deal of consideration to selecting a type of system exactly suited to the needs of South Carolina."

Adoption by the State of a Merit Personnel System was one of Governor Thurmond's first recommendations after his election. He included the recommendation in his Inaugural Address, and has continued to work for its passage since his inauguration.