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Statement on President Truman's Statement That All Segregation Is Discriminatory

Strom Thurmond

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STATEMENT BY J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA, ON PRESIDENT TRUMAN'S STATEMENT THAT ALL SEGREGATION IS DISCRIMINATORY. APRIL 13, 1950.

I am glad President Truman has finally admitted that the goal his administration has been working for all along is to abolish separation of the races.

Some of the Truman apologists in the South have tried to make it appear that the Truman-Boyle-Pendergast leadership of the National Democratic Party did not favor abolishing separation of the races, even though they were demanding enactment of the FEPC and other iniquitous proposals in their Civil Rights program.

Mr. Truman made it clear that this was a false assumption today, when he told his press conference that he gave his sanction and approval to the action of his Attorney General and Solicitor General in their contention before the Supreme Court that every form of segregation is discriminatory and illegal under the Constitution.

His statement clearly demonstrates the extent to which the Truman administration is willing to go to obtain the support of minority blocs.

The Supreme Court case to which the President referred is an effort by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to force the Interstate Commerce Commission to abolish segregation on railroad dining cars, known as the Henderson case. Long-established precedent should have caused the Justice Department to support its fellow government agency, the Interstate Commerce Commission, in its refusal to issue such an order. Instead, the Justice Department under Mr. Truman's appointee, Attorney General McGrath, has broken all precedent by appearing before the Supreme Court in opposition to the Interstate Commerce Commission, and in support of the N. A. A. C. P.

The President, in his news conference today, approved McGrath's action and thus placed the prestige of his office behind
the drive to have the Supreme Court reverse its previous ruling, that separation of the races was legal, provided equal accommodations were provided.

If President Truman and his Attorney General succeed in persuading the Supreme Court, three members of which are Truman appointees, to declare that we cannot separate the races in the South, the most serious situation since the days of carpet-bag government will confront the Southern states.

If this Truman-Waring dictum of the intermingling of the races prevails, we are headed for critical times. It has become crystal clear that no Southern Democrat can any longer play along with the Truman administration in Washington without jeopardizing the welfare of their people.

As I see it, no true Southern Democrat can be a Trumanite. There can be no middle ground. We are either against Truman or we are for him. I was against him in 1948. I am against him in 1950, and I will be against him in 1952 if he seeks another term. Should he run again for President, I have no doubt that the American people will correct the mistake they made in 1948.

We in the South must be on guard against the Trumanites capturing control of our State Democratic Parties. Here in South Carolina we have witnessed an effort of the Trumanites to capture control of our party. When our convention meets next Wednesday, I am confident South Carolina Democrats will remain true to the doctrines of Jackson and Jefferson and the great principles of state sovereignty and local self-government which are the very essence of our Democracy.

No fight for principle is ever lost. We must fight on, and in the end we will drive from power those who would scuttle our institutions, our customs, and our form of government, to win favor with minority blocs in doubtful states.