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Senate campaign address, America's international situation

Strom Thurmond

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ADDRESS BY J. STROM THURMOND, CANDIDATE FOR THE
UNITED STATES SENATE OVER STATE-WIDE NETWORK
ORIGINATING AT WND, ORANGEBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA
MAY 30, 1950, 7:00 P. M.

In announcing for the Senate, I stated that I would not sail under any false colors in this campaign. I realize that everyone is not going to agree with my position on every question but I believe the people have a right to know how a candidate for public office stands on public issues.

Our campaign meetings last week convinced me that our people are sick and tired of fence straddling, and double talk on the important questions which confront them.

As United States Senator, I promise you that I will not be one kind of a Democrat in Washington and another kind of Democrat in South Carolina.

The people of South Carolina want Senators in Washington who stand for something, because they know that if a Senator does not stand for something he will fall for anything.

When our campaign meeting reaches your county, I hope that you will attend if you possibly can. There is a rebaptism of real South Carolina Democracy under way in our State. And come next July 11th the real Democrats of this sovereign State are going to let the nation know that the spirit of our Jeffersonian and Jacksonian democracy still lives in this State, and that no man who deserted the Democratic Party of South Carolina in its greatest hour of need can continue to be rewarded with the highest office in the gift of our people.

This evening I want to discuss with you important issues relating to our country's international situation, and next Tuesday I will discuss matters of domestic concern to our people.

No function of the United States Senate is more important than the part which it plays in shaping and handling our foreign affairs, the conduct of which may mean the difference between peace and war. Air power has brought every part of the world into close relation with every other, and neither land nor ocean barriers serve any longer as defense against potential enemies. We all know now that we cannot live in isolation in this troubled world, and we have long since recognized that our national security and our internal economy alike compel
us to assume and discharge our full responsibility in world affairs.

Regardless of differences on domestic issues, partisanship must stop at the water's edge in shaping our foreign policy. I believe that our foreign policy should be truly bi-partisan so that every man and woman in American will feel a personal responsibility for it.

No foreign policy is stronger than the military power of a nation. We know that Soviet Russia, which constitutes the greatest threat to the peace of the world today, respects only one thing, and that is power. I favor a strong national defense as our greatest assurance of maintaining peace. We cannot afford another Pearl Harbor. We must make whatever sacrifice is necessary to remain adequately prepared to insure our national security until such time as there is no danger of war, and nations have demonstrated their ability to settle their disputes around the conference table.

I will work to strengthen the United Nations and make it the effective instrument of world peace President Roosevelt believed it would be. We must see to it that the doors to peace are always kept open.

I favor the Baruch plan for the international control of atomic energy as the means of preserving world peace and allowing mankind to enjoy the peaceful benefits of this discovery instead of being destroyed by it.

I am opposed to the proposal to change the United Nations into a world Government to which the sovereignty and independence of the United States of America would be subordinated.

Our nation has been engaged for the past several years in what has been called the cold war, an effort to halt the spread of Communist aggression, particularly in Europe and the strategic Middle East, and thus avoid the dread possibility of a shooting war.

As one who so recently experienced the horrors of modern warfare, I was astounded to see my opponent in this race, the junior senator from South Carolina, join with a small group of diehard Republican isolationists in fighting and voting against virtually every measure passed to wage the cold war, and even
to hear him publicly boast about such actions on his part.

When World War II ended, the American people confidently expected peace to follow in due time. It was not long, however, before Communist Russia embarked on a course of international dealing which not only menaced the freedom of other nations but constituted a threat to our own institutions as well. We in America saw the Iron Curtain come into being, and many of our allies in the war become prisoners behind it.

Instead of demobilizing, the Red Army proceeded to increase its striking power. For a time it seemed that all of Europe would succumb to the grim pressure of Red expansion, and that in the end we would find our freedom as surely endangered by Communist totalitarianism as it had lately been by Nazi totalitarianism.

Against this background, the United States determined as a nation to employ our economic strength to stem the tide of Communist Aggression, and the Marshall plan was born. Sponsored by the great General George C. Marshall who as chief of staff stood at the helm in our war effort, the underlying purpose of the Marshall plan was to send our dollars to fight for our national security in order to keep from having to send our sons and daughters later.

When the Marshall plan was put into effect, Italy hung in the balance, with a critical election pending. If Italy fell, it was a foregone conclusion that Communist aggression would engulf France and carry the hammer and sickle to the shores of the Atlantic ocean nearest to us.

Russia would have swept in behind our occupation forces in Germany, and we would have had no choice except to withdraw because their lines of supply would have been cut off and their rear menaced.

With the fall of Europe's western nations, Russia would have come into control of the European industrial production centers, and particularly the combined steel production of Germany and France in the Ruhr and Lorraine areas.

Had this happened the United States would no longer have enjoyed the vast superiority in production, especially of steel, which had turned the tide in World War II and made it possible for us to fight that war both in Europe and the Pacific at the
same time.

Today we can look back and see what the Marshall plan did for America.

By the Marshall plan we kept the steel and other production areas of Europe out of the Communist grasp. We preserved large areas of the world as export markets for American products. Over half of the expenditures made under the Marshall plan went to buy American farm products, including tremendous amounts of South Carolina cotton and tobacco. We bolstered free enterprise and democratic institutions throughout the world. We gave vital assistance to Greece and Turkey, emboldened Yugoslavia to defy the Kremlin, and supported the Middle East against Communist pressure.

The Russians have bitterly condemned the Marshall plan because they know it halted progress of their program of world domination.

There were only four Democratic senators who joined with thirteen Republicans in voting against the original Marshall plan in 1948. My opponent was one of that four. There was only one Democratic Senator who joined with six Republicans in voting against continuing the Marshall plan in 1949. My opponent was that one. There was only one Democratic Senator who joined with seven Republicans in opposing continuance of the Marshall plan in 1950. My opponent was that one. My opponent also voted against the British loan, although it was recommended by the then Secretary of State James F. Byrnes. He was one of seven Democratic Senators who joined six Republicans in voting against the Korean Assistance Act of 1949. He was one of ten Democrats who joined fourteen Republicans in voting against the Foreign Military Assistance Act of 1949.

We are still waging the cold war, and I am convinced that we shall win it, but if success had depended on my opponent's votes on those critical measures, we would already have lost the cold war.

Russia makes progress in its world conspiracy not only from the work of those who carry Communist party cards or fellow travelers. The Kremlin also makes progress through the folly of those in high position who are unable to appreciate the seriousness of the measures which they are required to pass upon.
I favor the Marshall plan because if we allow the freedom-loving nations of Europe and other parts of the world who are resisting Communism to fall, then we in the Western Hemisphere would be left to fight alone.

I will insist that funds used to carry on the Marshall plan to its conclusion in 1952 shall be carefully screened and spent wisely. I will not oppose a plan that I believe will avoid a shooting war, save lives of American boys, and aid us in our fight against the spread of Communism.

South Carolina does not believe in isolationism. The people of South Carolina are opposed to Communism in all its forms. South Carolina should not have in the Senate the only Democratic Senator who votes with that small group of die-hard Republican isolationists and in so doing gives aid and comfort to Stalin and his Politburo.

The American people are gravely concerned today with the threat to peace which hangs heavily over us. Twice in our lifetime our young men and young women have had to take up arms. They fought to end war. They engaged in combat on beaches and battlefields the world over. In almost every corner of the globe, the American people mourn the rows of countless white crosses which show where they died.

If we should lose the peace, we shall have a heavy accounting to render to those who made the supreme sacrifice in two world wars, and whose sacrifice will then have been made in vain.

We can win the peace, but we cannot win it by an ostrich-like policy of isolation in our foreign affairs, sticking our head in the sand and ignoring what is happening around us. The economic strength of the United States is the greatest deterrent of militant aggression in the world today, and the greatest force for peace. We must keep economically strong, and we must use that strength with fortitude and prudence to keep democratic institutions and free enterprise from being destroyed in the freedom-loving nations of the world. We shall thus save both money and lives in the end, and shall finally bring stability and peace to our turbulent world.

As your United States Senator, I shall work unceasingly for the cause of peace.