6-29-1950

Statement at Senate campaign meeting about the South Carolina Industrial Commission

Strom Thurmond

Follow this and additional works at: https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/strom

Materials in this collection may be protected by copyright law (Title 17, U.S. code). Use of these materials beyond the exceptions provided for in the Fair Use and Educational Use clauses of the U.S. Copyright Law may violate federal law.

For additional rights information, please contact Kirstin O'Keefe (kokeefe [at] clemson [dot] edu)

For additional information about the collections, please contact the Special Collections and Archives by phone at 864.656.3031 or via email at cuscl [at] clemson [dot] edu

Recommended Citation
Thurmond, Strom, 'Statement at Senate campaign meeting about the South Carolina Industrial Commission' (1950). Strom Thurmond Collection, Mss100. 892.
https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/strom/892

For additional information about the collection, please contact the Special Collections and Archives by phone at 864.656.3031 or via email at cuscl [at] clemson [dot] edu
INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

During this campaign, I have brought to the attention of the people of South Carolina the pardon racket which we have cleaned up since I became Governor.

I want to tell you this morning about another racket I have cleaned up in South Carolina. This racket was not as destructive to law and order as the pardon racket but it struck at the very heart of good government. It also took from the pockets of working people funds which rightfully belonged to them.

I refer, of course, to the Industrial Commission.

It was a matter of common knowledge that an amazing number of the cases before this commission seem to find their way into the hands of a "select few" lawyers, often when the act applies automatically and no lawyer's services are needed.

It was a matter of common knowledge that exorbitant amounts have been allowed by the commission as attorneys' fees, out of awards made to injured employees or their widows and orphans under the compensation law. Not only have our working people received less from their compensation than the law intended and provided for them, but our State has suffered for a number of years because it has the highest compensation insurance rates of any in the Southeast.

Our people grew sick and tired of hearing about such cases as the one in which a young boy, awarded $6,000 for a fractured skull, was ordered by the hearing commission to pay $2,000 attorney's fee out of
it, although liability for the compensation was admitted by the employer.

Our people grew sick and tired of hearing about such cases as the one in which the widow of an employee who was killed received an award of approximately $5,500 and was then compelled to pay an attorney's fee of over $1,700 out of it, although the employer admitted liability for compensation.

Our people grew sick and tired of hearing about such cases as the one in which the widow of an employee who was killed was given an award of $6,000 and was then compelled to pay an attorney's fee out of it of $2,000, although the employer admitted liability for compensation.

Our people grew sick and tired of hearing about such cases as the one in which the beneficiaries of a deceased employee were compelled to pay an attorney's fee of $1,200 out of a settlement of only $2,700.

These are only a few of the many flagrant instances in which our working people have been deprived of large portions of their awards for excessive attorney's fees, paid to a "select few" lawyers.

The situation became such a stench in the nostrils of those who believe in clean government, that the Grievance Committee of the South Carolina Bar Association condemned and deplored the whole situation.

In order to assure our working people a square deal before the Commission it was necessary to appoint successors to Industrial Commissioners appointed by my opponent in this campaign while he was Governor.

You will recall that we had quite a fight in the Senate over the confirmation of one of your fine citizens, Miss Faith Clayton. Her appointment was necessary to get a majority on the commission and have the Workmen's Compensation law administered for the benefit of the working people.
I was criticized for naming a woman to the Commission. As Governor, I have appointed more women to positions of responsibility than in any other administration. They make fine public servants and Miss Clayton was no exception. As you can testify, she has worked hard all of her life, was entitled to the position on merit, and she had held a union card.

Despite all of this, her confirmation was fought by a small group of Senators, most of whom are active supporters of my opponent, but we forced a showdown and won by a vote of approximately three to one.

It was a great victory for clean government and I will always look with pride on this accomplishment in behalf of the working people of South Carolina.

I am not one who goes around giving just lip service about being a friend of labor. I get results for our working people.