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Senate campaign radio address

Strom Thurmond

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My fellow South Carolinians:

When the Senatorial campaign opened, I made my position on our foreign affairs crystal clear. In view of the tense Korean situation, I want to review the issue on foreign affairs as it has developed in the Senate race.

I stated that I believed our foreign policy should be truly bi-partisan, and that political differences should stop at the water's edge. I stated that I believed in the United Nations and favored strengthening it to keep the doors of peace always open. I stated that I stood for a strong national defense as the best means of maintaining peace. I stated that I favored the Marshall plan and the other measures designed to win the cold war and halt Communist aggression. I warned that if we allowed the freedom-loving nations in other parts of the world to fall, then we would be left alone to struggle against the march of Communism.

In typical demogogue fashion, my opponent assailed the stand I took in favor of the Marshall plan and other cold war measures. He set himself up as knowing more about combating Communist aggression than General Marshall, General Eisenhower, General Bradley, Cordell Hull, and James F. Byrnes, all of whom favored the Marshall plan. He went all over South Carolina talking about our pouring money down the rat holes of Europe and the rest of the world. He belittled the Marshall plan when he should have known that it saved Italy and France from Communism and prevented us from being driven out of Germany by the Reds.

Now at the eleventh hour of this campaign, my opponent has tried to reverse his field because of the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, where our troops representing the United Nations are resisting Communist aggression. He has had the affrontery to put an advertisement in the newspapers today about the Korean fighting and recommends himself for election because of his past experience. Let us see what his past experience in the Senate on Foreign Affairs has been.
My opponent was one of the four Democratic Senators who voted against the original Marshall plan. He was the only Democratic Senator who voted against the Marshall plan in 1949 and 1950. He voted against the Foreign Military Assistance Act and the Korean Assistance Act of 1949. He voted against virtually every measure to win the cold war. If success in our efforts to halt Communist conquest had depended on my opponent's votes, we would have already lost the cold war. It is on this record of experience that he tells you he should be returned to handle the situation, now that the cold war is getting hot in Korea.

If there is any Democratic member of the Senate who because of his past record should not be entrusted with the handling of our international affairs in the tense and critical days ahead it is my opponent. My opponent's record marks him as an Isolationist. Isolationists played a major part in our Pearl Harbor unpreparedness preceding World War II. By their votes the isolationists gave encouragement to the enemies of a free world. Neither South Carolina nor the Nation wants an isolationist in the United States Senate voting on important legislation dealing with our international problems when the world is threatening to burst into flames. The need is for men who place principles above political considerations.

As a combat veteran of World War II, I have been through the horrors of modern warfare and that is the best experience a United States Senator can have in dealing with the serious international problems which now confront us.

In announcing for the Senate in this primary, I did so on the basis of my record of public service. I am proud that we have been able to bring about character, honesty, and efficiency in the government of our state; the reorganization of the state government; the sound and business-like operation of our state's fiscal affairs; the location of new industries with an increase of 50,000 new jobs and $100,000,000 annually in new wages for our working people; the ending of the disgraceful pardon racket; the deflation of the liquor ring which sprang up under my opponent's liquor law; the breaking up
of the unconstitutional practice of dual office holding; the greatest advances in our educational system and the highest teachers salary schedule in the state's history; the fostering of industrial peace, so that our workers lost less man hours from labor disputes than those in any other state of the union; cleaning up the industrial commission; establishment of Area trade schools; the provision of funds for hospital and health center construction in counties; the great progress in the construction of farm to market roads and extension of rural electrification; the inauguration of a state farm marketing system; and many other constructive measures for the welfare of our farmers, our workers, and the people of every section in the state and every segment of our economy.

I have shown how these years of progress during my administration contrast with the years of confusion and chaos while my opponent was Governor.

After refusing to discuss his pardon record before the people on the stump, my opponent during the closing days of the campaign, rushed into the newspapers with large advertisements carrying a letter from the Secretary of State saying he granted only 607 pardons. Everyone knows that the 2,591 leaves of absences granted by my opponent, which are back-door pardons and illegal, were not recorded in the Secretary of State's office, but are found in the records of the penitentiary, and the letter from the Secretary of State is no answer to the conduct of my opponent which shook the very foundation of law and order in this state.

Tomorrow the Democrats of this state will meet the most serious issue that has confronted us since the days of Reconstruction. They must settle once and for all the question of whether minority bloc voting is going to dominate the politics of this state, and bring about a breaking down of segregation. Let me make it clear that I have no prejudice against the negro. During my administration, perhaps more has been accomplished for our colored citizens than in any other administration. But bloc voting is a menace to democracy wherever it exists. It is unfortunate that it has come about in our state. People should vote as citizens and not as blocs. The credit for this minority bloc threat in South Carolina goes, first, to a turncoat federal
judge who turned into our party thousands of voters who do not believe in its principles and wish only to destroy South Carolina democracy; second to Harry Truman who has bartered with minority blocs in this country and stabbed the South in the back as the price of their vote; and last but not least to my opponent who for two years has been courting the support of the organized negro bloc vote in this state in his effort to be re-elected to the Senate.

After publicly declaring that no decent white Southerner could support Harry Truman for president, my opponent deserted the Democratic Party of South Carolina and along with the negro voters in this state supported Truman. In so doing, he violated the solemn pledge he took as a candidate for the Senate in 1944. He betrayed the Democrats of South Carolina in order to support for President the man who had proven himself to be the worst enemy of the South who has ever sat in the White House in American history.

After refusing to attend a Jackson Day dinner in 1948, because of a non-segregation policy, my opponent to get the negro bloc vote attended and had a full table at the Truman Jackson Day Dinner in 1950 when more negroes were present than in 1948.

To get the negro bloc vote, my opponent was as silent as the tomb when Truman's order was issued breaking down segregation in the armed forces. This is no time for either a President or a Senator to play negro politics with our national defense and I have promised the people I will fight to have this order withdrawn so that if our white boys and girls are drafted they will not have imposed upon them conditions which are abhorrent.

It was to get this negro bloc vote that my opponent never raised his voice against the proposal to federalize our national guard which would break down segregation in the guard.

It was to get this bloc vote that my opponent courted the favor of the CIO Political Action Committee and other organizations which are seeking to break down all segregation in the South and help him with the organized negro vote.
That my opponent has succeeded in winning the minority bloc vote in South Carolina is obvious to all. Not only that but Truman and his minority bloc organizations have thrown their influence and a slush fund into South Carolina in an effort to prevent defeat of my opponent in tomorrow's primary.

The irony of the situation is that federal investigators were sent to South Carolina to intimidate and coerce our people on the false charge that Dixiecrat money was coming into the State. The CIO, the negro association, and the Democratic national committee has sent more money into South Carolina than has ever before been spent in a South Carolina senatorial campaign and to establish this fact an investigator had only to read the newspapers and listen to the radio during the last several days. On the radio they have dramatized my opponent as though they were selling soap and soda pop. But they cannot send enough money in here to cause the Democratic Party of South Carolina to commit political suicide.

The negro ticket has been circulated throughout South Carolina today and my opponent is being repaid for his 1948 betrayal of the Democratic Party and his support of Truman. The official negro newspaper in Columbia, the Lighthouse and Informer, has gone so far as to brazenly instruct the negroes how to mark their ballot. This newspaper claims between 75 and 100 thousand negroes are eligible to vote and I quote: "What concerns us most is that we get every registered negro to the polls Tuesday and vote. It is urgent that every voted to this to insure victory against Dixiecratism." End quote.

Then the negro newspaper tells the negro voters how to go into the voting booth and vote for my opponent, and get these words, "draw a line through the name of Governor Thurmond" and "the line should be clear and distinct." end quote.

My opponent in this campaign has tried to get both the organized negro bloc vote which he has wooed and won and also the votes of the white Democrats who believe in the separation of the races and in upholding the South Carolina Democratic party. The true Democrats of South Carolina will not fall into the Truman trap of dividing their votes in the face of this open bloc threat.
and allowing the organized negro bloc vote to become the balance of power in our politics and send a Trumanite back to the Senate.

When this campaign began, my opponent said he was not going to run on anybody's coat-tail. When he saw the White Democrats of this state leaving him by the thousands he became desperate and he has tried to ride everybody's coat-tail in this race from Harry Truman to Harry Byrd.

Like a drowning man, he has grasped at every political straw, but tomorrow he will join his fellow Trumanites, Pepper and Graham in going down to defeat.

As the campaign closes, I want to express my deepest appreciation to those who have helped us wage this fight in every county and every precinct. To you will go the credit for winning this victory which is going to be ours tomorrow night. Don't stop working until every friend of South Carolina democracy has voted and don't leave the polls until every vote is counted. And I tell you now we are going to sweep this state from Rocky Bottom to Little River and from Fort Mill to Port Royal.

And the nation will know once again that the spirit of true Southern Democracy still lives in South Carolina and never will this proud state run up the white flag and surrender to those who would destroy our heritage and our traditions.

As your United States Senator, I promise you that I shall ever be true to those principles of government which every South Carolina Democrat holds dear. I will fight in the future, as I have in the past, for Southern democracy. And it will be my ambition to make every South Carolinian who votes for me proud of the part he or she had in sending me to the Senate.

I shall use the power and the prestige of that high office, in the fight to restore our party to the leadership of those who will not permit this nation to go down the road to Socialism and who believe in the Jeffersonian doctrine of states rights upon which the Democratic Party was founded. And above all, as a Senator of a Sovereign State, I shall see to it that the interests of South Carolina are always protected and promoted in the relationship between the federal government and the respective states as ordained under
the Constitution in giving to the Congress the control of purse strings and the power to appropriate for the national defense and the public welfare.

Thank you and good night.