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Statement for Senate campaign meeting. Too Little, Too Late

Strom Thurmond

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TOO LITTLE -- TOO LATE

What the people are asking after the first week of this campaign is -- why and when did my opponent decide to reverse his political field once more and pretend in this race to be against Truman again.

Our people remember how he denounced Truman in the spring of 1948 and he declared he would break away from the national democratic party before he would support his election. He said a choice between Truman and a Republican would be a choice between satan and Beelzebub.

Truman was nominated and he immediately called a special session of Congress to enact his civil rights program. About this time my opponent changed his tune. As Br'er Rabbit would say -- "he laid low in the briar patch" until the night of the election.

The Democratic Party of South Carolina had taken a forthright stand against Truman or anyone else who favored ramming the civil rights program down our throats.

The Democratic Party of South Carolina called on its membership to stand firm behind the principles of the state party as declared in the 1948 convention. My opponent did not answer that call.

His voice was finally heard about eleven o'clock
on the night of the election when he said he had stood with Truman that day. My opponent then broke all speed records in getting back to Washington to get on the band wagon and welcome the President when he got there from Missouri. There was no more talk about Satan and Beelzebub. He began conniving with the Truman-Pendergast regime to get back in their good graces.

I charge here today, and my opponent can not deny it, that after having deserted the Democratic party of South Carolina in its most critical hour, he then joined with the little handful of Trumanites who were trying to take over our state party. He knows he worked hand in hand with the rump Trumanite organization in this state to stage the Barkley dinner in Columbia last year.

These Trumanite bolters thought that because Truman had won, the Democrats of South Carolina would crawl back and say -- "we are sorry Mr. Truman, won't you please take us in?"

When that Pendergast henchman, William Boyle, from Kansas City, was made national chairman, he set out to capture the Democratic party of South Carolina, and my opponent was a party to the deal and he can not deny it.

The Trumanites publicly announced they were going to capture our club meetings and thereby capture our state.
convention.

We accepted the challenge and told the Trumanites we would meet them in the club meetings, at the county conventions and at the State Convention. There was a sprinkling of Truman support at the club and county meetings but when we met in Columbia, there were so few of them they could not even put up a fight.

The South Carolina Democratic convention responded to the clarion call of Keynoter George Warren of Hampton, and in a voice heard across the Potomac, the state convention resolved there would be no retreat from our stand in 1948.

Those who attended that convention saw my opponent sit with folded arms while Senator Warren delivered that stirring keynote address in behalf of South Carolina democracy. But when he got back to Washington, my opponent issued a statement saying he had just returned from South Carolina and had found his people stirred up against civil rights and he would fight the legislation to the bitter end.

If my opponent had not run out on the Democratic party of South Carolina in 1948, he would have known earlier just how much our party membership was stirred up about Truman's unconstitutional and communistic program.

Was it the 1950 convention which woke up my opponent to the depth of our people's feeling and made him decide to
reverse his political field and once more denounce Truman?

Or was it the defeat of Claude Pepper, his voting companion in the Senate, that made him figure he had better get down here and start talking against Judge Waring, about whom he had been strangely silent/while our people were being abused and villified from the federal bench and in after dinner speeches?

Did my opponent then go to Chairman Boyle and the Truman gang/and tell them that his only chance to keep Strom Thurmond out of the Senate/ was to attack Truman and Waring?

Has he an understanding under cover with Boyle and the Pendergast bunch/that he can denounce Truman again, and then crawl back in bed with them if elected, just as he did in 1948?

One thing we know for sure, and it cannot be disputed. He connived and played along with the Trumanites/and helped them in their abortive effort to capture our state party, and it was not until the campaign opened in Lexington that he started denouncing the President again/ as he had done before his nomination in 1948.

I do not know who formulated my opponent's strategy in this campaign, but I can tell him now/he arrived too late with too little. And he will find this out when the real Democrats of South Carolina speak at the polls July 11th.