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Statement at Senate campaign meeting. Outside influences on election

Strom Thurmond

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Now I want to tell you something about the outside influences which have been at work in this state to dominate this senatorial election.

The President injected himself into this campaign by using the White House as a sounding board, to reflect on my democracy and that of Governor Wright of Mississippi. He said because we led the fight for Southern Democracy in 1948 we were not Democrats, and he declined to invite us to a White House function for Democratic Governors.

The people of South Carolina know I speak for the democracy of South Carolina, and I will put our democracy,—S. C. democracy—up against the Truman-Pendergast brand anywhere at anytime.

For the first time in history, federal investigators have come into South Carolina, to snoop around and intimidate our people in a primary campaign. They came in with a fanfare of publicity, about how they were being sent here to investigate Dixiecrat money, in an effort to smear Strom Thurmond and those who are supporting us.

If they wanted to find out about money coming into this State, why did these investigators not walk across LaFayette Park from the White House and investigate the CIO Political Action Committee, which boasted they had raised a million dollars to reelect my opponent and other members of Congress who do the bidding of this organization, which is the spearhead of the movement to break down segregation in the South? Why did they not investigate the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which had its hirings in here getting 75,000 negroes registered, to vote in this primary? Why did they not investigate how much money the Democratic National committee and the Democratic senatorial committee is sending in here to help the Trumanite candidate?

We know what they tried to do in Florida and in North Carolina. They tried to divide the white Democrats in these states and by bloc voting to return the Trumanite candidate to the Senate.
Listen at these official returns from negro precincts in North Carolina. In one box in Durham, they voted 1,514 for Graham, and seven votes for Smith. In a Charlotte negro precinct, they voted 1,231 for Graham, and 12 for Smith.

In six negro precincts alone, in the first North Carolina primary, they voted 5,455 for the Truman candidate, Senator Graham, and only 65 for the States Rights candidate, Willis Smith.

These same minority organizations are in South Carolina today, hoping that the white Democrats will divide their votes and these minority bloc votes will throw this election to my opponent. Well they might get by with this bloc voting in controlling elections in Kansas City, in Jersey City or in Harlem, but they did not get by with it in Florida and North Carolina, and they are not going to get by with it in South Carolina.

Here is the Lighthouse and Informer, the negro newspaper in Columbia, which is carrying out orders from Truman and the National Association for Advancement of Colored People and telling the negroes how to vote in next Tuesday's primary.

On the editorial page this negro paper boasts there are 75,000 negroes registered in our primary and the newspaper calls for the defeat of Dixiecratism and of course when this negro newspaper and my opponent talks about Dixiecrats they are talking about the white Democrats of South Carolina who stood by our party in 1948.

On the front page of this negro newspaper Truman is pictured greeting two negroes in St. Louis. There is an article under Truman and the negroes attacking Thurmond supporters in South Carolina.

And with that setting this negro newspaper in Columbia, which speaks for the organized negro vote in this state, proceeds to instruct negroes how to vote in next Tuesday's primary. Here is the pass word the National Association for Advancement of Colored People have sent down here to get the negroes to vote in a bloc for my Trumanite opponent just like they voted in a bloc for a Trumanite in North Carolina.
Let me read it to you:

"Supposing you have already in mind the candidates you are going to support (which you should have anyway when you go to vote) and supposing that in the race for the U. S. Senate you are going to vote for the incumbent Senator Olin D. Johnston, what do you do?

"First, you present your registration certificate at your polling place and if your credentials are in order you will be given the ballot for your county and district and will move into one of the voting booths where you will begin to prepare it for casting in the box.

"If you are voting for Mr. Johnston, then you draw a line through the name of Governor Thurmond. The line should be clear and distinct." Then they give the rest of the negro ticket."

The white Democrats are already seeing how arrogant these minority blocs are becoming. Yesterday in Moncks Corner they banded together and cheered my opponent. And last night in Charleston, when I mentioned the name of John C. Calhoun, a roar of boos came from the negro section attending that meeting. Little did I ever dream that the name of that great statesman and fighter for states rights, would be booed by a South Carolina audience, either white or colored.

I tell you these outside influences, which are trying to dominate this election, are foreign to what we believe in and what we stand for in South Carolina.

They must be turned back next Tuesday, and they are going to be turned back, because the real Democrats in this state know it is their time to stand up and be counted for Southern democracy, and they are going to repudiate Harry Truman and his minority bloc organizations, by defeating this Trumanite who betrayed his party and replace him with a true South Carolina Democrat.