

For Release to Weekly Newspapers Week of October 11, 1954

COLUMBIA -- (Special) -- Strom Thurmond, Democrat write-in candidate for the United States Senate in the November 2 General Election, wound up another week of intensive campaigning last Friday with a verbal blast at National Democratic Party Chairman Stephen Mitchell -- the "Chicago lawyer who is attempting to meddle in the Senate race here."

Mitchell aroused citizens of the State last week when he issued a statement in support of Brown in which he declared that few people would vote, and very few would be able to master the difficulties of a write-in vote.

"I regard this as an insult to the patriotism and the intelligence of South Carolinians," Thurmond told a large crowd gathered in the Florence courthouse of Friday evening. The crowd agreed with him; boos and catcalls greeted mention of Mitchell, and loud cheers punctuated the former governor's remarks, here given in full:

"The Chairman of the National Democratic Party, Mr. Mitchell, has announced that Mr. Brown will be elected because South Carolinians haven't got enough interest in their government to vote, or because they are too lazy to vote, or because they are too ignorant to write-in Strom Thurmond on their ballots. I regard this as an insult to the patriotism and the intelligence of South Carolinians. I believe that the people of South Carolina will demonstrate to this Chicago lawyer, who is attempting to meddle in the Senate race here, that our people do have enough interest and enough intelligence to vote, and, furthermore, that they will go to the polls on November 2nd and write-in the name of Strom Thurmond for United States Senate."

Earlier in the week, Mr. Thurmond also replied to the challenge that he should contest the legality of the Executive Committee's nomination of Brown in a court action.

Retorted Thurmond: "The proposal is ridiculous. I have not taken the position that the action of the committee was illegal. What I HAVE said, and what the people of South Carolina have said and will continue to say is that the Committee could just as easily have held a legal primary. The action of the Committee in refusing to hold a primary was an abuse of discretion, and it was indefensible and inexcusable."

Besides routing his flank attackers, Candidate Thurmond continued his spearhead attack against the Committee's action, pounding home his contention that the nomination was contrary to Democratic principles and the will of the electorate. In Georgetown, Sumter, Saluda County, Marion, and Florence, he spoke directly to the voters last week, appearing at rallies arranged by friends and supporters. He took to the airwaves and TV channels as well, speaking to a statewide audience on Friday evening.

Wherever he went, he stated the issue clearly and succinctly; "The issue in the Senate campaign is whether 31 men shall choose a United States Senator or whether the people shall choose him. This is a fight for principle. It is a fight for government by the people instead of government by a small group of committeemen. I have no selfish ambition in this race."