FARM STATEMENT OF STROM THURMOND

As your Senator I would endeavor to improve certain phases of the present drought relief program. Handling of applications for drought aid should be simplified and action should be speeded to make aid available as soon as possible.

Present provisions of the drought disaster program applying to cattle producers should be extended to also apply to hog and poultry producers.

The disaster program should cover not only droughts but also other crop disasters, such as the loss of peach crops by freezing.

Measures must be undertaken to promote soil conservation and to improve land and water use and management. The drought this year emphasizes such need.

I will vote for a firm 90 per cent parity for basic farm commodities. Either low prices or the loss of one crop sets a farmer back for several years. If we are to maintain a prosperous national economy, we must have a prosperous agricultural economy.

The Congress should enact laws to encourage expanded exports of agricultural commodities. This is necessary if we are to restore our export markets to the point that our farmers may produce abundantly without creating burdensome surpluses, which always result in ruinously low prices unless assured of high parity supports.

Agricultural research should be greatly increased, including research in soils, fertilizers, cattle diseases, dairy and beef promotion, poultry culture, crop pests and diseases, and peach and watermelon diseases. Funds should be provided to carry out such a program to an effective degree.

Rural electrification must be extended until every farm home has been provided power and telephones should be made available to our farm families.