

NEWS RELEASE BY SEN. STROM THURMOND (D-SC) ON ADDRESS BEFORE  
NEWBERRY REA MEETING, OCTOBER 22, 1955

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NEWBERRY, October 22--Senator Strom Thurmond today hailed former President Roosevelt's 20-year old executive order establishing the Rural Electrification Administration as having had "more profound effects upon the economic and social history of our nation than almost any other single act."

In a talk before the Newberry Electric Cooperative, the South Carolina Democrat credited the REA with lighting up the rural areas of America and providing farm families with electrical power and labor-saving devices that make life "more enjoyable and comfortable."

The write-in Senator also reviewed the major legislative accomplishments of the 1st Session of the 84th Congress. He placed particular emphasis on legislation affecting farming and textile industries, which he has been so instrumental in sponsoring in the Senate.

He stated that he believes it is imperative that Congress act favorably on the Thurmond-Eastland bill at the beginning of the next session. The bill would spur the sale of surplus cotton on the world markets and at the same time it would place an import quota on foreign-manufactured cotton goods being imported into the United States.

In praising the REA, Senator Thurmond told the crowd that as a result of REA cooperative loans 88 out of every 100 rural farms in South Carolina now have electricity. He pointed out that only three out of every 100 had electricity in 1935.

Speaking further, he said:

"The REA program has lifted many burdens from the shoulders of our hard-working farm families. Today these families, which form the backbone of our economy, have electric lights to replace kerosene lamps in their homes and schools; they have electric power to replace muscle power in much of their work; and--I am glad to say--a great many of our farm families now enjoy the luxuries and conveniences of radio, television, washing machines, refrigeration and food freezers, and many of our other modern appliances which make life more comfortable and enjoyable.

"I know of no agency of the federal government which has made a larger contribution to more people who really deserve such a contribution than has the REA during the past 2 decades."

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