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Conclusion honoring Governor James F. Byrnes

Strom Thurmond

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The man who has just spoken to us was more responsible for one of today's top headlines than any of the persons mentioned in the story which you read on the front-page of your newspaper. I cite this as further proof of the great influence he holds and because there may be some who will forget past events.

I refer to the successful battle waged at the 1952 Democratic Convention in Chicago when Governor Byrnes spoke for the Southern states against the infamous and so-called loyalty oath. Today's headlines and story might lead some to believe that certain National Democratic Party leaders have given a present to the Southern States in agreeing to "require no commitments" of delegates to the National Democratic Convention.

But this was no gift. Don't forget that the firm stand taken by Governor Byrnes against the oath in 1952 at Chicago is the real reason for our political freedom today. The voice of the South has been heard and respected by the national Democratic leaders. But they can not deceive us by offering a "gift" which already belonged to us and which was firmly secured by the courageous stand of Governor Byrnes and his associates in Chicago and the resulting freedom of political action exercised by millions in 1952.