

TV AND RADIO REPORT BY SEN. STROM THURMOND (D-SC), JUNE 29, 1955

MR. COAR: Senator Thurmond, I believe you made history this week when you introduced a Senate Resolution calling for an investigation by the Tariff Commission of the recent trade negotiations at Geneva which may gravely affect the textile industry. I may be wrong, but I don't believe this has ever been done before. Would you mind telling our viewers why you did this?

SEN. THURMOND: I am deeply concerned as to the likely effects of the recent agreements entered into between this country and Japan and other nations on the American textile industry and its employees. My information from a reliable source is that the tariff reductions agreed to in the GATT Conference at Geneva will run as high as 27 to 48 per cent on the basic products of the textile industry. Our textile industry employs more than a million persons, and related industries employ another million. In many sections of the Southeast and New England, the whole economy is directly tied to the healthy operation of the textile industry. Although the agreements entered into at Geneva were under provisions of the Trade Act of 1951 and not the new law passed this month, and do not go into effect until September 10 of this year, I do not believe we should wait until it is too late to protect the people of our great textile industry.

In spite of the fact that no more reductions can be made on items to which I refer under provisions of the new trade law which I advocated and supported, I now advocate prevention instead of attempted remedy to the damage done the textile industry.

MR. COAR: What can this investigation accomplish, Senator?

45-311

SEN. THURMOND: The escape clause of the Trade Act provides that the Tariff Commission shall report to the President if actual or relative imports of competitive products cause or threaten serious injury to the domestic industry producing like or directly competitive products. Under the law in determining whether cause or threat of injury has arisen, the Tariff Commission must take into consideration a downward trend of production, employment, prices, profits, wages and other related matters in the industry. Upon receipt of the Tariff Commission report, the President may make such adjustments in the rates of duty, impose such quotas, or make such other modifications as are found and reported by the commission to be necessary to prevent or remedy serious injury to the respective domestic industry.

MR. COAR: Senator, do you think your resolution stands a good chance of passage?

SEN. THURMOND: I have received much favorable response from fellow Senators and key committee members who will handle the resolution. I believe the resolution should be approved by the Senate as a preventive measure against disaster to a vital industry not only to South Carolina and the Southeast, but to all America. I certainly can't see where it can bring about any harm. If the Tariff Commission should determine that no injury has been caused or threatened by the reduction of tariffs at Geneva, then certainly no harm has been done by performing the investigation. But, if serious damage or the threat of serious damage is found by the Commission, time will have been saved by passage of my resolution. That time saved could well mean the difference between continued operation

and curtailment of many of our textile plants.

In addition to introducing this resolution, I have also written the President a letter protesting the cuts at Geneva and asking that he request investigation by the Tariff Commission.