
During the last several weeks, I have devoted much time to economic problems affecting the people of South Carolina. I will not have time to discuss all of them in this brief broadcast, but I would like to share some of my thinking with you.

The problems of our cotton farmers have been aggravated by the manner in which the Department of Agriculture has administered the Soil Bank plan for 1958. It was indicated that there was ample money appropriated to fulfill all Soil Bank contracts this year, but, when it came time for farmers to sign up for their allotments, quite a different situation became evident.

Farmers signed for allotments in the total amount of about $23,000,000, but the Department of Agriculture had earmarked only $13,000,000 for payment to the cotton farmers of South Carolina.

I believe that the Federal government has a moral obligation to fulfill all Soil Bank commitments. There is no fair way to spread out $13,000,000 to cover an obligation of $23,000,000. The only fair solution is a supplemental appropriation, and I have asked the appropriate committee chairmen in Congress to give this proposal their most serious consideration.

It is hard for our farmers to understand how our country can afford to spend billions of dollars in foreign aid but cannot afford a few millions to honor its contractual obligations with individual citizens.

Another group of South Carolinians with very serious financial problems are those engaged in lumbering. A few years ago,
South Carolina pine was sold extensively in the Eastern area, but this market has now been largely lost because of the competition from West Coast lumber. South Carolina lumbermen have a natural advantage because of their nearness to the market, but this advantage has been lost because of several adjustments in freight rates which work to the disadvantage of South Carolina interests.

I have urged the Interstate Commerce Commission to make a study. I am sure that when the facts are uncovered, justice will require a readjustment favorable to South Carolina lumbermen.

Still another area of concern is with our law enforcement officers. Our policemen perform one of the most vital of public services, but they are too often grossly underpaid. Local communities are finding it very difficult to make ends meet and, in many cases, cannot pay policemen the salaries they deserve.

Under the present tax law, it is possible for local governments to allow their policemen a $5-a-day tax-free subsistence allowance. A bill now before Congress would remove this provision. I am working to prevent any change in the law which would be to the detriment of local governments and our police officers.

Before I conclude this brief talk, let me say just a word about the ward and precinct meetings of the South Carolina
Democratic Party, to be held on Saturday, February 22, except where the County Chairman has designated another date. At these meetings, delegates will be chosen to attend the County Conventions in March. At the County Conventions, delegates will be chosen to attend the State Convention.

It is in these precinct meetings that the process of government really begins. If our State Democratic Party is to be representative of the people's will during the next two years, it is important that the people attend the precinct meetings and play a part in electing their precinct officers and delegates. Some of the delegates elected at the precinct meetings will ultimately represent their counties at the State Convention.

I wish to thank this station for granting me the time to speak to you this week.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington.

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