

(75-11)

STATEMENT OF SENATOR STROM THURMOND RECORDED FOR TELEVISION,
FEBRUARY 19, 1958.

I am happy to report to you that the Senate Commerce Committee has favorably recommended my resolution to halt the trial of pay television until Congress can make a thorough study and determine what should be done.

The Committee also has agreed to hold early hearings on the bill I introduced last year to prohibit pay television.

I am glad the Committee took this action for the following reasons:

Pay television is not a broadcasting service, and may better be described as "narrowcasting" rather than broadcasting, because it would be available only to those willing to pay a fee.

Pay television and the present system of televised broadcasts are absolutely incompatible, because pay television will be able to outbid free television for any program it desires. Existing stations would be compelled, for financial reasons, to turn to pay television.

The commercial use of the airwaves has historically been without direct charge to the receiving public, and a change in this policy is not in the interest of the American people.

A new and broad television policy decision, affecting millions of Americans, faces the nation, and it should be decided by the Congress in the interest of the general public. This should not be left to the whim of a government agency.

47 million television receivers now in use constitute a multi-million dollar investment by the people of the United States, made in reliance on continuance of free television. A change in concept would be a flagrant breach of trust to the people.

END