

(R-12)

STATEMENT BY SEN. STROM THURMOND (D-SC), RECORDED FOR COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM, JUNE 23, 1958.

Statehood for Alaska would be unwise at this time.

Alaska is an undeveloped Territory. Its economy is based on the activities conducted there by the Federal government. It is not the kind of economy that can properly support the responsibilities that go with Statehood.

We have never admitted to Statehood any area which was separated from the rest of the United States by an ocean or by a foreign country. To do so now would set a precedent for the admission as States of other non-contiguous areas.

The new State of Alaska would require extraordinary Federal aid. This would be seized upon as an excuse to extend increased Federal aid to all States, since all States must be treated alike, and State sovereignty would be further diminished.

In addition, the Alaska Statehood Bill before the Senate has many defects. The section authorizing the President to withdraw large areas from State control would weaken the sovereignty of Alaska and make it inferior to the other States. I cannot see how this could be construed as being constitutional. The proposal to grant more than a hundred million acres of public land to the State of Alaska is the greatest "give-away" ever incorporated in a Statehood bill.

It is possible to provide Alaska with a form of government which would give its citizens a greater degree of self-government without the disadvantages of Statehood.

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