STATEMENT OF SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) ON SENATE FLOOR, MARCH 21, 1958.

MR. PRESIDENT:

I wish to congratulate the distinguished Senator from Alabama on the fine statement he has made today. It reflects his intimate knowledge of the problems of the small businessman. It demonstrates clearly that the Select Committee on Small Business has performed a noteworthy service to the country in its study of the problems and in the preparation of the legislation to provide remedies for the problems.

Any study of the economic history of this country is sure to have, running through it, the thread of something that has been called "the American dream." It is the belief, bred in our bones, that any individual can go into business for himself, and that, with the application of perseverance, perspiration, and skill, that individual will have a reasonable chance of making a success of his business.

We believe, in America, that it is not necessary to start out with an inherited fortune to be financially successful. We believe in opportunity for all. This nation was founded in that belief.

In recent years, as our society has become more complex, it has been more difficult for a businessman to start from scratch. Most enterprises, nowadays, require substantial working capital. Certain natural advantages accrue to the owner of a large business. There is the advantage of being able to engage in diversified fields, and the advantage of being able to buy and sell in large quantities. The large business can obtain the services of the best managerial talent, including specialists...
in production, marketing and the law.

Even so, there is still ample room for the small businessman. He may become a specialist himself, and operate in a narrow field where he may become a more proficient expert than any of his larger competitors. He may sell in a local market, where the advantage of proximity will outweigh the advantages held by the larger, but more distant, competitor. He may, very simply, be willing to work harder, to put more into his business and thereby get more out of it. There is room for the small businessman; I am not willing to preach his funeral sermon. I have confidence in small business. I believe it will continue to compete with large business.

But let us not tie the hands of small business by inequitable tax legislation. Whoever begins a small business enterprise must expect that his larger competitor will have some advantages. However, it is surely not consistent with the "American dream" that the small businessman should bear tax shackles that are not also borne by his competitors. It is not consistent with the American philosophy that the small man should be denied the right to be in business.

As the Senator from Alabama has so ably pointed out, there was never any intent, on the part of Congress, to write tax laws that would be unfair to the small businessman. The inequities have not been created deliberately. They have resulted accidentally, in the process of writing and amending some extremely complicated tax legislation.
It is typical of small business that financial reserves are small. Whenever there is a decline in business activity, the small businessman is the first to be pushed into a tight place. For this reason, he especially needs relief at this time.

This is not an emergency relief bill. That point should be made absolutely clear. It is a bill to put the small businessman on an equal footing with large business, in his relations with his government. It is desirable legislation, good times or bad times.

I am glad to be a co-sponsor of this legislation. The enactment of this bill will be a boost, not only for the small businessmen now in business, but also for the many young people of our nation who are ambitious to go into business for themselves.