STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) FOR HIS WEEKLY RADIO BROADCAST, AUGUST 8-9, 1959 (RECORDED AUGUST 7, 1959)

MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

The Senate is already well into its eighth month. Ordinarily adjournment for the year would be in the minds of the Senators at this time. In 1959, however, adjournment may still be a month or more away. We are running into a late session this year because of the insistence of some on passing a so-called civil rights bill. All of the major legislative hurdles have been cleared except for a labor reform bill, a housing bill, and the foreign aid appropriation bill. There are a few appropriation or spending bills pending in conference committees in order to thrash out the differences between the House and Senate versions, but they can be approved very quickly once the conferees reach agreement.

There has been very little clamor for so-called civil rights legislation except from the extremist integrationists and those who feel that the passage of such legislation might improve their chances of winning the White House. Unless the Congress acts prior to September 9 of this year, the unconstitutional and unnecessary Civil Rights Commission will die. I told the Senate in my extended address against the 1957 civil rights legislation that there would be agitation to extend the life of the Commission beyond the expiration date. Government agencies and commissions are much like old soldiers. They never die, but unlike old soldiers, they never fade away either. They just seem to grow and fatten. I was never so shocked in my life when in 1957, while serving as Chairman of the Veterans Affairs
Subcommittee, the chief of one of the VA's boards came before my subcommittee and asked that his board be discontinued because its job had been concluded. I immediately commended the members of the board and obtained passage of legislation which retired the board from existence. This was a very unusual and welcome shock.

The House Judiciary Committee has ordered favorably reported a five-point so-called civil rights bill. It will now go to the House Rules Committee, which is charged with the responsibility of clearing and setting the time limit on all bills approved by all other committees of the House. Congressman Howard Smith of Virginia presides over the Rules Committee. I am hopeful that he will be able to delay the bill and provide for open debate on the House floor in the event it is impossible to deny clearance to it.

In the Senate a subcommittee has approved a two-point so-called civil rights bill, and the full Judiciary Committee has agreed to make it the pending committee business. It is possible that this bill or some similar bill could be reported at any time. I am hopeful, however, that Chairman James Eastland of Mississippi and other Southerners on the committee can either hold the bill indefinitely or delay its approval.

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The House is expected to act very soon now on the weak labor reform legislation which was recently reported by the House Labor and Education Committee. The Senate earlier passed a labor reform bill, which I felt would do some good but should have been more effectively amended. A majority of the Senators, however, favored
a weaker version as against the more effective amendments offered by Senator McClellan, me, and others. We were successful, though, in getting in some good amendments.

I think there is a good possibility that the House may approve the Landrum-Griffin substitute for the committee bill. This proposed amendment is the best possible substitute which stands a chance of passage. It has been indorsed by Senator McClellan, President Eisenhower, most Southern legislators, and just about everyone who favors effective labor reform legislation.

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One of my most important responsibilities in recent weeks has been that of presiding as Chairman of the Armed Services Subcommittee hearings on defense procurement. More than half of the money spent by the Federal government today is for defense. The hearings which I am conducting have one principal aim—that of getting all the facts together, sorting them and determining whether anything constructive might be done to promote efficiency and economy in defense procurement.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington.