

STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND FOR HIS WEEKLY RADIO BROADCAST,
AUGUST 22-23, 1959 (RECORDED AUGUST 20, 1959)

MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

There are two legislative items pending before the Congress which are drawing much attention during the closing days of the congressional session. They are the labor reform bills and the so-called civil rights bills. I am giving my full support to efforts to enact into law at this session a strong and effective labor reform bill which will provide adequate protection to the workers and the public against unscrupulous labor bosses and illegitimate labor practices. I am adamantly opposed to the passage of any so-called civil rights legislation designed to impose the will of the do gooders and the integrationists on the people of the South.

Senators Hennings of Missouri and Keating of New York now have pending before the Senate, so-called civil rights amendments which would treat the South as a conquered province to be ruled over punitively by a czar in the person of the Attorney General of the United States. The Hennings proposal contains eight anti-South provisions. The Keating proposal contains nine points, all of which are also sharply directed at the people of the South.

I am quite certain that there is very little sentiment in the Congress, except from the extreme radicals, to pass such vicious legislation. A Senator from the northern region of our country told me the other day that he has not had a single piece of mail this year urging passage of so-called civil rights legislation. Presidential candidates seem to feel, however, that approval of such legislation would be in the best interest of their candidacy.

What I fear is that those few seeking passage of a so-called civil rights bill/may use the extreme Hennings and Keatings proposals to force passage of what others may term/"less distasteful legislation." To me, any legislation which seeks to force an integrationist philosophy on the people of the South, or which violates the Constitution, is both distasteful and repugnant. I have been working very hard during recent weeks in preparing a very forceful, logical, and legal argument/against the passage of all pending so-called civil rights legislation. If the proponents push the issue, I will be pleased to have the opportunity to present my very extensive arguments/on the floor of the Senate.

- - - - -

I have been very pleased by the support/which the people and the press of South Carolina/have given our efforts to win passage of strong and effective labor reform legislation. I can personally report to you that the mail, phone calls, and telegrams have been pouring into Washington/ from people in every walk of life in our State/and from without our State. I was very glad also that every House member from South Carolina-- and all but a very few from the entire South--gave their support to the Griffin-Landrum labor reform bill/which passed the House last week.

The Griffin-Landrum bill is now pending in a Senate-House conference committee. Ranking members of the Senate and House Labor Committees /are trying to reach agreement on the differences/between the House bill and the Senate-passed Kennedy bill. They should report back to both Houses sometime during the week. At that time the members of both Houses will have an opportunity/to either ratify the agreements reached by the conferees/ or to insist on the version passed by their own body.

84-15)

Earlier this week I appeared with Senator McClellan, the chief investigator of labor racketeering, on a nation-wide telecast about labor reform legislation. He pointed out the superior features of the House bill over the Senate bill, such as the provisions in the Taft-Hartley amendments covering secondary boycotts, organizational and recognition picketing, and the no-man's land problem. He also made the point that the Senate bill is stronger in a few respects, such as the fiduciary relationships of union officers to the members, prohibiting convicts from holding union office, insuring democratic election of union officers, and in the penalties imposed. We both feel the best provisions of both bills/should be finally approved. I asked him, however, which bill he preferred/in the event the conference committee should reach a stalemate. He answered very quickly/that the Senate should then adopt / the House-passed Landrum-Griffin bill.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington.

-END-