New Release on address of Senator Strom Thurmond (D-SC) to the Carolinas Branch of the Associated General Contractors of America, Inc., Boca Raton, Florida, 1960 November 10

Strom Thurmond

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BOCA RATON, FLA., Nov. 10--U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond warned in a speech here today that the American people stand in danger of losing their economic, political, and individual liberties to an alliance of forces bent on firmly implanting socialism in this Country.

In addressing the Carolinas Branch of the Associated General Contractors of America, Inc., the South Carolina Democrat named the following groups as enemies of liberty: "the welfare-staters, the free spenders, the big labor bosses, and the advocates of an all-powerful central government." He indicated by his remarks that they all had one objective--a socialist system for America.

Thurmond's formula for halting and reversing the trend to the left consisted of an unflinching and uncompromising overall fight "against the forces of socialism and tyranny wherever the battles arise." He urged the contractors to broaden the scope of their resistance to common situs picketing legislation to every proposal which would restrict liberty, particularly centralization of power in Washington, socialistic and extravagant spending proposals, and moves which would further increase the power of big labor bosses.

The Senator trained his verbal fire on all four groups, but he reserved most of his time for the welfare-staters. He tabbed them as being the "most subtle" of the forces fostering socialism. The welfare state road to socialism was pictured by the Senator as succeeding where the socialist party approach had failed previously because the welfare state system did not propose to change the form of our capitalistic system, as would be done through nationalization.

"Rather than attaining socialism through ownership by the state," he averred, "the welfare-state concept achieves socialism through regulation and control by the state, while leaving the outward vestiges of ownership in private hands. Unfortunately, this system is equally as effective for the destruction of capitalism, and therefore equally as socialistic, as is the outright ownership of property by the state which is accomplished by nationalization."

In taking "big labor bosses" to task, Thurmond made the following comments:

"They seek not just collective bargaining with management but to virtually seize control of industries and businesses in order to dictate to the owners whom they will hire and fire, and to assume the prerogatives and policy-making powers of the companies which rightfully belong to management."
In other words, they want to do everything except put up the capital, exercise the business ingenuity, and assume the risks and liabilities of the owners."

The Senator chided the labor leaders for their pressures to push through Congress legislation which would permit secondary boycotts (pressure on neutral employers) in the construction industry. He said the legislation would not only have serious effects on construction operations and costs but would be a "crippling blow to our national defense effort."

Thurmond, a major general in the Army Reserve and a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said he had obtained figures from the Defense Department which showed that unions averaged one strike every four days during fiscal year 1960 at vital Air Force missile bases. He expressed the fear that passage of the legislation would multiply many times the 95 strikes and 78,000 man-days lost at these installations during the past year.

Turning to centralization of power advocates, the 1948 States' Rights presidential candidate was particularly critical of federal grant-in-aid programs and the efforts of the National Government to intervene in local affairs by forcing desegregation of the public schools. He said there are now approximately 100 grant-in-aid programs which contribute to the flow of more and more State and local powers and tax sources to Washington.

The "free spenders" were credited by the Senator with much responsibility for the "$750-billion mortgage" which Budget Director Maurice Stans says the National Government is obligated to meet in future years in addition to annual outlays for defense, welfare, and commerce. He said the spenders have "squandered billions on non-defense programs--many of which are unconstitutional, unnecessary, and unwise."

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