For Release 12:30 P. M., Monday, September 15.

REMARKS OF J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA, AT THE
REGIONAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REAL ESTATE
BOARDS, HELD IN MYRTLE BEACH, S. C., ON SEPTEMBER 15, 1947

We in South Carolina are very happy to welcome you to Myrtle
Beach, and we hope that you will come again soon. Myrtle Beach
is one of the finest strands on the Atlantic.

You are all concerned with housing, one of the three physical
essentials of life. We all recall the words of President Roosevelt
—that one-third of the nation is "ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-
housed." The New Deal was dedicated to relieving that situation.

Billions of dollars were spent in the effort.

I want to tell you today that, ironically enough, we appear
to be in extreme danger of losing those gains of the New Deal,
especially with regard to housing. On the surface, we in South
Carolina would seem to have adequate housing. According to the
most recent housing census, we have slightly more than 450,000
dwelling units, of which 18.7 per cent have been built since
1929. The average number of persons in each unit works out to 4.14. That is not excessive. In addition, in my travels over the State, I have seen new houses going up almost everywhere.

This has been pleasing to me. Home owners are substantial citizens. They have a stake in their community. They participate in community life. They are our best guarantee of the traditional way of American life. Especially now, they have it in their power to make a real contribution to the Nation.

A moment ago, I said that we seem to have adequate housing "on the surface." You know as well as I do, however, that something is seriously wrong with the housing situation. I want to tell you openly of my concern. You handle most of the real estate rentals and sales in our part of the country. You have now an opportunity to render an extremely important service to your communities.

The fact is that a person finds it hard to get a place to live in South Carolina, as well as over the entire Nation. Is it because we do not have enough places to go around? It cer-
tainly is not.

We saw over the Nation only a few months ago a curious phenomenon. In almost every state, including, I am unhappy to say, South Carolina, some owners of vacant apartments and houses refused to rent them. They refused to rent them because they would not accept the OPA rent ceilings. They hoped by this means to force the government to throw rent ceilings out.

Now, many of these owners go to church. Many of them give to charities. They give their time to civic betterment. They are kind to their children, and undoubtedly would give a hungry man a meal. They consider themselves good citizens and good Christians. Are they?

Let's consider a little background. At the time they went on this odd strike, the armed forces were releasing and had released millions of men and women. Millions of them needed places to live. Millions of them, prevented by service against the enemy on the fighting fronts from getting married, wanted to
establish homes and raise families.

At that time millions of war workers, redistributing themselves over the Nation when their plants shut down, were likewise seeking places to live.

These were the people who saw to it that those same buildings which the owners refused to rent were not requisitioned by men who served under the Swastika and the Rising Sun.

This was their reward.

Were those owners Christians? I would call those who seek to profit from misery -- especially the misery of those to whom they owe their property if not their lives -- something else. I would not call them, as we called other people of similar breed after the War Between the States, carpetbaggers and scalawags. I would call them gluttonous hogs.

I sincerely hope that not one of you counseled any of your clients to withhold apartments or houses. I do not see how you can sleep well if you did.

Now we are seeing another phenomenon which I never before
associated with America.

This is the "get while the getting's good" spirit.

Look in the daily newspapers of South Carolina and you will see what I mean. Look at that short space devoted to advertisements of apartments and houses to rent. Then take a look at the space devoted to advertisements of houses for sale.

Owners complain that they cannot make enough by renting. They therefore withdraw their houses from the rental market and offer them for sale. In theory, they have every right to do this. But in practice, they do not have a moral right to do this with the objective they have in mind. Their objective is profiteering, in the worst sense of the word. This is morally equivalent to black marketing.

They want to force people to buy their houses in order to find a place to live. But that is not the worst part. These houses are ridiculously and exorbitantly overpriced. Many of these sellers don't care how the money is raised. All they want is the cash in hand.
Many of these people are getting rich out of human misery and unhappiness. I, for one, did not fight in this war to make anyone rich. I am ashamed that there are people of this type in South Carolina.

I will say also that there are some real estate dealers who agree entirely with the profiteering theory. They want abolition of all rent controls. They call them vicious and unAmerican. These are people who have seen what happened when the Republicans killed OPA food ceilings. They now want the same thing to happen on rents. They say that then there will be plenty of apartments and houses offered for rent.

Well, plenty would be offered for rent, all right. But where would the people come from who could afford to live in them? How many people in South Carolina could afford to pay double their present rents? Let me remind you that the average annual income in South Carolina is only $719.

As for saying that rent ceilings are unAmerican, I tell you that is a ridiculous statement. The United States of America
compelled men to risk and lose their lives on foreign soil during the war. Was that vicious and unAmerican? I will do everything in my power to help keep rent control until some degree of sanity returns to profiteering real estate owners.

You real estate people, as I said before, can render important services. You can counsel your clients to be reasonable. Somebody, somewhere, has got to stop this horrible inflation. I would like for you to be the ones who open the campaign.

Urge your clients to put reasonable prices on their property. Urge them to rent. Let me put in a special word here about one type of property owner -- the type which says "No children."

I regard this as loathsome and inhuman. Many of the people who fought in this war were children whose parents came up against this same restriction in 1919. I would like anybody to just try to justify such owners to me.

Here in South Carolina we have a long tradition of decency. Some of our people have strayed away. I ask you to help me bring them back.