

Nixon Gave Thurmond Veto on Court

By Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson

The position that Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), the Senate's No. 1 Dixiecrat, played in the backstage maneuvering at Miami Beach is probably the most important development so far in the election campaign.

Sen. Thurmond has now denied to Richard Starnes of the Scripps-Howard newspapers that he made any deal with Nixon. But in so doing Thurmond actually confirms the fact that he did veto Gov. Nelson Rockefeller and Mayor John Lindsay of New York, Sen. Mark Hatfield of Oregon and Sen. Charles Percy of Illinois for the vice presidential nomination.

"To me," Sen. Thurmond is quoted as saying, "Mr. Nixon's assurances on the kind of Vice President he intended to pick were ample. But there was some renewed alarm . . . and I had Dent (chairman of the South Carolina delegation) call John Mitchell (Nixon's campaign manager)."

There followed the all-night session at the Eden Roc hotel at which Northern candidates were vetoed and it was finally agreed Gov. Spiro Agnew of Maryland was acceptable to the South.

Apparently the Senator from South Carolina didn't

consider this a deal. Nevertheless, to paraphrase Shakespeare, a deal by any other name would smell as sweet.

This, however, is only part of the story. The rest of it will also be denied. However, here is what happened. Sen. Thurmond met Nixon privately in the Riviera hotel in Atlanta on June 1. This was when the deal described above was consummated. As already reported, Nixon made Thurmond his private ambassador to corral Southern delegates, and Thurmond in turn persuaded Nixon that he could not expect to hold Southern delegates at the convention if he selected a Northern liberal as his running mate.

Supreme Court Veto

But their conversation went much further. Thurmond is passionately interested in the Supreme Court. He feels that the worst blot on American history in this century was the Supreme Court's desegregation ruling of 1954, coupled with its other rulings—the one-man, one-vote decision for the reapportionment of state legislatures and rulings protecting the constitutional rights of accused criminals.

Thurmond is so bitter against the Supreme Court that he spent two days firing vitriolic questions at Justice Abe Fortas during his Senate confirmation hearings to be

Chief Justice Thurmond's vehemence reminded other Senators of the old bulldozing days of the late Sen. Joe McCarthy.

He was referring to a ruling handed down before Fortas was appointed to the Court prohibiting the police from holding suspected criminals without formally charging them.

Sen. Thurmond had been nursing his critical view of the Court long before the Fortas appointment, so it was not surprising that he raised it as a main point in his private talk with Nixon in Atlanta at the Riviera hotel. Though unpublished, this was the most important part of the Nixon-Thurmond deal. Thurmond got an agreement from Nixon that if elected, he would appoint future Supreme Court Justices agreeable to the South—in effect giving Thurmond the right to pass on all Court appointments just as he passed on vice presidential candidates in Miami Beach.

Thurmond's Record

Most surprising aftermath of the Nixon-Thurmond deal is the fact that many editors have been so complacent about it. For approximately ten days it has been well known that Thurmond was Nixon's Southern emissary in Miami Beach, yet the public has not been reminded of

Thurmond's remarkable record.

It dates back to 1948 when he led the walkout of Southern delegates from the Democratic National Convention after Hubert Humphrey forced the adoption of a civil rights plank in the Democratic platform for the first time in history.

Thurmond promptly proceeded to organize the States Rights party and ran against Harry S. Truman for President, thus trying indirectly to help Gov. Thomas E. Dewey get elected. He failed.

Since then, Thurmond has become the unfailing spokesman for neo-fascists in the United States. Newspaper editors have good reason to know of his close ties with Gen. Edwin Walker, because Walker brought a series of mammoth libel suits against the Associated Press as well as the Louisville Courier-Journal, New Orleans Times-Picayune, Denver Post and other papers. The cost of defending the Associated Press suit alone ran around \$800,000, even though the AP won.

It was Thurmond, a reserve Major General in the Army, who became Gen. Walker's No. 1 defender when Walker faced a Senate investigation. Thurmond tried to let Walker get by with a written statement to the Senate, rather than being cross-examined—as Thurmond did Justice Fortas.