

Defense of Nixon Draws Cheers in Oklahoma City

Oklahoma City

An estimated 1200 persons gave a standing ovation when Senator Strom Thurmond (Rep-S.C.) called for an end to the "vendetta" against President Nixon.

In a press conference before the Support the President Rally Saturday night, Thurmond challenged congressional critics of Mr. Nixon to bring impeachment charges against the President.

"If they really have

grounds, let them bring them and quit talking about it," Thurmond said, adding that bringing such charges might be the best way to clear the air.

"I expect to support President Nixon until he proves he is not worthy, which is not the case now," Thurmond said. However, he added, "I don't think he has been entirely blameless."

Thurmond said the President had been misled by some of his advisers and that he should have kept a

closer eye on things. But the senator said the President's preoccupation with efforts on behalf of world peace was easy to understand.

"I think people ought to stop harassing this man and stop their vendetta against him," Thurmond said.

Senator Harry Bellmon (Rep-Okla.) took note of newsmen covering the event and said, "I hope they tell it like it is."

Bellmon said people in Washington would be amazed to learn that a rally for the President right now would require a meeting place bigger than a phone booth."

Associated Press