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Guest (s): Senator Herman E. Talmadge (D-GA)

Title: Will South Accept Integration?

Note: Questions were paraphrased and/or shortened by the transcriber. For the exact question, please consult the audiotapes.

Morphew: (No mention of this being a special report from Washington, but the intro states that the program is 'from Washington')...introduction...so many times we're hear northerners say that the south will eventually accept integration in time, do you think this is the case?

Talmadge: I certainly do not, Dick, and I might say, when you mention civil rights bills, I have never read a civil right bill in my life that didn't take away more rights for the people than it granted. Second, it vests the civil rights of individuals in a government official or government bureaucracy rather than making them inalienable with the people as they are now under the constitution of the United States and particularly the first ten amendments of the constitution. Thirdly, they are politically inspired by minority bloc voting elements in the urban centers of our country, and fourthly, they are aimed and politically motivated against a certain section of our country. So, it's entirely foreign from civil rights as we know them in accordance with the constitution. In fact, it's a revolutionary and alien doctrine.

Morphew: So if southerners don't accept it voluntarily, do you believe force is the answer?

Talmadge: I certainly do not. We have always seen, by studies of history, that you cannot impose laws on people that are not accepted by the overwhelming majority of people. We've seen that recently in Hungary where the Russian tanks destroyed a whole country but they still have not made the people acquiesce in their philosophy of life and government. We particularly saw it in the prohibition bill and every effort was made to stop the manufacture, transportation and sale of intoxicating beverages in this country, and it was far more successful in our area of the country than it was in other areas of the country but the people now who want to use bayonet to force integration on the South openly thwarted and defied the prohibition laws of our country because it was unacceptable in their area of the country.

Morphew: Well, carrying this left-wing theory even farther, if we don't accept integration and if force isn't the solution, how about the federal government controlling the schools, is that an answer?

Talmadge: I certainly do not. We know that wherever the national government has controlled education, such as Russia and Germany and Hitler, under Hitler and Mussolini and Stalin, that they have used it as an instrumentality of totalitarian government. Now, of course the schools are not even mentioned in our federal constitution. Schools were created by the state and local governments and they are completely and solely financed by those governments and they ought to be responsive to their control and wishes. In fact, just last year, when the Congress passed a bill admitting Alaska as the 49th state, there was a specific provision in the Alaska bill giving Alaska sole administrative control of their schools. I'm for that principle for Alaska, I'm for it for Georgia, I'm for it for Mississippi, I'm for it for every state in the Union.

Morphew: How do you feel historians will come to regard these attempts by the SC to force integration?

Talmadge: Unless we become a complete totalitarian form of government, live under a dictatorship, future historians will regard it the same way they did the Reconstruction era in the South. Claude Bowers's book, *The Tragic Era*, probably describes it better than any other book that I have read on that particular unfortunate era. And it will be one of the saddest periods of history in the entire history of our nation.

Morphew: Is there some way that some of these external pressures to force integration in the South can be removed?

Talmadge: I hope so. I think if all of us who believe in constitutional government, local self-government vested in the states and its subdivisions, get on the offensive and if we can get our message to the American people by television, radio and press and platform speeches in every way possible, I'm convinced in my own mind that the overwhelming majority of the American people who do not want to destroy the control of schools by state and local governments. Toward that end, as you know, I have recently introduced a constitutional amendment proposing to vest control in state and local governments. At least that will put our area of the country on the offensive rather than continuing on the defensive, and it'll give us a media to project our thoughts, our views on this particular issue, and if we can get the cooperation of press, radio and television, we can get our message to the people of this country. And if the people understand the issue, I believe they will respond favorably.

Morphew: The amendment is not a long one, will you read it for our audience?

Talmadge: I'd be delighted. It would amend the constitution to read as follows: 'Administrative control of any public school, public educational institution, or public educational system operated by any state or any other political or other subdivision thereof shall be vested exclusively in such state and subdivision and nothing contained in

this constitution shall be construed to deny to the residents thereof the right to determine for themselves the manner in which any such school, institution, or system is administered by such state and subdivision.' Now that simply means, Dick, that if that is written into the Constitution, every state in this union and political subdivision in conjunction with the state will have the authority to administer their public school system as they see fit.

Morphew: If this is adopted, what would its immediate effect be?

Talmadge: Well, its immediate effect would be to take the pressure off of the Congress for further civil rights and integration bills because they would be meaningless. Its immediate effect would be to restore the school operations in our southern states to normal, to relieve the fear and anxiety on the part of students, parents, and teachers of destruction of their public school system. It would put our operation of our public school system back on the same level that it was prior to the integration decision of May the seventeenth, nineteen hundred and fifty-four.

Morphew: Would it have an additional long range effect in later years?

Talmadge: I certainly think it would. I think it would destroy the continued and constant and ever-increasing pressure to move all phases of government from municipalities, from counties, and from states, to Washington, D.C., and otherwise to make of our people one great monolithic nation instead of a dual system of government that we've know from seventeen hundred and eighty-nine to the present time.

Morphew: One statement you've made in recent addresses that has struck me and I would like to discuss for a moment, that is that all government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed, and you are saying that these attempts to force integration definitely do not have the consent of the governed.

Talmadge: That's certainly true. As you know that statement is taken verbatim from the Declaration of Independence which was written by Thomas Jefferson. When our foreparents settled this nation, they realized that they had been subjected to many tyrannies by our mother country, Great Britain, and they decided to establish a new system of government, a dual system of government and the reason they decided to establish a dual system of government is because, while then we only had thirteen colonies, they knew that the problems of Georgia, the southernmost colony, would be different than those of New York or Pennsylvania, they knew that our country would one day expand to become a great nation, it would have territories that lie beyond the sea, and they realized that the solution of local problems ought to be solved by the people on the local level who are familiar with the problems, who understood the problems, and understood the best means of solution. And they thought that any form of government that was imposed on people, ought to be with the consent of the people upon which that government was imposed. Now, of course, in recent years, it has become an international policy with our country. Woodrow Wilson's greatest claim to fame as a great president is because he wanted every country on the face of the earth to have local, self-

determination, that is government by the consent of the governed. And we have continued that policy up to the present time, yet we have seen our chief executive use bayonets to destroy the social life in Little Rock, Arkansas, and our nation threatening to do the same in vast areas of our country to impose upon us social concepts of life totally alien and foreign to everything we've ever known throughout our history.

Morphew: Have you noticed any signs by your colleagues recently that there is a 'reawakening' to this consent of the governed?

Talmadge: Dick, I would like to think so. Those who are realistic in the privacy of the cloak rooms would tell you they thoroughly agree with you. A great number of people in Congress now have become professional South-haters and South-baiters. They want to take up where Thaddeus Stevens left off. But in the final analysis, people who represent districts and states in the Congress of the United States are responsive to the will of the voters, and if we can ever reach some great masses of the American people, we can win this struggle ultimately and we cannot win it until we do reach the masses.

New intro with new patriotic music

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