Zusatzmaterialien


Weblog-Postings zu Fallbeispiel (1)
Z 1 – Duncan B. Black („Atrios“) – „Eschaton“-Weblog
Z 2 – Official Democratic Ticket in Mississippi 1948
Z 3 – Joshua Mica Marshall – „Talkingpointsmemo“-Weblog
Z 4 – Glenn Reynolds – „Instapundit“-Weblog
Z 5 – Sam Heldman – „(The Return of) Ignatz“-Weblog
Z 6 – Andrew Sullivan – „The Daily Dish“-Weblog
Z 7 – David Frum – „david frum’s diary“-Weblog
Z 8 – Tim Noah – „Slate“
Z 9 – „The Note“ – Artikel
Z 10 – „CBS News“ – Artikel
Z 11 – „FoxNews.com“ – Artikel
Z 12 – „CNN Capital Gang“ – Auszug aus Mitschrift

Materialien zu Fallbeispiel (2)
Z 13 – Tagesschau.de – Bericht aus Berlin: Sommerinterview
1. Posting vom 06. Dezember 2002 (13:21)

**Trent Lott**

Here is what Senator Trent Lott, Republican of Mississippi, said yesterday at Senator Strom Thurmond's birthday party, according to ABCNEWS' O'Keefe. "I want to say this about my state: When Strom Thurmond ran for president we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had of followed our lead we wouldn't of had all these problems over all these years, either."

Since political correctness is the scourge of society, I won't mention that the problems Lott is referring to are the Civil and Voting Rights Acts.

UPDATE: To be fair, as people have pointed out, Lott is also likely referring lots of other horrible things like the Brown decision as well.

UPDATE 2: Cut the crap my friends on 'the other side.' Tim Noah reminds us exactly what Strom was running on, and what Lott was saying he was proud his state supported:

"I want to tell you, ladies and gentleman, that there's not enough troops in the army to force the southern people to break down segregation and admit the Nigra race into our theaters, into our swimming pools, into our homes, and into our churches.

I'm sure Lott's frightening comments will get at least much coverage as John Kerry's hair.


2. Posting vom 06. Dezember 2002 (18:02)

Here is what Senator Lott was proud of in 1948 Mississippi. Check out the official Democratic Party sample ballot (vgl. hierfür Anhang XX, RHP).

You see it was all about States' Rights. The State's Right to condone lynching of 'Nigras.' If only Strom had won, and Truman's anti-lynching law hadn't passed, we wouldn't be having all these problems. Simple.

Look! John Kerry got a haircut!
From the Dixiecrat Platform, regarding their opposition to the repeal of the poll tax:

*The negro is a native of tropical climate where fruits and nuts are plentiful and where*
clothing is not required for protection against the weather. The essentials of society in the jungle are few and do not include the production, transportation and marketing of goods. [Thus] his racial constitution has been fashioned to exclude any idea of voluntary cooperation on his part.

[edited to add the words 'repeal of']


I love being right! Well, not really.

While the John Kerry haircut story made Inside Politics, the what the hell is up with helmet head Lott's hair story Trent Lott's comments did not. Nor did that little bastard Jonathan Karl ask him about them.


Haha, the prince of darkness says that Lott was "kidding."

SHIELDS: And now for the Outrage of the Week.
This week Mississippi Senator Trent Lott said, quote, "When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years either," end quote.

In his 1948 campaign defending racial segregation, Thurmond said, quote, "All the bayonets of the Army cannot force the Negro into our homes, our schools, our churches," end quote.

To his credit, Strom Thurmond changed dramatically. Why, then, does Trent Lott romanticize an era of hate when black Americans were truly oppressed?
Bob Novak.

NOVAK: I think Trent Lott was kidding, Mark.


I've never quite understood why every time Glenn Reynolds says something half way reasonable all the lefty bloggers feel the need to point it out and praise him. It reminds of the pathological behavior some victims of spouse abuse display - "Isn't he wonderful! He didn't hit me today!"*

But, in any case, this time Reynolds hasn't said something half way reasonable, he's said something quite offensive and Sam Heldman so far is the only one to call him on it (that I've seen, anyway).

Reynolds says:

*It's easy to forget how things once were. Lott has, apparently. At least, it would be worse if he hasn't.*

It isn't that Lott is a bigot who remembers exactly how things used to be and misses it, it's that he's forgotten!

Not reasonable at all.

*Yes, by casting the hypothetical spouse abuser as a male I have once against demonstrated what a sexist Leftist I am.*


Trent Lott's home state led the nation in black victims of lynching from 1882-1930, both in terms of the absolute numbers and per capita of the black population. *And through 1962 as well.*

Reasons giving for lynchings:

- Acting suspiciously
- Gambling
- Quarreling
- Adultery
- Grave robbing
- Race hatred; Race troubles
- Aiding murderer
- Improper with white woman
- Rape
- Arguing with white man
- Incest
- Rape-murders
- Arson Inciting to riot
Resisting mob
Assassination
Inciting trouble
Robbery
Attempted murder
Indolence
Running a bordello
Banditry
Inflammatory language
Sedition
Being disreputable
Informing
Slander
Being obnoxious
Injuring livestock
Spreading disease
Boasting about riot
Insulting white man
Stealing
Burglary
Insulting white woman
Suing white man
Child abuse
Insurrection
Swindling
Conjuring
Kidnapping
Terrorism
Courting white woman
Killing livestock
Testifying against white man
Criminal assault
Living with white woman
Throwing stones
Cutting levee
Looting
Train wrecking
Defending rapist
Making threats
Trying to colonize blacks
Demanding respect
Miscegenation
Trying to vote
Disorderly conduct
Mistaken identity
Unpopularity
Eloping with white woman
Molestation
Unruly remarks
Entered white woman's room
Murder
Using obscene language
Enticement
Non-sexual assault
Vagrancy
Extortion
Peeping Tom
Violated quarantine
Fraud
Pillage
Voodooism
Plotting to kill
Voting for wrong party
Frightening white woman
Poisoning well

It is important to note that the purpose of lynchings, and defending the right to keep on doing it, wasn’t just to punish the victims for their perceived transgressions. It was terrorism, plain and simple, designed to intimidate the black population.

Z 2 – Official Democratic Ticket in Mississippi 1948

(http://mshistory.k12.ms.us/, Mississippi History Now. An online publication of the Mississippi Historical Society)

THIS is the OFFICIAL DEMOCRATIC TICKET

IN MISSISSIPPI

To Vote Democratic on Tuesday, November 2nd You Will Vote This Ticket—
And You Will Vote for These Democratic Presidential Electors

Duly Nominated by the Official Mississippi State Democratic Convention and Pledged to Governors Thurmond and Wright.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd IS THE BIG TEST DAY FOR ALL MISSISSIPPIANS

—Every Mississippi man and woman should vote — without fail — we must show our full strength to our enemies.

—Every Mississippi man and woman should vote the straight Democratic Ticket as shown on the right. Carry this sample ballot to the polls so you will know who the official Democratic presidential electors are.

—Make it 100 per cent for Governors Thurmond and Wright on November 2nd.

REMEMBER

A vote for Truman electors is a direct order to our Congressmen and Senators from Mississippi to vote for passage of Truman’s so-called civil rights program in the next Congress. This means the vicious FEPC — anti-poll tax — anti-lynching and anti-segregation proposals will become the law of the land and our way of life in the South will be gone forever.

If you FAIL to VOTE you are in fact casting a vote for Truman and his vicious anti-Southern program.

Get in the Fight for STATES' RIGHTS — Fight for THURMOND and WRIGHT — Be Sure to Vote on NOVEMBER 2nd — and Vote the STRAIGHT OFFICIAL DEMOCRATIC TICKET

Published for your information by the MISSISSIPPI STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

I've always thought that for all the jokes about age and longevity in office, the one line that really captures how long Strom Thurmond has been around is this: he ran for president against Harry Truman.

Do you really have to say any more than that?

Of course, Thurmond ran as the presidential candidate on the "States-Rights Democrat" or "Dixiecrat" ticket -- a candidacy that was based exclusively and explicitly upon the preservation of legalized segregation and opposition to voting rights and civil rights for blacks.

There's a sort of agreement in Washington these days -- with Thurmond's retirement and hundredth birthday -- to sort of forget about all that unpleasantness.

But look at what Trent Lott said about that candidacy yesterday...

I want to say this about my state: When Strom Thurmond ran for president we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had of followed our lead we wouldn't of had all these problems over all these years, either.

Oh, what could have been!!! Just another example of the hubris now reigning among Capitol Hill Republicans.


"A poor choice of words conveyed to some the impression that I embrace the discarded policies of the past. Nothing could be further from the truth, and I apologize to anyone who was offended by my statement." ... That's the apology Senator Trent Lott issued tonight in the face of the mounting controversy -- some of it blog-borne -- over his endorsement of Strom Thurmond's segregationist presidential platform from 1948.

In such a situation one doesn't want to appear to be flogging a dead horse even after the guy has a apologized. And to me this issue transcends partisanship so I especially would not want to appear to be doing that. But frankly this strikes me as a pretty feeble apol-
ogy. He won't say what 'policies' he's talking about. He won't say they're wrong, just that they were 'discarded'.

It's probably too much to ask for him to get down on his knees and confess his sins. But given Lott's history of flirtation with neo-segregationist politics and the seriousness of the original statement, something a bit more explicit and specific was and is in order. Really, why so grudging? Why so hard to say that he knows, like everyone else knows, that segregation was wrong? It's like getting blood from a stone. If Ron Bonjean needs some help drafting a new apology, I refer him back to my proposed statement from yesterday.


(…)

Here's David Broder from yesterday on Meet the Press, commenting on Trent Lott's endorsement of the platform Strom Thurmond's pro-segregation, anti-civil-rights 1948 presidential candidacy ...

It's not the first time that he has had to explain his association with or references to that kind of race-focused rhetoric in the South. He was involved a few years ago speaking to a group that was pretty overtly racist in the South. Race remains, much as we would like it to be otherwise, a very, very important factor in our national life. And it is a decisive factor in Southern politics. Any Southern politician that you talk to can tell you with precision exactly what percentage of the white vote he or she needs to get, because all of them assume that 90 percent or more of the black vote is going to the Democrats. As long as that racial divide continues, any kind of comment like this on Senator Lott’s part is going to be-have all kinds of bad resonance.

Does Broder really need his calls returned by Lott that badly? Is that really the best he can do? A 'bad resonance'?

Here's Broder on the shame of President Clinton and how Broder thought he'd be-smirched Washington. "He came in here and he trashed the place. And it's not his place."

David Broder, the dean of the Washington press corps. Says it all.

In the department of quotes that just make you cringe, see this graf from the Associated Press article which reports Trent Lott's 'apology'.

Kevin L. Martin, government and political affairs director of the African American Republican Leadership Council, said people were overreacting to the remarks. "By no means was he endorsing segregation or anything like that. It was lighthearted, it was humorous." Martin said Lott captures 25 percent of the black vote in Mississippi, which he said couldn't happen if Lott were a racist.

Ugh ...

Posting vom 06. Dezember 2002 (9:15 PM)

TRENT LOTT DESERVES THE SHIT he's getting from Atrios and Josh Marshall.

It's one thing to say that Strom Thurmond should be allowed to celebrate his 100th birthday without people focusing on his allegiance to a hateful and oppressive ideology half a lifetime (er, his lifetime -- for most people it would be a whole lifetime) ago -- just as youthful flings with Marxism may be forgiven later on even if they're nothing to be proud of.

But to say, as Lott did, that the country would be better off if Thurmond had won in 1948 is, well, it's proof that Lott shouldn't be Majority Leader for the Republicans, to begin with. And that's just to begin with. It's a sentiment as evil and loony as wishing that Gus Hall had been elected.

(The official 1948 Democratic Party sample ballot on Atrios' page, by the way, is a must-read. It's easy to forget how things once were. Lott has, apparently. At least, it would be worse if he hasn't.)


Posting vom 09. Dezember 2002 (11:21 PM)

LOTT HAS APOLOGIZED, though I'm not sure this will end the matter. On the other hand, Jesse Jackson (whose record in this area isn't very clean: remember "Hymietown" and his mock-surprise at a black journalists' meeting that so many black people could read and write?) is still on the attack, and he's joined by professional race-baiter Al Sharpton. That's pretty sure to drain the anti-Lott forces of moral authority in short order.

Then again, Tom Daschle is defending Lott, which, well, doesn't help anybody much as far as I can tell.

I do understand the virtue in saying nice things about people who reach the age of 100 yrs old, even if you don't agree with their politics -- particularly if you can find something that you like about the person, leaving aside the politics. But that virtue does not explain Trent Lott's praise of Strom Thurmond yesterday, as reported by ABC News (via Atrios), which -- if his words are taken to mean what they say, which is the way I approach people's words unless proven otherwise -- means that Trent Lott thinks that the country would have been better off if the overtly racist Dixiecrats had prevailed in 1948 rather than Truman. Then, says Lott, we wouldn't have had "all these problems over all these years".

UPDATE: I keep thinking about this and wondering what Senator Lott would say he meant, if pressed about this. Even if you take his statement at its most minimal -- as a regret that Truman was President during 1948-1952 rather than Thurmond -- what does Senator Lott think that the executive branch did during those years, or didn't do, that is responsible for "all these [what?] problems over all these years"? Is there any plausible answer, other than that Senator Lott wishes that the Dixiecrats’ stance on race had prevailed?


So Senator Lott's office was given a chance yesterday to explain what he might have meant by his comments yesterday (see below) other than vicious racism of the virulent 1948 variety -- and that office was unable or unwilling to give any substantive explanation. If the Senator has any capacity for shame, he should resign. See Atrios for some historical explanation. And by the way, Prof. Reynolds (Instapundit) is way too generous in suggesting that Senator Lott has apparently forgotten what Thurmond stood for in 1948; no one who pays attention to politics in the Deep South and is over 30 years old could possibly not know. Just call Senator Lott's comment what it is: the most unchanging, severe, extreme, overt, intentional racism.

TRENT LOTT MUST GO: Sorry to those who think I'm making too much of this. But it seems to me that the G.O.P. has zero credibility on racial matters until they get rid of this man as Senate Majority Leader. When I'm in agreement with the Family Research Council, a virulently anti-gay group, you know something's got to give. Last night's revelation - that Lott had said almost identical things over twenty years ago - clinches in my mind that this was not a poor choice of words. It was a classic political gaffe - where the politician in question accidentally says what he truly believes. And no, I don't think bringing up Robert Byrd, another old bigot, is a satisfactory response. It's a sign that you cannot defend someone when you respond by attacking someone else. Lott had a chance to repudiate his words and he chose to side-step the issue. He's flirted with racists before. He's said the same things before. It seems to me that president Bush now has his Sister Souljah opportunity. Just as Clinton secured centrist backing when he repudiated the anti-white racism of Sister Souljah, so Bush needs to repudiate the anti-black racism of Lott publicly, clearly and irrevocably. If he doesn't, then I'm afraid he will lose any black support indefinitely and the respect of many decent voters who aren't black as well. Lott's remarks are, in fact, a direct insult to black members of the administration and the Republican Party. Mr. President, we're waiting for you to say something.

RAINES AWARD NOMINEE: This is how the Washington Times spins the Trent Lott story today: "Black lawmakers upset with Daschle." At least Howell Raines has some sophistication.

Moments of Truth

Speak Up, Trent: Trent Lott did himself and the Republican party serious damage with an ill-judged remark at Strom Thurmond’s 100th birthday party on Thursday – and the damage is only growing.

Lott said:

“I want to say this about my state: When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years, either.”

According to Tom Edsall of the Washington Post, “The gathering, which included many Thurmond family members and past and present staffers, applauded Lott when he said ‘we’re proud’ of the 1948 vote. But when he said ‘we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years’ if Thurmond had won, there was an audible gasp and general silence.”

Edsall explained the reason for the gasp thus: “Thurmond, then governor of South Carolina, was the presidential nominee of the breakaway Dixiecrat Party in 1948. He carried Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and his home state. He declared during his campaign against Democrat Harry S. Truman, who supported civil rights legislation, and Republican Thomas Dewey [who it should be said supported civil rights rather more firmly than Harry Truman did]: ‘All the laws of Washington and all the bayonets of the Army cannot force the Negro into our homes, our schools, our churches.’

“On July 17, 1948, delegates from 13 southern states gathered in Birmingham to nominate Thurmond and adopt a platform that said in part, ‘We stand for the segregation of the races and the racial integrity of each race.’

Lott’s birthday remark drew scant attention at first. It was broadcast live on C-Span, but the only media source to take note of it on Friday morning was ABC.com’s “The Note.” On another day, the Note’s report might have triggered a media stampede, but the announcement of the firing of Paul O’Neill and Larry Lindsey at 10:05 am on Friday obliterated all other Washington news.

Edsall’s story appeared on Saturday morning, as did a more matter-of-fact one in South Carolina’s The State. A spokesman issued a perfunctory “clarification”: “Senator Lott’s remarks were intended to pay tribute to a remarkable man who led a remarkable life. To read anything more into these comments is wrong.” And that would seem to be that. Saturday’s news was dominated by Iraq’s “nobody here but us chickens” reply to Security Council Resolution 1441. On Saturday night Mary Landrieu pulled off her down-to-
the-wire victory in the Louisiana Senate race.

The Lott story seems to have been left behind in the dust. And yet I cannot help thinking that this story is not over – that Republicans will hear Lott’s words quoted at them again and again in the months to come.

I for one do not believe Trent Lott is a racist or a segregationist. My guess is that his speechwriter gave him note cards with a few jokes, and that when Lott finished reading them, he launched himself into what he probably intended to be nothing more than a big squirt of greasy flattery.

But that’s not what came out of Lott’s mouth. What came out of his mouth was the most emphatic repudiation of desegregation to be heard from a national political figure since George Wallace’s first presidential campaign. Lott’s words suggest that one of the three most powerful and visible Republicans in the nation privately thinks that desegregation, civil rights, and equal voting rights were all a big mistake.

These would be disgraceful thoughts to think, if Lott thought them. If Lott thought them, any Republican who accepted his leadership would share in the disgrace. So Lott needs to make it clear that he does not in fact think them. He owes his party, his state, his country, and his conscience something more – something much more – than a curt “I am sorry if you were offended.” If he can’t do that, Republicans need to make it clear that Lott no longer speaks for us.

**Liberals and the War:** While Trent Lott was creating headaches for conservatives and Republicans, Saddam Hussein was thrusting a moment of truth upon anti-war liberals. If the reports from Baghdad are correct, Saddam Hussein is asking war-opponents to defend – not merely his right to acquire nuclear weapons – but his right to lie about them.

Western left-wingers have often been willing to make excuses for evil regimes: See Paul Hollander’s *Political Pilgrims* or Mona Charen’s forthcoming *Useful Idiots*. But seldom before have they encountered an evil regime so unwilling to make any effort to conceal its evil.

That puts the anti-war liberals into a very awkward spot, a spot interestingly explored in yesterday’s *New York Times* magazine in an article by George Packer.

Packer briefly profiles five men: Paul Berman, Christopher Hitchens, David Rieff, Michael Walzer, and Leon Weiseltier.

All five supported military action in Bosnia, a war in which America’s interests were not easily explained. Only two of them – Berman and Hitchens – forthrightly favor military action in Iraq. Yet none of the other three can quite bring themselves to oppose military action either. Walzer’s response in particular is almost a cartoon of liberal handwringing and ineffectuality:

“‘The uncertainties right now are so great,’ he told me as we sat and talked at a cafe in Greenwich Village, ‘and the prospects, the risks, so frightening, that the proportionality rule forces you the other way. And with a lot of other things going on — suspicion of this government of ours, anger at the automatic anti-Americanism of people here and other places. It’s all mixed up.’ ....
“None of this means that Walzer is rallying opposition at teach-ins. In the 1960’s, he was willing to join an antiwar movement that he says he knew would strengthen the hand of Vietnamese Communists ‘because I thought they’d already won. I would not join an antiwar movement that strengthened the hand of Saddam.’ And yet he can’t imagine one that doesn’t. The nature of the enemy makes it almost impossible to be outspoken for peace, a dilemma that has created what he calls ‘a kind of silent majority, a silent antiwar movement.’ Walzer’s position offers cold comfort, for it ends up with Saddam still in power. ‘It leaves me unhappy,’ he says.”

It would be hard to imagine a more abject picture of moral collapse – unless of course it is the strange coalition of radical Muslims, campus leftists, retired Foreign Service officers, and embittered last-place cable-TV hosts, who oppose the war outright.

(Quelle: http://frum.nationalreview.com/post/?q=YTk2ZGNkODc4NmYyNWE1NWRhZTFiM2U3YjE1MjI5MDc=, Stand: 21. Januar 2008).
"I want to say this about my state: When Strom Thurmond ran for president we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had of followed our lead we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years, either."

—Trent Lott at Strom Thurmond's 100th birthday party, as reported Dec. 6 in ABC News' political Weblog, The Note. To watch a video of the festivities, click here.

"I want to tell you, ladies and gentleman, that there's not enough troops in the army to force the southern people to break down segregation and admit the Nigra race into our theaters, into our swimming pools, into our homes, and into our churches."

—Strom Thurmond, then-governor of South Carolina, in a speech from his 1948 "Dixiecrat" presidential campaign. To hear an audio clip, click here.

„(…) Here is what Senator Trent Lott, Republican of Mississippi, said yesterday at Senator Strom Thurmond's birthday party, according to ABCNEWS' O'Keefe. "I want to say this about my state: When Strom Thurmond ran for president we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had of followed our lead we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years, either."

There is, as you might recall, an election in the Bayou tomorrow, where African-American turnout is crucial to the chances of Democratic incumbent Landrieu. Maybe Lott was being jocular. But a plain reading of what he said did generate some anger:

Wade Henderson of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights told ABCNEWS' Douglass: "This was an offensive and blatant attempt to rewrite the history of the last 50 years" … "Thurmond ran for president as a Dixiecrat, a segregationist. He gave the longest filibuster in history to try to stop passage of the Civil Rights Act. In his statement today, Lott also embraced those dubious achievements." ..'Lott betrayed his role as the Majority Leader of all Americans."

GOP Chief Burned By 'Choice Of Words'. Trent Lott Said Strom Thurmond Should Have Been President.

(CBS) Senate Republican leader Trent Lott, battered by a sharp backlash from a comment at a birthday party, has apologized for implying the country would have been better off had Strom Thurmond won the presidency when he ran in 1948 on a segregationist ticket.

"A poor choice of words conveyed to some the impression that I embraced the discarded policies of the past," Lott said in a statement issued Monday night. "Nothing could be further from the truth, and I apologize to anyone who was offended by my statement."

Lott's statement came "out of personal concern for the misunderstanding," his spokesman, Ron Bonjean, said.

Members of the House Congressional Black Caucus, at a news conference Tuesday, said Lott's apology was insufficient. "I'm very concerned and very upset that anybody who would issue such a statement would be in the leadership of this nation or the Senate," said Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., who on Tuesday was elected the next chairman of the 39-member caucus.

Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., warned fellow Democrats that it would not be acceptable to explain away such statements "and then at election time talk about why black Americans should turn out in large numbers."

Earlier Monday, former Vice President Al Gore, who served in the Senate with Lott and Thurmond, said Lott should withdraw his "racist statement" or face Senate censure of those comments.

Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson described Lott, a Mississippi Republican, as "an unrepentant Confederate who cannot speak for all Americans."

Gore, speaking on CNN's "Inside Politics," said the Senate should censure Lott. "It is not a small thing for one of the half-dozen most prominent political leaders in America to say that our problems are caused by integration and that we should have had a segregationist candidate," he said. "That is divisive, and it is divisive along racial lines."

Lott, a 14-year Senate veteran, returns to the position of majority leader next month because Republicans recaptured control of the Senate in November's elections. The
leader of the majority party is the most powerful senator because of the leader's control of the Senate agenda.

At a party celebrating retiring Sen. Thurmond's 100th birthday, attended by hundreds of Thurmond's family members and friends from South Carolina, Senate colleagues and members of the Supreme Court, Lott said that when Thurmond ran for president on a states' rights, anti-integration ticket in 1948, Mississippi voted for him.

"We're proud of it," Lott said to applause. "And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years, either."

In a statement Monday before he apologized, Lott insisted his comments last week had been lighthearted and in no way endorsed Thurmond's positions of more than a half-century ago.

"This was a lighthearted celebration of the 100th birthday of legendary Sen. Strom Thurmond," Lott said in his first statement. "My comments were not an endorsement of his positions of over 50 years ago, but of the man and his life."

A call left at Thurmond's Washington office after work hours was not immediately returned.

Jackson, in a statement, said Lott should step down. "The civil rights movement was one of America's finest hours. Strom Thurmond's massive resistance to that movement, and his support in states like Mississippi, was one of one of history's low points. Trent Lott must not be allowed to tarnish that truth."

Kevin Martin, government and political affairs director of the African American Republican Leadership Council, said people were overreacting. "By no means was he endorsing segregation or anything like that," Martin said. "It was lighthearted. It was humorous." Martin said Lott wins 25 percent of the black vote in Mississippi, which he said couldn't happen if Lott were a racist.

Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle also came to Lott's defense Monday, saying he had talked with Lott on the phone and accepted Lott's explanation that he hadn't meant for the remarks to be interpreted as they were.

"There are a lot of times when he and I go to the microphone and would like to say things we meant to say differently, and I'm sure this was one of those cases for him, as well," Daschle said.

Thurmond, then governor of South Carolina, received 39 electoral votes in his 1948 president bid, all from Southern states. He ran as a "Dixiecrat," breaking away from the Democratic party, and during the race remarked, "All the laws of Washington and all the bayonets of the Army cannot force the Negro into our homes, our schools, our churches." His campaign posters proclaimed "Now is the time to fight."

He entered the Senate in 1954 and became one of the South's most vocal opponents of integration. He opposed the Supreme Court's 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education school desegregation decision and filibustered against civil rights legislation.

Later in his career he changed his positions, hiring black staff members and helping
promote blacks to federal judgeships.

Thurmond retired this year as history's oldest member of Congress and the longest-serving senator ever.

Lott has angered black groups in the past with his one-time support for the Council of Conservative Citizens, which Lott once appeared to praise as standing for "the right principles" but has since disavowed.

The group grew out of smaller segregationist organizations and supports an extremely conservative position on racial matters, including arguing that Martin Luther King does not deserve a national holiday.

Lott Apologizes for Remark

WASHINGTON — Trent Lott wanted to honor his friend, retiring Sen. Strom Thurmond, and he never meant to imply that he supported Thurmond’s segregationist policies of the past, the incoming Senate majority leader said Thursday.

"I wanted to honor Strom Thurmond, the man, who was turning 100 years old. He certainly has been a legend in the Senate both in terms of his service and the length of his service. It was certainly not intended to endorse his segregationist policies that he might have been advocating or was advocating 54 years ago. But obviously, I am sorry for my words, they were poorly chosen and insensitive and I regret the way it has been interpreted," he told radio host Sean Hannity.

Lott gave the interview just hours before an Associated Press report surfaced, saying that Lott tried to help Bob Jones University keep its federal tax-exempt status despite the school’s policy prohibiting interracial dating two decades before his recent comments stirred a race controversy.

"Racial discrimination does not always violate public policy," Lott, then a congressman from Mississippi, wrote in a 1981 friend of the court brief that cited prior court rulings upholding affirmative action programs at colleges.

(...)
SHIELDS: And now for the Outrage of the Week.

This week Mississippi Senator Trent Lott said, quote, "When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years either," end quote.

In his 1948 campaign defending racial segregation, Thurmond said, quote, "All the bayonets of the Army cannot force the Negro into our homes, our schools, our churches," end quote.

To his credit, Strom Thurmond changed dramatically. Why, then, does Trent Lott romanticize an era of hate when black Americans were truly oppressed?

Bob Novak.

NOVAK: I think Trent Lott was kidding, Mark.

Man kann die Wahlen im Osten vielleicht nicht gewinnen, aber man kann sie verlieren. Auch die Vorsitzende der CDU Deutschlands, Angela Merkel, bewegt diese Frage - im Sommerinterview mit Thomas Roth und Thomas Baumann im Bericht aus Berlin.

Thomas Roth: Frau Merkel, wir sind hier auf „Einstein-Gelände“. Er war ja nicht nur ein genialer Naturwissenschaftler, er war auch ein störrischer Mensch, der sich über die Gesellschaft viel Gedanken gemacht hat. Er hat unter anderem einen Satz gesagt: „Es ist die hohe Bestimmung des Menschen, mehr zu dienen als zu herrschen und sich sonst in irgendeiner Form zu erheben.“ Unterschreiben Sie das?

Angela Merkel: Es kommt zumindest meinem Verständnis sehr nahe, auch was Politik leisten sollte. Politik sollte nämlich für die Menschen die Bedingungen schaffen und sich dabei auch nicht überhöhen, also einsetzen. Und insofern bin ich an der Stelle mit Einstein, obwohl ich ihm physikalisch sicherlich nicht gewachsen bin, einer Meinung.

Thomas Baumann: Sie unterstreichen jetzt das Dienen, Frau Merkel. Das klingt ganz anders als Ihre Ankündigung, durchregieren zu wollen. Was meinten Sie mit Durchregieren?

Merkel: Mit Durchregieren meinte ich, dass man einander zuhört. Und wir haben gleiche Mehrheiten im Bundestag und Bundesrat. Falls die Union gewinnen sollte, dann natürlich entscheidet und auch handelt. Aber bei gleichen Mehrheiten in beiden Kammern nicht den Weg gehen müssten, den wir heute gehen mussten, nämlich immer wieder Kompromisse suchen, bei denen die Menschen zum Schluss nicht mehr genau wissen, was politisch gewollt ist. Und das ist genau das Verständnis. Das steht aber in gar keinem Widerspruch zu der Aufgabe, die Politik hat, nämlich den Anliegen und dem Wohl der Menschen zu dienen.

Baumann: Vor einigen Wochen noch lag die Union mit der FDP zusammen in den Umfragen haushoch vorne – jetzt schmilzt der Vorsprung von Schwarz-Gelb dahin und das hat vor allem auch damit zu tun, dass die CDU in den neuen Ländern nicht so gut dasteht.


der Weg länger ist, dass viele Menschen auch enttäuscht wurden, enttäuscht auch schon zu Zeiten, als wir unter Helmut Kohl regiert haben, jetzt durch Schröder noch mal massiv enttäuscht wurden. Und meine Ansprache an die Menschen in den neuen Bundesländern wird ganz klar sein: Leute, wir können es schaffen und es hat keinen Sinn, nur auf Protest zu setzen mit Menschen wie Gysi und Lafontaine, die vor der Verantwortung immer weggelaufen sind.

**Roth:** Der Faktor, die ist eine von uns – ich sag das mal so salopp – der scheint irgendwie nicht durchzudringen.


**Baumann:** PDS und Linkspartei, Frau Merkel, stehen jetzt in den Umfragen in den neuen Ländern bei sagen und schreibe 33 Prozent. Ich glaube, da hilft es nicht, nur auf die zu schimpfen und zu sagen, das sind alles Populisten. Fragen Sie sich eigentlich auch, warum die SPD, aber auch die CDU, diese Menschen gar nicht mehr erreicht?

**Merkel:** Genau aus diesem Grunde heraus werden wir bis zum letzten Tag, und ich werde sehr, sehr viel in den neuen Bundesländern sein, darum werben zu sagen, überlegt es euch gut, wem ihr eure Stimme gebt: denen, die erstmal eure Wut irgendwo als Protest aufnehmen. Oder uns, die wir darum bitten, ein Vertrauen zu bekommen, dass wir Schritt für Schritt ganz Deutschland nach vorne bringen wollen. Und wenn es ganz Deutschland gut geht, werden vor allen Dingen auch die neuen Bundesländer davon profitieren.

**Roth:** Es geht um Gefühle, haben wir gerade gelernt, die Menschen zu erreichen. Es geht aber natürlich auch um Inhalte, es geht um das Programm. Wir schauen auf die Kandidatin, Kanzlerkandidatin und das Programm:


**Merkel:** Also, die Politik aus einem Guss sieht erstmal, anknüpfend an Leipzig, so aus, dass wir das Steuersystem radikal vereinfachen. Das füht ja auch zu einigen Diskussionen, weil von jeder Steuerausnahme auch wieder Menschen sozusagen einen Nutzen haben. Und wir sagen insgesamt, Steuerschüppflöcher schließen. Wir senken dafür auch die Steuersätze. Das bedeutet Steuergerechtigkeit. Und dann haben wir uns gefragt, was ist das, was Deutschland eigentlich so im Augenblick in eine schwierige Lage bringt? Und das ist die Tatsache, dass wir jeden Tag tausend sozialversicherungspflichtige Arbeitsplätze verlieren. Und jetzt haben wir gesagt, Mehrwertsteuer hoch, um ein Ziel zu erreichen, nämlich die Arbeitskosten zu senken und damit Arbeit wieder in Deutschland möglich zu machen und damit die soziale Sicherung zu ermöglichen. Und insofern ist
dann das, was sich vielleicht um die Frage rankt, wer zahlt den erniedrigten Mehrwertsteuersatz, eine Frage, die sich für mich zur Zeit nicht stellt. Auf Grundnahrungsmittel 7 Prozent, das ist wichtig für die Menschen, die darauf angewiesen sind. Miete hat überhaupt keine Mehrwertsteuer. Aber das ist das, womit wir in Leipzig angefangen haben und genau das setzen wir auch jetzt fort.

**Baumann:** Frau Merkel, wenn Sie so sicher sind, dass das funktioniert, dann sagen Sie den Menschen bitte, wann glauben Sie, werden die Menschen in Deutschland spüren, dass es wirklich besser ist, dass wir mehr Arbeit haben, dass wir mehr netto im Geldbeutel haben?

**Merkel:** Schauen Sie, wir neigen ja immer dazu, jetzt haben wir drei Jahre Hartz-Voraussagen. Was da alles versprochen wurde und anschließend wieder gebrochen wurde, das hat viel Enttäuschung produziert. Und deshalb sage ich keine konkreten Zahlen.

**Roth:** Noch mal Stichwort Ehrlichkeit: Die Experten sagen, auch solche, die Sie beraten, zum Thema Rente, wenn man ganz ehrlich ist, dann müssten die Renten eigentlich runter. Müssten im Grunde genommen gesenkt werden, damit man die Renten weiter finanzieren kann. Wie anders könnte denn die Rentenreform funktionieren als zum Beispiel am Ende diese Konsequenz zu ziehen?

**Merkel:** Diese Konsequenz muss man nicht ziehen, wenn wir auf Wachstum setzen, wenn wir sagen, wir wollen den Trend, dass wir dauerhaft Arbeitsplätze verlieren, stoppen, und dazu muss jeder auch einen Beitrag leisten. Das ist für manch einen schwierig, das weiß ich.

**Baumann:** Wenn wir die gesetzlichen Rentenkassen entlasten wollen, muss es dann nicht so sein, dass wir die Riester-Rente zur Verpflichtung machen?

**Merkel:** Nein. Das muss es nicht. Ich glaube, dass die Riester-Rente entbürokratisiert werden kann, einfacher gemacht werden kann und der interessante Effekt, den wir jetzt haben ist ja, dass für alle Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer – und für die gilt ja die Riester-Rente – die Bruttolöhne um ein Prozent sinken, wenn wir die Lohnzusatzkosten senken. Und das gibt auch wieder Spielraum um zum Beispiel für die eigene Altersvorsorge etwas zu tun und das ist ja genau das, was wir wollen.

**Baumann:** Sie haben gesagt, Frau Merkel, Sie wollten grundlegend alles anders machen, damit es in Deutschland besser wird. Das war vor allem auf die Innenpolitik gemünzt, aber auch in der Außenpolitik möchte die Union Kurskorrekturen.

**Roth:** Frau Merkel, Stichwort Putin – werden Sie mit ihm Klartext reden in Sachen Abbau von Demokratie, in Sachen Scheinparlament, Konflikte im Kaukasus. Werden Sie sagen: so geht’s nicht?

**Merkel:** Ich werde alles dafür tun, damit es eine strategische Partnerschaft mit Russland geben wird – auch in Zukunft. Die ist notwendig und eine solche Partnerschaft schließt natürlich auch ein, dass durchaus Dinge gesagt werden, wo Kritik angebracht wird. In welcher Form man das macht – ob direkt, ob auch mal in der Öffentlichkeit – das muss man sehen. Aber was ich in der ganzen Argumentation nicht verstehe ist, wenn wir heute gute Beziehungen zu Russland haben, dann ist das ja erfreulich. Wenn wir heute freundschaftliche Beziehungen zu Frankreich haben, dann war das in der gesamten Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland so und würde sich auch unter einer

**Baumann:** Frau Merkel, Sie werden nächste Woche sprechen vor dem Bund der Vertriebenen. Im Wahlprogramm der Union steht, dass die Union ein Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen in Berlin als Idee unterstützt. Was heißt das konkret? Wird eine unionsgeführte Regierung unter Ihnen dieses Zentrum auch finanziell mit Mitteln des Bundes unterstützen?


**Roth:** Frau Merkel zum Schluss – Sie haben in dem Interview gesagt, große Koalition wird es nicht geben. Nun ist der Wähler ja launisch möglicherweise und erzwingt das, dass es nur rechnerisch nur zu einer großen Koalition kommen kann. Stehen Sie auch dann als Kanzlerkandidatin zur Verfügung?

**Merkel:** Ich arbeite auf eine Wechselmehrheit, d.h. auf eine Mehrheit von Union und FDP hin. Und bis zum Wahltag wird mich da auch nichts von abbringen. Das Wählervotum kann, und da sind die Chancen gut, für diese Mehrheit reichen und ich werde immer wieder deutlich machen: Es ist eine Richtungswahl, es geht bei dieser Wahl um einen Umbau Deutschlands am Anfang des 21.Jahrhunderts, dafür, dass wir wieder nach vorne kommen und dass die Menschen in diesem Lande, jeder einzelne wieder eine Chance hat und über …(Baumann: Klar, aber die Frage war, Frau Merkel, ob Sie dann als Kanzlerkandidatin zur Verfügung stünden, falls es so käme?) und ich sage Ihnen, ich kämpfe für das, was ich gerade gesagt habe und alles andere sehen wir nach dem Wahltag, aber wir haben ja – wie Sie schon am Anfang sagten – noch alle Hände voll zu tun, unsere Mehrheit zu bekommen und ich werde um jede Stimme intensiv werben.

**Roth:** Also, der 18.September wird’s zeigen – Frau Merkel, vielen Dank für dieses Gespräch.

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