STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND, (D-SC), BEFORE THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE ON HR 7000, THE RESERVE
BILL, JULY 11, 1955, at 10: A.M.

Mr. Chairman, I am appearing this morning on behalf of HR 7000 as a Senator from South Carolina and as an Army Reserve Officer for approximately 27 years. It has been my privilege to participate actively in reserve training throughout these years, interrupted only by my active duty with the Army during World War II. I have been deeply impressed by the constant need for reserve forces adequately trained and equipped to meet the requirements of a national emergency.

On June 25, I concluded a term of one year as President of the Reserve Officers Association. During that period on a number of trips to various sections of the country, I observed, at meetings of the Reserve Officers Association, the vigilance and confidence displayed by our citizen reservists. Such confidence and vigilance have been a trademark of Americans since our forefathers settled this country. Nowhere is it more strongly reflected today than in the actions and spirit of our citizen soldiers, the reservists of this nation.

Everywhere they seek to strengthen our national security through strengthening our reserve forces, but they are looking to the Congress to provide them with the means to accomplish the necessary task.
Colonel C. M. Boyer, Executive Director of the Reserve Officers Association, appeared before this Committee on July 8 and made a statement in support of HR 7000. I agree generally with the statement made by Colonel Boyer in his appearance here.

There may be some objections to the Reserve Bill sponsored by the Administration, but it is a practical, workable bill and should produce effective results. I endorse this bill and hope the Committee will act favorably upon it and report it to the Senate.

Knowing the history and methods employed by the Communists in their efforts at world domination, it is essential that we be prepared militarily against any such actions against the United States.

Only two ways have been suggested as to how we can establish adequate security for our country:

1. By maintaining a large and expensive regular military establishment.

2. By maintaining a regular military establishment of reasonable size and developing a large combat-ready reserve.

The maintenance of a large regular establishment sufficient to meet the demands of national defense without a large reserve is too expensive. Therefore, the only solution to carry out our obligation of an adequate defense establishment is by providing an expanded reserve.
program and the maintenance of a reasonable regular establishment. Not only is the latter alternative preferable from the standpoint of expense and from the standpoint of American traditions, it is also a more feasible plan today. I say it is more feasible because today super planes fly faster than sound. It is possible for such bombers to fly from continent to continent in less than a day's time.

Our military experts acknowledge that it would be impossible to stop all the bombers of an enemy attack force. Therefore, if we should be attacked, we would have to anticipate much destruction as the result of the bombs dropped by planes which escaped our radar net and others that got through in spite of detections. Such destruction could create chaotic conditions, and that leads to the point I am making regarding the importance of a large reserve force.

Our reserves would be located wherever attacks occurred, to preserve order and to assume the responsibility contingent upon the conditions existing following such an attack.

We must also take into account the fact that if enemy planes penetrate our defenses, airborne armies could be dropped upon us at points where defense installations did not exist or regular troops were not available. This again emphasizes the importance of a large combat-ready reserve which would be necessary to engage the enemy immediately. It
might take hours for the regulars to reach such points, but the reserves could go into action immediately. This difference in time might be the deciding factor in victory. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I believe that a large reserve not only would be less expensive, but that it would also provide more adequate defense than any other plan suggested thus far.

We approach the time when the President will participate in the Big Four Talks at Geneva. We must exert every effort to secure a lasting peace, but, also, we must be realistic. One thing we must remember above all else is the history of our relations with the Soviets as we approach the Big Four meeting.

The Soviets, who so often claim title to world championships, deserve the title of real champions in one respect: They're champions in the breaking of solemn treaties and agreements entered into with other nations.

Tragic examples of their lack of good faith are a matter of record. We have no reason to believe they will now keep an agreement any longer than they believe it to be to their advantage.

We cannot take the word of Soviet leaders at face value, even though they may sign a new agreement pledging peace. Their actions in daily relations with other nations cannot be disregarded, no matter what they say or sign at a Big Four conference.
The Soviets must first prove their good faith by daily dealings with their fellow members of the United Nations and with all nations of the world. We must not be deceived by the continued use of the old Russian strategy of deception.

The Soviets continue to apply pressure whenever and wherever they believe they can subjugate peoples to Communism. New methods do not mean new policies. Russian overtures to Tito, agreement to an Austrian treaty and discussions with Japan toward a treaty should only serve as warnings that the Soviets are now trying to take our allies away from us.

Therefore, as this Reserve Bill is considered and as we await the Big Four talks, we must remember the fruits of past experience.

In view of our experience with the Communists, I hope our President demands concrete evidence of good faith at Geneva -- actions as well as words.

Mr. Chairman, I have made these remarks regarding the world situation because I believe the world situation makes it necessary to establish a strong Reserve to meet the needs of national defense.

I do not believe that the Soviets respect anything except strength. Only by providing a strong Defense Establishment can we hope to deal with them and secure their observance of agreements.
Approval of the bill now pending before this Committee would serve immeasurably to strengthen the hand of the President at Geneva.

I hope the members of this Committee will approve this bill because, as I have stated here, I believe it is the most practical and reasonable plan which has been suggested thus far.

- THE END -