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Introduction of tariff agreements resolution

Strom Thurmond

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Mr. President, I would like to send to the desk for appropriate reference a Senate Resolution that would direct the Tariff Commission to make an investigation of the effects of the tariff agreements entered into at the GATT Conference at Geneva.

On Tuesday I announced my intention to offer this resolution because of my deep concern as to the likely effects of the agreements entered into between this country and other nations on the American textile industry and its employees. My information from a reliable source is that the tariff reductions agreed to in the GATT Conference will run as high as 27 to 48 per cent on the basic products of the textile industry.

Although the agreements entered into were under provisions of the old trade law—the Trade Agreements Extension Act of 1951—and not the new law as enacted this year by the Congress; and, also, although these cuts do not go into effect until September 10 of this year, I do not believe we should wait until actual damage is done our great textile industry before we take steps to prevent such damage.

Mr. President, I believe this resolution which I am offering on behalf of myself and of my Senate colleagues should be approved by this Senate as a preventive measure against disaster to a vital industry of this nation. As I pointed out Tuesday, if the Tariff Commission should determine that no injury has been caused or threatened by the reduction of tariffs agreed to at Geneva, then no harm has been done. But, if serious damage or the threat of serious damage is found by the Commission, time will have been saved by the passage of this resolution. That time
saved could well mean the difference between continued operation and curtailment of many of our textile plants.

I might add, Mr. President, that I am very happy that 58 of my Senate colleagues have joined in introducing this resolution. They are Senators George, Aiken, Allott, Barrett, Beall, Bricker, Butler, Capehart, Carlson, Chaves, Cotton, Daniel, Duff, Dworshak, Ellender, Ervin, Flanders, Goldwater, Green, Hickenlooper, Hill, Holland, Ives, Jackson, Johnston of South Carolina, Kennedy, Long, Martin of Iowa, Martin of Pennsylvania, McClellan, McNamara, Pastore, Payne, Purtell, Saltonstall, Sparkman, Smith of Maine, and Thye. I regret that I have been unable to contact every member of the Senate in regard to becoming associated with this resolution as co-sponsor. Should any others desire to become associated with the resolution, I will be happy to have them join today.

I now send the resolution to the desk for appropriate reference.