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Statement regarding public sentiment and integration

Strom Thurmond

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Mr. President:

On behalf of Senator Johnston and myself, I send to the desk for appropriate reference a Joint Resolution which was passed without a single dissenting vote by the South Carolina General Assembly on February 14, 1956. This is a Joint Resolution condemning and protesting the usurpation and encroachment on the reserved powers of the States by the Supreme Court of the United States, calling upon the States and Congress to prevent this and other encroachment by the central government. The resolution declares the intention of South Carolina to exercise all powers reserved to it, to protect its sovereignty and the rights of its people.

I ask that this historic document be printed in the body of the Record at the conclusion of my remarks. In addition, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the resolution be followed by an article from the February 27, 1956 edition of the Washington Post and Times Herald. The article was written by Mr. John M. Fenton and is entitled "The Gallup Poll: 8 out of 10 Southern Whites Veto Integration."

Mr. President, I have offered these two insertions to be printed in the Record together to point out to the Congress that the people of South Carolina are handing down an almost unanimous verdict that they do not want integration and that they do not approve of legislation by judicial decree. This resolution demonstrates the unanimity of the South Carolina General Assembly on this point, and the Gallup Poll shows
that 9 out of every 10 white South Carolinians are against integration. The people of South Carolina believe that local matters can best be handled by local people who are familiar with existing conditions and public sentiment.

I submit to you, Mr. President, that public sentiment is a vital factor in determining either the success or failure of any undertaking. Abraham Lincoln believed this to be true, also, when he uttered these words of warning in 1832:

"With public sentiment nothing can fail"

"Without it nothing can succeed."

The End