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STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SO) WITH REFERENCE TO HIS BILL, S. 4, WHICH WOULD PROHIBIT THE SERVICE AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ON AIRPLANES.

S. 4 is identical to S. 2845 which I introduced during the 84th Congress.

This legislation is needed because:

1. The unregulated consumption of liquor by air line passengers is a compromise with safety which we can ill afford.
2. The serving of liquor to passengers places an unnecessary burden on the flight crews.
3. Drinking aboard airplanes creates a social problem, in that even though in some instances no safety hazard develops, the drinking passengers may offend or annoy other passengers. Drinking cannot be confined to club cars as on trains.
4. Alcohol and flying do not mix any more than drinking and driving. In fact, alcohol intoxicates in the air even more than it does on land or sea.

Since some air lines began serving alcoholic beverages, more individual passengers now take their own bottles on planes with them. At one time passengers under the influence of alcohol were not permitted to board a plane. But now, as might be expected, with the serving of such beverages aboard the planes, enforcement has also been relaxed on individual passengers.

I was out of office from April to November 1956 and the Senate did not act on my bill. However, the House did pass a similar bill last year so there is good reason to believe that it would do so again if the Senate should take action.

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Organizations such as The Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the Air Line Pilots and Hostesses Association could be very effective in helping to bring about the enactment of my bill by informing the Members of Congress of their experiences in connection with passengers drinking alcoholic beverages on airplanes.

Since I introduced my bill in the 84th Congress, the air lines have imposed some voluntary restrictions on the service of alcoholic beverages. However, these restrictions are inadequate and legislation is still needed as much as ever.

I shall exert every effort toward securing enactment of S. 4 during this Congress.

Strom Thurmond

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