STATEMENT IN THE SENATE BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) ON INSERTING TWO EDITORIALS IN THE RECORD, FEBRUARY 14, 1957

MR. PRESIDENT, I ask unanimous consent to place in the Record two editorials from newspapers in South Carolina. The first is entitled "Senator Bridges Offers A Solution," and was published in the Charleston Evening Post on February 4, 1957. The second is entitled "Legion Head Challenge To Speak Up Fearlessly Against Increasing Government Control," and was published in The Edgefield Advertiser on February 6, 1957.

I wish also to comment briefly on the proposal made by Senators Bridges and Byrd for a constitutional amendment to require the President and the Congress to balance the budget each year. That is the subject of the editorial in the Charleston Evening Post. I want to make it clear that the editorial approves the idea of a balanced budget.

In my opinion, millions of Americans all over this country also approve -- and not only approve, but greatly desire and seek -- a balanced budget as a required method of operating the Federal Government. I know that the proposed budget this year is said to be within the revenue anticipated, but there have been too many years in which spending far exceeded revenues.

The public debt totals $275,906,294,121.74. Even if we maintain a balanced budget, we should also make greater efforts to reduce the public debt at a faster rate.

At the present rate, it will take generations to pay off the debt, even if no additional indebtedness is incurred, and none can foretell what emergencies might arise.

The Federal Government would do well to follow the example of some of the States with reference to the handling of revenues and appropriations. I shall not attempt to go into the details at this time, but the facts show that the States are in much better financial condition than the Federal Government.

However, I call to the attention of the Senate the provisions for a balanced budget in my own State of South Carolina.

Article 10, Section 2 of the State Constitution provides that:

"The General Assembly shall provide for an annual tax sufficient to defray the estimated expenses of the State for each year, and whenever it shall happen that the ordinary expenses of the State for any year shall exceed the income of the State for such year the General Assembly shall provide for levying a tax for the ensuing year sufficient, with other sources of income, to pay the deficiency of the preceding year together with the estimated expenses for the ensuing year."

That means, first, that the General Assembly is obligated to secure estimates from the financial officers of the State to insure that appropriations for any year do not exceed anticipated revenue. Second, it means, that if an error is made in estimating revenue for one year, it is the obligation of the General Assembly to provide for the deficiency to be paid off during the succeeding year.

As Governor of South Carolina from 1947 to 1951, I required the financial officers of the State to give me a statement when the single-package appropriations bill was sent to me for my signature, certifying that the bill was in balance.

I recommend this procedure as highly satisfactory. It keeps the State of South Carolina in excellent financial condition. It would do the same for the Federal Government.

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