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Statement about Senator Walter George

Strom Thurmond

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STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) IN THE SENATE ON THE LATE SENATOR WALTER GEORGE, AUGUST 12, 1957

Mr. President, the people of South Carolina have always felt a common bond with the people of Georgia. Events that have made the people of one State happy have made the people of the other happy also. Events which have made Georgians sorrow and grieve have also made South Carolinians sorrowful.

The Nation and the world have lost a great man in losing Senator Walter George. But Georgia has lost a son and a man who attained honor and greatness for himself and for his native State through his masterful achievements in government. As the people of Georgia mourn the loss of Senator George, so mourn the people of my State.

Shakespeare wrote that "Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." Senator George came neither in the first or third categories. He could only be classified as a man who achieved greatness — a man who through his own efforts stood on a pinnacle which few ever reach.

I regret that I did not have the opportunity to serve with him longer in the Senate. But I shall never forget the solemn quiet which fell upon this chamber whenever he arose to express his views and opinions on matters of vital import. His impact on matters before the Senate was something felt, not so much because of what he said, as because of the man who was saying it.

This Nation owes a debt of gratitude to Senator George for the part he played in creating a strong defense establishment, and in developing a bi-partisan approach to foreign affairs.

But above the specific attainments of the Senator and
Ambassador, we who were his colleagues owe him a debt for his lessons in statesmanship. He was a man who placed his convictions above convenience when he came to consider what was best for his State and Nation.

A poet once said:

"When a great man dies, for years beyond his skin, the light he leaves behind him will shine upon the path of men."

Mr. President, the light left by Sen. George will be a guidepost for generations yet unborn.