WALTERBORO, S.C., -- Senator Strom Thurmond warned a Veterans Day audience here tonight that bravery in wartime is no longer enough, that fortitude and vigilance in peacetime are also important.

"We Americans have fought in three wars for the sake of liberty and justice during the past 40 years," he said, "but today we find ourselves closer to deprivation of these inherent rights than we have been at any time in our nation's history."

South Carolina's junior senator referred to F.B.I. Chief J. Edgar Hoover's frequent remark that the Communist threat is greater "from within than from without" and urged all South Carolinians to be alerted against the infiltration of Communist ideals into democratic programs.

He reminded the audience of the Communist program to divide and conquer and stated that the Communists are working their way into those organizations through which they can create the most strife.

"When it's possible for a Communist to rise to the rank of a chief advisor to the President of the United States as did Alger Hiss some years ago," Senator Thurmond said, "then, it's conceivable that Communists and fellow travelers are in key policy-making positions in many places almost everywhere today."

The only hope, according to the Senator, is a return to Constitutional government -- not government by administrative decrees and Supreme Court decisions, but government based on the Constitution and true interpretations thereof.

In closing, he once again urged his listeners to stay informed, to know what their representatives on all levels are doing, and to be certain that only conscientious fearless and able men are elected to all public offices.