

75-10

STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) ON PROPOSAL TO UNIFY ARMED SERVICES,
1/3/58

I am glad that many of our national leaders are now realizing that the time has come for the complete unification of the armed services. Previously I have called attention to the necessity for this step, and in conformity with my earlier statements, it is my intention to propose legislation to accomplish unification of the services.

The present organization of the Department of Defense has during the past ten years demonstrated that when co-operation is relied upon to replace coordination under centralized authority, duplication, extravagance, waste, and inefficiency in time of peace are the inevitable results, and in time of war the results would be disasterous.

I am convinced that the Department of Defense should remain under a civilian head but should be organized with a direct line of command and responsibility to and from a military commander of all forces whether they be land, sea, or air and including a single unit for procurement and a single unit for research and development in all military fields responsible to and commanded by the same commander.

This re-organization will accomplish a speed-up of weapon and material development by several means. It will not only abolish duplication and accomplish a concentration of effort, but through the elimination of waste and inefficient utilization of trained manpower.

It is my belief that the handicap of inter-service rivalry can be replaced by a traditional unit Esprit de Corps that is based on pride in the efficiency of the overall unit rather than on any particular branch or service.

--END--