STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) RECORDED FOR HIS WEEKLY RADIO BROADCAST, JULY 31, 1958.

MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

Recent events in the Middle East have emphasized the necessity for this country to be prepared for military conflict, while continuing our efforts to build a lasting peace.

We cannot put complete reliance on our growing strength in intercontinental missiles or in the nuclear striking power of the Strategic Air Force. These potent weapons cannot be used in a so-called "brush-fire," or limited, war. In any war, large or small, ground troops are needed to occupy and hold the land.

I have been alarmed and disturbed by the position taken by the Administration with regard to the strength of our ground forces. The Administration has taken the position that our standing Army should be reduced from 900,000 to 870,000 men; that the Marine Corps should be cut from 200,000 to 175,000 men; that the Army Reserve should be reduced from 300,000 to 275,000 men, and the National Guard weakened by 10 per cent, from 400,000 men to 360,000 men.

When the Military Appropriations Bill came to the Senate floor, it contained a provision that the National Guard be maintained at the level of at least 400,000 men. The Appropriations Committee also recommended that there be no reductions in the size of the Army, Army Reserve, and National Guard, but these recommendations were not spelled out in the bill.

In view of the fact that the Administration has been insistent in its desire to reduce the size of our ground forces, I proposed
that the bill be amended by the Senate to make it mandatory that there be no reduction in the strength of the Army, Army Reserve and Marine Corps. My amendments were approved, thus giving all these ground forces, including the National Guard, the same legislative protection.

I believe that these amendments to the bill are vital to our national security. They are an assurance that our ground forces will be maintained at present manpower levels, or be increased.

As far as South Carolina is concerned, the effect of the amendments is far-reaching. They will improve the chances of maintaining Fort Jackson as a permanent installation, assure the continuation of Army Reserve and National Guard units throughout the State, and aid in the continued development of the Marine Corps installations at Parris Island and Beaufort.

In emphasizing the importance of ground troops, I do not mean to underestimate the vital role played by other elements of our Armed Forces. Radical changes in weapons are bringing about new concepts of strategy.

One of the most interesting of these new developments is the concept of the nuclear-powered submarine equipped to fire long-range missiles. These submarines can travel for vast distances, underwater, without refueling, and can even fire missiles without rising to the surface.

A support base and dry-docking facilities, necessary for servicing these submarines, are planned for Charleston. I have been exerting every effort to have the authorization for these
facilities included in the Military Construction Bill for 1959. I am confident that the Conference Committee which has the bill in its charge will approve the missile base, and there is a possibility the dry dock will be approved also. Once the missile base is authorized, the Navy has informed me that construction can be commenced this fall.

It is essential that we permit no delay in the development of this nuclear submarine program. The support base at Charleston is essential to the work.

I wish to thank this station for granting me this time each week, and thank you for listening.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington.

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