STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) FOR HIS WEEKLY RADIO

MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

Now that the question of what rules the Senate will operate
under has been settled, the 98 Senators from the 49 States are
busy drafting and introducing legislation and getting started on
committee work.

The fight over the change in rules may have seemed complicated
and unimportant to many, but the band of liberals who challenged
the rules contended that the changes proposed by them were vital
if legislation to force integration of the races were to be
passed during the 86th Congress. The liberal group was strongly
rebuffed by the Senate on every vote, although a modification
of the so-called filibuster rule was effected on the final vote.
The liberal group said this was not enough change to win passage
of force legislation.

The modification, which permits two-thirds of these Senators
present and voting to halt debate on a bill, was not as
objectionable as the others proposed. I believe, however, in
unlimited debate and the right of the majority of one section of
the country to have some type veto power over abhorrent legislation
aimed at that particular section by a majority of the Congress
or the country. Therefore, I vigorously opposed any change in
Rule XXII.

I was pleased to receive notification in the middle of the
week that I had been given a position on the Armed Services
Committee, with top seniority-rank among the four new members. In view of my deep interest in maintaining a strong military posture and the vital role which South Carolina's installations play in our defense program, I am particularly pleased to serve on this committee. It has always been my pleasure to maintain close relationships with the leaders of our nation's Armed Forces, first as an officer during World War II and later as National President of the Reserve Officers Association and the Military Government Association. As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I hope to be able to render our State and country an important service.

My other committee assignment is Interstate and Foreign Commerce, on which I have served since first coming to Washington as your Senator four years ago. In view of its important functions in such areas as railroads, communications, aviation, navigation, marines and fisheries, and commerce between the states and foreign nations, this is an important committee on which a South Carolina member of the Senate should serve. A special sub-committee of this committee was set up last year to study the textile industry, and the report of this sub-committee, on which I served, will be published in the next 30 days. We in South Carolina are vitally interested in textiles, as 75 per cent of all our industrial payrolls are provided by this industry. I hope that my contributions to this committee will be of assistance in promoting the economy of the State and nation.
During the week I introduced several bills, and I plan to offer more very soon. One of the first bills I introduced was to change the oath required of United States Supreme Court Justices and Judges. It is my contention that the present oath of office does not conform to the requirements of Article VI of the Constitution, which requires that they vow to support the Constitution.

The present oath says nothing about supporting the Constitution. It merely requires that the Justice or Judge will faithfully perform all his duties "according to the best of my abilities and understanding, agreeably to the Constitution and laws of the United States."

This oath gives the Justices and Judges too much latitude for writing into the Constitution and the laws their own beliefs and ideologies. Perhaps this is one reason why they have felt so free in recent years to rewrite the law without regard to the expressed will of the Founding Fathers and the Congress.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington.

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