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STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) ON THE SENATE FLOOR ON  
COMMENTS BY AIR LINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION RE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES  
AND AIR LINE SAFETY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1959.

MR. PRESIDENT:

On July 2, 1959, the Federal Aviation Agency issued Civil Air Regulation Draft Release 59-7 entitled "Drinking and Serving of Alcoholic Beverages on Board Air Carrier Aircraft." At the time, industry comments were requested.

The Air Line Pilots Association, under date of August 27, 1959, submitted to the FAA a letter presenting in detail the comments of the Association on this proposed regulation. I have worked closely with the ALPA for the past several years in an effort to bring a halt to the service or consumption of alcoholic beverages aboard airplanes.

In 1956 the various air carriers banded together and adopted a code which provided in essence that no more than two drinks would be served to any passenger during a flight and also that no air carrier would advertise its service of alcoholic beverages to the public. I stated at that time that I felt the code was drawn up for the purpose of effectively heading off legislative action in this field by the Congress. At the time the code was put into effect by the air lines the House had passed a bill prohibiting the service or consumption of alcoholic beverages on aircraft, and the Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee was preparing to take some action either on that bill or on my bill. After the code was published, no action was taken by the Senate in the closing days of the 84th Congress.

Since that time ALPA, the Air Line Stewards and Stewardesses Association, I and others have continued our efforts to obtain legislation on this subject.

The Civil Air Regulation Draft Release 59-7 has now resulted in further stalling of legislative action, after it was reported in the press that House Speaker Sam Rayburn was anxious to obtain legislative action in view of a bad experience he encountered with a drinker while on an air flight this year. The draft release is not practical nor realistic for two principal reasons: First, the draft release continues in effect the FAA sanction of permitting air lines to serve alcoholic beverages to their passengers. As long as the air lines provide drinks aloft,--some of them even free--then those passengers who might become inebriated and thereby constitute a hazard to the flight certainly have no inducement to abstain from drinking either before or during the flight. Second, it places an undue burden on the crew of the aircraft. Under the proposed regulation an air line stewardess would be charged with the responsibility of judging whether a passenger had already had too much to drink before serving another drink. These young ladies should not be cast in the role of either barmaid or policewoman and subjected to the liability this proposed regulation places on them and the embarrassment and danger that continued service of alcoholic beverages poses for them.

I have today written a letter to the FAA expressing the view that the comments of the ALPA be given most serious consideration with a view toward completely prohibiting the service or consumption of alcoholic beverages aboard aircraft.

At this point in my remarks, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the ALPA letter to the FAA be printed in the Record.

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