News release, 8:00 p.m., 1960 June 3

Strom Thurmond

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GREENVILLE, S. C., June 3--Senator Strom Thurmond (D-SC) warned here tonight that the only way the United States can achieve "peace with freedom" is by "surpassing the Soviets in every vital area of competition--above all, in our defense and retaliatory strength."

The Senate Armed Services Committee member made this point in a re-election campaign speech here in which he talked mostly about national defense, the "civil rights" issue, and the need to halt the increasing tide of low-wage textile imports.

Long an advocate of a defense force "second to none in the world", Thurmond chided talk of modifying U. S. defense policies because of the "Communist rantings" over the U-2 incident and the collapse of the Summit talks. He said that if our policies now require change, then "our policies were inadequate in the first place."

"We should and must adopt policies", he stated, "that will encompass any possible fluctuation in approach by the Communist leaders . . . We cannot afford, either financially or militarily, to fluctuate our military strength to respond to every frown or smile of Mr. Khrushchev, or whoever might be the Russian dictator at the time. Our defense forces must be stronger--not necessarily bigger, but stronger--than the Communist forces in every respect. If necessary, we must sacrifice for this accomplishment. Our military force does not meet this test in every respect at the present time. In some areas we have a bare minimum, in others less than the minimum requirements."
Thurmond offered the following steps to strengthen U.S. military power: (1) "a clear superiority in strategic nuclear weapons rather than the mere edge we have at present"; (2) "design and equip our ground forces with maximum firepower of tactical nuclear weapons"; and (3) "secure sufficient airlift capability" for rapid transport of the ground troops anywhere in the world.

The Senator pointed out that "these steps did not become necessary because of the summit failure", but have been needed all along. He added that he had fought for them "because of the nature of our struggle with Communism, and without which victory may be theirs and not ours."

On the subject of textile imports, the South Carolina Democrat pointed to the threat imports pose to domestic textile jobs and his relentless fight as a Senator to reverse the "sky-rocketing" trend of imports both administratively and legislatively. In the Senate, Thurmond is the only Southerner on the Special Textile Subcommittee, which he was instrumental in establishing to fight imports and to find ways to aid the industry and its employees with their other problems.

Turning to the issue of "civil rights" and integration of the races, the Senator decried the "political hypocrisy" which he credited with being primarily responsible for the agitation of the issue. He then cited these facts in his strong record of opposition to integration and "civil rights" legislation and his promotion of States' Rights: (1) his authorship of the original draft of the Southern Manifesto which was signed by 101 Members of Congress and which put the South on the offensive against the desegregation decision; (2) his testimony and speeches
against the 1957 "civil rights" bill, including his record-breaking speech of more than 24 hours against final passage; 
(3) his work in winning 34 co-sponsors for the States' Rights bill, which lost in the Senate by one vote; (4) his discovery and elimination from a housing bill of a provision which would have permitted integration of housing by a method of "scatteration" of individually integrated public housing units in neighborhoods; 
(5) the successful efforts of the 18 Southern Senators to defeat the most vicious proposals in the 1960 "civil rights" bill by an organized filibuster and other parliamentary tactics; and (6) Congressional Quarterly's voting record analysis which showed him to be the "Most Southern of the Southern Senators."

In reviewing other aspects of his Senate record, the Senator pointed to his record of perfect attendance last year, his fight for labor reform legislation to protect the public and the working people, his number one standing among Senate Democrats on voting for economy in government spending, and his efforts to serve the people in every capacity and report fully to them on his actions in the Senate.

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