

times its size. The park is easily accessible, yet continues to provide quiet, solitude, and remoteness to visitors, especially in the back country. Trail Ridge road provides a unique experience for visitors that are not able to hike in the park. It is the highest paved highway in the United States, and crosses the park from east to west. Spectacular views of peaks and valleys can be seen from the road and nearby overlooks in every direction, similar to what you could see during a helicopter tour. Trail Ridge Road reaches above the timber line and travels for 4 miles above 12,000 feet and for 11 miles above 11,000 feet.

Several problems are specific to this mountainous national park. The elevation of the Park does not allow for a large minimum altitude to minimize noise, therefore, according to the National Park Service, natural quiet is unlikely if overflights are permitted at all. The terrain, consisting of many 13,000 foot peaks and narrow valleys, coupled with unpredictable weather presents serious safety concerns. Also, the unique terrain of Rocky Mountain National Park would cause air traffic to cumulate over the popular, lower portions of the park as pilots are forced to navigate around the dangerous peaks and high winds. Not only would the overflights be concentrated directly over the most popular portions of the park, but more powerful, and louder, helicopters must be used to achieve the necessary lift at a high altitude.

Rocky Mountain National Park has been fortunate enough to be free from overflights to this point, partially because local towns have discouraged companies that might provide such services. Last year the FAA issued a temporary ban on sightseeing flights over Rocky Mountain National Park.

In light of these distinctive qualities, one can assess that the best solution to overflight disturbance is a ban on commercial tour flights at Rocky Mountain National Park. My proposed ban will apply to commercial tour overflights only, with exceptions granted for emergency flights and commercial airlines and private planes. Both the senior Senator from Colorado and I are strongly behind this effort to permanently ban overflights at the park.

A ban would be completely consistent with the recommendations of the overflights task force. There has been public involvement and preparation of an air tour management plan. There is no need to repeat the steps required under this legislative proposal at Rocky Mountain National Park.

A commercial tour overflight ban has wide spread support throughout my state. State and local officials in areas adjacent to the park strongly support a ban on overflights. In fact, local ordinances already exist to protect the quiet at the Park. The entire Colorado delegation and Colorado's Governor are on record in support of an overflight ban. My proposal is supported by the

business community, including the local Chambers of Commerce, as well as the local environmental community.

In 1995, one of our top Denver newspapers editorialized that the FAA should make Rocky Mountain National Park off-limits to low-flying aircraft use, "the sooner the better." Now, three years later, we have finally taken the opportunity to place a permanent restriction on scenic overflights.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that John Bradshaw, who is a fellow in my office, be allowed to be on the floor for the duration of this statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Chair.

KOSOVO

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter which I sent to the President about Kosovo be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SEPTEMBER 22, 1998.

President BILL CLINTON,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: As NATO Defense Ministers, including Secretary Cohen, gather in Portugal this week to consider the situation in Kosovo, I write to express my deep concern over the growing humanitarian crisis there. Unless immediate and determined action by the U.S. and our western allies is taken to address this situation, it is clear we will begin to face a catastrophic loss of civilian lives with the onset of winter in the region as early as mid-October.

Despite tight constraints on their reporting by the government of Serbia, the western media daily offers new reports on the rapidly deteriorating situation there. Candid assessments by Administration officials acknowledge the growing crisis. Systematic and brutal military action by Serbian forces, accelerated during their summer-long offensive against UCK forces, has forced an estimated 300,000 or more ethnic Albanians to flee their homes. While many have fled as refugees to neighboring countries, most of these displaced persons remain inside Kosovo and are now vulnerable to exposure, starvation, disease and further Serb military attack. I understand that Assistant Secretary for Refugees Julia Taft concluded during her recent visit there that over 210 villages in the region have already been looted, and many torched, by Serbian security forces.

Serbia has failed utterly to comply with the persistent demands of the Contact Group to: (1) cease attacks on civilian populations, and withdraw its forces used to repress civil-

ians; (2) permit the establishment of an effective international observer group in Kosovo; (3) allow refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes safely, under international supervision; (4) allow unimpeded access for humanitarian organizations and supplies; and (5) make rapid progress in the dialogue with the Kosovar leadership.

While Ambassador Hill is to be commended for his persistent diplomatic efforts, it is clear that the time has come for a more vigorous and sustained high-level multilateral effort to pressure President Milosevic to comply fully with Contact Group demands. I urge you therefore to proceed immediately with a series of steps designed to prevent the looming humanitarian crisis and to prepare for possible implementation of more forceful options developed by NATO planners. These actions include:

Moving forward now, under NATO auspices, with the pre-deployment phase of NATO military plans on Kosovo, including securing base rights agreements in the region, immediately assessing the contributions of each NATO member in the event military action is necessary, and then forward-deploying appropriate levels of NATO military forces and equipment, thus preparing us to take any appropriate military action that may be necessary to secure Serb compliance with Contact Group demands, and with international law regarding the treatment of Kosovar civilians;

Bolstering border security efforts through preventive NATO force deployments which can increase regional stability and assist in international monitoring and anti-arms smuggling efforts;

Leading an immediate multilateral effort, at the United Nations and through regional bodies like the European Union, to tighten the existing sanctions regime on Serbia, and to re-impose the trade embargo, total airlift and investment bans, and other sanctions lifted after signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, coupled with renewed enforcement initiatives to prevent the flourishing of black markets under a full embargo;

Accelerating U.S. and NATO logistical support for the ongoing international humanitarian aid effort in Kosovo, including pre-deployment of humanitarian supplies in Kosovo in anticipation of winter distributions by NGOs—but only in a way which avoids absolutely the prospect of a repeat of the disgraceful "safe haven" disaster of Srebrenica;

Pressing for more extensive access for human rights monitoring in Kosovo by internationally-recognized organizations, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and non-governmental monitors, and providing appropriate support and assistance for their efforts;

Encouraging the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia immediately to send its Chief Prosecutor to Belgrade and Kosovo; increasing aid and intelligence support to the Tribunal; and assisting them in placing forensics teams on the ground there, thus signaling to all parties that the Tribunal is committed to prosecuting war crimes committed in Kosovo, including attacks on innocent civilians, and has begun to actually gather evidence to support potential indictments against perpetrators—and their commanders and political leadership to whom they answer;

I believe it is essential that these actions be taken as quickly as possible. We must act now, before the onset of winter in Kosovo, to prevent a potential humanitarian tragedy of historic proportions. I also recognize that these steps in themselves may not be sufficient to force Serbia to comply with the Contact Group's demands in a timely manner,