

when casualties occur, a clamor could begin to "bring our troops home." We witnessed that in Somalia; we could see that again in Kosovo. Our military deserves our support. I say to my fellow Senators, if you were sitting in a cockpit, ordered to carry out strikes against the Serbian military, you would like to know that the Congress, the elected representatives of the people, is with you, supporting your mission and concerned for the risks you are taking.

I first visited Kosovo in August of 1990 on a delegation headed by Senator Robert Dole. I commend this brave veteran for his mission to the Balkan region in the past few weeks in the cause of peace. His efforts contributed to the securing of signatures by the Kosovar Albanian delegation on a peace agreement.

During my visit to Kosovo in 1990, I saw first-hand the oppression of the Kosovar Albanians by the Serb authorities. I returned to the region most recently in September of 1998, traveling through Kosovo with Ambassador Christopher Hill and elements of a courageous international observer group called KDOM.

Since last March we have all closely followed developments—indeed the humanitarian tragedy—in this troubled region. And since last September, when NATO first threatened the use of force against Milosevic, NATO credibility has been on the line. We are now at a defining moment in this crisis.

Since September, I have been outspoken in my support for the use of U.S. ground troops as part of a NATO-led force to implement a peace agreement that is in place relative to Kosovo. In my view, such a military force is necessary—once a peace agreement is reached—if the parties to the agreement are to have the confidence necessary to be bound by the provisions of such a peace agreement. And I believe U.S. participation in such a force is necessary if we are to maintain our status as the leader of the NATO Alliance.

My greatest concern has been and continues to be that a deterioration of the situation in Kosovo could undermine the modest gains we have achieved in Bosnia—at a cost of over \$8 billion to date to the American taxpayer; and could lead to problems in neighboring Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and perhaps Greece and Turkey.

In addition, I share with all Americans concern for the humanitarian tragedy we have witnessed—are now witnessing—in that troubled land.

But what happens if a peace agreement remains elusive, which is now the situation with which we are faced. It is one thing to deploy troops into a permissive environment for the purpose of overseeing the implementation of a peace agreement. It is quite another to use military power—air—to compel a sovereign nation to sign an agreement to end what is essentially an internal civil war.

There are many questions that must be addressed. The most important question is, what happens if bombing does not succeed? There are very few operations, historic examples, where air power alone has succeeded in meeting our military objectives. Some have made the argument here today that air strikes were the key to bringing the Bosnian Serbs to the peace table in Dayton. I had the opportunity to visit with two people last week who were intimately involved in the Bosnia crisis—former British Defence Secretary Michael Portillo and former U.N. High Representative in Bosnia, Carl Bildt. Both of these men told me that air strikes were an important part, but not the decisive factor in ending the fighting in Bosnia. History records that the Croatian offensive against the Serbs, and the fact that the parties were all exhausted from fighting were of equal significance to the important air campaign by the United States and our allies. Today, that is not the case in Kosovo—the parties there are, regrettably, ready to fight.

My point is,—there is risk in relying on air strikes, alone, to stop the fighting in this crisis. We must know what our next steps will be and how far we are ready to go with other initiatives to stop the fighting in Kosovo. If this first military action is taken—which in my view this contingency is tantamount to an act of war—what comes next and how far we are willing to go? We must have in mind not simply our first step, but our second, third or fourth steps before we commit U.S. troops.

While one of my main concerns in this is the credibility of NATO now that we have threatened military action for many months, we must ask ourselves what happens to NATO credibility if the air strikes fail to accomplish their objectives? That would be a devastating blow to the Alliance if we take the drastic step of attacking a sovereign nation, and are not successful in the ultimate objective.

What of the credibility of the United States and our leadership on the continent of Europe, in military as well as economic or diplomatic partnerships? What of the credibility of the U.S. military as a partner in other actions? There are important issues that can be debated in the context of the pending amendment.

The Smith amendment provides that the Congress must be on record as supporting this operation before we commit the U.S. military to the crisis in Kosovo. I agree. We owe it to the men and women of the Armed Forces to act on this issue. For that reason, I will support the Smith amendment and vote for cloture on this amendment.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume consideration of S. 544, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 544) making emergency supplemental appropriations and rescissions for recovery from natural disasters, and foreign assistance, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Hutchison amendment No. 81, to set forth restrictions on deployment of United States Armed Forces in Kosovo.

Lott amendment No. 124 (to amendment No. 81), to prohibit the use of funds for military operations in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) unless Congress enacts specific authorization in law for the conduct of those operations.

Mr. STEVENS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENT NO. 124

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The present business is amendment No. 124 offered by the majority leader.

Mr. STEVENS. The amendment to the Hutchison amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. STEVENS. The Kosovo question is the pending issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I have listened with interest at the statements made by the distinguished Senator from Delaware. And he has some very good points. My memory of the conversations that were held at the time President Bush made the statement that the Senator from Delaware referred to was that the President was talking about racial cleansing, or genocide, on the part of the Serbs versus the Kosovo population—not just a military incident, but an act of genocide, but an act of racial cleansing in the magnitude of a national aspect.

There is no question that there is a dispute here. And the Senator from Delaware has heard my comments that I made to the President. I believe that article V of the NATO agreement does not authorize bombing in Serbia.

I was very interested over the weekend to listen to people talk on the radio and television about Yugoslavia. It seems that we are slipping back now, that it is a Yugoslav question, not just a Serb-Kosovo question, that is being raised now by the media. But in any event, I think this would be the first time in the history of NATO that NATO has taken offensive action against a nation that has a dispute within its borders. I think it is a horrendous proposition that the Serbs are presenting to Kosovo. "Either leave, or be exterminated."

But the question really is, What is the proper justification for this action