Mr. Speaker, let me say that these resolutions always

pose problems for me because I believe so strongly in the separation of

the branches of our government. I think that 1569 certainly expresses

my sentiments with respect to the sending of American land troops into

Kosovo, and I am going to vote today in favor of this resolution, but I

do it with some reservation. The President informed a group of us this

morning that he will not, and I repeat, he will not send American land

troops into Kosovo until he brings this message to the Congress to

allow a full debate by the Congress.

I appreciate the President recognizing the concern of those of us in

the legislative branch of government about this endeavor in Kosovo.

My vote today is with hesitation, with some reservation, but simply

because of the word ``funds.'' The bill says it prohibits the use of

``funds'' by the President or by the Department of Defense for

deploying forces. I think that a more clearer resolution would be an

expression of Congress to not deploy U.S. ground forces in Yugoslavia

until the deployment is authorized by law.

I have expressed so many times on this floor that I did not vote for

Bill Clinton, but the American people did, and in that expression of

the American people they gave him express authority to do what he is

doing. However, we in the legislative branch have authority also to

express our views. I intend to vote for this, and I am going to vote no

on the other two House resolutions. But my favorable vote on this

amendment is simply an extension of what I have personally already

expressed to the President, what I have expressed to the people I

represent in south Alabama; that I do not want to send the

first American soldier into any part of Yugoslavia. But I think, in the

expression of our views that we should not have use the word ``funds.''

We do not want to give an indication to our soldiers we do not want to

pay them when we simply could have said that the Defense Department is

not authorized to deploy ground troop into Yugoslavia.

I think we should be very careful. There is always the possibility

that this endeavor is on the verge of some type of diplomatic

settlement, and we want to be very certain that we do not tie the hands

of the President by expressing opinions that could send a message to

the enemy that conceivably could be construed by Milosovic that the

President will not be able to carry out his threats of military action

if a diplomatic resolve is not reached.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding,

especially with the advances knowledge that I intend to vote against

his resolution.

I must warn my colleagues that we should be very cautious about what

we do and what we say here and the messages that we send. Just last

weekend, the NATO nations were here; they were unanimous in every

respect in saying that they are going to stop the atrocities that have

been taking place in Yugoslavia.

At this time and place in history, when we are involved, whether we

like it or not, in Kosovo and debating

whether or not we should send American land troops, I think that the

message of passing a resolution soon as this would be a serious mistake

on the part of this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this

time.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is unprecedented. Maybe some of you who are

more historically informed and more constitutionally informed can

correct me, but I think this is the first time in the history of this

Congress where Congress has initiated a declaration of war.

Generally, as I understand it, the President comes to the Congress

when he finds situations such as required and requests that Congress

declare war. Conceivably I am erroneous on that, but I do not recall.

Maybe some of my more learned colleagues can recall a time when the

Congress initiated a declaration of war.

I think this is ill-conceived. A declaration of war I think would be

divisive within NATO. It would put restrictions on the front line

states. It would make them unable to assist us in the efforts they are

giving us in providing landing operations and staging operations in

those countries, and I think it would be a very dangerous precedent for

this Congress to tell the commander-in-chief that he must go to war if

he does not want to. I know that is not necessarily the case as we see

it today, but I think to start this in this Congress at this time, with

the Congress initiating a declaration of war, is ill-advised, and I

urge Members to vote ``no''.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this

time. I just want to point out one thing. All we are doing in all of

these resolutions today is sending messages. I think we have sent some

pretty strong messages. I imagine tonight if there is a television

capability in Belgrade that the Belgrade television will say Congress,

U.S. Congress votes 430-2 against war against Yugoslavia.

But with respect to this particular message that we are sending, we

mention in this resolution, Montenegro. I do not think that there is a

Member of this body who thinks that we should be bombing Montenegro. I

agree that we should be bombing Belgrade, and I support the President

in that respect. But I do not think we ought to send a message to the

people of Montenegro that this Congress is in favor of bombs being

dropped in that part of the world because they indeed are struggling,

struggling to create a democratic form of government, struggling to do

what we are requesting they do. I think that if we send a message, we

should make certain that the people of Montenegro know that we are

supportive of their efforts and sorry they are in the dilemma they are

in.