Mr. President, I

note that both Senator MCCAIN and

Senator SMITH came to the floor to

present their thoughts on Kosovo. I

would really like to join them and second

their remarks.

Mr. President, it is estimated that at

least 250,000 Kosovar Albanians have

been displaced by the violence and

bloodshed of the past several months,

and that many are currently living in

the forests, without access to adequate

food, shelter or medical care. With winter

soon approaching, we are on the

verge of a major humanitarian catastrophe

in Kosovo, which is the direct

result of a cruel and intentional policy

directed by President Milosevic and

carried out by Serbian security forces

in Kosovo.

The time has come—indeed, it is my

belief that the time came long ago—for

the United States, our NATO allies,

and the entire international community,

to back with resolve that what

happened in Bosnia must not be allowed

to happen again in Kosovo. For

too long, we have stood by passively

while Milosevic has acted in bad faith.

He has made numerous commitments

to halt the violence, such as that contained

in his joint statement with

President Yeltsin on June 16, and he

has honored none of them.

In July, the Senate unanimously

passed a bipartisan resolution which

called on the United Nations War

Crimes Tribunal to indict President

Milosevic for his crimes in Bosnia.

That resolution has not yet been carried

out. In my mind, the time has

come for the United States to call an

end to the charade of taking at face

value the word of a man the U.S. Senate

believes should be indicted as a war

criminal.

If thousands, or tens of thousands, of

people in Kosovo now die because they

have been systematically forced from

their homes, forced into the forests, denied

access to food, warmth, shelter

and medical care, it is a crime worthy

of the world’s condemnation.

With winter imminent in the Balkans,

the U.N. Security Council is prepared

to vote on a resolution threatening

force under article 7 of the U.N.

Charter unless Milosevic calls a ceasefire

and negotiates with Kosovo’s Albanian

separatists.

At the end of this week, Secretary

Cohen will be meeting with other

NATO defense ministers. According to

press reports, the Clinton administration

has already asked the North Atlantic

Council to seek commitments of

arms, material and troops from NATO

members to complete plans for a multinational

force.

I hope and trust that this means that

a plan of action to halt the violence

and bloodshed in Kosovo—a plan with

clear benchmarks for success and a

clear exit strategy—will be at the top

of the NATO defense minister’s agenda.

I trust that Secretary Cohen will

take a strong leadership position at

this meeting, and that Secretary

Albright is taking an equal stand on

this issue in discussions with her counterparts.

Although I wish it were not

the case, we have seen all too often

that when Washington hesitates, our

Europe allies become paralyzed.

And, lastly, I hope and trust that this

time NATO, acting in coordination

with the United Nations, will develop a

plan consistent with this pressing humanitarian

need, which will be quickly

implemented, and not just talked

about.

Mr. President, it took us 4 years to

develop the courage to join and urge

NATO to intervene in Bosnia at the

cost of 200,000 dead and 2 million displaced.

Hundreds, if not thousands

have already been killed in Kosovo, and

hundreds of thousands have been forced

from their homes. What more needs to

happen before the international community

acts?

There is no doubt that the search for

peace in Kosovo has thus far proved

elusive, and that finding a solution

which provides Kosovar Albanians with

full political rights and civil liberties

will be difficult.

But the time has come for the international

community to take action: We

must keep our promise not to allow

Kosovo to become another Bosnia, and,

unless Milosevic halts the violence immediately

and unambiguously, to commit

ourselves to the course of a much-needed

humanitarian intervention in

Kosovo.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair. I

yield the floor, and I suggest the absence

of a quorum.