Mr. President, for a

short while today and on Monday and

on Tuesday, we will debating a very

short, clear, and concise proposal by

the distinguished senior Senator from

New Hampshire, Senator SMITH, relating

to the use of American Armed

Forces in combat in Kosovo and Yugoslavia.

Mr. President, I want to state as

forcefully as I possibly can my support

for that amendment. Senator SMITH

states, I think with total accuracy,

that the U.S. national security interests

in Kosovo do not rise to a level

that warrants military operations by

the United States. It goes on to point

out that any intervention on our part

would be to engage the Armed Forces

of the United States in a civil war inside

the truncated but still nation of

Yugoslavia.

Mr. President, there was an op-ed

column in the Washington Post just 3

days ago in which the author set out

three principles that struck me as totally

sound and logical. Rule 1 is, don’t

involve yourself in a civil war; rule 2, if

you do involve yourself in a civil war,

take a side; rule 3, if you do involve

yourself in a civil war and take a side,

make certain that your side wins.

Mr. President, the proposed intervention

in Kosovo on the part of the

United States essentially violates all

three of those rules. Clearly, it will involve

us in a civil war. To a large extent,

we will not have picked a side because

we will not be promoting what

those who are revolting against the

Serbian authorities wish; that is to

say, their independence. And we clearly

aren’t going in with the intention of

winning in the sense of settling that

conflict.

So we will follow the sorry example

of this administration’s military adventures

so far: The billions of dollars

we have spent in Haiti with troops still

in that country now simply defending

themselves, without having any discernible

positive impact on that society;

the low caliber war in which we

have been engaged on and off in Iraq

without any discernible prospect of removing

Saddam Hussein from office;

and our multibillion-dollar adventure

in Bosnia, an adventure that has no

end, because we are attempting to

force people to live together who have

no intention and no willingness to do

so; and, now here in Kosovo we propose

to do exactly the same thing.

Mr. President, I believe that the situation

would be different and perhaps

more justifiable if the President were

to go all the way and to say that the

service of freedom requires liberating

people who no longer wish to be a part

of Yugoslavia and helping them attain

their freedom. But we are not doing

that. We continue to promote the fiction

that borders will not be changed.

The Secretary of State has justified

this intervention on three grounds:

that it is vital to the survival of NATO,

a strange proposition when we have

gotten NATO into this position largely

ourselves and largely by accident; second,

that there are humanitarian reasons

to save the victims of this civil

war, a justification which will also require

us to enter a civil war in Africa,

and perhaps in Afghanistan, and in

Lord knows how many other places

around the world; and the ancient domino

theory that if we don’t stop this

fighting here, it will next go over into

Macedonia, into Greece, and into Turkey.

But if we were to defend Macedonia,

at least we would be defending

a sovereign nation.

Mr. President, I am convinced that

before the President commits our

Armed Forces to combat in Kosovo

that he should be required to seek the

advice and consent of both of the

Houses of the Congress of the United

States. I am convinced that this is a

matter on which the views of this body

should be known formally after a debate,

and by a vote. I am convinced

that the amendment sets the issues in

this case in stark and appropriate context.

And I am convinced, Mr. President,

that we should vote in favor of

that Smith amendment; that we should

not risk the lives of members of our

armed services and the prestige of the

United States to an undefined cause for

undefined and secondary ends in a way

in which those ends are highly unlikely

to be met, or at least highly unlikely

to be met without a permanent investment

in both our money and in our

Armed Forces.