Mr. President, I

am pleased that we are now going to

talk about the Kosovo situation. I

think it is a very fluid resolution that

we have before us but, nevertheless, I

think it is very important that we

begin to talk about the situation there,

because, frankly, in the last 24 hours,

things have changed greatly. When the

Serbs refused to sign the peace agreement,

that started a different dynamic.

Many Members of Congress have been

in constant meetings with members of

the administration, including the

President, about just where we are

now, where is NATO, what are the commitments

and, most important, I think

from all of the meetings, it has become

very clear that many Members of Congress

want to know what is the totality

of the commitment.

We are beginning to have to address

the issue of what kind of hostile possibilities

will there be if the NATO

forces, which includes the United

States, go forward into any kind of a

military intervention in Kosovo.

We do not know what Milosevic is

planning. I believe if President

Milosevic starts to take human lives,

that is going to trigger a very swift response.

I hope the President of Serbia will realize

that he could solidify this Congress

in a way that nothing else would

if he decides that he is going to embark

on that course, because I think our

forces are ready to stop something that

would be the annihilation of innocent

people.

Mr. President, I think many are not

prepared to go into a full-scale altercation

with a sovereign country until we

have looked at the entirety of that

commitment. We need to know the entirety

of the commitment of our allies

and what we ourselves are willing to do

in light of our own principles and our

own standards for when we would put

American troops into harm’s way, into

foreign conflicts, and into a situation

in which there is no peace agreement.

There is even a question of whether it

is a real peace agreement if that peace

agreement is arrived at through bombing.

This is a watershed period for our

country, and the Members of Congress

who have been participating in the

meetings are trying to put before the

President and the administration and

the people of this country exactly what

are our options.

I believe it is going to be very important

in the next week or so that we do

know what our commitments are, if we

are going to propose to take any kind

of hostile action, that we know what is

the end game, what is the strategy,

what is the commitment of dollars as

well as potential lives. The President

of the United States must come forward

and not only inform Congress, not

only work with Congress on these

plans, but inform and work with the

American people to explain exactly

what is proposed and what will be the

end game if we get into this kind of

conflict.

Mr. President, this is a sobering

time. I am pleased that my amendment

is the pending business.

I am pleased that Senator LOTT has

now offered a second-degree amendment,

because we now have two options.

We have the option of an up-ordown

vote on whether we are ready to

send troops into Kosovo, or we have a

second approach, which is, if we are

going to do this, let’s have a plan.

Those are two options, and in the next

72 hours, I think it will become more

and more clear what kind of approach

we should take.

There is one thing that is certain

today, and that is, the Congress of the

United States has the power to declare

war. I suggest that means the power to

send our troops into harm’s way for a

long period of time if we are expecting

a conflict. If this is the case, then it is

imperative we talk about this issue up

front, we have a full debate in the Senate

and House of Representatives, that

the people of America know what the

plans are, know what the potential liabilities

are, and the people of America

realize what is at stake. There is no

substitute for this kind of planning and

this kind of communication.

So I am pleased that we are now on

this amendment. I look forward to

working with all the Members of the

Senate so that everyone can be heard

and so that, hopefully, we will be able

to come to an agreement, but if not, a

clear agreement that there will be a

real vote and that Congress will play

its constitutional role in what happens

next; because I believe that what happens

in Kosovo and the rest of the

Balkans in the decisions that will be

made in the next few weeks will perhaps

have consequences for years to

come in our country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence

of a quorum.