Mr. President, for the

information of our colleagues, the majority

leader will soon be coming over

to make a unanimous consent request

concerning the vote on a resolution

dealing with Kosovo. I have been involved

in the negotiations of the resolution.

I might read it for my colleagues,

for the information of my colleagues,

and then I am going to state

my opposition to it. But for the information

of all of our colleagues, it is

our hope and our expectation we would

have a vote on this resolution in the

not too distant future, possibly as

early as 6 or 6:30 or 7 o’clock. So I

wanted my colleagues to be aware of

that.

Mr. President, this resolution authorizes

the President of the United

States to conduct military air operations

and missile strikes against the

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Serbia,

and Montenegro.

The resolution reads,

It is very simple. It is very short.

There are not a long list of

‘‘whereases,’’ not a lot of confusion. It

says we authorize the President of the

United States to conduct airstrikes

against Serbia.

I oppose this resolution. I will take a

couple of minutes to explain my opposition.

I understand and I have great

respect for many of our colleagues who

are supportive. I have joined with colleagues

who went to the White House

on Friday and also earlier today to

talk to the President and hear his side

of the issue. He tried to make a very

strong case for airstrikes and for military

intervention. He didn’t convince

me. I respect his opinion. I just happen

to disagree with him.

Time and time again I ask, If we are

going to war, why are we going to war?

Make no mistake, if we conduct airstrikes

against Serbia, we are going to

war. I don’t think we should do that

lightly.

I tell my colleagues, the resolution

that we are voting on, in my opinion, is

a very important resolution. It is probably

one of the most important votes

we will conduct, certainly this session

of Congress. Maybe Members will look

back over their Senate career and it

may be one of the most important

votes Members will cast in their Senate

career.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on

this resolution. That means I think

that we are making a mistake by conducting

a bombing campaign in Serbia.

A bombing campaign will also lead to

ground campaigns. A lot of people have

the false assumption that if we have

airstrikes, that is it. Many times there

has been a tendency by this administration—

and maybe previous administrations

as well—that we can do things

by air and that will do it.

We had an air campaign, we had military

strikes in the air against Iraq in

December—I believe December 18, 19,

and 20. It was a significant military operation.

Why? Because we wanted to

get the arms control inspectors back

into Iraq. We bombed them like crazy.

Guess what. We don’t have any arms

control inspectors in Iraq today, so air

didn’t do it. Saddam Hussein is now

able to build weapons of mass destruction.

The air campaign didn’t change

his policies one iota.

What about in Serbia? The whole

purpose of this—I will read from yesterday’s

New York Times, an interview

with Madeleine Albright, Secretary of

State,

In other words, if the Serbs don’t sign

on to the agreement that was negotiated

in France, they are going to face

airstrikes. In other words, we are going

to be attacking a foreign country because

they refused to allow an international

force to be stationed in their

country. That is what the Paris agreement

is.

Some of our colleagues say they will

vote for airstrikes but they won’t vote

for ground forces. The Secretary of

State says we are going to bomb them

until they agree to sign up to a peace

agreement, a peace agreement that

calls for stationing 28,000 international

troops into Kosovo.

I just disagree. I don’t think you can

bomb a country into submitting to a

peace agreement. That is more than coercion,

and I don’t think you get real

peace by coercing somebody. Maybe cajoling

people, maybe a little leverage

here and there, but to say we will bomb

your country until you sign a peace

agreement is probably very shortsighted

and not real peace, and to station

the 28,000 troops into hostile territory

I think would be a very serious

mistake.

I have heard the President’s arguments.

I haven’t made the argument

this is not in our national interest, but

I will say there is—I started to say a

civil war is going on in Kosovo, but it

is not even to the point of a civil war.

There is certainly an armed conflict.

There is guerrilla warfare going on.

There has been sniping going on. There

have been people killed on both sides. I

think that is unfortunate, but it has

been happening. But this is not the

only civil conflict that is going on

around the world. Yet in this conflict,

we will take sides. Maybe if you declare

it is a civil war going on, a total

civil war going on in Kosovo—why

should we be taking sides? Should we

be the air force for the KLA, the

Kosovo Liberation Army? Should we be

trying to help them fulfill their goals?

Their goal is not autonomy; their

goal is independence. They were somewhat

reluctant to sign on to the France

so-called peace agreement because they

didn’t want autonomy; they wanted

independence. They will never be satisfied

until they have independence. The

French peace accords say we will insert

this peacekeeping force of 28,000 troops

for 3 years, we will have autonomy at

that time, and then we are somewhat

silent on what happens at the end of 3

years. If anyone has talked to the KLA,

they know that the KLA wants independence.

Should we be intervening to

the extent of taking that side?

Some of my colleagues say if Serbia

is really massing and having military

actions against the KLA, instead of us

just bombing, why don’t we just give

them some support? Why don’t we give

them some munitions and help them

defend themselves? It is similar to the

argument many of us made in Bosnia:

Instead of sending troops, we wanted to

take the arms embargo off and allow

them to defend themselves. Senator

Dole stood on the floor many times and

said let’s allow them to defend themselves.

Some people made that same argument

today, dealing with the Kosovars.

The problem is, the peace agreement

that has been negotiated says we will

disarm the KLA. I think the chances of

that happening are slim, if nonexistent.

They will hide the arms. We

will not be successful in disarming, nor

do I really think that we should. We

will be very much involved in a civil

war. We are taking the side of the

Kosovars. Many of the Kosovars are

great people and I love them and some

are very peace loving, but there are

some people on the other side, on the

KLA side, who have assassinated and

murdered as well.

I have serious, serious reservations

about getting involved in a civil war. I

have very strong reservations about

the ability to be able to bomb somebody

to the peace table and making

them agree to a peace agreement that

they were not a signatory to.

I am reminded by some of our friends

and colleagues that this is a continuation

of President Bush’s policy. As a

matter of fact, in December of 1992

President Bush—and he was a lame

duck President at the time—issued a

very stern warning to Mr. Milosevic: If

he made a military move in Kosovo,

there would be significant and serious

consequences. Mr. Milosevic rightfully

respected President Bush, and he didn’t

make that move. I supported President

Bush in making that statement. I

think he was right in doing so.

However, there is a big difference between

that statement and saying we

will move militarily if he moves aggressively

against the Kosovars. There

is a big difference between that and

saying we will bomb you until you

agree to a peace agreement, and part of

that peace agreement is stationing

28,000 troops in Kosovo. There is a big

difference. I hope our colleagues will

understand that difference. That is one

of the reasons I am vigorously opposed

to this resolution. I don’t think you

can bomb a sovereign nation into submission

of a peace agreement.

Let me mention a couple of other reservations

that I have. Somebody said,

What about the credibility of NATO?

NATO, for 50 years, has helped sustain

peace and stability throughout Europe.

It has been a great alliance. That is

true. NATO has been a great alliance.

It has been a defensive alliance. NATO

has never taken military action

against a non-NATO member when

other NATO countries weren’t threatened.

Now we are breaking new ground

and we are moving into areas which I

believe greatly expand NATO’s mission

far beyond the defensive alliance that

it was created under.

Another reservation I have: The Constitution

says that Congress shall declare

war; it doesn’t say the President

can initiate war. The President started

at least consulting Congress on Friday.

He also consulted with Congress today,

Tuesday. We understand that war is

imminent. I don’t consider that consultation.

I remember about 4 weeks

ago when Secretary of State Albright

and Secretary of Defense Cohen briefed

a few of us on the Paris negotiations,

or the negotiations in France. They basically

said: We are trying to get both

sides to sign; we think maybe the

Kosovars will sign, but the Serbs and

Mr. Milosevic are not inclined to. But

if we can get the Kosovars to sign, we

will bomb the Serbs until they do sign.

I left there thinking, you have to be

kidding. That is their policy? I want

peace. I want peace as much as President

Clinton. I want peace as much as

Secretary Albright, throughout Yugoslavia,

but I don’t think by initiating

bombing we will bring about peace. I

am afraid, instead of increasing stability,

it might increase violence.

There might be adverse reactions

that this administration hasn’t

thought about. Instead of bringing

about stability, it may well be that the

Serbian forces are going to move more

aggressively. In the last 24 hours, it

looks like that may be the case. So instead

of convincing Mr. Milosevic to

take the Serbs out of Kosovo, they may

be moving in more aggressively. It

looks as if that is happening now. Instead

of dissuading him from oppression

on the Kosovars, he may be more

oppressive, more aggressive, and he

may run more people away from their

homes and burn more villages. Instead

of bringing stability, it may be bringing

instability, and it may be forcing,

as a result of this bombing, Mr.

Milosevic—instead of his response

being to move back into greater Serbia

and away from Kosovo, he may be more

assertive and aggressive and he may

want to strike out against the United

States. If airplanes are flying, he might

find that is unsuccessful. I hope he has

no success against our pilots and our

planes, but if he is not successful

against our planes, what can he be successful

against? Maybe the KLA, or

maybe he would be more aggressive in

striking out where he can have results

on the ground.

So by initiating the bombing, instead

of bringing stability, we may be bringing

instability. We may be igniting a

tinderbox that has been very, very explosive

for a long time. I hope that

doesn’t happen, but I can easily see

how it could happen. I have heard my

colleague, Senator INHOFE, allude to

the fact that former Secretary of State

Henry Kissinger alluded to that.

I will read this one sentence: ‘‘ The

threatening escalation sketched by the

President to Macedonia, Greece and

Turkey are, in the long run, more likely

to result from the emergence of a

Kosovo State.’’ Well, the President, in

this so-called peace accord, is supporting

autonomy for Kosovo. I have

already stated that the Kosovo Liberation

Army doesn’t want autonomy,

they want independence. If they are an

independent state, many people see

that usually aligned with Albania and

may be including the Albanians in

Macedonia. So you have a greater Albania

which would be very destabilizing,

certainly, toward the Greeks

and maybe other European allies. So

the peace accord says we don’t want

independence for Kosovo, we just want

autonomy.

Former Secretary of State Kissinger

says maybe that makes it more dangerous

and maybe violence would be escalated

in that process. Instead of

being a stabilizing factor, it may be an

escalating factor. That is not just me

saying that. That is Henry Kissinger

and other people I respect a great deal

saying that, also.

I am glad we are going to be voting

on this resolution. We are going to

have this vote—at least that is our expectation.

I know the leader is going to

propound a request before too long. It

is important that we vote on this. It

would be easy for this Senator, or any

other Senator, to say we are never

going to vote on this; we can stop this,

and frankly, if you stop it long enough,

maybe the President will be bombing

and then you can say, hey, it doesn’t

make any difference, he already started

bombing. I think that would be a

mistake. We ought to have an up or down

vote. Is this the right thing to do

or not?

So I urge my colleagues to support

the leader in his efforts to come to an

agreement on a vote on this resolution.

I, for one —I say ‘‘for one’’ because

even though I am assistant majority

leader, I have not asked one colleague

to vote one way or another on this resolution.

Some issues are too important

to play partisan politics on. I am not

playing partisan politics. I refuse to do

so. These are tough votes.

I remember the vote we had on the

Persian Gulf war in 1991, authorizing

the use of force. We already had 550,000

troops stationed in the Persian Gulf

ready to fulfill our obligations as outlined

by President Bush to remove Saddam

Hussein and the Iraqis from Kuwait.

We had a good debate on the

floor. It wasn’t easy. It was a close debate

and a close vote—52–47. I thought

it was a good vote the way it turned

out.

I am going to vote against this resolution

because I think it is a mistake.

Maybe I am wrong, and if bombing

commences, I hope and pray that every

single pilot will be returned safely, and

that there will be peace and harmony

and stability throughout Kosovo. But I

am concerned that we are making a

mistake. I don’t believe you can bomb

a country into submission and force

them into a peace agreement that they

determine is against their interest. I

don’t think you can bomb a country

and say we are going to bomb you until

you agree to have stationed 28,000

troops in your homeland. And this is

Serbian homeland, and if you go back

centuries, fighting has been going on in

this country for centuries.

One other comment. Somebody said,

‘‘What about the atrocities?’’ I am concerned

about the atrocities, but we

have to look at what is in our national

interest. There were 96 people killed in

Borneo last weekend. In Turkey, something

like 37,000 Kurds have lost their

lives. They want independence. The

Kurds in Iraq want independence; they

want their own homeland. What about

in Sudan where there have been over a

million lives lost? What about Burundi,

where 200,000 lives have been lost. Or

Rwanda, where 700,000 lives have been

lost?

We have to be very careful. We had a

Civil War in this country 130-some

years ago, and 600,000 Americans lost

their lives. I am glad we didn’t have

foreign powers intervene in our Civil

War. I think that would have been a

mistake. I am afraid that we are making

a mistake by intervening in the

war now going on in Kosovo. I hope

this resolution that we are getting

ready to vote on is not agreed to. I

urge colleagues to vote no on the resolution.

I yield the floor.