Mr. President, I get confused

by this because I think the analyses,

although clearly heartfelt and

searching, are totally out of proportion.

This is Europe, not Asia. This is a

place where we fought two world wars,

where we got involved in the circumstances

based upon the legitimate

concern of the spread of communism.

This is part of an industrialized world,

not where we were in Vietnam. This is

not a Tonkin Gulf Resolution, which

was clearly open ended. This is closed

ended. This is the circumstance. I find

it fascinating—all these bad lessons we

learned. What is the bad lesson we

learned in Bosnia? We stopped bloodshed.

We have 7,300 troops there. We

have had as many as 365,000 troops in

Europe to preserve stability and democracy

in Europe for the past 54

years. We have 100,000 troops in Europe

right now. We have 100,000 troops who

sit there.

If, in fact, it is a bad idea, and it is

an open-ended commitment to keep

troops in Bosnia, to keep the peace

with not a single American life having

been lost, without the destabilization

of the region, without Croatia and Serbia

being at war, without a flood of refugees

into Germany and into the rest

of the area—if that is a bad idea—then

we shouldn’t even have anybody in all

of Europe. This is about stability in

Europe.

The idea of comparing this to Somalia—

a life in Somalia is equally as valuable

as a life in Kosovo. But the loss

of a life in Somalia and the loss of a

life in Kosovo have totally different

consequences, in a Machiavellian

sense, for the United States interests.

If there is chaos in Europe, we have a

problem. We are a European power. If,

as a consequence of this, there is a

flood of refugees into any of the surrounding—

let’s take Albania. Albania

has a Greek population that is a minority

population, where there is already a

problem. If radicalized Albanian

Kosovars are thrown out of Kosovo into

Albania radicalizing that society—because,

by the way, when they burn

down your home, when they kill your

mother, when they kneel your child on

the ground and put a gun to the back of

his head and blow it off, it tends to

radicalize you. It tends to have that

impact. We are talking about 400,000 to

800,000 refugees. What happens if, in

fact, the flood of refugees goes rolling

into Macedonia, where you have two thirds

of the population that is Slav,

one-third Albanian? Just play out that

little scenario for me. What happens in

that region?

I will not take the time of the Senate

to go through the litany of why this

clearly is in our interest. But at least

let’s agree that this isn’t anything like

Vietnam in terms of our interests—like

Africa, or like a whole lot of other

places. We have an alliance called

NATO. All 19 members of NATO are in

agreement that this is necessary. All of

Europe is united. All of Europe is

united in that we have no choice but to

deal with this genocidal maniac.

With regard to this notion of a peace

agreement that this is designed—my

friend from the State of Washington, I

respectfully suggest, misstated the objectives

of the administration. The objectives

of the administration are the

objectives of the rest of Europe—all 19

other nations as well as the contact

group, I might add—and the objectives

are these: To stop the genocide, stop

the ethnic cleansing, stop the routing,

stop the elimination of entire villages

in Kosovo, to have some guarantee

that the civil rights, civil liberties, life

and liberty of the people living in that

region, 2 million people, are somewhat

secure.

Why do we do that? Beyond the humanitarian

reasons, why we do that is,

we know what happens if it spins out of

kilter. We know what the downside is if

the entire area is engulfed in this

chaos. We also know from experience

what happened in Bosnia. When we

acted, when we put ourselves on the

line, when we demonstrated that we

would not allow it to ‘‘happen’’ again,

it worked.

My friends say it isn’t working in

Bosnia, because, if we move through,

all of a sudden everything will fly

apart.

That was the case in most of Europe

for 30 years. If we removed the troops

in Europe in 1954, or 1958, the concern

was all of Germany would go. The concern

was all of Europe would go. So we

held out. We decided that democracy

tends to bring stability. I, for the life

of me, do not understand why you can

just cut out an entire—I wish I had a

map here—segment of Europe and say

it can be in flames and chaos, and it

has no impact on us; it will have no impact

on the alliance; it will have no impact

on our national security. That I

do not understand.

I do agree that this is not an easy

choice. I do agree that to know exactly

what to do is debatable, legitimately

debatable. But I do not agree that the

purpose of the administration is, as

was stated, to hope to be permitted to

send ground troops.

The only reason why the proposal

that was put forward by 19 NATO nations

in Europe was put forward was

not because we want to put in ground

troops. It was because we wanted a

commitment that the genocide and

ethnic cleansing in Kosovo would stop.

I remind everybody, by the way, in 1989

and 1990 their rights were taken away.

Their autonomy was stripped. During

that first 7-year period, there was a

policy of nonviolence on the part of the

Kosovars led by a doctor named

Rugova. And what happened was what

some of us predicted: By failing to stop

any of the actions of Milosevic and the

ultranationalists in Serbia, one thing

was bound to happen. Maybe it is because

I am Irish I understand it. I

watched it. We watched it historically

for 80 years in Ireland. That is, when

peaceful means fail and people continue

to be cleansed, denied their civil

rights and their civil liberties, denied

the ability to work, denied the ability

to worship, denied the ability to speak

their language, they become

radicalized. So all of a sudden Rugova

found himself odd man out, as the KLA

gained credibility and momentum, basically

saying: You are not getting it

done for us so we are going to use the

violent means.

What do we think is going to happen

if we walk away? The objective is to

stop the oppression of men, women and

children who are a minority in Serbia,

but make up the majority in Kosovo;

to say it will stop. The only way it will

stop is one of two: Either Mr. Milosevic

is denied the means to continue his oppression,

or he comes to the table,

agrees to stop it, and allows international

forces in there to guarantee

that he will stop it.

That is what this is about. You may

not think that is a worthwhile goal. I

understand that. I understand that.

But this is not about the desire to send

troops. It is about the desire to keep

that part of the world from spinning

out of control. I see two of my colleagues

wish to speak so I will cease

with the following comment.

There is a big difference.

The difference is it is in the center of

Europe, No. 1. No. 2, if Europe in fact

becomes destabilized, we are deeply involved

in matters far beyond what is

existing now.

I acknowledge to my friend, though,

what was at stake in the Middle East

was oil, was economic security, and

was a lot of other things at the time.

So it is, in fact, a legitimate point to

make that that was a critical vote. I

voted against that involvement—I am

sure the next point my friend was

going to make. I voted against that involvement.

I insisted, along with others,

there be a resolution to authorize

the use of force.

But the argument I would make is,

although you can argue it made sense

to do what we did, it is a different reason

why we moved; a different reason

why it occurred; a different reason why

it was necessary. It seems to me, comparing

what we did in the gulf, comparing

that to what we do here either

for purposes of justifying action here

or not justifying action here, is an inappropriate

analogy. It stands on its

own. It either made sense or it didn’t

make sense. It turns out it made sense

to move in the gulf and I argue it

makes sense for us to take this action

now in the Balkans.

So, if I can conclude so my friend

from Kentucky, who has been seeking

the floor, can get the floor, Senator

NICKLES started off a few moments ago

pointing out that seven of us, assigned

by the leadership, met to see whether

we could work out a compromise resolution.

Senator NICKLES pointed out

that the resolution that we agreed to

move with, assuming the procedural

circumstances allowed it to be done,

was one that was a straight-up authorization

for the use of airpower in conjunction

with NATO against Serbia and

Mr. Milosevic. That was the language

as to how to proceed that was agreed

to.

Senator NICKLES indicated he would

vote against that, notwithstanding the

fact that he helped craft what the language

would be. And that makes sense,

by the way. He was trying to figure out

what is the best, simplest, most

straightforward way to get an up-or down

vote on what the President wants

to do.

In the meantime, the President has

sent us a letter asking for legislation

to be able to do this. He has asked us

whether or not we would support the

use of airpower in conjunction with

NATO. I think we should get, at the appropriate

point, an up-or-down vote on

that. I understand my friend from

Alaska may have an amendment to

that resolution, if it ever comes up

freestanding, dealing with a prohibition

of ground troops, but we should

get to the business of dealing with that

which we are getting at now. I hope

through the leadership of the majority

leader we can somehow clear the decks

and get to a vote on the resolution.