Mr. President, I thank

the Chair.

It is my hope to engage, through

some questioning, my colleagues. The

distinguished Senator from Kentucky

left. I did not want an impression left

with the Senate that nothing has been

done on the complicated issues of

Kosovo as related to Bosnia, as related

to the region.

The Armed Services Committee has

had a series of hearings, a series of

briefings. The distinguished chairman

of the Appropriations Committee

knows of an amendment that the bill

contained last year by Senator ROBERTS

which outlined considerable work

in this area. So I believe the Senate

has addressed this issue off and on for

some time.

The Armed Services Committee last

week, when we had all four of the Service

Chiefs up, we asked each one specifically,

regarding the risk of this operation,

what opposition they were

going to meet in terms of air defense

alone, and they replied it was significant,

it was multiples of two or three

of what had been experienced in Bosnia,

which is being experienced almost

every day in Iraq. We have had a considerable

deliberation, I think, in various

areas of the Senate. This is, of

course, the first action.

It is my hope that very shortly, with

the concurrence of the two leaders, Mr.

LOTT and Mr. DASCHLE, we can send to

the desk a relatively short resolution

which will provide Senators with a

clear up-or-down vote. I will just read a

draft. It as yet has not been finally approved.

It is submitted by Mr. BIDEN,

myself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr.

BYRD, and Mr. MCCONNELL. Those are

the sponsors to date.

It reads:

That clarity was achieved by a group

of six of us. The distinguished majority

whip, Mr. NICKLES, sort of had the unofficial

job of presiding over the group.

He made it clear from the beginning

his opposition to this, but, nevertheless,

I think we succeeded in devising

what the Senate desired, and hope will

be concurred in, in terms of bringing it

up for further debate of this resolution.

I yield the floor.

A group of us met this

morning with the President. We had a

very thorough exchange of views. Senator

BYRD raised the issue of the President

asking the Senate. I followed Senator

BYRD and repeated the question.

And he said orally: ‘‘Yes, I do want the

support of the Senate, indeed, the Congress.’’

And he has now sent a letter to

the leadership of the Congress.

I say to my colleague, what is the

consequence if we do nothing, if we do

nothing, if we stand there? Here we

are, the leader of NATO. Here we are,

the leader of so many agreements

throughout Europe that have provided

for the greater security of Europe in

the past, throughout the history of

NATO.

What do we say to the men and

women of the Armed Forces who will

be in the airplanes, perhaps as early as

tomorrow some time? I am not predicting

the hour, but it could be. What

do we say to them? That the people of

the United States, through their elected

Representatives, are not supportive?

I know the strong arguments against

going in. And I respect my colleague.

But I say to my colleague, it has not

been spoken, with clarity, as to what

the consequences are if we do nothing.

I predict it would be an absolutely disastrous

situation in that region, that it

could grow in proportion far beyond

the crisis of the moment, and that at

that juncture, if military action were

required, it would require greater military

force than envisioned by the limited

airstrike, limited in the sense that

that component of our arsenal and that

of 18 other nations—this is a 19-nation

operation—be required to stamp out a

literal implosion of that whole Balkan

region. I say to my good friend, I respect

his views, but I think we also

have to address what happens if we do

nothing.

I recognize we are intruding on the

time of the distinguished chairman of

the Appropriations Committee and others.

I know of no more significant issue

than to send our people into harm’s

way, which requires the debate of the

Senate. I shall stand here at every opportunity

I can to give my views on

why I think it is essential that we approve

the actions as recommended.

If I could reply, nothing

in the remarks by the Senator from

Virginia in this moment or earlier

today from this period infer that a Senator

voting against this proposed resolution

in its draft form in any way does

not support the men and women of the

Armed Forces.

I simply say at this hour when we are

trying to debate this, it would seem to

me that those who can come and support

this resolution—it is clearly in

support of what they are about to do;

they are likely to go.

I am convinced that the President

has a resolve with the other leaders of

NATO to go forth with this military

mission. It is important that debate

here in the Senate take place. Every

Senator will vote his or her conscience,

and I know that there will be 100 votes

in support of the troops if they are

called upon to take on this high risk

together with their families.