Mr. President, I rise

today to discuss a related issue. The

Senator from Nebraska touched on foreign

policy and how it affects our national

security. I want to express my

concern that President Clinton and the

United States, in coordination with

NATO, is once again preparing to take

military action with very little, if any

dialog, with the Congress or the American

people.

Once again, the President of the

United States may be about to ‘‘plant

the flag’’ of U.S. credibility that will

lock this Nation in another expensive,

long involvement without any clear

discussion—it may be warranted; it

may be in the national interest, but

without any clear discussion of U.S.

vital national interest—and that involvement

is in a place in the world

called Kosovo.

The news today is pretty grim. The

news from Kosovo has been and continues

to be very grim. In the Washington

Post, here is a story as of this morning:

‘‘New Kosovo Massacre May Spur

NATO To Act.’’ This is not pretty. I am

quoting from the Post story by Mr.

Guy Dinmore:

In the New York Times—and as Senator

MCCAIN pointed out a few short

moments ago, and completes the pictures—

there is a very disturbing story

summed up:

A USA Today headline, ‘‘Yugoslavian

Army Takes Steps to Avoid Strikes.’’

Then in the London Times, a story by

Tom Walker, the reporter who discovered

the tragedy:

I won’t go into the gory details.

The international press and our local

national press are forecasting what I

think everybody in the Senate certainly

is aware of.

I commend to my colleagues the latest

issue of Time Magazine. The headline

reads, ‘‘The Balkan Mess: The

West has been fiddling while Kosovo

burns and regional peace strategies falter.’’

This is precisely the topic that Senator

HAGEL was talking about. I don’t

like saying this, but the headline says

it: ‘‘And Bill Clinton is too distracted

to pay proper attention.’’

The highlights of the article are as

follows:

That is a sad, sad commentary if in

fact that is true.

I’ll repeat that.

Senator HAGEL tried to point this

out, and Senator MCCAIN has tried to

point this out, as others have—

That is certainly true, with the

third-stage rocket being tested by

North Korea, and Saddam Hussein is

certainly not behaving. And India and

Pakistan are continuing their war of

words. There is very little justification,

by the way, for the missile strike

in regard to Sudan and the Khartoum

chemical plant. I won’t go into all of

that, but let me say on record that I do

not think that the justification can be

verified:

Senator MCCAIN talked about this

last week, and he did so a few moments

ago, also. Last week, he repeated the

observation made by the former majority

leader, Bob Dole of Kansas, who

tearfully told an audience he had been

to Kosovo and was shocked in regard to

the number that have been killed, the

atrocities, and the tragedy that 250,000

people are in the mountains hiding,

trying to prevent them and their families

from being killed. I don’t know

what is going to happen, but it is a

human tragedy. Bob Dole said, ‘‘For

goodness sake, let’s not repeat Bosnia.’’

Let me say that I just came from an

intelligence briefing as of yesterday

with Senator DEWINE of Ohio. He and I

are extremely concerned about the situation.

I can tell you that our sources

from the various intelligence assets

certainly confirm what the press has

reported—a human tragedy in the making,

a foreign policy disaster that bears

upon the ability of NATO to function.

Now, what do we do about it? Last

July, I offered an amendment to the

Defense Appropriations bill that required

the President to come before the

American people and the Congress before

he committed the U.S. to a military

involvement in terms of Kosovo.

The amendment asked the President to

address several items to make his case

before we intervened.

Why is it in our national interest?

You can argue it both ways. You can

say we are into another Bosnia, another

$10 billion, and year after year of

presence; or you can say that the future

of NATO is in danger. You can

even make a case that it is in our national

interest to intervene. But regarding

the amendment, I went on to

ask, how many troops will be required?

Now, that is a good question because

when the distinguished Senator from

Alabama, Chairman of the Intelligence

Committee, and I were visiting the new

NATO countries just a month or 2 ago,

we were at a social event and one of

the generals who certainly plays an important

role regarding NATO indicated

to me privately that it would take

70,000 troops to be on the ground—

‘‘peacekeepers,’’ as he called them. I

have no idea how 70,000 troops can be in

that part of the world, with that rough

terrain, in the middle of winter, with

no accessible roads and a very difficult

situation where the Serbs are trying to

kill the ethnic Albanians. I don’t know

how we can put 70,000 troops in there.

But if we are going to do that, we at

least ought to go over those contingencies.

Then, again, I stated it should be

mandatory to state what the objectives

would be, when we expected the troops

to be withdrawn, and what criteria

would signal ‘‘mission complete,’’ what

the cost would be and what would be

the funding source.

I am going to interrupt again and say

that, yesterday, as Senator MCCAIN

pointed out, the Joint Chiefs of Staff

came before the Congress, and it was a

pretty candid session. That is putting

it mildly. I don’t agree with the press

coverage in the Post as of this morning

regarding Senators raising holy ned

with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We

wanted candor and they gave us candor,

and it pointed out that the joint

chiefs—all of the services combined

said we need $21 billion to keep our

services in a status where at least we

could honor our responsibilities regarding

readiness.

I pointed out that the President has

requested $1 billion. It has to be offset

in the rest of the defense budget. The

Marine Corps needed $1.9 billion just to

put new tires on trucks, and other essentials.

So he is going to get $51 million,

but he has to offset it in another

way. The rest of the services said we

need $5 billion or $6 billion, or the

‘‘nose of the plane,’’ in terms of readiness,

will go into the ground, and the

President requested $1 billion that has

to be offset, and $1.9 billion in terms of

emergency funding regarding Bosnia.

This is a disaster. We do not even have

enough funds to keep our services in a

readiness posture, and here we are

talking about going into Kosovo, and

perhaps we should, but there has been

no dialog. What would be the impact on

an overstressed military? We are

stressed and we are strained and we are

hollow in some portions.

The distinguished present occupant

of the Chair summarized it very well

when we had that hearing. The Senator

from Oklahoma was the Readiness Subcommittee

chairman. He had a hearing

last week that pointed this out. The

first obligation to the Federal Government

is to guarantee our national security,

and we are not doing that today.

Also, as of today, nothing has been

heard on the subject from the administration

regarding Kosovo. Now, that

train has left the station while the Nation

has been preoccupied with other

matters.

Let me point out what has happened

in the Serbian province of Kosovo since

July. Mr. Milosevic has steadily increased

the level of violence against

the Albanian majority. Estimates put

the number of deaths at several hundred.

We read the latest reports, and

the number of refugees is probably

around 250,000. As I have indicated before,

we have intelligence assets and

there is talk of humanitarian relief—

and I am for that—but we can’t even

find these folks. Why? Because they are

hiding in the trees, on the mountains,

in the snow, and women and children

are starving, because they are afraid

Serbs will kill them. NATO has developed

plans for military action against

the Serbian forces. I will point out that

NATO had a flyover, called ‘‘Determined

Falcon.’’ That was one falcon

who wasn’t very determined. These

planes flew over for about 3 minutes.

What was the signal sent to the Serbs?

We were not really serious about it.

They took advantage. What was the

message that was given to liberation

army on the other side? It was: I think

the United States is going to come to

our aid. So there wasn’t any real dialog.

I wonder why that demonstration

was even started.

Humanitarian groups, including U.S.

State Department, have warned that a

human disaster is in the making if the

refugees do not find shelter and food

before winter starts. Winter has started.

This week, the first snows have fallen

in Kosovo.

The U.N. has adopted a resolution

under Article 7 of the U.N. Charter demanding

an immediate cease-fire.

Under Article 7, military force can be

used to ‘‘compel compliance,’’ Mr.

President.

NATO members are being canvassed

about the number of troops and equipment

they are willing to commit to an

‘‘undefined operation in Kosovo.’’ We

have several hundreds troops in Macedonia.

The general told us, when we

were over in the NATO countries, they

need at least 70,000 people. You know

the U.S. would have a larger portion

than 200 or 300.

I am calling for the administration

to come to the Congress now and not

after a military action and the commitment

of U.S. credibility and fully

discuss what the plans are, what is the

objective, how many troops, what is

the cost, what is the national interest

for military action in Kosovo. None of

the questions addressed in my amendment

have been answered, but it is

clear to me the United States and

NATO are very close to a prolonged,

costly involvement in another part of

the Balkans.

And the risks of such an involvement

is great. The risk of not taking action

is equally great. As I have indicated,

we have several hundred U.S. troops on

the ground in the neighboring country

of Macedonia. What risk would they be

in if we strike? What is the risk of destabilizing

the entire region if we incite

a broader conflict in Kosovo? What

is the risk if we do not? How likely will

a conflict in Kosovo draw Turkey and

Greece into the fray as opponents?

These are tough issues. They require

very close examination before we get

involved, and not after a military demonstration

strike of cruise missiles.

The administration and the national

security team, with all due respect, is

the most doggone outfit I have ever

seen in terms of planting the flag; and,

then, after the flag is planted we have

the choice of whether we are going to

withdraw while the troops are in the

field. You can’t do that. So the flag is

planted, and then we are stuck.

If the administration thinks threats

of military action may alter the behavior

of President Milosevic, what clearer

signal of intent could we send that we

were prepared to forcibly stop the violence

against the Albanians than by

having the President of the United

States lay out the issues to the American

people?

It might be a good idea to come back

and confer with the Senate, as Senator

WARNER, the distinguished Senator

from Virginia, the leading spokesman

for defense and foreign policy, has requested

the administration to come up

and consult. It might be a good idea to

get off the fundraising trail, Mr. President,

and come back and do that.

The President owes this Nation and

the Congress the full explanation of intent

if we are to become even more involved

in Kosovo.

There is no need to discuss the military

details of any proposed action. I

am not asking for that. No one is asking

for that. We don’t need to know the

timing, or the types or selection of

weapon platforms. But we do need a

dialogue on why this is necessary, and

why this is in our U.S. vital national

interests.

I indicated just a moment ago that

Senator WARNER has requested Secretary

Cohen, our national security adviser

to the President, Sandy Berger,

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright,

and anybody else that will listen, especially

the President of the United

States, to please come down here, to

please come to the Capitol, and to

please consult with us. What is going

on?

As I have indicated, we are having a

very tough time in regard to the national

defense.

As I said, it is a national disgrace.

And before we commit American men

and women in uniform to a possible

combat role overseas and an additional

role as opposed to what we are doing in

Bosnia, we have to be consulted. Mr.

President, what is going on?

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence

of a quorum.