

is the congressional authority and congressional responsibility to act if the United States is to be engaged in war.

Presidents are traditionally reluctant—unwilling really—to come to the Congress to ask for authorization because they do not want to make any concessions about what they consider to be their unilateral authority as Commander in Chief. That, in fact, was the tact taken by President Bush when he declined to come to Congress to ask for a resolution authorizing the use of force in 1991.

However, debate was undertaken. We had historic debates on this floor on January 10, 11, and 12. Finally, a resolution was passed in the House and passed in the Senate. The resolution which passed here was by a very narrow margin of 52-47. But the hand of the President was strengthened immeasurably by the congressional action.

We have seen the brutal historical fact of life that a war cannot be maintained—such as the Vietnam war—without public and congressional support. There was a Senate briefing yesterday by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Adviser, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff outlining a number of the issues relating to possible military action in Kosovo. This morning, President Clinton met with a large group of Senators and Members of the House of Representatives in a session which lasted approximately 2 hours, going over a great many of these issues.

I believe it is fair to say that although there has been some dissent, most of those in attendance stated that they believe that acting against Serbia, a sovereign nation, in the context of this case does constitute an act of war and should require congressional authorization. I commend our distinguished majority leader, Senator LOTT, for taking steps today after that meeting occurred to try to bring this issue to a vote.

There is an amendment pending on the supplemental appropriations bill stating that there should not be airstrikes taken by the administration without prior congressional authority. I believe this is a very sound proposition.

In my view, it is very important that there be a national debate, and that there be an understanding by the American people of precisely what is involved if we undertake airstrikes in Kosovo. This is not a matter where the airstrikes can be limited to missile strikes which do not put Americans in harm's way. If there are airstrikes with aircraft, considering all of the factors at play here, there is a very, very serious risk of casualties. That is something which none of us takes lightly. Certainly the American people are very reluctant, as the American people should be, to see those kinds of risks undertaken; and the Congress is very reluctant—really, unwilling—to take

those risks unless there is a clear statement of what our national interests are. And if they warrant that kind of military action.

The Constitution gives the sole authority to involve the U.S. Military in war to the Congress of the United States. One of the problems with this issue is that too often when confronted, there is a tendency on the part of the Congress—candidly—to duck. In February of 1998 when missile strikes were imminent against Iraq, they never came to pass. The Congress had an opportunity to debate and act on the issue and decided not to act.

Last fall, and again this past December, we had missile strikes against Iraq and, again, the Congress of the United States had an opportunity and authority to face up to that issue and decided not to act. Now, with the imminence of military action in Kosovo, in my view, it is imperative that this issue be debated by the Senate. It has been debated by the House of Representatives and they had a narrow, but favorable vote—a close vote—supporting peace-keepers, conditioned on a peace agreement being entered into. The agreement has not since happened, so that resolution is really irrelevant at this point.

But it is my hope that when the President addresses the Nation this afternoon at 4 o'clock, as he is scheduled to do, that will trigger a very extensive national debate. That is not the kind of debate that is going to be triggered by one Senator in an empty Senate Chamber speaking on C-SPAN 2, but the American people need to know what is involved. They need to know that there are risks involved, and there has to be the formulation of a national judgment to undertake this risk if we are, in fact, to move forward.

I have found in my contacts with people from my State of Pennsylvania that the people do not yet understand Bosnia, do not understand why we are there. We have the bitter experience of Somalia, when we saw the television picture of American soldiers being dragged through the streets, and we beat a hasty retreat.

We ought not to undertake military action in Kosovo unless we are prepared for the eventualities. I think it is a very useful matter to have the issue formulated in the Senate, to have debate on Monday and Tuesday, to follow up on the President's presentation, and to make a determination as to what our national policy should be. While bearing in mind that it is the role of the Congress to authorize the use of force if, in fact, it is to be undertaken.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

KOSOVO

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, for a short while today and on Monday and on Tuesday, we will debating a very short, clear, and concise proposal by the distinguished senior Senator from New Hampshire, Senator SMITH, relating to the use of American Armed Forces in combat in Kosovo and Yugoslavia.

Mr. President, I want to state as forcefully as I possibly can my support for that amendment. Senator SMITH states, I think with total accuracy, that the U.S. national security interests in Kosovo do not rise to a level that warrants military operations by the United States. It goes on to point out that any intervention on our part would be to engage the Armed Forces of the United States in a civil war inside the truncated but still nation of Yugoslavia.

Mr. President, there was an op-ed column in the Washington Post just 3 days ago in which the author set out three principles that struck me as totally sound and logical. Rule 1 is, don't involve yourself in a civil war; rule 2, if you do involve yourself in a civil war, take a side; rule 3, if you do involve yourself in a civil war and take a side, make certain that your side wins.

Mr. President, the proposed intervention in Kosovo on the part of the United States essentially violates all three of those rules. Clearly, it will involve us in a civil war. To a large extent, we will not have picked a side because we will not be promoting what those who are revolting against the Serbian authorities wish; that is to say, their independence. And we clearly aren't going in with the intention of winning in the sense of settling that conflict.

So we will follow the sorry example of this administration's military adventures so far: The billions of dollars we have spent in Haiti with troops still in that country now simply defending themselves, without having any discernible positive impact on that society; the low caliber war in which we have been engaged on and off in Iraq without any discernible prospect of removing Saddam Hussein from office; and our multibillion-dollar adventure in Bosnia, an adventure that has no end, because we are attempting to force people to live together who have no intention and no willingness to do so; and, now here in Kosovo we propose to do exactly the same thing.

Mr. President, I believe that the situation would be different and perhaps more justifiable if the President were to go all the way and to say that the service of freedom requires liberating people who no longer wish to be a part of Yugoslavia and helping them attain their freedom. But we are not doing that. We continue to promote the fiction that borders will not be changed.

The Secretary of State has justified this intervention on three grounds: that it is vital to the survival of NATO, a strange proposition when we have gotten NATO into this position largely ourselves and largely by accident; second, that there are humanitarian reasons to save the victims of this civil war, a justification which will also require us to enter a civil war in Africa, and perhaps in Afghanistan, and in Lord knows how many other places around the world; and the ancient domino theory that if we don't stop this fighting here, it will next go over into Macedonia, into Greece, and into Turkey. But if we were to defend Macedonia, at least we would be defending a sovereign nation.

Mr. President, I am convinced that before the President commits our Armed Forces to combat in Kosovo that he should be required to seek the advice and consent of both of the Houses of the Congress of the United States. I am convinced that this is a matter on which the views of this body should be known formally after a debate, and by a vote. I am convinced that the amendment sets the issues in this case in stark and appropriate context. And I am convinced, Mr. President, that we should vote in favor of that Smith amendment; that we should not risk the lives of members of our armed services and the prestige of the United States to an undefined cause for undefined and secondary ends in a way in which those ends are highly unlikely to be met, or at least highly unlikely to be met without a permanent investment in both our money and in our Armed Forces.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, March 18, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,639,558,556,809.78 (Five trillion, six hundred thirty-nine billion, five hundred fifty-eight million, five hundred fifty-six thousand, eight hundred nine dollars and seventy-eight cents).

One year ago, March 18, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,537,179,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred thirty-seven billion, one hundred seventy-nine million).

Five years ago, March 18, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,554,111,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred fifty-four billion, one hundred eleven million).

Twenty-five years ago, March 18, 1974, the Federal debt stood at \$471,215,000,000 (Four hundred seventy-one billion, two hundred fifteen million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,168,343,556,809.78 (Five trillion, one hundred sixty-eight billion, three hundred forty-three million, five hundred fifty-six thousand, eight hundred nine dollars and seventy-eight cents) during the past 25 years.

SAFE DRINKING WATER FOR RURAL AMERICA

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, as the Congress works to provide billions of dollars to address a crisis affecting our neighbors abroad who have had their lives disrupted overnight by raging waters, I have become more and more concerned about another water-related crisis occurring every day in this nation. That crisis is the lack of a safe, reliable supply of drinking water for millions of rural American families. Since 1995, federal data outlining the sorry details of the safe drinking water crisis have been available and, yet, year after year, adequate funding for water and wastewater projects that would solve this crisis is not provided. Last night, my distinguished colleagues joined Senator STEVENS and me in sending a message to rural Americans that their crisis is not forgotten.

Yesterday evening, the Senate adopted an amendment offered by myself and Senator STEVENS to the supplemental appropriations bill that would provide \$30 million in additional funds for rural water and wastewater systems. This money would benefit the neediest of rural communities that are affected by extreme conditions that increase the cost of constructing water and wastewater systems, that have a high incidence of health problems related to water supply and poor sanitary conditions, or whose residents are suffering from a high rate of poverty.

Within the \$30 million in budget authority provided in this amendment, \$5 million would be allocated for loans and \$25 million for grants. The result would be a total program level of \$55,303,000. The reality of this funding is that this year, an additional 25 or more communities throughout the United States would get some relief from the fear of an inadequate, unsafe supply of drinking water.

Safe, reliable drinking water is not an amenity. Safe drinking water is essential to the health and well-being of every American. All life as we know it depends on the necessary element of water.

Most Americans take safe drinking water for granted. Most Americans just assume that when they turn on the faucet, clean water will automatically flow out of the faucet. They assume that there will always be easy access to an unlimited supply of clean, safe drinking water.

The terrible truth is that, in the United States of America, the health of millions of men, women, and children is made vulnerable by their reliance on a possibly contaminated water supply.

According to statistics from 1998, approximately 2.2 million rural Americans live with critical quality and accessibility problems related to their drinking water, including an estimated 730,000 American citizens who have no running water in their homes. Let me repeat that—an estimated 730,000 people have no running water in their homes. An additional five million rural

Americans are affected by grave, although less critical, water problems, such as water sources that are overtaxed or poorly protected, and by antiquated distribution systems. The very young and the elderly are placed at particular risk of illnesses caused by unsafe, unclean, drinking water, and many towns without a reliable supply of water cannot even protect residents from the threat of fire.

This funding provided in our amendment is desperately needed to address conditions in West Virginia and much of Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta, in rural and native Alaskan villages, the Colonias, and in Indian Reservations. Senator STEVENS has been working hard to get the necessary funds for an authorized program for rural development in several Alaskan Native villages. I understand that while the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is trying to help, funding simply is not there for the water and wastewater systems that are the backbone of any development proposal. Our amendment specifically directs funds through the national reserve in an effort to serve the deserving families in Alaska in a timely manner.

In my own state of West Virginia, families in towns such as Pageton, Belington, and Crum must deal with the normal family worries of providing food, shelter, and a sound education to their children. Can you imagine the frustration that these families face every day in having to further protect their children from a foul or unreliable source of water! I am not talking about water that smells bad or tastes funny. I am talking about water that must be boiled before consumption, or that flows—when it flows—like opaque brown sludge from their taps. This is water not fit to wash a car, let alone to cook with or to mix with baby formula. That simply should not be, in a nation as rich in resources as we are.

A good part of the supplemental provides assistance for disaster recovery in other nations. This amendment reaches out to Americans in crisis. It gives hope to rural America that a brighter future lies ahead, a future flowing as bright and clear as the water out of their tap.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 975. An act to provide for a reduction in the volume of steel imports, and to establish a steel import notification and monitoring program.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. DOMENICI, from the Committee on the Budget, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 20. An original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal years 2000 through 2009 (Rept. No. 106-27).