

Mr. LEVIN. If our good friend from Alabama will yield one more second, it is possible we can at least divide the time tonight after the Senator from Alabama concludes so we will know how much each side has.

Mr. WARNER. First, how much time is remaining again with the Senator from Virginia?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia has 2 hours 50 minutes. The Senator from West Virginia has 1 hour. The Senator from Michigan has 3 hours 4 minutes; that is less 2 hours 55 seconds divided between the two Senators for this portion of the debate.

Mr. WARNER. The Senator from Virginia has 2 hours and?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Fifty minutes.

Mr. WARNER. With the addition of the distinguished Senator from West Virginia, that is 3 hours 50 minutes. The Senator from Michigan has?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia plus the Senator from West Virginia will have 10 minutes less than 4 hours.

Mr. WARNER. Understood.

Mr. LEVIN. We have 4 minutes more than 3 hours, if anybody at this hour can figure this out.

Mr. WARNER. Our colleague tonight will consume part of my time, and we will almost be in balance at the conclusion of this evening. The vote is going to happen at 2:30, so we are running around with fractions tonight.

Mr. LEVIN. This is my last intervention before my friend from Alabama speaks. I wonder if we can get an idea of approximately how long the Senator from Alabama expects to talk tonight.

Mr. SESSIONS. If it is not disrupting Senator WARNER's time, I want about 40 minutes, give or take 5 minutes.

Mr. WARNER. Why don't we do 30?

Mr. SESSIONS. I will do my best.

Mr. WARNER. It seems to me we are going to have 5½ hours tomorrow. We will discuss this together. I will listen to the Senator from Michigan's views.

In order to get some certainty for the opening of this debate tomorrow, which will commence immediately after the Senate is formally opened and the prayer is given, Senator ROBERTS from Kansas would be given 15 minutes to be followed by Senator LAUTENBERG of New Jersey for 15 minutes. Then I will only make known that Senator BURNS, of course—he is the chairman of the subcommittee for MILCON—will undoubtedly require some time. I assure him now that that time will likewise be given to Senator BURNS.

So the purpose of my unanimous consent is to see that those two Senators be recognized in that order for a total of not to exceed 30 minutes equally divided, 15 minutes each. I ask unanimous consent that that be the order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. It is possible Senator LAUTENBERG will need 20 minutes. That

additional 5 minutes will come out of our time.

Mr. WARNER. That is fine.

Mr. LEVIN. OK.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

The Senator from Alabama is recognized for up to 30 minutes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I have enjoyed hearing two great Senators tonight, Senator JOHN WARNER, who chairs our Armed Services Committee, and Senator CARL LEVIN, who is the ranking member on that committee. They are able patriots who are skilled advocates and who do a great job of presenting their viewpoints.

I have always said about Senator LEVIN that if I were in trouble, I would want him to defend me. I think we have a foreign policy situation that is in trouble, and he does a good job of defending it.

It is more than a legal question, however. It is a question of policy. It is a question of the commitment of American troops. It is a question of the wealth of the United States being committed to this area of the world.

I do believe our troops are doing a great job. Last year, I had the privilege, within 10 days of the end of the bombing in Kosovo, to travel there with Senator LEVIN and two other Senators. We toured that area.

I returned there, not too many weeks ago, for my second visit at Easter time. We had the privilege of meeting with troops and touring the area and celebrating Easter Sunrise Services with our troops there.

Our soldiers—men and women—are extraordinarily skilled. They are doing a great job for our country. They do what we ask of them. They have good morale. I will assure you that the morale of our soldiers is not going to be undermined if the Congress of the United States says: We are going to review this matter come next August or September or October—which is probably when we would do it because I think that is Senator WARNER's and Senator BYRD's commitment; it would actually be next October, 17 months from now.

They are not going to have their morale hurt because we have not forgotten them. They are not going to have their morale hurt if the Members of the Senate are discussing what is going on there and evaluating the situation. That is a matter that strikes me as really not good to be said. I would dispute that.

The intervention and the whole commencement of this exercise in Kosovo has been a colossal failure of diplomacy and a colossal failure of foreign policy. That is my view of it. I do not claim to be a thorough foreign policy expert, but I have watched this matter from the beginning. A lot of people have not done so. We have gotten confused about what has happened.

Senator JOHN WARNER, time and time and time again, since this involvement in Kosovo began, has done his best to

support the President, even when he had doubts about it. He supported the Secretary of Defense; he supported the Chief of Staff; he supported General Clark because he felt it was his duty to do so. I know he was uneasy about that.

But how long do we go? It has been a year now. We are talking about having a vote a year from now again to see whether or not we want to continue there. What is so dangerous about that? Why are people so afraid to have a debate and a vote? I do not understand that.

I think it is our duty, as Members of Congress, who represent the taxpayers of this country—who pay our salaries and pay the cost of that war effort that has come out of our defense budget—to confront this question and make some decisions about it. If anything, I believe we have been too lax. We have been too unwilling to confront the challenges that have occurred and too unwise about how to go about that.

So this Warner-Byrd amendment is a bipartisan amendment. It came out of the committee 23-3. That is the kind of vote we got in the committee. It has powerful support, broad bipartisan support. It is not extreme. It is not irrational. It is not going to cause NATO to collapse.

We have done our bit in Kosovo. Make no mistake about that. We have done our bit there. So the Congress has been patient. We have supported the President. He consistently misled the people of the United States and this Congress.

I remember upstairs, in the secret room, we had our briefings. And they started talking about this bombing. They said it might be over in 3 days; it might be over in 10 days. I remember one of our Senators asked: What if it is not? What if the bombing does not work? What do we do then? And they said: We believe it is going to work. I decided then if we did not have a plan better than that, we did not need to go into this operation.

But let me share what really happened.

Basically, what happened in this area, as I see it, is Milosevic started a nationalist campaign in Serbia and Yugoslavia that was very dangerous, horrible, unwise, that destabilized this whole area and helped lead to the tragedies that we have today. There is no mistaking that.

Remember now, though, before this bombing started we had 1,000-plus peacekeepers in Kosovo. We had some violence, periodic violence. This was with KLA guerrillas fighting, ostensibly, the Serb Government.

So we had a situation there which was definitely deteriorating in some ways. The Serb and KLA forces were sparring, but it was not out of control. We had 1,000 peacekeepers there.

We made a number of efforts to negotiate a peace agreement that could have provided for an orderly transition in that area to a more just society.

That was our goal and responsibility. I think it was a challenge that was difficult but could be met.

Not long ago, in the Old Senate Chamber, right off the Rotunda of this Capitol, we had Senator George Mitchell, who did the peace negotiations in Northern Ireland, as our speaker at the Majority Leader's Lecture Series.

He told us how he accomplished it in the face of the intractable forces that seemed to be at work. He said: There we kept talking. He said: I learned from the Senate that people can talk and talk and talk. And I would let them talk. They would talk and talk and talk. They would completely get everything out of their system. We would stay there into the night, day after day after day. Tensions began to go down. People began to think more clearly about the possibility they could work out their differences.

But that is not what happened here. I have often thought if we had had George Mitchell in Yugoslavia instead of the "masters of the universe" that we did have, who thought they could dictate a peace agreement and make it happen, we might have avoided this war.

The fact is, as the Economist Magazine said a few weeks ago, maybe it could not have been avoided, but it did not have to be started as soon as it did, and there was a chance it could have been avoided if we kept the negotiations going. I have no doubt about that.

Remember what happened. Our leadership demanded that the Serbs and the KLA—the Kosovars—come to Rambouillet, France, where we would begin to have a peace conference. We were just going to settle this thing, like a mama bringing two children together. We were just going to bring them together, and we were going to get together and settle this once and for all. And as time went along, the President said: You are going to reach a peace agreement, or the United States is going to bomb you. NATO is going to bomb you.

They would not agree. They kept on fussing, and they could not reach the agreement. Things were really tense. Henry Kissinger referred to that as a reckless event; it is a dangerous, high-risk operation to risk everything on a Rambouillet peace conference under those circumstances.

I asked Secretary of Defense Cohen—and I serve on the Armed Services Committee—in the history of the United States, had he ever known of a circumstance in which the United States got two contesting, contending parties together and said, if you don't agree to the peace agreement I write up, we are going to bomb you? Of course he said no. This is unprecedented, in my observation, in the history of the world.

So we did that, and we undertook this reckless gamble, and we were just going to force these people to do it. You remember, even the Kosovars

would not agree. They left the agreement, and then the Serbs were going to leave the agreement. Apparently the Americans told the Kosovars: You come back and sign this thing because we really will bomb these guys. If you will sign it, we will make them sign it. So they came back and the Kosovars signed, but the Serbs would not.

By the way, the agreement we were asking them to sign basically said we can send troops throughout Yugoslavia, anywhere we want to—NATO can send troops anywhere.

It is very difficult for any nation that had any respect for its sovereignty to agree to some of the things that were in that agreement. Regardless, they would not sign it. Days went by, time went by, and people were saying: You promised, Mr. President, you were going to bomb. You are not going to bomb. You can't be trusted. Your word was not good.

He was under investigation and had his credibility questioned severely right in this body by the American people. So it was a question of would he follow through on his worldwide public commitment to start a war. Of course, eventually, he did. He started to bomb.

I want to mention how that was conducted, but I will just say this about it. The Air Force general who conducted that war testified in a postwar congressional hearing in the Armed Services Committee, and I was there. I remember asking him—he was unhappy with the fact that he was not allowed to start the bombing aggressively, that he was dictated to targets he could go after. There were only certain limited targets, and it was a slow start. He opposed that privately. He was very aggressive, and he warned that that was not the way to do a war.

If you are going to get involved, you have to go with full force, aggressively at the beginning. We have learned that over the years in this country. But, oh, no, we had to get all 17 NATO nations to sign off on every target. And somebody would object, and they would object, and you could not do this target or that target, and only these limited targets so nobody would be injured, and we started off with this slow bombing campaign.

Now, 3 days after that, the big event happened. Remember, we have been told repeatedly that the reason this war commenced—and we have almost forgotten the true facts of the situation, but we were told we were commencing and carrying out this war to stop ethnic cleansing. There had not been ethnic cleansing until the bombing started. It was 3 days after the bombing started that Milosevic sent his troops south into one of the most vicious displays of violence that I suppose anyone has ever seen against a basically defenseless people. They burned houses, ran people out, moved families and children. You saw them on TV. They were on wagons; they were walking; they were on mules and on horses, trying to survive in those camps. They ran them out.

I say to you, do not let anybody make the case that we had to bomb to stop that kind of ethnic cleansing. The ethnic cleansing started after we started the bombing—3 days. This effort with the NATO air campaign—what a blunder that was.

By the way, we also announced that in the conduct of this war we would never use ground troops. That gave Milosevic a serious basis for confidence that certain things would not happen. He would not be threatened by events by which he could otherwise have been threatened. We were unwilling to use troops. He didn't have to prepare certain defenses because we eliminated the possibility that ground troops would be used.

We were told this would be a joint air effort and we would have planes from other countries. Others did participate, but 75 percent of the actual combat missions were flown by U.S. pilots. In fact, it is a true statement to say that NATO meant to deploy the U.S. Air Force. They told our Air Force whom to bomb, when to bomb, and how to do it. They rejected our air commander's advice about how to conduct the war, and even General Clark's advice on many matters.

So I asked our Air Force commander did he oppose this and did he think it was wrong the way they started controlling the targets he thought should have been hit. He said, "Yes." I asked him, "Did this prolong the war?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Did it cost innocent lives because they didn't follow your advice?" He said, "Yes, sir." Why? Because President Clinton and Schroder and Tony Blair were conducting a political war, not a real war, in many ways.

It took 78 days to complete this thing, resulting in the complete ethnic cleansing of Kosovo and extraordinary damage in Yugoslavia and in Kosovo and in areas surrounding there—a colossal disaster. How can anybody suggest otherwise? This was not a great victory, as some have tried to portray it. It was a disaster that, Lord knows, we should have done everything to avoid. As Henry Kissinger and others told us: If we get in there and deploy, it is going to be difficult to get out. We are going to be stuck. You do not want to be committed in the midst of these hostilities to a long-term occupation in Kosovo and those areas. You will find it difficult to get out.

That is exactly what happened. In addition to this, our relationship with Russia soured. Russia is a big-time world power. Russia had the opportunity to be our ally. But our relationship with Russia over the last number of years has deteriorated. If you think this war didn't have anything to do with it, you are mistaken. They were very upset about the way this was conducted. It was basically a NATO attack on a non-NATO nation which posed no real military threat to any other NATO nation. They didn't like that. They have an identity with the Serbs. So it made the Russians very unhappy.