

In addition, since this air operation began, the U.S. Embassy in Skopje, Macedonia, has been subjected to increasingly hostile demonstrations by a large number of Serbian sympathizers. In response, I have authorized a unit consisting of about 100 combat-equipped Marines from USS NASSAU (LHA 4), which is supporting the air operations in Kosovo, to deploy to Skopje to enhance security at our embassy. These Marines will remain deployed so long as is necessary to protect our embassy and U.S. persons.

We cannot predict with certainty how long these operations will need to continue. Milosevic must stop his offensive, stop the repression, and agree to a peace accord based on the framework from Rambouillet. If he does not comply with the demands of the international community, NATO operations will seriously damage Serbia's military capacity to harm the people of Kosovo. NATO forces will also use such force as is nec-

essary to defend themselves in the accomplishment of their mission.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. In doing so, I have taken into account the views and support expressed by the Congress in S. Con. Res. 21 and H. Con. Res. 42.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

## The President's Radio Address

*March 27, 1999*

Good morning. Three days ago I decided the United States should join our NATO Allies in military airstrikes to bring peace to Kosovo. In my address to the Nation last Wednesday, I explained why we have taken this step: to save the lives of innocent civilians in Kosovo from a brutal military offensive; to defuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results; to prevent a wider war we would have to confront later, only at far greater risk and cost; to stand with our NATO Allies for peace.

Our military operation has been underway for several nights now. In this time, Serb troops have continued attacks on unarmed men, women, and children. That is all the more reason for us to stay the course. We must and we will continue until Serbia's leader, Slobodan Milosevic, accepts peace or we have seriously damaged his capacity to make war.

As always, America's military men and women are performing with courage and skill. Their strength comes from rigorous training, state-of-the-art weaponry, and hard-won experience in this part of the world. This is the same brave

and tested force that brought stability to Bosnia after 4 years of vicious war. I am confident they will once again rise to the task.

Some of them are fighter pilots, some are bombers, some are mechanics, technicians, air traffic controllers, and base personnel. Every time I visit our troops around the world, I am struck by their professionalism, their quiet, unassuming determination. They always say, "This is the job I was trained to do." They don't see themselves as heroes, but we surely do.

I've also been deeply impressed by the solidarity of NATO's purpose. All 19 NATO nations are providing support, from Norway to Turkey, from England to Italy, from Germany and France to our neighbors in Canada, including our 3 allies from central Europe, the new NATO members: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic.

And we should remember the courage of the Kosovar people today, still exposed to violence and brutality. Many Americans now have heard the story of a young Kosovar girl trying to stay in touch with a friend in America by E-mail as a Serb attack began in her own village. Just

a few days ago she wrote, "At the moment, just from my balcony, I can see people running with suitcases, and I can hear some gunshots. A village just a few hundred meters from my house is all surrounded. As long as I have electricity, I will continue writing to you. I'm trying to keep myself as calm as possible. My younger brother, who is 9, is sleeping now. I wish I will not have to stop his dreams."

We asked these people of Kosovo to accept peace, and they did. We promised them we would stick by them if they did the right thing, and they did. We cannot let them down now.

Americans have learned the hard way that our home is not that far from Europe. Through two World Wars and a long cold war we saw that it was a short step from a small brushfire to an inferno, especially in the tinderbox of the Balkans. The time to put out a fire is before it spreads and burns down the neighborhood. By acting now, we're taking a strong step toward a goal that has always been in our national inter-

est: a peaceful, united, democratic Europe. For America there is no greater calling than being a peacemaker. But sometimes you have to fight in order to end the fighting.

Let me end now by repeating how proud all Americans are of the men and women in uniform risking their lives to protect peace in the Balkans. Our prayers are with them. And our prayers are with all the people of the Balkans searching for the strength to put centuries of divisions to rest and to join Europe and North America in building a better future together.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:44 p.m. on March 26 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 26 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

## **Statement on the Rescue of a United States Pilot in Serbia** *March 27, 1999*

I am pleased with the news that our pilot has been rescued successfully. I am tremendously proud of the skill and bravery of the pilot and of the courageous individuals who participated in the recovery.

As I have said from the outset, this military operation entails real risk. However, the continued brutality and repression of the Serb forces

further underscores the necessity for NATO forces to persevere.

Our NATO operations will go forward as planned. I strongly support the decision of Secretary General Solana to move to a new phase of the air campaign, which will include a wider range of targets, including forces in the field.

## **Statement on the Death of Michael Aris** *March 27, 1999*

The First Lady and I were saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Michael Aris, a scholar of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies at Oxford University. We offer our sincere condolences to his wife, Aung San Suu Kyi, his sons, Alexander and Kim, and other family members.

Dr. Aris' perseverance and dedication to his wife and family and to the cause of human rights and democracy in Burma earned him the

respect and admiration of citizens around the world. At this difficult time, I want to reaffirm to Michael's family and to all the people of Burma that the United States will keep working for the day when all who have been separated and sent into exile by the denial of human rights in Burma are reunited with their families and when Burma is reunited with the family of freedom.