

a 2-week recess, in spite of the fact that many of our Government's critical emergency farm loan programs are set to run out of funds in the next several weeks.

Therefore, I am taking this immediate stop-gap measure so that our farmers, who face continuing low crop prices and difficulty in securing private loans, will be able to finance spring planting. This action will make more than \$300 million in loans available to farmers and ranch-

ers. I urge Congress when it returns from its recess to move immediately on our emergency request for funds for farm loans.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 12:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

March 26, 1999

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

At approximately 1:30 p.m. eastern standard time, on March 24, 1999, U.S. military forces, at my direction and in coalition with our NATO allies, began a series of air strikes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in response to the FRY government's continued campaign of violence and repression against the ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo. The mission of the air strikes is to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course; to deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo; and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military's capacity to harm the people of Kosovo. In short, if President Milosevic will not make peace, we will limit his ability to make war.

As you are aware, the Government of the FRY has been engaged in a brutal conflict in Kosovo. In this conflict, thousands of innocent Kosovar civilians have been killed or injured by FRY government security forces. The continued repression of Kosovars by the FRY military and security police forces constitutes a threat to regional security, particularly to Albania and Macedonia and, potentially, to Greece and to Turkey. Tens of thousands of others have been displaced from their homes, and many of them have fled to the neighboring countries of Bosnia, Albania, and Macedonia. These actions are the result of policies pursued by President Milosevic, who started the wars in Bosnia and Croatia, and moved against Slovenia in the last decade.

The United States, working closely with our European allies and Russia, have pursued a diplomatic solution to this crisis since last fall. The Kosovar leaders agreed to the interim settlement negotiated at Rambouillet, but the FRY government refused even to discuss key elements of the peace agreement. Instead, the Government of the FRY continues its attacks on the Kosovar population and has deployed 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo in preparation for a major offensive and in clear violation of the commitments it had made.

The FRY government has failed to comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions, and its actions are in violation of its obligations under the U.N. Charter and its other international commitments. The FRY government's actions in Kosovo are not simply an internal matter. The Security Council has condemned FRY actions as a threat to regional peace and security. The FRY government's violence creates a conflict with no natural boundaries, pushing refugees across borders and potentially drawing in neighboring countries. The Kosovo region is a tinderbox that could ignite a wider European war with dangerous consequences to the United States.

United States and NATO forces have targeted the FRY government's integrated air defense system, military and security police command and control elements, and military and security police facilities and infrastructure. United States naval ships and aircraft and U.S. Air Force aircraft are participating in these operations. Many of our NATO allies are also contributing aircraft and other forces.

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