

Rangel and others—[laughter]—proved themselves to be America's greatest team.

You know, this was a team that reminded a lot of people of the Yankees that made the Yankees America's team—of Ruth and Gehrig, of Mantle and Maris, of DiMaggio, who threw out the first pitch at Yankee Stadium in the last season. And for lifetime baseball fans, I can't help saying a word, since he's passed away, that I'm awful glad that he was able to see one last championship season for the Yankees.

You know, Yogi Berra said a lot of interesting things. I've tried to commit a lot of them to memory, and they always get a laugh, and I won't bother you with any of them today, except he said one thing that I think is worth repeating, because I think it is the motto of this team and it reflects the spirit that I hope we have when we come to work here every day. He said, "You give 100 percent in the first half of the game, and if that isn't enough, in the second half, you give what's left." [Laughter]

Well, last year, that's what the Yankees did all year long: more victories in a year than any other team in Major League history, 125. I understand that even George Steinbrenner was impressed. [Laughter] Although I think he still wants to know what happened to the other 50 games. [Laughter] Joe Torre inspired America with his leadership, his character, and his comeback. But I can tell you, after having been President now for 6½ years, the leader can't win without good players.

I was glad to see Donna Shalala acknowledge Mr. Steinbrenner, and now I know where she got her grit. We all remember the clutch hits

of Paul O'Neill and Derek Jeter. You remember David's 20 wins; Bernie Williams' battle—title, captured in the very last day of the season; Tino Martinez's game-winning grand slam home run in the first game of the World Series; and of course, World Series MVP Scott Brosius' two homers, six RBI's, and steady defense in the four-game series. [Laughter]

Now, I don't know how long America will have to wait for another baseball season where two guys hit over 60 home runs, but the New York Yankees defied every conventional wisdom about what a professional baseball team could achieve in a highly competitive league, with more and more teams and more and more talented players.

But again, I say to all of you, all Americans—Yankee fans, and even the couple of guys in the press who waved their hands when I said it was a good thing there was a little more competition this season—everybody who's loved baseball from childhood will never forget that Yankee team and what it did to clearly, clearly make baseball our national pastime and remind us that New York Yankees are America's team.

Thank you, and God bless you. Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 5:45 p.m. in the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joe Torre, manager, and George M. Steinbrenner III, owner, New York Yankees, and 1998 team members David Cone, Paul O'Neill, Derek Jeter, Bernie Williams, Tino Martinez, and Scott Brosius. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Address to the Nation on the Military Technical Agreement on Kosovo June 10, 1999

My fellow Americans, tonight for the first time in 79 days, the skies over Yugoslavia are silent. The Serb army and police are withdrawing from Kosovo. The one million men, women, and children driven from their land are preparing to return home. The demands of an outraged and united international community have been met.

I can report to the American people that we have achieved a victory for a safer world, for

our democratic values, and for a stronger America. Our pilots have returned to base. The airstrikes have been suspended. Aggression against an innocent people has been contained and is being turned back.

When I ordered our Armed Forces into combat, we had three clear goals: to enable the Kosovar people, the victims of some of the most vicious atrocities in Europe since the Second World War, to return to their homes with safety

and self-government; to require Serbian forces responsible for those atrocities to leave Kosovo; and to deploy an international security force, with NATO at its core, to protect all the people of that troubled land, Serbs and Albanians, alike. Those goals will be achieved. A necessary conflict has been brought to a just and honorable conclusion.

The result will be security and dignity for the people of Kosovo, achieved by an alliance that stood together in purpose and resolve, assisted by the diplomatic efforts of Russia. This victory brings a new hope that when a people are singled out for destruction because of their heritage and religious faith and we can do something about it, the world will not look the other way.

I want to express my profound gratitude to the men and women of our Armed Forces and those of our Allies. Day after day, night after night, they flew, risking their lives to attack their targets and to avoid civilian casualties when they were fired upon from populated areas. I ask every American to join me in saying to them, thank you, you've made us very proud.

I'm also grateful to the American people for standing against the awful ethnic cleansing, for sending generous assistance to the refugees, and for opening your hearts and your homes to the innocent victims who came here.

I want to speak with you for a few moments tonight about why we fought, what we achieved, and what we have to do now to advance the peace and, together with the people of the Balkans, forge a future of freedom, progress, and harmony.

We should remember that the violence we responded to in Kosovo was the culmination of a 10-year campaign by Slobodan Milosevic, the leader of Serbia, to exploit ethnic and religious differences in order to impose his will on the lands of the former Yugoslavia. That's what he tried to do in Croatia and in Bosnia, and now in Kosovo. The world saw the terrifying consequences: 500 villages burned; men of all ages separated from their loved ones to be shot and buried in mass graves; women raped; children made to watch their parents die; a whole people forced to abandon, in hours, communities their families had spent generations building. For these atrocities, Mr. Milosevic and his top aides have been indicted by the International War Crimes Tribunal for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

I will never forget the Kosovar refugees I recently met. Some of them could barely talk about what they had been through. All they had left was hope that the world would not turn its back.

When our diplomatic efforts to avert this horror were rebuffed and the violence mounted, we and our Allies chose to act. Mr. Milosevic continued to do terrible things to the people of Kosovo, but we were determined to turn him back. Our firmness finally has brought an end to a vicious campaign of ethnic cleansing, and we acted early enough to reverse it, to enable the Kosovars to go home.

When they do, they will be safe. They will be able to reopen their schools, speak their language, practice their religion, choose their leaders, and shape their destiny. There'll be no more days of foraging for food in the cold of mountains and forests, no more nights of hiding in cellars, wondering if the next day will bring death or deliverance. They will know that Mr. Milosevic's army and paramilitary forces will be gone, his 10-year campaign of repression finished.

NATO has achieved this success as a united alliance, ably led by Secretary General Solana and General Clark. Nineteen democracies came together and stayed together through the stiffest military challenge in NATO's 50-year history.

We also preserved our critically important partnership with Russia, thanks to President Yeltsin, who opposed our military effort but supported diplomacy to end the conflict on terms that met our conditions. I'm grateful to Russian Envoy Chernomyrdin and Finnish President Ahtisaari for their work, and to Vice President Gore for the key role he played in putting their partnership together. Now, I hope Russian troops will join us in the force that will keep the peace in Kosovo, just as they have in Bosnia.

Finally, we have averted the wider war this conflict might well have sparked. The countries of southeastern Europe backed the NATO campaign, helped the refugees, and showed the world there is more compassion than cruelty in this troubled region. This victory makes it all the more likely that they will choose a future of democracy, fair treatment of minorities, and peace.

Now we're entering a new phase, building that peace, and there are formidable challenges. First, we must be sure the Serbian authorities meet their commitments. We are prepared to

resume our military campaign should they fail to do so. Next, we must get the Kosovar refugees home safely. Minefields will have to be cleared; homes destroyed by Serb forces will have to be rebuilt; homeless people in need of food and medicine will have to get them. The fate of the missing will have to be determined. The Kosovar Liberation Army will have to demilitarize, as it has agreed to do. And we in the peacekeeping force will have to ensure that Kosovo is a safe place to live for all its citizens, ethnic Serbs as well as ethnic Albanians.

For these things to happen, security must be established. To that end, some 50,000 troops from almost 30 countries will deploy to Kosovo. Our European Allies will provide the vast majority of them; America will contribute about 7,000. We are grateful that during NATO's air campaign we did not lose a single serviceman in combat. But this next phase also will be dangerous. Bitter memories will still be fresh, and there may well be casualties. So we have made sure that the force going into Kosovo will have NATO command and control and rules of engagement set by NATO. It will have the means and the mandate to protect itself while doing its job.

In the meantime, the United Nations will organize a civilian administration while preparing the Kosovars to govern and police themselves. As local institutions take hold, NATO will be able to turn over increasing responsibility to them and draw down its forces.

A third challenge will be to put in place a plan for lasting peace and stability in Kosovo and through all the Balkans. For that to happen, the European Union and the United States must plan for tomorrow, not just today. We must help to give the democracies of southeastern Europe a path to a prosperous, shared future, a unifying magnet more powerful than the pull of hatred and destruction that has threatened to tear them apart. Our European partners must provide most of the resources for this effort, but it is in America's interest to do our part, as well.

A final challenge will be to encourage Serbia to join its neighbors in this historic journey to a peaceful, democratic, united Europe.

I want to say a few words to the Serbian people tonight. I know that you, too, have suffered in Mr. Milosevic's wars. You should know that your leaders could have kept Kosovo as a part of your country without driving a single

Kosovar family from its home, without killing a single adult or child, without inviting a single NATO bomb to fall on your country. You endured 79 days of bombing not to keep Kosovo a province of Serbia but simply because Mr. Milosevic was determined to eliminate Kosovar Albanians from Kosovo, dead or alive.

As long as he remains in power, as long as your nation is ruled by an indicted war criminal, we will provide no support for the reconstruction of Serbia. But we are ready to provide humanitarian aid now and to help to build a better future for Serbia, too, when its Government represents tolerance and freedom, not repression and terror.

My fellow Americans, all these challenges are substantial, but they are far preferable to the challenges of war and continued instability in Europe. We have sent a message of determination and hope to all the world. Think of all the millions of innocent people who died in this bloody century because democracies reacted too late to evil and aggression. Because of our resolve, the 20th century is ending not with helpless indignation but with a hopeful affirmation of human dignity and human rights for the 21st century.

In a world too divided by fear among people of different racial, ethnic, and religious groups, we have given confidence to the friends of freedom and pause to those who would exploit human difference for inhuman purposes.

America still faces great challenges in this world, but we look forward to meeting them. So, tonight I ask you to be proud of your country and very proud of the men and women who serve it in uniform. For in Kosovo, we did the right thing; we did it the right way; and we will finish the job.

Good night, and may God bless our wonderful United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); NATO Secretary General Javier Solana; Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe; President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland; and former Prime Minister and Special Envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. The President also

referred to the Military Technical Agreement Between the International Security Force (KFOR) and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner June 10, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Charlie, wait a minute. Before Chairman Rangel sits down—you know, Dick Gephardt got up there and said, “You know, the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee is as powerful as the President.” [Laughter] Bob Johnson said, “That’s a scary thought.” [Laughter] And I said, “No, no, he’s more powerful than the President.” [Laughter]

You should know that among all the things we have to be grateful for tonight and to celebrate, tomorrow is Charlie Rangel’s birthday. So I think we should sing “Happy Birthday” to him.

[At this point, the participants sang “Happy Birthday.”]

Representative Charles Rangel. My only response is, save Social Security now! [Laughter]

The President. That’s just like we rehearsed it. [Laughter]

Let me say to Congressman Rangel and, in his absence, Chairman Clyburn, Eleanor Holmes Norton, all the members of the caucus who are still here, and those who have come and gone, to the members of the Cabinet that are here—I saw Secretary Slater and Secretary Riley, there may be others here—and my former Cabinet member Jesse Brown, former Secretary of Veterans Affairs back there, I’m glad to see you. My wonderful friend from Chicago and fellow Arkansan John Stroger and all the others who did so much to make this night a possibility. I thank the chairman of the DNC, Joe Andrew, for being here; and Lottie Shackelford, others from the DNC who are here.

I want to say—I have so many friends here, but there’s one young couple here that I’m particularly pleased about being here because they’re new Washingtonians, the newly acquired new quarterback for the Washington Redskins, Rodney Peete, and his wonderful wife, Holly Robinson Peete. You all stand up there and say hello. [Applause] They are a big addition

to this community and wonderful people, and I’m glad to have them.

I want to say a few things rather briefly tonight. First of all, Congressman Rangel, my wife said to tell you hello, and once again, thank you for your friendship. [Laughter] Secondly, I want you to know when we had the New York Yankees at the White House today to celebrate their championship last year, I called them the Bronx Bombers, and I emphasized “Bronx,” and I said I was doing it at your behest. [Laughter]

Finally, let me say I was looking at Dick Gephardt standing up here, and I have known him for many years, and I thought he was a good man and an able man when I first met him. But I have watched him grow in his responsibility, in the depth of his understanding and his spirit. He should be the Speaker of the House. He should be the Speaker of the House.

The last thing I want to say by way of introduction is, I’m delighted to see Lionel Hampton again. We had—John Conyers and I had a 90th birthday party for him at the White House last year, almost a year ago, and they actually let me play with the band. And I hadn’t played in months, and it was really one of the nicest nights I’ve had in the White House, and I’m very grateful for that. And I’m grateful for him. If I look half as good at 60 as he does at 90—[laughter]—if I can hear to play my horn as well as he can hear to play his vibie, I will be a happy fellow.

I apologize for being late here tonight. I think all of you know why. I addressed the people of the United States tonight about the end of the conflict in Kosovo. I want to say a couple of things about that and what it has to do with all of the things that have already been mentioned and all the issues we don’t have time to mention tonight.

The unimaginable horrors that were inflicted on those people, which led to an unprecedented