

a just cause to prevail in Kosovo, for giving shelter and hope to the Kosovar refugees, and for welcoming our NATO troops who came here to help those refugees.

NATO could not have achieved its mission without you; the people of Kosovo would not be going home to security and autonomy without you. I came here, as much as anything else, to say thank you.

Second, I came here because I believe the United States, our NATO Allies and, indeed, all nations of the world who support the reversal of ethnic cleansing and respect for human rights and minority rights have a responsibility to help Macedonia to overcome the economic hardships that the recent crisis has imposed and to return to a path to prosperity and even stronger democracy and freedom.

Already, our total aid to Macedonia has more than tripled over last year to \$72 million, and today we will provide another \$12 million in food commodities. In the months ahead, we will do more. But we are also committed to the restoration of economic opportunity and jobs in Macedonia. Today I am delighted that an executive of the American company Liz Claiborne came with the First Lady here to Macedonia to follow up on her trip and to announce that they would be reopening facilities and employing somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 of your people. We will encourage other American businesses now to look at Macedonia as a model of stability at the end of the conflict in Kosovo.

Finally, Mr. President, let me reaffirm once more our belief that in order to build a future

of freedom and prosperity, in which human rights and minority rights are everywhere respected, in which nations are not torn apart by yesterday's hatreds and violence, we must make this Stability Pact a success. We must create real opportunities for ordinary citizens throughout southeastern Europe. And the United States is committed to doing that.

But the thing that is even more important, Mr. President, is that the Macedonian people and leaders are committed to that kind of future. I think it is worth noting that this country is not ethnically homogeneous. It has its own challenges. And yet, in spite of that, you were willing to take these refugees, 300,000 of them; 50,000 have already gone home. You bore this burden at great cost and considerable risk so that we could together pursue a vision of southeastern Europe very different from what the horrible ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo represent.

We have stopped that. Now it is time to build that better future. And I pledge to you, sir, that the United States will work with you, and we will do this together.

Thank you.

NOTE: The remarks began at 1:43 p.m. in the President's Ceremonial Office at the Parliament Building. In his remarks, President Clinton referred to Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski of Macedonia; and Paul R. Charron, chairman and chief executive officer, Liz Claiborne, Inc. President Gligorov's remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

## Remarks to Kosovar Refugees at Stenkovic I Refugee Camp in Skopje *June 22, 1999*

Thank you. Thank you very much. First of all, I would like to thank all the people who have shared time with my family and me, all these children and their parents. And I would like to say a special word of appreciation to all the workers here who have come from all over the world to help you recover your lives. I thank them very much.

The second thing I would like to say is that I have brought with me a number of people who helped me make sure the United States

and NATO did the right thing by the people of Kosovo, and they are also very proud to be here. And I want to thank them, and I hope you will thank them—Mr. Berger and all the other people on our team—because we're proud of what we did because we think it's what America stands for, that no one ever—ever—should be punished and discriminated against or killed or uprooted because of their religion or their ethnic heritage. And we are honored to be here with you.

*June 22 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999*

I just want to say a couple of more words before the rain comes down. The first thing is that we are committed not only to making Kosovo safe but to helping people rebuild their lives, rebuild their communities, and then to helping Kosovo and all the countries of the region build a brighter, more prosperous future based on respect for the human rights of all people.

Now, I promised all these wonderful people from all over the world who are here working for you that I would also say this: I know a lot of people are anxious to go home. Many have already left. But you know there are still a lot of landmines in the ground on the routes into Kosovo and in many of the communities. We are bringing in the best people in the world to take those mines up. Every year the United States does more than half that work all around the world. It is hard work; it is dangerous work.

You have suffered enough. I don't want any child hurt. I don't want anyone else to lose a leg or an arm or a child because of a land-

mine. So I ask you, please be patient with us. Give us a couple of more weeks to take the landmines up, if the people here ask you to do that, because you are going to be able to go back in safety and security. I want to make sure it is a happy return.

You have given my family and me a day we will remember for the rest of our lives. All we want is for you to be able to live your lives. But I ask you to remember that the United States did not act alone. All of our NATO Allies felt the same way, in Canada and Europe. And the President of the United States never acts alone; it is the American people who care about you, who believe in you, who want you to be free, who want you to be able to go home.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4:20 p.m. on the grounds of the camp. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

## Remarks to Kosovo International Security Force Troops in Skopje

*June 22, 1999*

Thank you very much, General Clark, General Jackson, General Craddock, Colonel Ingram, ladies and gentlemen of the United States military. And as nearly as I can tell, we've got a few of our British counterparts back there and at least two Spanish officers over here somewhere.

And I just want to say, first of all, I am proud to have the soldiers, the marines, the air men and women, the naval forces of the United States of America serving in NATO. I am proud that we're part of KFOR. I'm proud that we're serving under an able commander like General Jackson. I am proud of Wes Clark.

You know, General Clark and I went through the agony of Bosnia together. He lost three good friends, who fell off a mountain because Mr. Milosevic wouldn't let them take the safe road to try to negotiate a peace. And we watched for 4 years while reasoned diplomacy tried to save lives and a quarter of a million people died and 2½ million refugees were created before NATO and our friends on the ground in

Croatia and Bosnia forced a settlement there and ended the horror there.

This time we didn't wait. And it took 79 days, but that's a lot better than 4 years. And I hope the people of the world, when they see these horrible, horrible stories coming out, the mass graves and all of that, just imagine what it would have been like if we had stepped to the side and not done what we did for the last 3 months.

I hope, to the day you die, you will be proud of being a part of a nation and a democratic alliance that believes that people should not be killed, uprooted, or destroyed because of their race, their ethnic background, or the way they worship God. I am proud of that, and I hope you are.

Let me also say to you that I just came from one of our refugee camps, and there are a lot of grateful people there. But you and I know that there's a lot to be done yet, and General Jackson's got a big job. And the United States is proud to be doing our part to help our allied efforts succeed there. We must not have one