

south, and we hope to hold their feet to the fire because the drugs coming up from Colombia and South America transit through the south of Mexico. Finally, we want to seek the cooperation of Mexico in enforcing laws that they have passed dealing with illegal narcotics trafficking which they have really thumbed their nose at, including Operation Casa Blanca, a U.S. Customs operation where last year our Customs investigators uncovered a plot to launder hundreds of millions of dollars through banks and arrested individuals, indicted individuals, and Mexican officials knew about it and even so Mexico when these indictments and arrests were made threatened to arrest United States Customs officials and other U.S. law enforcement officers. So rather than cooperate fully as the law requires for certification, they have actually thumbed their nose at the United States.

□ 2015

So, Mr. Speaker, with those comments tonight, tomorrow we will hear more about Mexico and how it has become a haven for murderers and for drug traffickers, and we will return to the floor with additional information both to the Congress and the American people on the biggest social problem facing our Nation and the root problem to many of the crimes, the murders, the gun offenses that we see in this Nation. That is the problem of illegal narcotics.

EVENTS IN THE BALKANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, before I get into tonight's discussion, I want to first compliment my good friend from Florida (Mr. MICA) for his weekly reminder to this body and to the Nation about the evils of drugs and the drug war and the challenges that we still face as a Nation.

As a former prosecutor in western Wisconsin and special prosecutor in the State of Wisconsin, I saw up front and close and personal the evil effects that drugs have, not only in our society, but with individuals and the families and the communities in which the problem persists. And I look forward to working in the coming weeks and for the rest of this session with my friend from Florida to develop a comprehensive and commonsense policy in order to tackle this scourge in American society. But I do compliment him for all the wonderful work that he has done in committee and for this body for the sake of the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, what I like to do right now is kind of change gears a little bit. I rise today along with a few other colleagues who I anticipate will be joining me in a little bit to talk for a while

about the events in the Balkans and, more specifically, our involvement in Kosovo. The events have been progressing quite rapidly over the last week and a half or so after Milosevic had finally agreed to capitulate.

Now I think now is a good opportunity for us to kind of stand back and take a look at the past, present conditions in the Balkans area and also the vision of the future in that area, as tenuous as it may be.

There is no question that, thus far, things seem to be progressing according to plan, knock on wood, but it is going to be a very difficult task of implementing the peace, of securing it. Now that we have won the conflict, it is vitally important that we do everything possible not to lose the war, and that is the next great challenge that we face as a Nation, as the leader of the NATO alliance for the sake of the European continent.

But let us give credit where credit is due tonight, Mr. Speaker, starting with the troops in the area. I had the opportunity, the privilege really, a few short weeks ago to be a part of a small congressional delegation of 10 other Members who headed over to the Balkans on a fact-finding mission.

It was really a threefold purpose for going over there. One was to meet with military command, the leadership there, and get an assessment from them.

Another reason for going was to meet with the troops in the field, make sure that everything that they needed in order to carry out their mission as safely and efficiently as possible was being delivered to them.

Finally, a chance to get into the refugee camps, meet with the Kosovar refugees, families, hear from them firsthand what terror and horror they had just been put through in Kosovo, the fortunate ones that were able to successfully leave the country.

It was a fascinating trip, it was incredibly emotional and very moving listening to the firsthand accounts of the innocent civilians who were forced out of the country and what had just taken place inside their villages and cities.

All of them had their own horror story to tell. Each of them explained in their own terms the terror that they had just survived. I did not encounter one person in those refugee camps, Mr. Speaker, who was not affected by the loss of a loved one, either someone who they had personally witnessed executed before their very eyes or who had fled, many of them up into the mountains to avoid the Serb forces.

And you cannot help but go to a region and experience what I think we did as a delegation and not be moved and profoundly affected by what has taken place in the Balkans.

But I do believe that was the right policy for the right reason at the right time, the NATO campaign against Milosevic. I also believe that credit should go to the 19 democratic nations

of NATO who stood united and through their perseverance finally prevailed in getting Milosevic to capitulate and to end the atrocities in Kosovo.

I think it was a real show of determination and the very credibility of NATO and the U.S. leadership on the European continent, and as the leader of NATO was very much on the line.

But this policy has been difficult to explain to the folks back home in Wisconsin. I think by and large the people who I have had the opportunity to talk to about this and to elicit their opinions have felt very conflicted about our role in the Balkans and with the NATO air campaign.

They see, as everyone else does in the country, the horror image that has been reported on TV, and they have heard the stories, the plight of the Kosovar families, the ethnic cleansing and the atrocities that have taken place in Kosovo, and I think the natural reaction for most Americans is to try to do something to prevent that.

But on the other hand there was also the tug, the concern, that this could turn into a quagmire. It may be our next Vietnam in areas so far away that we knew very little about as far as the history and the peoples and the origins of the conflicts, the politics of the situation, the socioeconomic conditions in the Balkans, that people also felt conflicted about our active and leadership role in this campaign.

And so you get a lot of conflicting advice, as you can imagine, from folks back home. I have been certainly severely criticized in the press, letters to the editor, people on the street who come up to me who vehemently disagree with my support for the NATO campaign and my belief that it was in the United States' interests to be involved on the European continent again.

But hopefully what we have today is the dawn of the new era of peace, a lasting peace in the region, a peace that is going to finally see the removal of Slobodan Milosevic from power in Serbia, a peace that will see real democratic reform take place within the Balkan countries and a peace that will see the eventual inclusion of these Balkan nations into the community of nations in Europe as full-fledged partners in the European Union and perhaps even some day members of the NATO alliance itself.

Is this an illusion or a pipe dream? I really do not think so. But I think first and foremost the credit really does belong to those young men and women in American uniform who are being asked yet again in the 20th century to try to restore some peace and stability on a conflict-torn region called the European continent and to try to restore some humanity to the European continent.

I think the concern was as the 20th century entered in very bloody internecine warfare primarily in this region. The beginning of the 20th century that we were going to exit the 20th century

under the same type of conditions, and I think today is a day where Americans can stand tall and feel proud about the role that the United States of America played in trying to help innocent civilians to end the atrocities that were being committed in Kosovo by Milosevic's forces and to try to bring some peace and stability to this continent, a continent that we have paid dearly with our own blood during the first half of the 20th century.

It was, after all, even though the United States was the first half of the century pursuing a policy of disengagement from Europe of isolationism, it was a single shot that rang out on the streets of Sarajevo, the capital of Yugoslavia, back in 1914 that provided the spark that led to the blaze that eventually engulfed all of Europe and ultimately drew the United States, reluctantly albeit, into the First World War at a tremendous cost and sacrifice to our Nation with the loss of young lives that were spilled on the continent of Europe.

And then in the shadow of the First World War and all of the conditions that were created in trying to form a lasting peace, we ultimately saw a Second World War just two short decades after the first one on the continent. But again, between the inter-war periods, the United States and the people in this country felt that it was not in our interest to be actively involved in Europe, that we can retreat across the ocean again, pursue a policy of splendid isolationism, hope that the countries in Europe can settle their differences themselves and that things would just work out on their own, but unfortunately the efforts of Europe proved otherwise.

In fact, public opinion polling before the bombing of Pearl Harbor; yes, they did do some polling back then, too; revealed that the overwhelming majority of Americans felt that the problems on the European continent were not our problems, that it was something we should avoid at all costs, that we had our own issues and concerns to deal with within the continental United States and that the last thing we wanted to do was get dragged into the European conflict again.

And we tried pursuing that policy of splendid isolationism while at the same time FDR was trying to move the country into the realization that, no, we do have vital interests at stake regarding the stability and the peace in Europe. But it did take the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, to arouse this Nation into action and again draw us into the Second World War as reluctant participants.

And the cost of those two world wars were tremendous. Over 500,000 young American lives lost during those two conflicts, over a million casualties we suffered. And at the end of the Second World War we made a policy change in the country, that never again should it be viewed in our interests to stand back and to let events go unheeded in

Europe, that it was in our interests to remain engaged and to pursue a policy of peace and stability and promoting democratic reforms throughout the continent.

That is what gave rise, after all, to the Marshall Plan. We literally rebuilt Europe and Japan from the ashes of conflict from the Second World War, and it ultimately gave rise to the NATO alliance that has had U.S. leadership for the past 50 or so years.

And who can argue with the success of NATO? The last 50 years in Europe have been some of the most peaceful years that the continent has ever experienced, and I would submit it is in a large measure due to the United States participation, active involvement, with not only economic conditions in Europe, but the NATO military alliance, to provide some stability and to give these countries a chance to experience real democracy, real freedom, and liberties that we unfortunately at times take for granted in the United States.

But none of this could have been done without the tremendous commitment and professionalism exhibited by our U.S. troops throughout Europe, but especially in this conflict. It is truly amazing for me to have gone over there and to have met with many of the troops who are involved in carrying out their mission whether it was the logistical support base at Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany. And we met with the troops there providing assistance to the campaign or meeting with the pilots in Aviano, Italy, the F-15, the F-16 pilots carrying out the sortie missions over Kosovo, even spending half a day in Tirana, Albania, with Task Force Hawk, the Apache helicopter task force that was deployed, and they were ultimately employed in the Kosovo conflict.

But just meeting with these young men and women was truly inspiring, seeing their professionalism, the dedication, the commitment that they exhibited. No other Nation in the world, Mr. Speaker, could have done what the United States did do in this situation within a very short period of time, being able to deploy a force of that magnitude, deployed even in Albania in a short time period in which it was deployed and still dealing with the humanitarian catastrophe, the likes of which the continent has not seen since the Second World War. It was truly an amazing feat that I think America can be proud of given our logistical capabilities that do exist on the European continent.

And I just wish all Americans had the opportunity that I and the rest of my colleagues who went on that mission over to the Balkans to see and to meet these troops as I did. These are the young men and women who are day and night guarding the fence of freedom, protecting our security and maintaining our interests across the globe.

□ 2030

They are the best trained, the best capable military that the world has

ever seen. I think they proved that in the Kosovo conflict.

But it has been a difficult policy to explain and to justify U.S. interests in the Balkans. However, I believe it was the right policy for the right reasons. If we are going to learn any lessons from the Second World War, it is that the United States should not stand idly by when we do have the capability to do something about it and watch the innocent slaughter of civilians in Europe, and in the Balkans in this instance.

It was not my first trip to the Balkans. I went over about a year ago and visited the NATO peacekeeping mission in Bosnia, a policy I believe has been extremely successful since the end of the hostilities in that country back in 1996. I also had a chance to visit the former Yugoslavian Republic back in 1990 as a student, Mr. Speaker, with a backpack on my back, traveling by myself throughout the region, when I, as a student of history, who loved to read a lot about European history in particular, saw the war clouds on the horizon after Milosevic came to power in 1989. I wanted to take that opportunity to get into that country quickly and meet the people throughout Yugoslavia, and other students, and get their reaction and their impression as to whether war was imminent and inevitable.

It was striking back then that those who I met were not convinced that this was necessarily and inevitably going to lead to warfare. In fact, many of them believed that it would have been catastrophic for those different ethnic groups to turn on one another. They were working incredibly hard back then to make economic progress, to have an integrated Yugoslavian area that could eventually be included into the European Union and the rest of the Western European continent for the benefits of trade and the economy. And they felt that it was senseless for them to turn on one another and to begin a conflict and to subject the region to war. But 6 short months after my visit to the region, sure enough, that is when the first fighting broke loose.

I think all too often when we get involved in these types of military conflicts across the globe, but here in particular, we tend to focus on the short term and on the specifics of the immediate situation. I think it is helpful from time to time to step back and get a historical perspective as far as what is happening around the countries and where all of this is leading. I think with that historical perspective, we have a lot of reason to be optimistic that we can see a lasting peace in the Balkans, a peace that will lead to democratic reforms and to economic integration into that region.

Let me just go down to the well in order to illustrate a point of what I am trying to get at. It is really a remarkable phenomenon that we have seen take place across Europe in the last decade or so. I think the historical

trends that have been sweeping across Europe over the last 10 years are working in our favor when it comes to managing a lasting peace and an optimistic vision for the Balkans.

With that, let me descend into the well.

Mr. Speaker, what I put up here a little bit earlier is a map of Europe. The title of it is European Transition to Democratic Government, 1989-1999. Why is 1989 a significant date? Well, that is when the Berlin Wall fell, and that is when the collapse of communism and the Soviet Union occurred. That is when the Communist nations throughout Europe started to fall one right after another. I had a chance to visit Central Europe a few short months after the collapse of the Communist governments.

But what this map depicts, the blue area showing the countries in Western Europe show what nations had democratic governments before 1989, before the collapse of communism. We recognize the boot-shaped Italy, Spain, Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, but we can see how limited this map is before 1989 when it came to democratic governments that were already existing on the continent of Europe. But after the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Communist regimes, the purple area demonstrates how democracy has since swept Europe and what countries now have been included into the fold of democratic nations. All of central Europe, including East Germany which is now a part of Germany; all of the former Soviet Union.

What the red portions of this map demonstrate are those nations that are still lagging behind in this great historical sweep of Europe, that are still dominated by authoritarian and dictatorial regimes, one of which is still right here in the heart of central Europe, Belarus; and the other happens to be the Yugoslav Republic under the Milosevic regime down here in the Balkans.

I think what this demonstrates all too well is that Milosevic in this situation is isolated. He is an island. He is surrounded by emerging democracies. I mean, who amongst us could have predicted that in 10 short years some of the most repressive Communist regimes in central Europe would today be flourishing democracies and full members of the European Union, and even members of the NATO Alliance itself, within 10 short years. That was unimaginable pre-1989. But, in fact, that has been the historical trend right now. It is only so long when one Communist dictator can withstand the force of historical events.

What we see here is a Serbia that is completely surrounded and isolated by emerging democracies; some that are full-fledged democracies, others that are well on the road to democratic reforms and democratic institutions. I think that, more than anything, gives us hope that it is going to be a matter of time, I think, in my own opinion, a

matter of a very short time when Serbia and these Balkan nations are going to institute democratic reforms, when they are going to reject the authoritarian and criminal policies of Slobodan Milosevic and move to democratic institutions, have democratic elections, and then ultimately change the conditions which would allow their acceptance into the rest of Europe and into the European Union. That, for me, gives me a lot of hope, a lot of promise, really, that what we did in the Balkans, albeit very difficult in the short term, is going to be the right policy in the long term by giving these people a chance of realizing true peace and stability and allowing democratic reform to take place.

I think that is a message that we have not heard all that much of during the course of this conflict in the Balkans, during the NATO air campaign, is that we certainly have time on our side, and that Milosevic is facing irresistible forces throughout the continent of Europe, and that as long as we can continue to maintain the policy in the international community of isolating him, as has been accomplished now through the NATO air campaign, through the International War Crimes Tribunal issuing an indictment against Milosevic as a war criminal, the first time any sitting President of a nation has been indicted for war crimes, and also given the significant event of Russia coming over and accepting the NATO objectives during this campaign and further isolating Milosevic, he is basically left with no friends anymore in the international community.

That is what gives me a lot of hope that what we can see happen in this region is a very successful policy of engagement, leading to democratic reforms and leading to a Balkans area that will be included within the rest of the European community as far as democracy and economic integration is concerned. So I think certainly we have that possibility, we certainly have that capability right now, but the reports, the news stories coming out, at least right now, appears to show that things are working according to plan.

What I would like to do now is yield to my friend, the gentlewoman from Chicago, Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), who is one of my colleagues who was able to join us on the trip over to the Balkans just a few short weeks ago.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for organizing this intelligent and thoughtful and optimistic discussion, and for allowing me to participate.

From May 20 to May 24, we were both part of a congressional delegation to the Balkans that was led by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), and due to the persistence really of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON), our delegation was able to get a firsthand picture of the situation in the days before the agreement was

signed, a very comprehensive picture of the refugee camps and the troop deployment, and to meet with General Wesley Clarke. It was quite an informative and incredible trip.

The most poignant moment for me and I think for all of us came on Sunday, May 23, when we were at the Kosovo/Macedonia border of Blace when traumatized refugees began streaming, or, more appropriately, staggering, across the border. We were able to talk with them, and what we heard made us literally weep along with them. Stories of guns to the head, a grenade thrown into a family group; being driven from home with 5 minutes' notice; eating grass in the hills; hunger; terror; murder.

In a tent of some 15 women, I would say, and a few dozen children, it was eerily quiet. Those of us who have children know that when we get that many little kids together, it is usually noisy and a lot of energy. It was really silent in there. These women had no idea where their husbands were, and their children, of course, had no idea where their fathers were.

In another tent, a well-dressed man pointed to the wheelbarrow he had used to wheel his frail, elderly mother across the border. He was fine for a while in talking about what happened to his family, but then, when he talked about the wheelbarrow and pointed to his mother who was sitting on a blanket, he broke down. She was comforting him by saying, at least we are still alive. He did not know, however, if the same were true for his grown children.

The day that I came back, there was an e-mail waiting for me from a constituent that said, I quote, "I have serious reservations about your casual use of terms like atrocities, crimes against humanity, genocide." I guess that e-mail kind of hit me at the wrong moment, because after having talked to victims of and witnesses to the terror of the Serbian forces, I felt that these words were exactly appropriate.

And now, of course, we are learning more every day about the extent of the atrocities committed against the ethnic Albanian Kosovars. Estimates of the number dead keep rising. Evidence of torture abounds. Mass graves, rape, burned bodies, human shields, it is really hard to read the accounts.

Then the evening after our return, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT), who was also part of our delegation, and I cohosted a reception at the Holocaust Museum for our freshmen colleagues. At that event, Miles Lehrman, who is president of the Holocaust Council and a Holocaust survivor said, this is his quote: "It is here," he was talking about the museum, "It is here where you will fully comprehend that the Holocaust did not begin in Auschwitz or in any of the death camps. It began when lawmakers lacked the stamina to speak out against the constantly escalating evils. It is here where it will become clear to

you what our role in Kosovo must be. It is here where you will see what can happen to a people who become mesmerized by a political charlatan who professed to simple answers to complex and difficult problems. It is here where you will be able to fortify your inner strengths, to stick to your convictions and speak your mind in your legislative deliberations, even at times when your opinion may not be most popular. It will strengthen your determination to stand alone, if need be, and speak truth to power.”

That was Miles Lehrman, the president of the Holocaust Council.

I often speak of my granddaughter, Isabel, on this floor. She is now 15 months old. I thought about her when I thought about Kosovo and knew that if, when she grew up, she asked me what I did to stop the killing of innocent people, I wanted to tell her that I did the right thing. And when I listened to that brave survivor of the Holocaust, I heard him saying that we did the right thing to stop Milosevic.

But our job is not done yet. It will not be done until those mothers are reunited with their husbands who we hope are still alive; until the man and his mother are home, and the wheelbarrow is used in the garden again; and until our children start playing games of peace and not of war. And until the vision of the gentleman from Wisconsin, his vision of Europe that, with the help of the United States and NATO and the international community, can be a unified Europe working as part of a more unified international community, I think that was the ultimate goal of our mission there, and I hope very much that we can be part of achieving that goal as we move forward.

□ 2045

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her comments and participation on this issue, and for traveling with me just a few weeks ago. It really was a moving, very emotional experience, I think, for all of us.

I have never seen a group of representatives, Mr. Speaker, who were quieter or more chagrined than we were when we boarded that bus at Blace, the refugee camp in northern Macedonia, having met with the families the moment they took their first steps out of Kosovo and talking to them, and hearing firsthand accounts of the atrocities and the terror that they were just put through.

Now we read the headlines of the recent days showing that what we feared is in fact materializing; that once NATO troops, the peacekeeping troops, were allowed to go into Kosovo along with the western media, who were specifically excluded during the 78-day air campaign, that the atrocities are even more magnified and even more horrific.

In fact, this headline in the papers a couple of days ago reads “Kosovo Albanians returning in droves,” which is no surprise. When we talked with the fam-

ilies in the camps, they were very eager that once NATO prevailed, that they wanted to get back to their homes, which was a natural reaction.

What was interesting, however, was another reason they gave, for why they felt it was so important to get back to their homes as soon as possible. It was the same that thing that many Albanians and Muslims experienced during the Bosnia conflict just a few short years ago when Serb forces overran their towns. They stripped them of everything that they had, identity, identification papers, documents proving ownership of property.

And when they were eventually allowed to come back and resettle, it was very difficult for them to prove up ownership of their properties and of their homes. They were concerned the same thing was going to happen in Kosovo. In fact, they knew when they were expelled that many of the towns and villages were being laid waste and burned to the ground, but they were eager to get back see what did remain, and to lay claim again to their ownership and to their lands.

But the other subtitle to this article reads, “Serb-led Offensive Took 10,000 Lives, According to British Estimates.” That figure was still higher than what the actual predictions were earlier. In fact, that number is being escalated every day with the revelation of more mass graves and the body counts that are coming with it. It was something that we feared at the time. Since we did not have people inside Kosovo that could give us firsthand accounts, other than the refugees themselves, it was very difficult to predict just the magnitude of the atrocities and the mass executions and mass graves that are now being uncovered.

Sure enough, now that the NATO peacekeeping troops are allowed in they are uncovering mass grave after mass grave, and the number is only going up and up and up. Again, I think our worst fears are being realized. I also believe that but for the NATO campaign, the atrocities would have been much more severe than what we are witnessing today.

There has been some criticism that because of the NATO campaign, it led to the brutality and to the ethnic cleansing that occurred in Kosovo. I happen to disagree with that, given historical indicators and facts. In fact, the policy of oppression within Kosovo itself and even Bosnia really began shortly after Milosevic came to power in 1989.

These were groups, provinces within Yugoslavia that enjoyed a form of self-autonomy during the Tito regime. Tito realized that given the ethnic diversity of the region, it made sense to allow them a form of self-autonomy, to allow them to practice their own religion and culture and have their own language.

But Milosevic came to power by nationalizing the issue and by claiming that Kosovo is Serbia. Immediately when he took power in 1989 he started

cracking down on the ethnic Albanians within Kosovo, stripping them of their identity, of their culture and history, and even disallowing the use of their own language.

But the atrocities really started to be stepped up in the early 1998 period when Serb forces started moving in. That is when the negotiations between the West and Milosevic started. It was later in the year at Rambouillet where we were trying to reach a peaceful resolution to what was occurring in Kosovo.

But this is not something that started overnight. This was not a change in NATO policy. In fact, it was a policy that was clearly enunciated back in 1991 and 1992 within the NATO nations themselves, but also within the Bush administration, when President Bush clearly warned Milosevic that if he moved on Kosovo, that NATO would move on him. It was really a continuation of that policy into the Clinton administration and within the NATO alliance that ultimately led to the NATO air strike campaign against Milosevic's forces in Kosovo.

But I think we are going to see in the coming days more and more stories of the atrocities and the brutality that was perpetrated on these people within Kosovo.

Another article I think demonstrates a little bit of the ambivalence that not only the American people were feeling in the course of this campaign, but some of the troops themselves in the area.

It was interesting when I was in Aviano, Italy, talking to a lot of the pilots, asking them their opinion as far as the policy and whether or not this made sense and if it was working, one of the pilots came to me and said, if you could see what we see flying these missions over Kosovo, the lines of refugees streaming out, and you could tell where the line originated from because of the black plumes of smoke coming up from behind them of the burnt villages and burnt cities that they were fleeing from Serb forces, and the bodies strewn along the countryside, if you could see that as we are flying over the countryside it would remove any doubt that this is something we have to do.

In fact, in an article last week a couple of the other troops were interviewed. Let me just quote this. This was in USA Today. The headline reads “Marines Play Hurry Up and Wait.”

“The moment arrives beneath a trash-strewn overpass in the heart of Skopje.

“Huddled in the shadows are dozens of children, some in underwear, others barefoot, each waving dirty hands formed into peace symbols.

“‘Nah-toe! Nah-toe!’ their cries thunder off the overpass walls.

“‘Wow,’ says Lance Corporal Jon Hager, 23, of Carlisle, Pa., at the wheel of a marine Humvee. . . .

“‘I’ll never forget it,’ says Lt. John Marcinek, 28, of Rochester, N.Y., commander of the Marine Combined Anti-

armor Team, which will be responsible for securing" the part of Southeast Kosovo that the United States is responsible for.

"Resting in the sizzling sun near the border with Kosovo, Marcinek searches out a pen and pad.

He says, "I want to write my girlfriend and tell her this was the best experience that has ever happened to me," says the former Utah ski bum. "It hits you straight in the heart. The tears flowed."

"For Sergeant James Loy, the sight does nothing less than change his views on being in the Balkans.

He said, "I'll be honest, until now I didn't really feel like we needed to be here. Until I saw those kids," and he has a 10-month-old son himself called Christopher. He went on to say, "We do have a purpose here, and that's to get those kids back home. Some people in the U.S. think we're just here to kill. But we can help give these people their freedom back."

And get something monumental in return: "This is our moment in history," he said. "If people in the United States could see this now, they'd understand."

What is encouraging in recent days are some of the reports coming out of Serbia itself indicating that internal opposition to Milosevic is rising. This article reads "Serbian orthodox church urges Milosevic and his cabinet to quit."

Another article in today's paper, the Washington Post, entitled "Serbs From Kosovo Assail Government. Pro-Western Politicians Seek Elections."

Here the article reads "Last week, a 45-year-old Serbian lawyer named Dragan Antic fled his home in southern Kosovo for fear of ethnic Albanian guerrillas who were beginning to pour into town. Today he stood in the center of Belgrade denouncing Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic as the source of his troubles.

"It is Slobodan who is guilty," he shouted as police attempted to break up a protest rally by a hundred or so Serbs who had just recently fled Kosovo. "What was the purpose of fighting this war if we had to give Kosovo away? Before the war we were living in our homes. Now we have nothing more than the clothes you see on our backs." "Milosevic led us in the wrong direction," complained another displaced Serb. We should be entering the European Union and cooperating with the rest of the world. Instead, we are completely isolated."

Adding to the pressure on Milosevic, a pro-Western political opposition group announced plans today for a series of demonstrations to demand early parliamentary elections in Serbia.

I think what we are seeing is internal opposition starting to rise up against Milosevic, realizing that it is because of his policies in the region that has cost them their homes as a result, and that they realize that their future cannot any longer be tied into the brutal

regime of the butcher of Belgrade. I think he has been so aptly named the butcher of Belgrade.

A couple more stories in the paper indicating what has transpired in recent days. "Framework for peace takes shape. Last Serb soldiers leave Kosovo." They had left 12 hours ahead of time, which allowed NATO to formally declare an ending of the NATO air campaign.

Then perhaps, most significantly, the KLA signs a peace agreement calling for the demilitarization of the KLA army. That is one of the key linchpins to a successful peaceful resolution and stability in the region, is that the KLA, the guerillas that were fighting against Milosevic's armies in Kosovo, are agreeing to disarm and to allow democratic reforms to take place in the country.

Here is one that really gives me a lot of hope: "KLA Chief Appeals to Serbs to Return. Political Leader Says Rebels Support 'Democratic Kosovo.'"

The political leader of the Kosovo Liberation Army said today that the ethnic Albanian rebel group is committed to building "a modern civil society" in the Serbian province, and appealed to fleeing Serbs to return to live in a democratic Kosovo, as long as they have not committed any crimes against their people.

I think these are all indications of what is transpiring in recent days that could give us a lot of hope to be optimistic regarding the success of our mission in Kosovo.

What I would like to do right now is to yield some time to one of our leaders in the Democratic Caucus, someone who has been at the forefront of this issue, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Wisconsin, for yielding to me. I want to congratulate the gentleman for focusing on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we do so because I think we need to reflect upon what the lessons of this operation are. Many had doubts. Many were concerned that we were going to lose large numbers of people. Many were concerned that those who had been expelled from Kosovo would not want to go home. Many frankly were opposed to the President's leadership on this issue because they thought it was wrong.

Mr. Speaker, the butcher of Belgrade, however, is in full retreat. NATO's 78-day air campaign allied force has harnessed Slobodan Milosevic's unbridled barbarism. It is producing the results we knew it would. It has made the world, in my opinion, a safer place today.

When we look at Southeastern Europe tonight and compare it to the situation there just 3 months ago, what do we see? First, of course, as I have said, we see a weakened Milosevic, both at home and abroad. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) mentioned

and I will repeat that just this morning the Washington Post reported that demonstrations denouncing Milosevic's genocidal rampage in Kosovo have begun to occur in Belgrade. We expected them in Pristina, but they are occurring in Belgrade.

One Serb protester complained, and this bears repeating, as the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) just used this quote, "Milosevic lied to us. He led us in the wrong direction. We should be entering the European Union and cooperating with the rest of the world. Instead, we are completely isolated."

Second, we see 1.3 million Kosovars who were forced to flee their homeland or displaced within their province preparing to return home. We have some measure of confidence that the nightmarish scenes and gross violations of human rights in Kosovo are at an end and will not be replayed there soon.

Third, we see the unified, decisive action by NATO forces can repulse a ruthless dictator, protect and preserve the sanctity of human rights, and help stabilize the entire region.

Can anyone seriously question whether the threat to Macedonia or the Yugoslavia Republic of Montenegro is less tonight because of NATO's unwavering action against Milosevic and his henchmen? No one can doubt that the same could not be said had we fallen prey to the isolationist experts who coached appeasement.

In 1940, as the European continent was about to explode into a Second World War, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said of appeasement, no man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it. There can be no appeasement with ruthlessness. There can be no reasoning with the incendiary bomb."

Milosevic's ruthless actions, his rejection of reasoning during the entire decade, left us little alternative but to confront him with force.

Mr. Speaker, let me again repeat, for the entire decade. This was not something that was sprung on the West. In fact, in my opinion, the West waited too long. But it is never too late to do the right thing.

□ 2100

With President Clinton, an extraordinarily courageous and forceful Prime Minister of Great Britain, and other leaders in NATO who obviously had in their own parliaments voices of doubt, voices of nonsupport, but notwithstanding that, they courageously stood as a NATO alliance to say that this kind of genocidal activity will not stand in the bosom of Europe.

Fourth, we see that the credibility of the United States has been enhanced throughout the world. As William Kristol and Robert Kagan wrote recently in the Weekly Standard, Mr. Speaker, as I am sure my colleagues well know, neither Mr. Kristol nor Mr. Kagan are known as spinmeisters for the Clinton administration, but they said this, the victory in Kosovo should

“send a message to would-be aggressors that . . . the United States and its allies can summon the will and the force to do them harm.”

We have sent, I think, a very simple message to would-be aggressors in Europe and elsewhere. Do not do it. Do not do it. Do not do it. The West has the will, and the West clearly has the ability to confront you, stop you, defeat you, and drive you back. Do not do it.

If one takes aggressive hostile action against one's neighbors or one's own people, one will pay a very high price indeed.

Fifth, we see that a policy that recognizes and embraces basic human rights, decency, and democratic values is not just the right thing to do, but, Mr. Speaker, a strategic imperative. This policy, in this case, has been vindicated.

Syndicated columnist William Safire hit the nail on the head when he wrote recently, “International moral standards of conduct, long derided by geopoliticians, now have muscle.”

How proud Americans ought to be of their President, this Congress, and their young men and women in the armed forces of the United States who align with those in NATO made that quote possible. That the cynics, the realpolitiks of the world who said that we did not have a strategic interest there, yes, of course, there was a moral imperative, but we did not have a strategic interest; therefore, perhaps as we did during the 1930s we ought to stand and simply watch, perhaps lament, perhaps wring our hand, but not take action.

The Clinton administration with the support of this Congress not only unified, not always out front, but nevertheless united in our conviction that we would let this policy go forward and congratulate themselves for standing for what is right. Why? Because of NATO's unified unwavering action in Kosovo, we have made it clear that international wrongdoers can and will be confronted.

This does not mean we can intervene, Mr. Speaker, in every instance. As Secretary of State Madeleine Albright stated recently, and again I quote, “In copying with future crisis, the accumulated wisdom of the past will have to be weighed against the factors unique to that place and time.”

Unfortunately, for Milosevic, Kosovo was the place and the time.

Finally, in closing let me state our efforts to secure peace in the Balkans are not over. We must keep the faith. We must keep our will. We must keep our focus. We must keep our ties to our allies strong and unbroken.

Milosevic has properly been branded as a war criminal by the International War Crimes Tribunal at the Hague. He, Mr. Speaker, and those who committed crimes allied with him or, very frankly, those who committed crimes on the other side must be held accountable.

Our policy goal now should be, not only his removal from office, but his

being held accountable for the atrocities for which he is clearly responsible. If we do not, Mr. Speaker, if we do not hold those who have committed war crimes accountable, then I fear we will see a continuation of the cycle of violence and revenge that has plagued the Balkans for so many years.

If, however, we hold accountable those responsible, then there will not be cause for the victims and their families and their successors to again strike out, to in vengeance, to restore the honor that has not been restored because we did not hold the criminals accountable.

We should encourage the Serbs to remove Milosevic and the brutal leaders who have caused this tragic suffering and misery. Serbia also must be clear about this. So long as Milosevic remains in power, it will not and should not receive financial assistance for its reconstruction. Humanitarian aid, yes. Reconstruction aid, economic aid, no.

Mr. Speaker, I am one of the Members of this House who has traveled to Macedonia and Albania, been to Pristina and Kosovo, and seen with my own eyes the devastation and the consequences of genocide. These images are seared into my memory forever.

We will not always be able to intervene to stop injustice wherever it occurs, but we have laid down a powerful precedent in Kosovo. Our credibility, as I said, earlier has been enhanced. NATO has been strengthened. A brutal dictator has been repulsed, and the cause for human rights has been advanced. If those are not good causes, Mr. Speaker, I do not know what are.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) who has himself been such a leader in this effort and who is ensured that the American public had the facts and were themselves focused on the objectives we sought, the means we used.

Parenthetically, let me say that we were extraordinarily lucky, the redress of the wrongs that were occurring, if they occur in the future, may not be as costless as this enterprise was. But having said that, the enterprise will be worth it.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for his comments and for the leadership that he has shown on this issue. What a long ways we have come in a short period of time when, just a few short weeks ago, this Chamber by a 213-213 vote tied on whether or not to even continue to support the NATO air campaign in the region. Now we are on the precipice of peace breaking out in the region.

A while back, I had a chance to have a conversation with Elie Wiesel, one of the Nazi concentration camp survivors, one of the foremost experts on the Holocaust. I asked him what his thoughts were in regards to the NATO air campaign in the Balkans.

What he said I thought really crystallized the issue, for me at least, in which he said, “Listen, the only miser-

able consolation that those people in the Nazi concentration camps had during the Second World War was the belief that, if the Western democracies of the world knew what was going on, they would do everything possible to try to stop it, bombing the rail lines, bombing the crematoriums.” But history later showed that the western leaders did know, but they did not do anything to try to stop it.

This time is different. This time the Western democracies know, and they are intervening. This time, in his opinion at least, he feels we are on the right side of history in this situation.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES) who was also one of my colleagues who joined us on the trip to the Balkans, Albania and Macedonia just a few weeks ago.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I am one of those that took the opportunity to go to the region, to the Balkans, and take a firsthand look at what was occurring.

I will tell my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that I had an opportunity to go, not once, not twice, but three times into this region. In fact, on Easter Sunday, I was in Prague and had the opportunity to go to the NATO bunker that was recently admitted to the NATO alliance, the Czech Republic had made available.

That day that I was there, on Easter Sunday at that NATO bunker, the Czech Republic cleared 130 sorties to go through their airspace to bomb Yugoslavia. I mention that because it is very significant when we have heard over an over the last few weeks that, first of all, a bombing campaign would never work, a bombing campaign would not bring about the desired effect and the desired impact to force Milosevic to come to the peace table.

Interestingly enough, every time I heard that, it was being espoused normally by people that have never been on the receiving end of a bombing campaign or a mortar attack or any of those.

Having had the experience of Vietnam and having been involved in some of those attacks, I can tell my colleagues that there is nothing more taxing, more horrifying that makes one feel more helpless than being attacked by bombs or mortars.

So to those that were criticizing the strategy, I say it worked. It is something that we all have to recognize and give credit where credit is due to the President and to the whole NATO alliance.

We also heard over and over, what is our interest in the region? What kind of national interests could we possibly have? I think a number of my colleagues this evening have gone over that interest and that compelling and overwhelming obligation that we, as Americans, can take full pride in tonight and in the coming days that President Clinton took the tough stand, made the tough decisions, and

ultimately brought Milosevic to the peace table and provided us an opportunity to once more see how great we as a country and as a nation can be.

Even though over the past few weeks we have not all been in complete agreement, we have not all been satisfied that all the things that were happening and that were occurring were being done according to the strategy or according to the game plan, but one thing that we do know tonight and that we have known since Milosevic came to the peace table is that we have so many thousands of refugees that are grateful for the role that the United States and NATO played in giving them the opportunity to go back and regain what they had, go back and take hold of what we hope is the future, the rest of their lives in their home country, in their home turf.

We heard a lot of the pundits night after night after night telling the American people and the audience worldwide that the refugees that had left their homes would never want to go back. They were wrong. They were wrong, and they should admit it. Just like they were wrong about the air strategy and the bombing campaign that it would never work, it worked. They should admit it.

Part of the compelling story, part of what I hope is chronicled in this campaign and in this great humanitarian effort led by the United States and NATO is the tremendous impact that it had on many thousands of individuals of every size and every age and every description, many thousands of individuals that were forced to flee their homes.

I would ask the American people tonight to stop and reflect for a moment what would happen to them personally if they were to suffer this contend of trauma, a trauma that to us is unimaginable, to us it is incomprehensible because we cannot even begin to imagine what it would be like to be forced out of our homes and to be forced into the refugee camps and the conditions of which my colleagues and I had a first-hand look, and conditions that today are going to be resolved by allowing these refugees to go back to their homeland.

□ 2115

Mr. REYES. I am proud to be in the well of the House this evening to thank President Clinton and to thank the NATO alliance. Over and over in the past weeks we heard it would never hold together. It held together. It brought about the desired successful conclusion that is going to, I think, write yet another chapter in the great history of this country where we do not do things because they are easy, we do not do things because they are simple, but we do do things, no matter how difficult the task, because they are the right thing to do.

I am proud of the President, I am proud of our men and women in uniform, and I am proud of those of my colleagues that stood with our President.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I wish to conclude by saying that, in the final analysis, someone had to stop Milosevic in Kosovo. And given the current geopolitical global lineup, that someone was us. I just hope and pray that for the sake of peace in the region, that what has started now will continue and we will see a lasting peace. And that our troops in the region, who are being asked to act as peacekeepers, will be able to do their jobs successfully, efficiently, and as quickly as possible so they can all return to their families safely.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. TIAHRT (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today on account of attending his daughter's high school graduation.

Mr. GILCREST (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and June 23 on account of official business.

Mr. DEFAZIO (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and June 23 on account of official business.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today through noon on Thursday, June 24th on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

The following Members (at the request of Mr. MCNULTY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOLT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ROEMER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. DELAURO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SLAUGHTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FORD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ETHERIDGE, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FOLEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BEREUTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BILIRAKIS, for 5 minutes, on June 24.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today, June 23 and June 24.

Mr. SOUDER, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, June 23, 1999, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2678. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—1999 Amendment to Cotton Board Rules and Regulations Adjusting Supplemental Assessment on Imports [CN-99-002] received June 11, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2679. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final—Raisins Produced From Grapes Grown In California; Final Free and Reserve Percentages for 1998-99 Zante Currant Raisins [Docket No. FV99-989-3 FIR] received June 11, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2680. A letter from the Director, Test, Systems Engineering & Evaluation, Department of Defense, transmitting notification of intent to obligate funds for out-of-cycle FY 1999 FCT projects and FY 2000 in-cycle FCT projects, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2350a(g); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2681. A letter from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report regarding the FY 1999 acquisition and support workforce reductions; to the Committee on Armed Services.

2682. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Clean Air Act Full Approval of 40 CFR Part 70 Operating Permit Program; State of North Dakota [ND-001a; FRL-6360-3] received June 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2683. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Clean Air Act Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plan; Colorado; Revisions Regarding Negligibly Reactive Volatile Organic Compounds and Other Regulatory Revisions [CO-001-0027a, CO-001-0028a, & CO-001-0033a; FRL-6358-6] received June 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2684. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Control of VOC Emissions from Decorative Surfaces, Brake Shoe Coatings, Structural Steel Coatings, and Digital Imaging [MD-3039a; FRL-6357-5] received June 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2685. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;