

have already contributed enormously to Montgomery College, and have significantly furthered the strength of its links with the local government and business communities. I have the utmost confidence in Dr. Nunley's ability to lead Montgomery College into the next century, and look forward to working with her during another successful 20-year tenure.●

TRIBUTE TO MR. MICHAEL A. FERRARA, JR.

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Michael A. Ferrara, Jr. as he is honored as an Outstanding Italian American by the Sons of Italy organization. Michael has enjoyed a fruitful legal career, multiple philanthropic endeavors, and a beautiful family.

Michael was born in South Philadelphia to the children of Italian immigrants. His father worked hard for the Pennsylvania Railroad and his mother worked for Wanamakers once Michael and his sister, JoAnn, were grown. He was raised in this city and stayed close after graduating high school, attending Villanova University on a NROTC scholarship. Michael graduated from Villanova with a degree in Mathematics and soon after, began his naval service.

In the Navy, Michael served aboard both a submarine and a destroyer, visiting Ireland, Spain, Italy, Greece, and Tunisia. His service was extended to five years due to the Vietnam War, which is where he spent his last year. While in DaNang, Michael taught English to Vietnamese children for the U.S. Information Agency and helped deliver Marines, tanks, and ammunition to river bases along the demilitarized zone. At the age of 23, Michael was in command of a mini-fleet of 25 boats and 250 men. His service in Vietnam was rewarded with several commendations including the Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Unit Commendations, Vietnam Campaign Medal and Vietnam Service Medal with three bronze stars.

After completing his military service, Michael attended law school at the University of San Diego. After graduation, he began his successful legal career. Michael has been elected President of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, as well as President of the 2500 member New Jersey Trial Lawyer's Association. He has also served as President of the National Civil Justice Foundation. Recently he was selected, along with four other attorneys, to represent the Attorney General of New Jersey in the lawsuit against the tobacco industry.

In addition to his extensive legal career, Michael has served his community through various philanthropic endeavors, including the March of Dimes and the New Jersey State Aquarium's education program. As a fellow Italian American it gives me great pleasure to recognize Michael Ferrara and his

achievements, both in his career and his community. He is a man most deserving of this award and his actions should be highly commended.●

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. COCHRAN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination on the Executive Calendar: The Foreign Service nominee on the Secretary's desk. I finally ask unanimous consent that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, any statements relating to the nomination be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

Foreign Service nomination of Richard Lewis Baltimore III, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 19, 1999

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to legislative session.

CONGRESSIONAL AWARD ACT
AMENDMENTS

Mr. COCHRAN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 81, S. 380.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 380) to reauthorize the Congressional Award Act.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. COCHRAN. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 380) was considered read a third time and passed, as follows:

S. 380

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL AWARD ACT
AMENDMENTS OF 1999.

(a) CHANGE OF ANNUAL REPORTING DATE.—Section 3(e) of the Congressional Award Act (2 U.S.C. 802(e)) is amended in the first sentence by striking "April 1" and inserting "June 1".

(b) MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS.—Section 4(a)(1) of the Congressional Award Act (2 U.S.C. 803(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraphs (A) and (D), by striking "member of the Congressional Award Association" and inserting "recipient of the Congressional Award"; and

(2) in subparagraphs (B) and (C), by striking "representative of a local Congressional Award Council" and inserting "a local Congressional Award program volunteer".

(c) EXTENSION OF REQUIREMENTS REGARDING FINANCIAL OPERATIONS OF CONGRESSIONAL AWARD PROGRAM; NONCOMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS.—Section 5(c)(2)(A) of the Congressional Award Act (2 U.S.C. 804(c)(2)(A)) is amended by striking "and 1998" and inserting "1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004".

(d) TERMINATION.—Section 9 of the Congressional Award Act (2 U.S.C. 808) is amended by striking "October 1, 1999" and inserting "October 1, 2004".

NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD
CONSERVATION ACT

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 79, S. 148.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 148) to require the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to provide assistance in the conservation of neotropical migratory birds.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate is considering S. 148, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1999, introduced by Senator ABRAHAM. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this legislation. The bill would establish a program to provide financial assistance for projects to promote the conservation of neotropical migratory birds in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Each autumn, some 5 billion birds from 500 species migrate between their breeding grounds in North America and tropical habitats in the Caribbean, Central and South America. These neotropical migrants—or New World tropical migrants—are birds that migrate between the biogeographic region stretching across Mexico, Central America, much of the Caribbean, and the northern part of South America.

The natural challenges facing these migratory birds are profound. These challenges have been exacerbated by human-induced impacts, particularly the continuing loss of habitat in the Caribbean and Latin America. As a result, populations of migratory birds have declined generally in recent years.

While there are numerous efforts underway to protect these species and their habitat, they generally focus on specific groups of migratory birds or specific regions in the Americas. One program that stands out for its success is Partners in Flight, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Started in 1990, this program has

raised more than \$41 million for 480 projects for migratory bird conservation in the United States and Latin America.

The program established by S. 148 is intended to support and bolster these existing efforts. It does so by creating a comprehensive program to address the varied threats facing the numerous species of migratory birds across their range. Frequently there is little, if any, coordination among existing programs, nor is there any one program that serves as a link among them. A broader, more holistic approach would strengthen existing efforts, fill the gaps between these programs, and promote new initiatives.

I do not intend that this program would supplant or supersede existing efforts, nor do I expect that Federal funds for implementing S. 148 be diverted from funds going to these existing efforts. New money should go to this new program to assist neotropical migratory birds in new ways.

S. 148 is identical to a bill that was approved by the Senate last year, S. 1970, but was never passed by the House. The bill is based on bipartisan negotiations with the sponsors of the bill, the House Resources Committee, the administration, and the EPW Committee. Numerous groups, including conservation groups and the forest products industry, have supported this bill.

The bill allows for the Secretary to establish an advisory group, and I urge that the Secretary do so. The success of this initiative will depend on close collaboration with public and private organizations involved in the conservation of migratory birds.

I am very pleased with the legislation. I urge my colleagues to support it, and urge its speedy enactment. Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, today the Senate again will pass legislation to protect the habitat of the broad range of migratory birds which spend the spring and summer months in the United States. This legislation, which I introduced with my distinguished colleagues, Senator DASCHLE and Senator CHAFEE, is designed to protect over 90 endangered species of bird spending certain seasons in the United States and other seasons in other nations of the West Hemisphere. This is actually the second time this legislation has passed the Senate. Last year, after receiving considerable support from the environmental and conservation communities, this legislation passed the Senate by Unanimous consent. Unfortunately, time ran out for equal consideration in the House. Nevertheless, this year we returned with renewed determination and were able to again move this bill.

Every year, Mr. President, approximately 25 million Americans travel to observe birds, and 60 million American adults watch and feed birds at home. Bird-watching is a source of great

pleasure to many Americans, as well as a source of important revenue to states, like my own state of Michigan, which attract tourists to their scenes of natural beauty. Bird watching and feeding generates fully \$20 billion every Year in revenue across America.

Birdwatching is a popular activity in Michigan, and its increased popularity is reflected by an increase in tourist dollars being spent in small, rural communities. Healthy bird populations also prevent hundreds of millions of dollars in economic losses each year to farming and timber interests. They help control insect populations, thereby preventing crop failures and infestations.

Despite the enormous benefits we derive from our bird populations, many of them are struggling to survive. Ninety species are listed as endangered or threatened in the United States. Another 124 species are of high conservation concern. In my own state we are working to bring the Kirtland's Warbler back from the brink of extinction. A few years ago, the population of this distinctive bird has been estimated at approximately 200 nesting pairs. Since then, a great deal of work has been done by Michigan DNR employees to preserve the Kirtland's Warbler habitat in the Bahamas, where they winter. Thanks in large part to this effort, the number of breeding pairs has recently increased to an estimated 800. This is an easily grasped problem. Since the entire species spends half of the year in the Bahamas, the significant efforts made by Michigan's Department of Natural Resources and concerned residents in Michigan will not be enough to save this bird if its winter habitat is degraded or destroyed.

This situation is not unique, among bird watchers' favorites, many neotropical birds are endangered or of high conservation concern. And several of the most popular neotropical species, including bluebirds, robins, goldfinches, and orioles, migrate to and from the Caribbean and Latin America.

Because neotropical migratory birds range across a number of international borders every year, we must work to establish safeguards at both ends of their migration routes, as well as at critical stopover areas along their way. Only in this way can conservation efforts prove successful.

That is why Senator DASCHLE, Senator CHAFEE and I introduced the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. This legislation will protect bird habitats across international boundaries by establishing partnerships between the business community, nongovernmental organizations and foreign nations. By teaming businesses with international organizations concerned to protect the environment we can combine capital with know-how. By partnering these entities with local organizations in countries where bird habitat is endangered we can see to it that local people receive the training they need to preserve this habitat and maintain this critical natural resource.

This act establishes a 4-year demonstration project providing \$8 million each year to help establish programs in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The greater portion of these funds will be focused outside the U.S. Approved programs will manage and conserve neotropical migratory bird populations. Those eligible to participate will include national and international nongovernmental organizations and business interests, as well as U.S. Government entities.

The key to this act is cooperation among nongovernmental organizations. The federal share of each project's cost is never to exceed 33 percent. For grants awarded outside the United States, the non-Federal match can be made with in-kind contributions. This will encourage volunteerism and local interest in communities that lack the financial resources to contribute currency. Since domestic organizations and communities are more financially secure, the matching portion of grants awarded within the United States will be required in cash.

The approach taken by this legislation differs from that of current programs in that it is proactive and, by avoiding a crisis management approach, will prove significantly more cost effective. In addition, this legislation does not call for complicated and expensive bureaucratic structures such as councils, commissions or multi-tiered oversight structures. Further, this legislation will bring needed attention and expertise to areas now receiving relatively little attention in the area of environmental degradation.

This legislation has the support of the National Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, the American Bird Conservancy, Defenders of Wildlife, the Ornithological Council, Ducks Unlimited, and the American Forest and Paper Association. These organizations agree with Senator DASCHLE, Senator CHAFEE, and I that, by establishing partnerships between business, government and nongovernmental organizations both here and abroad we can greatly enhance the protection of migratory bird habitat.

I want to take a moment to comment on the contributions of Senator DASCHLE and Senator CHAFEE with respect to this bill. For over a year, my colleagues and their staffs have dedicated a great deal of time and hard work to this legislation. This bill would not have advanced as it has, perhaps would not have moved at all, were it not for their efforts, and I wish to thank them for all they have done.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. COCHRAN. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 148) was considered read a third time and passed, as follows:

S. 148

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) of the nearly 800 bird species known to occur in the United States, approximately 500 migrate among countries, and the large majority of those species, the neotropical migrants, winter in Latin America and the Caribbean;

(2) neotropical migratory bird species provide invaluable environmental, economic, recreational, and aesthetic benefits to the United States, as well as to the Western Hemisphere;

(3)(A) many neotropical migratory bird populations, once considered common, are in decline, and some have declined to the point that their long-term survival in the wild is in jeopardy; and

(B) the primary reason for the decline in the populations of those species is habitat loss and degradation (including pollution and contamination) across the species' range; and

(4)(A) because neotropical migratory birds range across numerous international borders each year, their conservation requires the commitment and effort of all countries along their migration routes; and

(B) although numerous initiatives exist to conserve migratory birds and their habitat, those initiatives can be significantly strengthened and enhanced by increased coordination.

SEC. 3. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to perpetuate healthy populations of neotropical migratory birds;

(2) to assist in the conservation of neotropical migratory birds by supporting conservation initiatives in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean; and

(3) to provide financial resources and to foster international cooperation for those initiatives.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ACCOUNT.—The term "Account" means the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Account established by section 9(a).

(2) CONSERVATION.—The term "conservation" means the use of methods and procedures necessary to bring a species of neotropical migratory bird to the point at which there are sufficient populations in the wild to ensure the long-term viability of the species, including—

(A) protection and management of neotropical migratory bird populations;

(B) maintenance, management, protection, and restoration of neotropical migratory bird habitat;

(C) research and monitoring;

(D) law enforcement; and

(E) community outreach and education.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 5. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program to provide financial assistance for projects to promote the conservation of neotropical migratory birds.

(b) PROJECT APPLICANTS.—A project proposal may be submitted by—

(1) an individual, corporation, partnership, trust, association, or other private entity;

(2) an officer, employee, agent, department, or instrumentality of the Federal Government, of any State, municipality, or po-

litical subdivision of a State, or of any foreign government;

(3) a State, municipality, or political subdivision of a State;

(4) any other entity subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or of any foreign country; and

(5) an international organization (as defined in section 1 of the International Organizations Immunities Act (22 U.S.C. 288)).

(c) PROJECT PROPOSALS.—To be considered for financial assistance for a project under this Act, an applicant shall submit a project proposal that—

(1) includes—

(A) the name of the individual responsible for the project;

(B) a succinct statement of the purposes of the project;

(C) a description of the qualifications of individuals conducting the project; and

(D) an estimate of the funds and time necessary to complete the project, including sources and amounts of matching funds;

(2) demonstrates that the project will enhance the conservation of neotropical migratory bird species in Latin America, the Caribbean, or the United States;

(3) includes mechanisms to ensure adequate local public participation in project development and implementation;

(4) contains assurances that the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife management authorities and other appropriate government officials with jurisdiction over the resources addressed by the project;

(5) demonstrates sensitivity to local historic and cultural resources and complies with applicable laws;

(6) describes how the project will promote sustainable, effective, long-term programs to conserve neotropical migratory birds; and

(7) provides any other information that the Secretary considers to be necessary for evaluating the proposal.

(d) PROJECT REPORTING.—Each recipient of assistance for a project under this Act shall submit to the Secretary such periodic reports as the Secretary considers to be necessary. Each report shall include all information required by the Secretary for evaluating the progress and outcome of the project.

(e) COST SHARING.—

(1) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of each project shall be not greater than 33 percent.

(2) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

(A) SOURCE.—The non-Federal share required to be paid for a project shall not be derived from any Federal grant program.

(B) FORM OF PAYMENT.—

(i) PROJECTS IN THE UNITED STATES.—The non-Federal share required to be paid for a project carried out in the United States shall be paid in cash.

(ii) PROJECTS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.—The non-Federal share required to be paid for a project carried out in a foreign country may be paid in cash or in kind.

SEC. 6. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.

In carrying out this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) develop guidelines for the solicitation of proposals for projects eligible for financial assistance under section 5;

(2) encourage submission of proposals for projects eligible for financial assistance under section 5, particularly proposals from relevant wildlife management authorities;

(3) select proposals for financial assistance that satisfy the requirements of section 5, giving preference to proposals that address conservation needs not adequately addressed by existing efforts and that are supported by relevant wildlife management authorities; and

(4) generally implement this Act in accordance with its purposes.

SEC. 7. COOPERATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) support and coordinate existing efforts to conserve neotropical migratory bird species, through—

(A) facilitating meetings among persons involved in such efforts;

(B) promoting the exchange of information among such persons;

(C) developing and entering into agreements with other Federal agencies, foreign, State, and local governmental agencies, and nongovernmental organizations; and

(D) conducting such other activities as the Secretary considers to be appropriate; and

(2) coordinate activities and projects under this Act with existing efforts in order to enhance conservation of neotropical migratory bird species.

(b) ADVISORY GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To assist in carrying out this Act, the Secretary may convene an advisory group consisting of individuals representing public and private organizations actively involved in the conservation of neotropical migratory birds.

(2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—

(A) MEETINGS.—The advisory group shall—

(i) ensure that each meeting of the advisory group is open to the public; and

(ii) provide, at each meeting, an opportunity for interested persons to present oral or written statements concerning items on the agenda.

(B) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall provide to the public timely notice of each meeting of the advisory group.

(C) MINUTES.—Minutes of each meeting of the advisory group shall be kept by the Secretary and shall be made available to the public.

(3) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the advisory group.

SEC. 8. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

Not later than October 1, 2002, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the results and effectiveness of the program carried out under this Act, including recommendations concerning how the Act might be improved and whether the program should be continued.

SEC. 9. NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION ACCOUNT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Multinational Species Conservation Fund of the Treasury a separate account to be known as the "Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Account", which shall consist of amounts deposited into the Account by the Secretary of the Treasury under subsection (b).

(b) DEPOSITS INTO THE ACCOUNT.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall deposit into the Account—

(1) all amounts received by the Secretary in the form of donations under subsection (d); and

(2) other amounts appropriated to the Account.

(c) USE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may use amounts in the Account, without further Act of appropriation, to carry out this Act.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of amounts in the Account available for each fiscal year, the Secretary may expend not more than 6 percent to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this Act.

(d) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.—The Secretary may accept and use donations to carry out this Act. Amounts received by

the Secretary in the form of donations shall be transferred to the Secretary of the Treasury for deposit into the Account.

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Account to carry out this Act \$8,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2000 through 2003, to remain available until expended, of which not less than 50 percent of the amounts made available for each fiscal year shall be expended for projects carried out outside the United States.

APPOINTMENTS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the provisions of Executive Order No. 12131, the Chair appoint the following Members of the Senate to the President's Export Council: CONRAD BURNS of Montana; JOHN ASHCROFT of Missouri; MIKE ENZI of Wyoming; MAX BAUCUS of Montana; TIM JOHNSON of South Dakota.

APPOINTMENTS BY THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces the appointment of the following Senators on behalf of the Democratic Leader: Pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 105, adopted April 13, 1989, as amended by Public Law 105-275, adopted October 21, 1998, and further amended by S. Res. 75 adopted March 25, 1999, I hereby appoint the following Senators to serve as members of the Senate National Security Working Group: ROBERT C. BYRD of West Virginia (Minority Co-Chairman); CARL LEVIN of Michigan (Minority Co-Chairman); JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr. of Delaware (Minority Co-Chairman); EDWARD M. KENNEDY of Massachusetts; J. ROBERT KERREY of Nebraska; DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN of New York; PAUL S. SARBANES of Maryland; JOHN F. KERRY of Massachusetts; and RICHARD J. DURBIN of Illinois.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 1999

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 14. I further ask that on Wednesday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed to have expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate then begin a period of morning business until 1 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each with the following exceptions: Senator KERRY of Massachusetts, 30 minutes; Senator BROWNBACK, 20 minutes; Senator BAYH, 10 minutes; Senators DOMENICI and WELLSTONE in control of a total of 15 minutes; Senator LEAHY, 15 minutes; and Senator CLELAND, 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, it will be the leader's intention following morning business to begin consideration of S. 767, the uniformed services tax filing fairness bill. For the information of all Senators, the Senate will reconvene on Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. and begin a period of morning business until 1 p.m.

Following morning business, the Senate will begin consideration of S. 767, a bill introduced by Senator COVERDELL and others regarding tax filing extensions for certain members of the uniformed services. Following passage of that bill, it will be the leader's intention to begin consideration of the budget resolution conference report. There are 10 hours for debate on the conference report, but it is hoped that a significant portion of that time will be yielded back.

Members should, therefore, expect rollcall votes throughout Wednesday's session of the Senate in relation to the Coverdell bill or any other legislative or executive items cleared for action.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. COCHRAN. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator DODD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

I thank the distinguished Senator for his patience and his forbearance.

The Senator from Connecticut.

TRIP TO MACEDONIA AND NATO HEADQUARTERS IN BRUSSELS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, during the recent spring recess, I took the opportunity to travel to Brussels, Belgium, to meet with NATO officials about the situation in Kosovo. Last week, I traveled to Macedonia in order to make a firsthand assessment of the refugee problem confronting that small nation.

While in Brussels, I received an assessment of the ongoing military campaign against Yugoslav military and security forces and strategic installations from Gen. Wesley Clark, commander of our NATO forces. I also discussed NATO's objectives with respect to Kosovo and the more than 600,000 Kosovars now displaced with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, NATO ambassadors, and NATO military officials.

I found that NATO ambassadors were unified in their resolve to stand up to Slobodan Milosevic. They expressed a willingness to carry on the air campaign for as long as it might take to degrade Serbian military and security forces.

Let me also say how deeply impressed I was with Gen. Wesley Clark, the supreme allied commander of NATO forces, our ambassador to NATO

and their staffs. I urge colleagues who have the opportunity to go to Brussels and meet with these NATO officials to do so. At the end of next week, there will be a gathering of the NATO nations' leaders here in Washington to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the most important strategic alliance of the 20th century. I hope that my colleagues will take advantage of the opportunity created by that historic gathering to speak with as many of these ambassadors and NATO staff and personnel as possible about the situation in Kosovo.

After these meetings in Brussels, I traveled to Macedonia on a military aircraft that was bringing urgently needed supplies to the refugee camps. It was a long flight from Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany to Macedonia, and I was deeply impressed by the young crew and their hard work. Before I left Ramstein Air Force Base, General Brady and his staff gave me an excellent briefing on how they are helping to relieve the suffering of the men, women and children displaced from their homes in Kosovo.

In Macedonia, I met with United States Ambassador Chris Hill and his staff. Let me reiterate to our colleagues here how fortunate we are to have someone of Chris Hill's talents and abilities representing us in Macedonia, particularly at a time such as this. He is a career foreign service officer, has spent time in the Balkans, knows the region well and is handling a very difficult and tense situation with a great deal of energy, vision and creativity.

While I was in Macedonia, I also met with U.S. military personnel who are a part of a unit called Able Sentry. A brigadier general and his staff briefed me on their operations. Before hostilities broke out, Able Sentry was intended as the base facility for a peace-keeping force in Kosovo. Now, these American service men and women are leading NATO's efforts to help the refugees on the ground.

I also spent some time with the enlisted personnel who make up the unit to which three young servicemen, Sergeants Ramirez and Stone and Specialist Steven Gonzales were assigned before their illegal capture by Serbian forces.

I wish all of our colleagues could have joined me in that small room last Saturday to hear these young American servicemen talk with great pride about the work of their colleagues Ramirez, Stone, and Gonzales. Ramirez, Stone and Gonzales were professionals doing a commendable job. When they were captured, they were not close to the Serbian border where they would have placed themselves and their units in any jeopardy. When I spoke with this unit of highly competent individuals just three days ago, they were deeply worried that Members of Congress in Washington would misunderstand the role that they were engaged