

Security. I would point out that \$137 billion of the Social Security surplus under our lockbox will stay in Social Security.

Now, the President talks about 62 percent of the surplus for Social Security, and what the President and Vice President Gore are talking about doing is spending 38 percent of Social Security on other things. That is what the folks back home call raiding the Social Security Trust Fund.

Republicans say 100 percent of Social Security for Social Security. Clinton-Gore, they say 62 percent and spend the rest on other things. We want to put a stop to that, and that is why the lockbox proposal Republicans are moving through the Congress is so important, because it is the first step we should take as we work to save Social Security. Let us lock away Social Security first before we consider any other reforms.

Another question I am often asked is no one ever talks about the national debt. Let me point out that in this budget this year, we are in a position where we are going to be able to pay down \$1.8 trillion of the national debt. Last year we paid off \$50 billion; this year we are projected to pay off \$100 billion of the national debt, and under our budget we propose the potential of paying down \$1.8 trillion of the national debt. Saving Social Security, paying down the debt.

I am also asked at the union halls and the VFWs and the other community centers and the grain elevators in the district that I represent, when are we going to do something about the tax burden on families? Today the average family in Illinois sends 40 percent of their income to Washington and Springfield and the local courthouse in taxes.

The tax burden today for the middle class is at its highest level ever in peacetime history. Twenty-one percent of our gross domestic product goes to Washington. That is the highest level ever in peacetime history, and it is putting a tremendous squeeze on middle class families.

I believe as we work to lower the tax burden on middle class families we should simplify the Tax Code; we should work to bring fairness to the Tax Code, beginning with the elimination of the marriage tax penalty. It is simply wrong that under our Tax Code 21 million married working couples on average pay \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they are married. Let us lower taxes by simplifying the Tax Code by eliminating the marriage tax penalty, let us pay down the national debt and let us save Social Security.

ISRAEL'S COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC VALUES CONTINUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 19, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, yesterday the people of Israel demonstrated their commitment to democratic values by electing a new Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, a highly respected, decorated soldier and former leader of the Israeli Army. Despite the strong differences voiced during the campaign, both Mr. Barak and Prime Minister Netanyahu deserve our congratulations for articulating thoughtful visions for the people of their country.

As he prepares to leave office, I commend Prime Minister Netanyahu's accomplishments. He stood by his commitment to take Israel down a road of less reliance on U.S. economic assistance and a greater reliance on the powerful forces of capitalism and free markets. I commend him for setting his nation on a course of economic independence. Because of his willingness to work with his fellow citizens and his demonstrated leadership, Israel is a vibrant, strong, self-reliant nation.

The Prime Minister-elect, Ehud Barak, left the ranks of the military just four years ago after a highly distinguished 36-year career as a platoon leader, tank battalion chief, senior intelligence analyst and head of the Israeli Army. As Israel's most decorated soldier, Ehud Barak is perhaps best known as the catalyst of the 1972 storming of a Sabena airliner hijacked by guerrillas at Tel Aviv's airport.

Following his retirement from the military, Mr. Barak served as the Army Chief of Staff and Interior Minister under former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, then Foreign Minister under Prime Minister Shimon Peres. When I traveled to Israel in 1997, I had a chance to meet with Mr. Barak, who was serving as the leader then of the Labor Party. I was impressed with Mr. Barak's meticulous attention to detail, commitment to important issues, and his construction of an aggressive grassroots political operation. Throughout the campaign, Barak promised, if elected, to continue Yitzhak Rabin's legacy of reviving negotiations with the Palestinians and making an impassioned personal commitment to the peace effort.

I am also impressed with Prime Minister-elect Barak's appreciation and understanding of the American-Israeli partnership, a partnership that goes beyond common political and strategic bonds. Both nations share a common set of values: freedom, individual responsibility, hope and opportunity. It is no coincidence that the birth of Israel coincided with the rise of the United States as the world's pre-eminent power. Our futures, both the United States' and Israel's, are tightly intertwined. Our shared traditions,

which respect and value human rights, democracy, free speech, religious tolerance, are the seeds of a lasting peace throughout the world and in the Middle East.

The elections held yesterday are proof that the people of Israel are determined to withstand pressures and maintain a democracy, build a vibrant economy and achieve peace and security in the entire region. Our Nation has watched and admired a brave, determined and sometimes very divided people build a democracy under difficult circumstances that often have tested their resolve.

Throughout the past decade, Israel has lived and thrived through especially difficult circumstances: the assassination of Israel's great leader Yitzhak Rabin, repeated terrorist attacks, waves of immigrants challenging Israel's complex and the very contentious national elections. Through it all, the people of Israel stood strong, holding to its values and its belief that their country will remain strong and at peace.

I have also been encouraged by Mr. Barak's willingness to return to the land-for-peace Israeli commitments under the Wye River Peace Agreement brokered by President Clinton last October. As the Israeli government now changes hands, I am hopeful that the Middle East peace process can take meaningful steps forward.

It is critical that the United States continue to support Israel's commitment to see an end to terrorist aggression and State-sponsored attacks against its citizens and cities. We must also support Israel's desire to move the peace process by requiring that existing peace agreements be respected by all sides. We should embrace these conditions, for they have at their core the values of any true democracy, the values of personal freedom.

Now that the citizens of Israel have spoken again, we must work to ensure that the Nation of Israel remains on course towards peace. Because of the perseverance, ingenuity and faith of its people, Israel has overcome the most daunting of challenges and become one of the world's great nations. I am confident that the people of the United States stand ready to help the people of Israel as they continue moving down a road of peace, security and economic self-reliance.

ENFORCE THE WAR POWERS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, 56 days ago President Clinton launched a massive offensive air campaign against Yugoslavia. Over the

past few weeks we have witnessed the capture and release of three United States soldiers. We have seen destruction, lives lost, and hundreds of thousands of men, women and children forced to leave their homes and seek refuge.

Most would call this a war. But Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution grants Congress, not to the Commander in Chief, the authority to declare war. Approaching two months of repeated air strikes, President Clinton has never asked for congressional authorization. Now, in order to proceed with Operation Allied Force, President Clinton must either ask Congress for authorization or remove our troops from the region. Unfortunately, he has made no indication that he is eager to do either.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that President Clinton has violated our Constitution as it pertains to the declaration of war. Therefore, I join the efforts of the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) and 15 of our colleagues in the House in filing a lawsuit against President Clinton in order to clarify Congress's constitutional war authority. I regret that we are forced to call upon the courts, but until we do, further administrations will continue to violate the Constitution and the War Powers Act.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with many of my colleagues who have very grave doubts about the United States involvement in Operation Allied Force. While I agree that the situation in Kosovo is a tragic one, our national security is not threatened. Our armed services already suffer from years of neglect under this administration. When we continue to commit troops in our limited resources on peacekeeping operations, we undermine our military's primary goals, to protect and defend the citizens of this great country, and we leave ourselves vulnerable in an unstable post-Cold War climate.

Mr. Speaker, a constituent of mine recently forwarded to me a letter from Charles Hunter, a military Reservist who served in Bosnia for nine months. I want to share with my colleagues some of what he observed. I feel very strongly that his words and observations will prove much more powerful than my own.

In an open letter to Congress, Mr. Hunter wrote, "It would be interesting to note what light further history will cast on the actions currently being implemented by this administration and enabled by this Congress." Mr. Hunter further states, "It is interesting to note that this is the first time that we have attacked another sovereign nation unprovoked and uninvited by a host or exiled government." He further states, "To me, this is a huge and pivotal point, the possible effects of which are frightening." Mr. Hunter further states, "Should we some day have a

revolution in our land that is an affront to some sort of world entity, we have now forfeited the right to handle things as we as a Nation see fit. If we continue down this road before us, we will be handing national sovereignty, for any Nation, over to some non-elected multinational body."

Mr. Hunter further states, "My oath as a soldier and yours as a Senator included the phrase, 'to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.' Never has there been a vow made to an international constitution or treatise, so why the concern over the honor of NATO? Why is Congress not concerned with the honor of the United States?"

Mr. Speaker, these are words of a United States soldier who spent nine months in the Balkans, and he is absolutely correct. We need to restore the honor we once valued and treasured. President Clinton, my colleagues in Congress and I took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution. Especially now, we must keep that oath. Once again, I urge the President to seek congressional authority to declare war or bring our troops home.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I will submit the full text of Mr. Hunter's letter for the RECORD. God bless our troops and God bless this Nation.

A BALKANS SOLDIER'S OPEN LETTER

(By Charles W. Hunter)

I am a reservist. I have served in Bosnia for nine months. I am a linguist and interviewed between 100 and 200 people each day while I was there. I have also had the unique experience of losing a job due to my reserve commitment. I do hope that you will take these following points into consideration as you think about the possible future commitment of ground forces to, and our general involvement in, Yugoslavia.

As a point of clarification, I refer to the leader of the United States as "impeached" President Clinton, because that is the title that the House of Representatives voted to give him. I am not demeaning the office of the president or the person of William Jefferson Clinton. They, not I, put him in a classification different from recent past presidents.

1. THE YUGOSLAV PEOPLE DO NOT THINK AS WE DO

Due to the unique position and job which I had while I was in Bosnia, I had the opportunity to interview between 100 and 200 people each day for nearly 8 months. These people were mostly Croats and Muslims. However, during the last month of my tour my focus was with the Serbs. Because I had learned the language, these people felt that I was different than the majority of British and American soldiers they met and as a result they opened up to me. All of these people told me that as soon as we leave, if it is in one year, five years, or fifty years, they will go back to killing each other.

All of the sides committed mass executions, as is the case in Kosovo now. Look at the history of the region. I think that you will find it was not too long ago that the KLA was viewed to be a terrorist organization. They were raping, executing, burning and looting the Serbs in an attempt to drive

them out of Kosovo. This was not that long ago. Our response at the time was probably tempered by the fact that our Secretary of State was not Serb, as now Mrs. Albright is Albanian. These people do not forget the wrongs done to them. Unless a firm handed dictator is in power, like Tito or perhaps NATO, these people will not live together. Period.

2. HUMANITARIANISM IS A POOR EXCUSE FOR MILITARY DIPLOMACY

If we are to use the humanitarian crisis in the region as a reason for this gunboat diplomacy, then we are setting a dangerous precedent, as well as an inconsistent one. Millions of people have been killed in Sierra Leone in the past couple of years. The ethnic cleansing in Rwanda and Burundi has created over 1 million dead and 3 million refugees. Turkey has been killing the Kurds for years.

The list could go on, as you well know, yet to these tragedies a blind eye is turned. With this current administration it is even blasphemy to mention the abuses occurring in China. Yet, in all of these areas we do nothing. These examples serve only to show the glaring inconsistency of this as U.S. foreign policy. It also sets up a dangerous precedent. China will not renounce the possible use of force in relations to Taiwan. Tensions are still high between Iraq and Iran, India and Pakistan. What of the Taleban in Afghanistan? Will this foreign policy change dictate our future involvement in these areas? Why not?

3. FORGOTTEN LESSONS OF HISTORY

It has been well quoted, "Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." I am afraid that we are at such a crossroads now.

Some critics of this administration feel that all actions done by Impeached President Clinton are done so to create a legacy for history. It would be interesting to note what light future history will cast on the actions currently being implemented by this administration and enabled by this Congress. It is interesting to note that this is the first time in the history of our once great nation, that we have attacked another sovereign nation unprovoked and uninvited by a host or exiled government. To me, this is a huge and pivotal point, the possible effects of which are frightening.

Should we someday have a revolution in our land that is an affront to some sort of world entity, we have now forfeited the rights to handle things as we as a nation see fit. If we continue down this road before us we will be handing National Sovereignty, for any nation, over to some non-elected, multinational body. My oath as a soldier and yours as a senator included the phrase ". . . to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic." Never has there been a vow made to an international constitution or treatise, so why the concern over the honor of NATO? Why is Congress not concerned with the honor of the U.S.?

The specter of Vietnam is all over this operation. Vietnam started with U.S. bombing, so did this Yugoslav operation. The politically correct response to this is that this is a NATO mission. Yeah, right! 90 percent of the flights are U.S. aircraft, not to mention the cruise missiles. If this is the proportion of U.S. involvement now what precedent is being set for when a "permissive environment" is achieved? This is a U.S. mission.

Vietnam had a gradual escalation with no thought-out plan of execution. This is paralleled here as the nation witnesses the AH-

64 debacle. No ground troops were to be committed to Vietnam, and then were. Newspaper headlines today are saying the same thing. Congress was misled and half-informed in the '60s with lies and half-truths. Many Congressmen from both parties have expressed their frustration over these same problems in this situation. In Vietnam, a war was waged without the understanding of the psyche, intent and motivation of the enemy. By even being optimistic of peace happening between these peoples, a lack of understanding of them is being exemplified.

None of the lessons learned in Vietnam are being applied to any of this administration's military endeavors. From the police action in Southeast Asia three major lessons of military doctrine were learned. These pearls of military doctrine were to: (1) have defined, accomplishable objectives; (2) have a defined or structured period of involvement; (3) have a planned exit strategy. The last two parts of this doctrine are predicated by the first. These lessons were played out to grand effectiveness during the Reagan and Bush years (outside of Beirut). From Grenada to Desert Storm, even Somalia, these three points were practiced.

If one recalls, the U.S. involvement in Somalia was to be ended at a specified time. When Impeached President Clinton was elected, he extended the U.S. withdrawal indefinitely. Several Rangers had to die before Congress forced the end to that mission. U.S. forces are still in Haiti, as was I in '95. What is interesting, is that for the average Haitian all is as it was. Those who have the guns still have the power, yet we are still sending troops and dollars there.

For years Impeached President Clinton has been playing with the Iraqi President. Suddenly, he starts a bombing campaign to force compliance with U.N. weapons inspectors. "To what end?" I ask. Are there now, or will there be, U.N. inspectors in Iraq? To gain congressional approval for the operation in Bosnia, Impeached President Clinton outlined a plan for a one-year occupation. He held this claim until the day after his re-election. The day after his re-election he announced an additional 18 months of occupation, then it became an indefinite extension. Where is Congress and why is Impeached President Clinton not held accountable for his word?

Now the U.S. is faced with a police action in Yugoslavia. The Media labels this a war. Only Congress can declare war on another country. A police action can be stopped by Congress by not authorizing funding. In this action against the sovereign nation of Serbia, objectives and conditions for victory have never been defined and have been ever changing. One element which has been consistent is for an indefinite, multinational peace keeping force to be placed on the ground.

The people of this region of the world have a long and great history of hating each other. This hatred is not restricted to the Serbs. I mentioned the atrocities committed by the Albanians against the Serbs earlier. That was only one decade ago. As I would talk to the people in my AO while in Bosnia, I would ask them how the Bosnian conflict started. For an answer I received a history lesson that often started prior to WWII and sometimes would start back with the Ottoman Empire. To a person, everyone I spoke with said that as soon as we leave they will start at it (fighting) again. This is the problem for the current administration.

If the U.S. forces are withdrawn, war in Bosnia will erupt again, highlighting a bad

foreign policy. In order for the illusion to be maintained, U.S. presence in the region must be passed on to the next presidency. If that administration were to remove our forces, again, war would start and that administration will get the blame, so the illusion will be maintained. In the end, there might be an administration with enough honor to end the illusion. However, because all of the time, resources and lives spent which will have been wasted, that administration will be through. Again, look at history. Impeached President Clinton says that the current campaign against Serbia is based upon lessons learned from Bosnia. What is clear to me, and to every other soldier who has served there, is that nothing was learned—otherwise we would not now be engaged.

Many historians believe that if Hitler had listened to the advice of his general staff, the war would have gone in favor of Germany. The Washington Times reported that the U.S. military advisors to Impeached President Clinton advised him that this mission would not be successful, but rather, would only exacerbate the conflict. Impeached President Clinton chose rather to listen to the advice of Mrs. Albright. Once so ordered, the military advisers were bound by oath to carry on.

In a fashion which has not been seen since the fall of the Soviet Union, history is being rewritten by this administration. Another reason that Impeached President Clinton gives for this action is the preservation of U.S. interests in Europe by preventing another world war; after WWI and WWII both started in this region. This is false. WWI started here, that is true. I walked the bridge where the Archduke was assassinated. The real cause of the war was the entangling alliances throughout the region. No such alliances exist today outside of the growing relationship of Russia with Serbia. WWII did not start in this area. In truth, Hitler could have done what he wanted if he had not attacked Poland. The attack on Poland brought England into the war. WWII escalated from there.

One point about WWII, which is quite valid, is that the Serbs were the best friends a U.S. pilot had. In addition, ill clothed, ill fed, and ill armed the Serb partisans pinned down 24 German Divisions. The power of the Luftwaffe and the might of the Wehrmacht was all but lost in the terrain of Yugoslavia. Something to consider as you go to cast your vote on the escalation of this conflict and the introduction of U.S. ground forces.

Indeed, "Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

4. OUR POSITION IN YUGOSLAVIA IS MORALLY WRONG

In setting up this government and finding the principles upon which this Republic was established, the Founders of this country took great inspiration and insight from the Holy Scriptures, among other sources. In his Farewell Address, George Washington wrote, "Of all the disposition and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports." Up until the early '60s, primers and many secondary school language texts were based on the Bible. So powerful was the union of this country with Scripture, that in 1805 a man was convicted of treason against the United States for blaspheming the name of Jesus Christ. The founders understood well the Sovereignty of God. It was that understanding by which our Constitution was conceived.

By that same great Tome, which so inspired our Founders, our aggression towards

Yugoslavia is wrong. Throughout Scripture this is made very clear. In the book of Daniel we are instructed that successions of governments are determined by God. The book of Romans states that "There is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God." If one believes in the Sovereignty of Almighty God, then in the course of that same belief, in light of Scripture, as long as Molosevic is acting within his own borders then the only correct position to take is one of neutrality.

As was pointed out by the Chinese Premier, President Lincoln used force to hold this country together. In that war more Americans died than in any since. Both England and France were considering entering the war, but on the side of the South. What would have been the result if that had occurred? Freedom and a living form of democracy cannot be instilled in another people. It must be won by those for whom it is meant.

5. THE OVERSHADOWING OF OTHER REAL ISSUES

The people of this nation by course of the mainstream media are so preoccupied, and thus our elected officials, with the plight of the Albanians that real focus is being lost.

One of the problems with the Gulf War was that victory there was a cheap victory. One hundred thousand casualties and 100,000 prisoners were afflicted upon Iraqi forces while the U.S. suffered only 149 dead in both Desert Shield and Desert Storm. While I have no intent to minimize the sacrifice those brave and proud men gave, or the effect upon the conscience of this country. Desert Storm, like Vietnam was waged in the living rooms of America. However there is one great difference.

Instead of seeing men dying from limbs blown off or sucking chest wounds, the people of this country saw something like a video game on their computer. Bombs guided into windows with amazing accuracy. Deserted tanks being demolished in live-fire exercises. Here, the human element was removed. War became acceptable. What a tragedy.

Our attacks on Serbia are causing untold suffering for the general population of Serbia. This is acceptable because they are the villains, the evil Serbs, the scourge of the world. Has the lust for blood become so strong that we have become that which we hate?

Of greater national interest and security, but that which is all but off of the radar screen, is the ongoing Chinese/Impeached President Clinton saga. Impeached President Clinton opens trade through which missile guidance technology is transferred to the Chinese thereby allowing them to deliver the MRV technology stolen in the late 1980s to the shores of the United States. In 1995, Neutron Bomb technology is stolen by the Chinese. Problems are reported to the Administration in 1996. The suspected individual is allowed to continue working and even given a promotion in the facility. The Justice department head and Impeached President Clinton appointee, Janet Reno tells her agencies to leave it alone. In 1999 the story breaks, the individual is arrested.

Impeached President Clinton initially states there were security problems, inherited from the Republicans, but that no technology has been stolen by the Chinese on his watch as President. Once the story breaks in full, he denies any knowledge of the events. Subsequently, in a press conference with the Chinese Premier, impeached President Clinton jokes before national news media over the incident. China refuses to commit to a non-military resolution to the Taiwan issue.

Impeached President Clinton rebuffs critiques of Chinese human rights policies. In a news conference the Chinese Premier states that there has been enough talk of human rights. He further says that the Chinese just have a different way of looking at things. The media and, apparently Congress, buy off on this as a valid explanation as to the ongoing and increasing human rights atrocities being committed in China (as reported by Amnesty International). Put this together with the campaign fund-raising issue with the Chinese and an interesting puzzle starts to form.

WHY ARE WE BOMBING THE SERBS AND COURTING THE CHINESE? POSSIBLE ANSWER:

Mrs. Albright is Albanian and lost a grandfather and two cousins to Serb cleansing after WWII, as was reported in the New York Times. China was a staunch ally of Albania during the period of the cold war. Impeached President Clinton and China have a strange involved relationship, which is under investigation. Impeached President Clinton has always hated the United States Military. He is quoted as having stated that he loathed the military. Through the course of the policies and practices of the current administration: morale of the military is at a 25-year low; deployments are at an all time high; Reserve and National Guard units are being used on a regular basis in places such as Haiti, Bosnia, Central America and the Sinai; cruise missile and other munitions stores are being completely depleted and not replaced; all branches of the military are under manned; service members are leaving in record numbers; recruitment is at a two-decade low and China has gained 40 years worth of nuclear technology in the last six years.

I believe that the U.S. involvement in Yugoslavia is for only two real reasons:

1. Mrs. Albright's ancestral hatred of the Serbs. Now she is in power as an impeached President Appointee to seek revenge for her people—the Albanians.

2. Impeached President Clinton's ongoing relationship with the Chinese and his M.O. to use the military to divert and confuse the already short and anemic attention span of the American people.

I am not by nature a conspirator. I am a patriot. I am a critical thinker. I doubt that you will agree with my bold answer to my bold question. However, as to my five main points, I do hope that you will muse on them. As a soldier, I will go to wherever I am sent. As with all soldiers, I will do my duty to the best of my ability. I have had a terrible three years of employment since I lost my job due to my military service in Haiti. I was shot at and could have been killed as I stopped a Croat from blowing up his car at my base in Bosnia. I volunteered to go to Desert Storm; as a soldier I felt that I should be with my brothers in arms. I do not want, however, to see my children in a Vietnam-like situation. A situation in which at the end of the day, after the waste of lives, material, resources and National Honor, no difference will have been made.

Would you be willing to possibly die for the United States of America? Impeached President Clinton has clearly answered that question, in a manner quite different from the way the proud men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces today have answered that question. How would you, Senator, answer that question? How about your sons and daughters, would you commit them to possibly die for Old Glory?

Would you be willing to possibly die for Kosovo? When it was Vietnam, many did. In

1974 their deaths became meaningless? If we continue down the present path the same will be true for those who will lose their lives in Yugoslavia. Is this what you want, if it were your son who could die on the Field of the Blackbirds near Pristina? Is this what you want for the lives of the sons and daughters of your constituents?

Congress has not declared a war. Congress can stop this before it becomes a U.S. tragedy. I urge you, for the sake of this country, stop the conflict in Yugoslavia. Pull our forces out of the Balkans. You have the power to either end this or escalate it.

It is not unlike riding a bike up a road that is increasingly getting steeper. One either has to pedal harder, or get off of the bike. Let's get off. At the top of this hill is a cliff.

AMERICAN LEGION URGES WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS FROM YUGOSLAVIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I do not know of any group that is more respected and has more credibility when it comes to our Nation's veterans than the American Legion. Mr. Speaker, the Legion, representing over 3 million of our Nation's veterans, has gone on record against our involvement in Kosovo.

I would like to share with my colleagues this afternoon a portion of a letter sent to the President by the American Legion about our involvement in Kosovo, and I quote: "The American Legion, a wartime veterans' organization of nearly 3 million members, urges the immediate withdrawal of American troops participating in Operation Allied Force."

The letter went on to outline resolution number 44, the American Legion's statement on Yugoslavia that was adopted unanimously by their organization on May 5, 1999:

"This resolution voices grave concern about the commitment of U.S. armed forces to Operation Allied Force unless the following conditions are fulfilled: One, there is a clear statement by the President of why it is in our vital national interests to engage in Operation Allied Force. Two, guidelines be established for the mission, including a clear exit strategy. Three, that there be support of the mission by the United States Congress and the American people. Four, that it be made clear U.S. forces will be commanded by U.S. officers whom we acknowledge are superior military leaders.

The Legion believes that at least three of these conditions have not been met, and if they are not all met, then the President should withdraw American forces immediately."

Mr. Speaker, I agree with this position.

The President has committed the armed forces of the United States in a

joint operation with NATO, Operation Allied Force, but has not yet clearly defined what Americans' vital interests are in this region. The American people have a right to know why we are there. The President, in eight weeks of military action, has not properly defined what the specific objectives of NATO are, nor has the White House defined an exit strategy. And if my colleagues will remember, Mr. Speaker, the President promised our Nation that the U.S. military forces would be out of Bosnia in one year. Three years and six months later, U.S. personnel are still in Bosnia, and I expect that they will continue to be there for years to come.

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How long will our forces be in Kosovo? Will the President claim they will be there for just 1 year once again?

I continue to be troubled with America's participation in this conflict. U.S. forces continue to carry the overwhelming share of the military burden, rather than our European NATO allies. Only 13 of NATO's 19 member nations are actively engaged in Operation Allied Force. American pilots are flying some 90 percent of the missions.

It also seem to me that the Clinton administration continues to disregard attempts to reach a diplomatic solution. After a bipartisan congressional delegation met with the parliamentary leaders of Russia in Vienna recently to start formulating terms of a negotiated settlement to establish a cease-fire and establish peacekeeping operations, and after Reverend Jackson's successful trip to release the three American servicemen, the administration has not attempted to follow through on any of these overtures.

Many of us here in Congress are veterans. We swore an oath to defend our country and her interests. But we must remember, wars are fought to protect national security interests, not for human rights. In fact, no major conflict has been waged solely for the purpose of defending a beleaguered people. The United States has a moral interest in Yugoslavia, but we have no national interest.

This conflict violates the conservative principle that goes back to our American Founding Fathers: non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, except to counter threats to our national interest. Our dedication to free markets and democratic institutions are exportable only by example, not by force.

My greatest hope is that we can reach a diplomatic solution to this crisis and bring our men and women home safely.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, the American people are suffering from what I call Clinton fatigue. They question our reasons for being in Kosovo, and they now question the bases for which the President is choosing his policy.