

(Mrs. FOWLER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, this is a sobering moment. American military pilots and air crews are now in harm's way. I had previously expressed my strong reservations about the President's plan to influence events in Serbia. Now, however, our troops are engaged in a military conflict. As always, they are performing their job with the utmost professionalism and dedication and it is incumbent upon us to demonstrate our fullest support for them. I join my colleagues in doing so here and am praying, as I know we all are, for their safe return.

I would hope that every Member of this House will work together to ensure that our military personnel in the Balkans have every resource they need to perform their assigned mission as effectively as possible and are able to return home soon. I hope we are successful in this effort and that Mr. Milosevic will soon sign a peace agreement.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this most timely and appropriate resolution.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank the ranking member for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. Our young men and women in the Armed Forces are carrying out their duties with courage and professionalism, and they deserve our praise and our complete support.

In my view, however, it is not enough to support our military in carrying out the mission given to them. I rise, as well, Mr. Speaker, to support the very mission itself. The mission is to save lives, to stabilize a region, to save lives that certainly would be lost if we again delayed taking this decisive action. The reports about what Serbian forces were doing in Kosovo in the last few days are clearly horrendous, the separation of men from women and children, the reported mass execution of the former and desperate flight of the latter.

The mission is also asserting U.S. leadership when Europe needs that leadership. Our allies are with us and they need us. Like it or not, Europe cannot and does not do it alone. It is in our national interest to avoid even the perception of a vacuum in our leadership capabilities. That could lead to challenges which we cannot foresee now, which we cannot predict, but clearly which would likely put our military men and women at even greater risk if allowed to happen.

Mr. Speaker, everyone says that we cannot be the world's policeman and I agree. But when there is a need for action and when that action can so clearly be effective and when the military can use its resources to minimize the risks involved, then we should act. Tyrants around the world cannot and must not have the false impression of

knowing that we will not go after them because we cannot go after everyone. The fact that we could respond should give them pause.

Mr. Speaker, I have been one on this floor who in years past have said in Bosnia that we should have acted. In my opinion had we in Europe acted sooner, thousands, yes, tens of thousands of lives may have been saved.

I support the troops. I support the mission.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services and a member of our committee.

Mr. LEACH. I thank my dear colleague for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, last week the House of Representatives considered several resolutions on the Balkans. This gentleman voted to oppose intervention. Last night, I explained my concerns relating to the lack of the end game as well as the lack of relevance in my judgment of use of air power in a part of the world which has heavily engaged for much of this century in guerilla warfare.

This resolution is poignantly appropriate because it respects and reflects respect for our troops. But it should be understood by this body that the difficulties that our troops are in are much greater today and will be much greater tomorrow than they were yesterday, not simply because engagement is active today but we are changing the nature of our involvement. This is a bench mark change. We have moved from a peacekeeping role to a peace-enforcing role. That means we have moved from the role of being part of a NATO force acting as a police function to part of a NATO force choosing sides in certain civil war types of setting.

This means that our troops will now become more targets than simply intermediaries. Therefore, it is extraordinarily important that all of us recognize that there is reason to reflect great respect for those troops that are being put in harm's way. But to the degree that foreign policy should be considered morality in action, we should also be clear to recognize that means have to be part of the goals. To the great credit of the President, the goals of the United States in this intervention are quite admirable. The question that remains, however, is whether the means to achieve those goals will escalate the conflict or cause diminution of circumstance.

Mr. Speaker, let me just conclude by saying that I think this evening it is very important that this Congress move forth with this kind of resolution, and I strongly endorse it. But I also think that it be very important that we recognize that a change in policy has occurred of stellar significance and that it is our obligation to continue to review and appraise policies as they develop and to commit ourselves to doing the best we can to advance ap-

proaches that deescalate rather than escalate conflict in the Balkans.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER).

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, tonight this House, Democrats and Republicans, unite in support of the men and women of our armed forces and those of our NATO allies who are now engaged in one of the most challenging and dangerous missions of recent times. The dangers of this action are indeed great. But the dangers of inaction are even greater. The decision to act was perhaps the most difficult foreign policy decision our President has confronted. The moral leadership in the free world that we have exhibited through the years is being indeed tested by President Milosevic. With thousands of people fleeing Kosovo and with thousands of lives hanging in the balance, the United States has chosen to stand up against aggression and genocide. Our action is consistent with our moral responsibility, it is consistent with our commitment to our NATO allies, and it is consistent with our efforts to secure the peace and stability of Europe where two world wars have begun.

May our prayers tonight be for the safety of our soldiers, our sailors and our airmen, and may God bless America.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the committee as well as our leadership for bringing a resolution to the floor that is one that I can support. It is supporting of the troops but it does not go that one step further to rubber-stamp a foreign policy that is very questionable, so I appreciate that very much.

But in another sense, I think it is awful strange that every time we do find our troops in harm's way that we need to come to the House floor to reassure ourselves that we support the troops. I have never been challenged, and I take controversial votes on occasion, and I have never seen another Member challenge anybody as being unpatriotic and not supportive of our troops. So it sort of bewilders me a little bit that we always have to say, "We support the troops." I think that should go without saying.

Nevertheless, we do have this resolution on the floor, and I will support it. But I just wonder why that occurs, that we feel compelled to do so. I think sometimes it is because we have not met up to our responsibilities, because we have allowed our troops to be placed in harm's way, and usually in an improper manner. We have not done this properly according to the Constitution. The President did not get permission from the House and the Senate. We may have a little bit of a guilt feeling about having these troops placed in

harm's way without the proper permission, and, therefore, we have to reassure ourselves that we are taking care of the troops.

Now, if we really want to support our troops, I think we would defend the sovereignty of this country, we should provide for a strong national defense and we certainly should avoid putting our troops in harm's way. The real question that comes up is by putting the troops in this region right now, we are invading the sovereignty of a nation which is very questionable. This is not done very often. Yet Serbia is a sovereign nation. They are involved in a civil war, and there are bad guys on both sides. For us here in the Congress to decide who the good guys and who the bad guys are is not possible, nor is it our job.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am a man of peace, not of war. I am a believer in the philosophy and the discipline of nonviolence. I am a disciple of the teachings of Gandhi, Thoreau and Martin Luther King, Jr. But there comes a time when force and military might become necessary to put an end to madness. It was Gandhi who said, "Noncooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good." Mr. Speaker, we cannot sit idly by while thousands of people are murdered in Kosovo.

Today, President Clinton took bold, forceful, and decisive action to stop the slaughter of innocents in Kosovo. We have a moral obligation, a mission and a mandate to prevent a modern day holocaust. I am hopeful that our military action will be swift and sudden, that it will be compelling, and that it will persuade the Serbs that peace is the more excellent path.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers today are with our men and women in uniform. May they return home to their friends and families safe, sound and secure in knowing that, through their actions, they have saved the lives of countless men, women and children.

□ 1830

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), a member of our committee.

(Mr. HOUGHTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to take long. To me it is very simple.

I absolutely support the members of the armed forces, I support our President, I support the mission. I do not think there is a single person around here who does not see this as one of the most difficult decisions we can make. But make it we must, and we may not be divided. We must not be divided.

Mr. Speaker, I support this particular House Resolution 130 wholeheartedly.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL).

(Mr. BOSWELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for this opportunity to say just a couple of words. As my colleagues know, it is tough when a leader has to lead, and I think we are in that position. We are the only superpower, and we got a lot of responsibility to go with it. None of us who have ever been in harm's way wants to see somebody in harm's way, but, as my colleagues know, some of them have had experiences, and I respect everybody that has had experiences in life; some of them I have had. But I had the opportunity to walk on the grounds of Dachau and Bergen-Belsen and so on and look at what took place there and before they became shrines and before they became memorials, and I said in my heart: This is so wrong. Pray Lord, it will never happen again.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I see what is going on over there these last many months, people talking to us about it, we do not really have a choice. If we are the Nation that I believe us to be, then we must stand up and do something even though as difficult as it may be.

So, Mr. Speaker, I support our troops, I support our President's decision, and I know it is hard, but I hope that they return safely and the mission is over soon.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST).

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me, and I would like to express in the strongest terms possible my sentiments of this resolution tonight in the House of Representatives, that it is a heartfelt, gut wrenching resolution from every Member of the House of Representatives to everyone in the world about the United States commitment to this effort now underway and that it is not an act of war, it is an act of peace, a gesture of justice, and we appeal to the leaders of the world that the United States is carrying out the commitment that we had at the end of World War II that this will never happen again. The seeds of despair, the crime of genocide, will be stopped.

This, Mr. Speaker, this resolution is a gesture on our part to the parents, the wives, the children of the men and women in harm's way in this air strike. We, as Members of the House, come together to share their anguish. This resolution is a statement to Mr. Milosevic and people like him around the world that we are resolute in our relentless determination to end cruel injustice and genocide.

Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to express in the strongest way possible that we, with the unity of the full House and this country, that our sup-

port for our troops and this mission is unequivocal.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I certainly support the resolution, I support our armed forces, our brave men and women, and I support the President in his courageous decision.

This morning I showed a picture that I wanted to in advance and say it again. I apologize to my colleagues, the American people, if they are offended by this picture, but I think it has to be shown because this to me tells us why we are in Kosovo.

This is the picture of one of the victims, a dead Albanian child. Let me read for my colleagues what it says. It says his mother will never have to see him this way, they killed her too. Every night, while most of our children sleep in the comfort of a warm bed, Albanian homes in a place called Kosovo are being raided, and innocent people are being massacred, many of them children, all in the name of ethnic cleansing.

That is what is going on. That is why we, as leaders of the world, have to be in Kosovo, to stop genocide on the continent of Europe. That is why NATO has to be there, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization which is concerned about North America and Europe, to stop genocide. It is in U.S. national interests to stop genocide and in the U.S. national interest to stop a wider war because, if we did nothing, surely the war would expand and possibly engulf NATO allies such as Turkey and Greece and Hungary and other countries such as Albania and Macedonia and Bulgaria.

So once again, as the leaders of the free world, we are doing the right thing.

Mr. Milosevic has broken every agreement that he has accepted. He signed an agreement in October, and he violated it. Thousands and thousands of people have been displaced from their homes. There are a quarter of a million refugees, 100,000 in the past 2 weeks alone. People are being slaughtered. Innocent civilians, unarmed civilians, men, women and children lined up and shot into a pit. This has to stop.

I am proud of our Armed Forces. Support the resolution.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO).

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, on March 11, as a freshman Member of this body, I witnessed one of the most profound debates on the issue as to whether or not we should allow the President to move ahead on his plan to attack Yugoslavia. I was on the losing side of that debate. I believed that the decision was wrong; I believe that it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I am still convinced that the decision is a mistake, and I could not in good conscience say otherwise. Now, however, the trigger has