

FOIA MARKER

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Folder Title: Operation ALLIED FORCE				
Staff Office-Individual: Kosovo Office-Schulte, Gregory				
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Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. draft	Press Statement [partial] [CIA Act] (1 page)	07/06/1999	P3/b(3)
002a. note	SG(99)0872. To Permanent Representatives from Secretary General. Subject: Letter to UN Secretary General. [NATO] (1 page)	06/10/1999	P1/b(1)
002b. letter	SG(99)0869. Secretary Javier Solana to Secretary General Kofi Annan. [NATO] (1 page)	06/10/1999	P1/b(1)
003. paper	Options for Task Force Thunder. (3 pages)	04/22/1999	P1/b(1)
004. email	Charles Skinner to Donald Bandler. Subject: Naumann's Valedictory. (10 pages)	05/05/1999	P1/b(1)
005. map	Serbia: Electric Power Network Status. (1 page)	05/04/1999	P1/b(1)
006. report	[Task Force Thunder Deployment] (1 page)	05/07/1999	P1/b(1)
007a. email	Theresa Whelan to HINZPS@State.gov, et al. Subject: [TF Thunder, Revision 1] (2 pages)	05/14/1999	P1/b(1)
007b. map	Task Force Thunder - Lost Opportunities [NATO] [Duplicate of vz6305_002b, this case] (1 page)	05/14/1999	P1/b(1)
008a. memo	For Samuel Berger from Matthew Vaccaro. Subject: Deployment of Task Force Thunder. [Record ID: 9903755] (3 pages)	05/15/1999	P1/b(1)
008b. map	[Duplicate of 006b and vz6305_002b, this case] (1 page)	05/15/1999	P1/b(1)
009a. briefing paper	Victory Thunder. (16 pages)	05/00/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

Operation Allied Force

2008-0994-F
vz6342

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or
financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President
and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of
personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed
of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C.
2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of
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b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information
concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
009b. report	[Duplicate of 005] (1 page)	05/07/1999	P1/b(1)
010. memo	Some Thoughts on Kosovo at the NATO Summit. (2 pages)	04/15/1999	P1/b(1)
011. paper	Discussion paper. Subject: OPLAN 10601 - Targeting. [with fax cover] (4 pages)	04/02/1999	P1/b(1)

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UNCLASSIFIED

ALLIED FORCE ASSESSMENT (100400L June 1999)

ALLIED FORCE operations against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) are now in their 78th day. Strike operations continue around the clock and throughout the depth and breadth of the country. To date, over 34,700 strike and support sorties have been flown by 13 NATO nations against more than 410 fixed targets, with over 555 tactical engagements against fielded forces. **ALLIED FORCE** continues to destroy and degrade FRY military and security forces, as well as erode the military-industrial base that sustains them.

ARMY AND POLICE force operations are increasingly disrupted by allied attacks, particularly those of the 3rd Army in and around Kosovo.

- Over one-third of the armored vehicles (tanks/APCs) and over half of the artillery/mortars deployed in Kosovo are confirmed by EUCOM as destroyed.
- Over half of the 3rd Army's infrastructure and most of its ammo and fuel storage capacity have been destroyed.
- Distribution networks for all supplies (particularly fuel and ammo) have been severely disrupted – especially in and around Kosovo.

AIR DEFENSE/C3: Attacks and suppression of air defense and command & control targets have reduced FRY military effectiveness and permitted air operations over the entirety of Yugoslavia.

- Over 80% of modern fighter aircraft and strategic SAMs destroyed.
- Sustained air operations severely degraded by destruction of airfield maintenance and support facilities.
- National level C3 facilities have been damaged or destroyed, including two presidential residences, headquarters of the Ministry of Defense, army, air force, air defense force, Socialist Party of Serbia and national security services.

POL

- 100% of national petroleum refinery capability destroyed, over 40% of military reserve fuel storage, more than one-fifth of industrial fuel storage, and over one-half of joint military-civilian fuel storage is damaged or destroyed
- Serbian fuel imports hampered with damage to facilities along the Danube.

INDUSTRY/LOCS

- Aircraft repair and sustainability degraded by over 70%.
- Ammunition production capacity reduced by nearly two-thirds.
- Half of Serbia's explosives/propellant production infrastructure damaged.
- Over one-third of nationwide ground equipment production and sustainment capabilities damaged or destroyed.
- Electrical power shortages in Belgrade and Novi Sad continue. Power system remains unstable throughout the country.
- Rail capacity into Kosovo fully interdicted; primary roads over 55%.

UNCLASSIFIED

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesman

For Immediate Release

July 6, 1999

STATEMENT BY JAMES B. FOLEY, DEPUTY SPOKESMAN

CHINA - RELEASE ON ACCIDENTAL BOMBING

Following briefings of Congressional members and staff, the State Department today is releasing the text of the June 17 oral presentation made by Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas R. Pickering to the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC), conveying information compiled by the the intelligence community and the Department of Defense regarding how the accidental bombing of the PRC Embassy in Belgrade came to occur. We appreciate the cooperation of the agencies that provided the material for Ambassador Pickering's presentation.

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EAP/P:KBailes

CLEARANCES

EAP:SRoth

EAP:SShirk

EAP/CM:DSedney;SSchlaikjer

P:DSields

CIA: (b)(3)

DOD:TSutherland

NSC:JKeith

EAP PRESS GUIDANCE
July 6, 1999

CHINA – RELEASE ON EMBASSY BOMBING

CONTEXT: Following briefings of Congressional members and staff and the provision of this document to selected members of the Congress, the State Department today is releasing the text of the June 17 oral presentation made by Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Amb. Thomas Pickering to the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC), conveying information compiled by the the intelligence community and the Department of Defense regarding how the accidental bombing of the PRC Embassy in Belgrade came to occur. The material for Amb. Pickering's presentation was provided by these agencies.

Q: Can you elaborate or explain further the material in the report?

**A: -- WE BELIEVE THE DOCUMENT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. WE HAVE NO
ADDITIONAL EXPLANATION REGARDING THE EVENTS IN QUESTION.**

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ORAL PRESENTATION BY
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE THOMAS PICKERING ON JUNE 17
TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT
REGARDING THE ACCIDENTAL BOMBING OF
THE PRC EMBASSY IN BELGRADE

RELEASED JULY 6, 1999

- I am here at the instruction of President Clinton as his personal envoy. He has asked me to deliver a letter from him to President Jiang; to present the official report of our investigation into the accidental bombing of your embassy in Belgrade; and to answer any questions you may have about the report. My remarks and comments will constitute a full report to you.
- The attack was a mistake. Our examination explains how a series of errors and omissions led to that mistake. Let me emphasize: no one targeted the Chinese Embassy. No one, at any stage in the process, realized that our bombs were aimed at the Chinese Embassy.
- It is entirely appropriate that we provide you with an explanation of how this awful tragedy occurred. The U.S. government recognizes our responsibility to provide a full explanation. We have undertaken our own internal investigation into this matter and want to share our results with you.
- I have brought with me a high-level delegation of representatives from the White House, Department of State, Department of Defense, and the Intelligence Community.
- The delegation includes officials who have been directly involved in the investigation and the preparation of the report. Let me introduce them.
- With me here today are Ambassador James Sasser; Mr. James Simon, the Assistant Director of Central Intelligence for Administration; Mr. Franklin Kramer, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; Mr. Jeremy Clark, Deputy Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency; Dr. Susan Shirk, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and

Pacific Affairs; and Mr. James Keith, Director for Asian Affairs at the National Security Council.

- My intention is to provide information and explanation as we proceed. We will also show you some charts and photos to help illustrate some of the basic results of our investigation. After that, we will turn to providing answers to your questions.

Introduction:

- First let me express the heartfelt condolences of the American people and government to the families of the three Chinese journalists who died in the bombing of your Embassy in Belgrade on May 7th. Let me convey also our sympathy for the 20 Embassy staff members who were injured. We realize that no amount of explanation will make up for the personal tragedy suffered by these individuals and their loved ones.
- I am here, as you know, to provide the explanation and the investigation report in fulfillment of President Clinton's comments in his telephone conversation and letters to President Jiang.
- I want to underline that this report has been prepared by senior U.S. Government officials from our intelligence and military organizations.
- The report shows that multiple factors and errors in several parts of the U.S. Government were responsible for the mistaken bombing. Beginning as early as 1997, mistakes in different parts of our government contributed to this tragic set of errors; and our operational procedures failed to catch these errors.
- The CIA and Defense Department are continuing to interview individuals in the field who were involved in various aspects of the decisions that led to the bombing. Because the NATO air campaign has only just concluded, it has not been possible to debrief fully every person involved and to reach conclusions regarding responsibility for mistakes that led to the bombing. The Director of Central Intelligence, who is also Chief of the Intelligence Community, has directed the conduct of an accountability review which will go into the issue of responsibility, the appropriate results of which will be made available.

- The bombing resulted from three basic failures. First, the technique used to locate the intended target - the headquarters of the Yugoslav Federal Directorate for Supply and Procurement (FDSP) - was severely flawed. Second, none of the military or intelligence databases used to verify target information contained the correct location of the Chinese Embassy. Third, nowhere in the target review process was either of the first two mistakes detected. No one who might have known that the targeted building was not the FDSP headquarters -- but was in fact the Chinese Embassy -- was ever consulted.
- To help better understand the circumstances which led to the mistaken bombing, let me offer a chronology of events.

Mistargeting:

- The first major error stemmed from mislocating the intended target.
- In March of this year, officers at the Central Intelligence Agency began considering the Federal Directorate for Supply and Procurement (FDSP) as a potential target for NATO Allied Force strike operations. The FDSP, because of its role in military procurement, was a legitimate target.
- We had a street address of the FDSP headquarters: "Bulevar Umetnosti 2" in New Belgrade. But military forces require precise geographic coordinates to conduct an attack with precision munitions. During a mid-April selection and designation of the target, three maps were used in an attempt to locate physically the address of the FDSP headquarters: two local commercial maps from 1996 and 1989, and the then most recent U.S. government map produced in 1997.
- None of these maps had any reference to the FDSP building. And none accurately identified the current location of the Chinese Embassy.
- As you can see, the 1997 U.S. Government city map shows the Embassy in Old Belgrade and depicts an unidentified building at the actual Embassy site in New Belgrade. The 1996 commercial map made no reference to the Embassy at either location. The 1989 map predated the Embassy's move.

- Please keep in mind that the location of the Chinese Embassy was not a question that anyone would have asked when assembling this particular target package since it was not connected in any way to our intent to strike the FDSP headquarters.
- In an effort to locate the FDSP building at Bulevar Umetnosti 2, an intelligence officer in Washington used land navigation techniques taught by the U.S. military to locate distant or inaccessible points and objects. These techniques - which involve the comparison of addresses from one street to another - can be used for general geographic location, but are totally inappropriate for precision targeting, and were used uniquely in this case. Using this process, the individual mistakenly determined that the building which we now know to be the Chinese Embassy was the FDSP headquarters. To use these techniques for targeting purposes was a serious mistake. The true location of the FDSP headquarters was some 300 meters away from the Chinese Embassy. This flaw in the address location process went undetected by all the others who evaluated the FDSP as a military target.
- Because this first error was so fundamental, let me walk you through it.
- The method for determining the location of the intended target - the FDSP -- was seriously flawed. It was not based on certain knowledge of the numbering sequence for addresses on the Bulevar Umetnosti. Rather, our attempts to determine the location of the building employed a method that is used in the field by the Army, but is not normally used for aerial targeting purposes. The system will provide an approximation of location, but cannot guarantee an accurate geographic fix.
- A 1997 National Imaging and Mapping Agency (NIMA) map was first used to display the grid pattern of the streets in New Belgrade. Next, in order to identify locations to use as reference points, they identified and drew on the NIMA map to locate the Hyatt Hotel, the Intercontinental Hotel, and the Serbian Socialist Party Headquarters. Each of these buildings -- which were clearly labeled on the maps being used -- were approximately one mile east of Bulevar Umetnosti. Using these locations and their street addresses as reference points, parallel lines were drawn that intersected both the known addresses and Bulevar Umetnosti. In what proved to be a fundamental error, those same numbers were then applied to locations on Bulevar Umetnosti, assuming

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that streets were numbered in the same fashion along parallel streets. The effectiveness of this method depends on the numbering system being the same on parallel streets, that the numbers are odd and even on the same sides of the street and that the street numbers are used in the same parallel sequence even if the street names change. Unfortunately, a number of these assumptions were wrong.

- Using this approximation method, your embassy building was designated as the target when in fact the Embassy was located on a small side street at some distance on Bulevar Umetnosti from where the intended target was actually located at number 2 Bulevar Umetnosti. Let me show you a satellite photograph and some maps to illustrate the method and the error it produced.
- The identification of the building that actually was the Chinese Embassy as the FDSP building subsequently and in error took on the mantle of fact. It was not questioned nor reviewed up the chain of command. This was in part because everyone involved had, as a result of so many previously correct locations, assumed generally high confidence in our procedures to locate, check and verify such analytical facts. In this particular, and singular, case, our system clearly failed. In part it failed also because every established procedure in the review of this target was not followed.
- Maps and satellite imagery were also analyzed to look for any possible collateral damage issues near the target. There was no indication that the targeted building was an embassy -- no flags, no seals, no clear markings showed up. There were no collateral damage issues in the vicinity.

Flawed Databases:

- The second major error stemmed from flawed databases.
- The incorrect location of the FDSP building was then fed into several U.S. databases to determine whether any diplomatic or other facilities off-limits to targeting were nearby. We do our best to avoid damage to sensitive facilities such as embassies, hospitals, schools and places of worship. Viewed from space, there was no indication that the office building being targeted was an embassy. On the satellite imagery available to U.S., there were no flags, seals, or other markings to indicate that the building was an embassy. And unfortunately, in this

instance none of the database sources that were checked correctly identified the targeted building as the Chinese Embassy.

- Multiple databases within the Intelligence Community and the Department of Defense all reflected the Embassy in its pre-1996 location in Old Belgrade. Despite the fact that U.S. officials had visited the Embassy on a number of occasions in recent years the new location was never entered into intelligence or military targeting databases. If the databases had accurately reflected the current location of the Embassy, the mistaken identification of the FDSP building would have been recognized and corrected.
- Why was the Chinese Embassy not correctly located? It is important to understand that our ability to verify the location of fixed targets depends heavily on the accuracy of the databases, and the databases in this case were wrong. Further, it is difficult to keep current databases for cities around the globe. In general, diplomatic facilities have been given relatively little attention in our efforts to update our databases because such facilities are not targets. Military targets are the top priority in these databases because of the danger they pose to our own forces. Unfortunately, locations where strikes should be avoided had lower priority and our databases contained errors, notably in the failure to include the new location of the Embassy of China.
- Now, this is an important point, so let me expand upon it.
- The databases which contained information about the physical location of organizations in Belgrade -- including the so-called "no hit list" of buildings that should not be targeted -- were faulty.
- Although database maintenance is one the basic elements of our intelligence efforts, it has been routinely accorded low priority.
- The target and "no-hit" databases were not independently constructed. Outdated information that placed the Chinese Embassy in its former location in Old Belgrade was not updated when the Embassy moved. Because various databases were not independently constructed, this wrong information was duplicated. So when target information was checked against the no-hit list, the error was not detected.

- Many U.S. and other NATO diplomats must have visited the new building. The address was in the phone book, the diplomatic list and perhaps other sources, including Yugoslav maps. Certainly, many citizens and officials of the United States were aware of the correct location of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. However, in error, their knowledge was not recorded in any of the military or intelligence databases used in the targeting process.
- In addition, the correct location of the Chinese Embassy was not known to targeters or NATO commanders because we were not, in fact, looking for it. Since your Embassy was not a target, and because we were unaware of any diplomatic or civilian facilities in the immediate vicinity of the presumed FDSP building, no effort was made to verify or precisely locate the whereabouts of your Embassy.
- We have subsequently found some maps which show the correct current location of the Chinese Embassy, although there are others, including some produced in recent years by the Yugoslav government, which do not.
- Since the incident, the United States has updated its databases to show the best known location of diplomatic facilities. The databases will be updated as new information becomes available. Maps are out of date almost as soon as they are printed. Databases can and should be maintained to be effective.

Faulty Checks:

- The third problem was faulty checks.
- Once the target was proposed, the focus of the review was on the military value of the target, how best to attack it, and the issue of collateral damage. No one in any of the succeeding reviews questioned the accuracy of the location. The formal recommendation of the FDSP target was forwarded in late April to military staffs both in the U.S. and Europe, who were responsible for reviewing and identifying targets for Operation Allied Force. Maps and satellite imagery were analyzed to look for any possible collateral damage concerns near the target. We conducted a target review in Europe, and again, no significant risks to civilian or diplomatic facilities were uncovered.

- Following submission by the European Command for approval, the target package mistakenly received no additional examination outside of the Defense Department. It did go through additional review at the Pentagon, but this review found nothing different from the review that took place in Europe. There were no known collateral damage concerns. From that point on the building incorrectly identified as an FDSP facility was included on a list of potential Allied Force strike targets.
- Some of our employees knew the location of the new Chinese Embassy. But keep in mind that we were not looking for it, since the database with the old location was assumed to be correct. None of these individuals was consulted as the target was reviewed and, as a result, we lost any opportunity to learn that the building targeted was the new Chinese Embassy. We have also found one report from 1997 which gave the correct address of the Chinese Embassy, but unfortunately the correct address was not entered into the database.
- To further explain:
 - Once the wrong target was selected, the system of checks that NATO and U.S. command forces had in place to catch target errors did not reveal the mistake. The database reviews conducted by the European Command (EUCOM) were limited to validating the target data sheet coordinates with the information put into the database by NIMA analysts. Such a circular process could not uncover the original error and exposes our susceptibility to a single point of database failure.
 - There has been much press coverage of the fact that the U.S. and NATO relied on out-of-date maps to check targets. In fact, since any physical map can quickly become out of date, the key question is one of accurate databases. These were not properly maintained and did not catch the error. Furthermore, persons familiar with the layout of the city of Belgrade were not consulted in the construction of the target and no-hit databases. They were also not involved in a review of this target. This points up a flaw in our procedures.
 - The only question about the target information was raised by an intelligence officer who had doubts as to whether the building targeted was in fact the FDSP headquarters or might be some other unidentified building. At no time was there any suspicion

that the building might be an embassy. This question was not raised to senior levels and the strike went ahead.

- Let me explain further this attempt by an intelligence officer to question the reliability of the target information related to the FDSP. There was information that suggested a discrepancy between the selected target and the actual location of the FDSP. There was no information that the target location was the Chinese Embassy, only that it was perhaps the wrong building. However, there was a series of frustrating miscommunications -- missed phone calls and lack of follow-up -- which led to these doubts not being aired at a command level in time to stop the attack. (The officer had doubts early on in the process because of his own knowledge about the location of the FDSP building; attempted to check with working-level contacts; was continuing to check when the bombing happened; and was not able to communicate his suspicions to senior officers.)

The Bombing:

- The air strike then proceeded as planned on May 7 without any of the mistakes having been detected or doubts about the reliability of the target information having been addressed.
- At 2146 Zulu (about midnight local time in Belgrade) on 7 May 1999 one of the fleet of B-2 bombers from Whiteman Air Force Base (AFB) in Missouri dropped 5 Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM) 2000 lb. GPS-guided bombs on the target designated as the FDSP building but which was, in fact, the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. All B-2 strikes on Yugoslavia were flown from Whiteman AFB. The bombs were Global Positioning System (GPS) guided weapons and operate in all weather and at night using a satellite-based navigation system of a high order of accuracy.
- The air crews carried out their mission as planned. They had no idea they were in fact bombing the Chinese Embassy. As a result, it is obvious that they bear no responsibility for this failure; the problem, as I have outlined, occurred earlier.
- They had no way of seeing any identifying markers that would show the building was an embassy. A flag in front of the building or any such features would not be discernible at night and at the speeds and altitudes at which our planes fly.

- No other buildings in the immediate vicinity were hit. Our weapons hit the target they were aimed at. Unfortunately, we did not realize the true nature of the target.

To Review:

- In summary, there were several crucial errors which led to the Chinese Embassy being struck.
- There was an error in locating the target. The approach used to attempt to locate the FDSP building was severely flawed.
- All sources of information used to prevent precisely this type of accident were either inaccurate or incomplete.
- The review process did not catch the locational error and did not consult any material or any person which could have provided correct information.
- The United States is, as I speak, continuing to conduct an in-depth review of this tragic accident. Based on our initial findings, it is clear that this terrible mistake occurred not because of just one organization, or because of any one individual.
- There was in the immediate aftermath of the bombing some confusion as to what had happened and some of our early public statements were confused and contradictory. To summarize clearly and precisely: the attack on the PRC Embassy was the result of a series of errors that led to the destruction of the PRC Embassy instead of the Serb military target that was intended. The use of a map containing an error -- the inaccurate location of the Chinese Embassy -- contributed to the tragic mistake -- but this was not due solely to a "map error."
- What went wrong was, first and foremost, that the approach used to locate the Bulevar Umetnosti 2, the address of the FDSP, was severely flawed.
- Second, the databases used to check and prevent this type of targeting error were also inaccurate, incomplete, and not fully independent.

- And third, the target review process did not detect the first two mistakes, nor did it involve people and information that could have provided additional data to correct or detect these errors.
- As the President has already expressed, we are deeply sorry that we made these tragic errors.
- Following the accident, the President of the United States and the Secretary General of NATO separately expressed to China's leaders their sincere apologies for the mistaken attack on the embassy and their sympathy to the families of those who died and to the injured.
- Our government has also undertaken corrective actions to prevent mistakes like this from happening in the future.
- New updated city maps have been published detailing locations of diplomatic sites and other "no-strike" facilities in and around Belgrade. Additionally, databases are being updated as changes occur. We rely on these databases for our most current information, because maps themselves are inevitably out of date the day or the week they are published.
- Intelligence and Defense organizations have strengthened their internal mechanisms and procedures for selecting and verifying targets, and have placed new priority on keeping our databases current.
- All U.S. Government sources will be required to report whenever foreign embassies move or are established. This information will then be forwarded and incorporated into our intelligence and military databases.
- The U.S. Government will seek direct contact with other governments and interested organizations and persons to obtain their assistance in identifying and locating facilities and places of interest or concern.
- And as I noted earlier, we are continuing our internal reviews of the causes of the accident, and when these reviews are completed, we will determine whether any disciplinary action is called for.

U.S. Intentions:

- I would like now to address various speculative theories that appear to be held by some people in China.
- We have heard that many people believe that our attack on your Embassy was intentional.
- Clearly the United States had absolutely no reason to want to attack your protected embassy facility. Any such decision to bomb an Embassy would have been contrary to U.S. doctrine and practice and against international standards of behavior and established international accords. No such decision was ever proposed or indeed made.
- Bombing the Chinese Embassy also would have been completely antithetical to President Clinton's strong personal commitment to strengthening the relationship between the United States and China; he has defended this relationship and our engagement policy in the face of vociferous domestic criticism. It is not imaginable that President Clinton would make such a decision.
- Moreover, bombing the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade would have made absolutely no sense in terms of our policy objectives in Kosovo. The objective of the NATO bombing campaign was to diminish and degrade the capacity of the Yugoslav government and military for repression in Kosovo. The Embassy of China played no role in that set of activities. It had always been the intention of the U.S. and NATO to bring the Kosovo effort to conclusion through diplomatic efforts, including of the G-8 and in the UN Security Council.
- The accidental bombing of your Embassy not only intensified international criticism of the NATO bombing campaign, it also had negative effects on our diplomatic efforts, and affected in a deeply negative fashion China's attitude and policies toward our effort in Yugoslavia.
- In particular, as Secretary Albright told Premier Zhu in April, we always expected that China, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, would need to be a part of the resolution of the Kosovo crisis. We knew we would need China's support in this matter. Bombing your Embassy was hardly the way to persuade you to help.

- Thus, the bombing was contrary to two critically important U.S. foreign policy goals: the further development of U.S.-China relations and the resolution of the Kosovo situation.
- I also have heard that some people in China subscribe to the theory that the bombing was caused by one or several individuals working in our government who conspired to subvert U.S.-China relations or who may have concluded that China was too friendly to Belgrade or that the Embassy was playing some role in assisting Belgrade.
- We have found no evidence of an unauthorized conspiracy to attack the Chinese Embassy, for any reason whatsoever, or of any "rogue element" within the U.S. Government. The errors we have identified as producing the accident took place in three separate and independent areas. There was a series of three separate sets of events, some of which affecting the databases occurred as far back as 1997, when no one could have predicted this present set of circumstances. It is just not conceivable, given the circumstances and errors committed, that the attack could have been brought about by a conspiracy or by "rogue elements."
- Science has taught us that a direct explanation, backed up by full knowledge of facts obtained through a careful investigation, is always preferable to speculation and far fetched, convoluted or contrived theories with little or no factual backing.
- In this tragic case, the facts show a series of errors: that the target was mislocated; the databases designed to catch mistakes were inaccurate and incomplete; and none of the reviews uncovered either of the first two errors.

Compensation:

- The bombing of the embassy in Belgrade was a tragic accident occurring during a time of ongoing hostilities in Yugoslavia. While the action was completely unintended, the United States and NATO nevertheless recognize that it was the result of a set of errors which led to the embassy being mistakenly targeted.
- In view of these circumstances, and recognizing the special status of the diplomatic personnel who were affected, the United

States wishes to offer immediate ex gratia payments to those individuals who were injured in the bombing and to the families of those killed, based on current experience internationally for the scale of such payments.

- I have asked Ambassador Sasser to discuss the particulars of this offer on our part with you in the next few days.
- As for the damage to the embassy property in Belgrade, this is clearly a more complicated question. There is also the question of damage suffered by U.S. diplomatic and consular facilities in China in early May due to attacks by demonstrators.
- Because of their complexity, these latter issues will need to be examined with some care. We believe they too can be discussed through diplomatic channels and are ready to do so at a mutually suitable time.

06/12/99 3:40 PM

**Statement to the Chinese Government
on the Belgrade Embassy Bombing**

We are here today to give you the results of our examination of the circumstances that culminated with the mistaken NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade on 7 May 1999. I will also outline the corrective actions that we are taking within the United States Government to ensure that--as far as humanly possible--mistakes like this do not happen again.

The attack was a mistake. Our examination explains how a series of errors and omissions led to that mistake. Let me emphasize, no one targeted the Chinese Embassy. No one, at any stage in the process, realized that our bombs were aimed at the Chinese Embassy.

With me today are Mr. James Simon, the Assistant Director of Central Intelligence, Mr. Frank Kramer, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Mr. Ken Lieberthal, the Senior Director for Asian Affairs on the National Security Council, and Ms. Susan Shirk, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia.

The unintended attack happened because a number of systems and procedures that are used to identify and verify potential targets did not work.

There were three basic failures. First, the technique used to locate the intended target - the headquarters of the Yugoslav Federal Directorate for Supply and Procurement (FDSP) - was severely flawed. Second, none of the military or intelligence data bases used to verify target information contained the correct location of the Chinese Embassy. Third, nowhere in the target review process was either of the first two mistakes detected. No one who might have known that the targeted building was not the FDSP headquarters--but was in fact the Chinese Embassy--was ever consulted.

To help understand the circumstances which led to the mistaken bombing, let me offer a brief chronology of events.

In March of this year, U.S. intelligence officers began considering the FDSP headquarters as a potential target for NATO ALLIED FORCE strike operations. The FDSP clearly was a legitimate target given its role in support of the Yugoslav military effort.

We had a street address of the FDSP headquarters: "Bulevar Umetnosti 2" in New Belgrade. But military forces require precise geographic coordinates to conduct an attack. During a mid-April work-up of the target, three maps were used in an attempt to physically locate the address of the FDSP headquarters: two local commercial maps from 1996 and 1989, and one U.S. government map produced in 1997.

None of these maps had any reference to the FDSP building. And none accurately identified the current location of the Chinese Embassy. (Graphic One: 1997 U.S. Government map of original and current embassy locations.)

As you can see, the 1997 U.S. government city map shows the Embassy in Old Belgrade and depicts an unidentified building at the actual Embassy site in New Belgrade. The 1996 commercial map made no reference to the Embassy at either location. The 1989 map predated the Embassy's move.

Please keep in mind that the location of the Chinese Embassy was not a question that anyone would have asked when assembling this particular target package since it was not connected in any way to our intent to strike the FDSP headquarters.

In an effort to pinpoint the location of the FDSP building at Bulevar Umetmosti 2, an intelligence officer used land navigation techniques taught by the U.S. military to locate distant or inaccessible points or objects. These techniques - known as "intersection" and "resection" - can be used for general geolocation, but are totally inappropriate for precision targeting. Using this process, the individual mistakenly determined that the building which we now know to be the Chinese Embassy was the FDSP headquarters. The techniques used to identify the FDSP building were severely flawed. The true location of the FDSP headquarters was some 300 meters away from the Chinese Embassy. This flaw in the address location process

went undetected by all the others who evaluated the FDSP headquarters as a military target.

The incorrect location of the FDSP building was then fed into several U.S. data bases to determine whether any diplomatic or other facilities off-limits to targeting were nearby. **(Graphic Two and Three: U.S. Government image and map with FDSP headquarters and Chinese embassy)**. We try to avoid damage to sensitive facilities such as embassies, hospitals, schools and places of worship. Viewed from space, there was no indication that the office building being targeted was an embassy. And unfortunately, in this instance, no sources that were checked correctly identified the targeted building as the Chinese Embassy.

Multiple data bases within the Intelligence Community and the Department of Defense all reflected the Embassy in its pre-1996 location in Old Belgrade. Despite the fact that U.S. officials had visited the Embassy on a number of occasions in recent years, the new location was never entered into intelligence or military targeting data bases. If the data bases had accurately reflected the current location of the Embassy, the mistaken identification of the FDSP building would have been recognized and corrected.

Why was the Chinese embassy not correctly located? It is important to understand that our ability to verify the location of fixed-targets depends heavily on the accuracy of the data

bases, and the data bases in this case were wrong. Further, it is difficult to keep current data bases for cities around the globe. In general, diplomatic facilities--other than those of the U.S.--have been given relatively little attention in our efforts to update our data bases because such facilities are not targets. Military targets are the top priority in these data bases because of the danger they pose to our own forces.

Once the target was proposed, the focus of the review was on the military value of the target and how best to attack it. No one questioned the accuracy of the location. The formal recommendation of the FDSP target was forwarded in late April to military staffs both in the U.S. and Europe, who were responsible for reviewing and identifying targets for Operation Allied Force. Maps and satellite imagery were analyzed to look for any possible collateral damage concerns near the target. A target review was conducted in Europe, and again, no significant risks to civilian or diplomatic facilities were uncovered.

An administrative error at the Pentagon, however, resulted in the target package not receiving the full review it should have. This review, although truncated, found nothing different from the review that took place in Europe. There were no known collateral damage concerns. From that point on the building incorrectly identified as an FDSP facility was included on a list of potential Allied Force strike targets.

We have subsequently determined that there are some maps which show the correct current location of the Chinese Embassy although there are others, including some produced in recent years by the Yugoslav government, which do not.

Some of our employees knew the location of the Chinese embassy. But keep in mind that we were not looking for it. None of these individuals was consulted as the target was reviewed and, as a result, we lost any opportunity to learn that the building targeted was in fact the Chinese Embassy. We have also found one report from 1997 that gave the correct address of the Chinese Embassy but that information was ancillary to the focus of the report and unfortunately the address was not entered into the data base.

Very late in the process, questions were raised by an intelligence officer as to whether the building targeted was in fact the FDSP headquarters or might be some other unidentified building. At no time was there any suspicion that the building might be an Embassy. This question was not raised to senior levels and the strike went ahead.

In summary, there were several crucial errors which led to the Chinese Embassy being struck:

- There were human errors. The approach used to attempt to locate the FDSP building was severely flawed.
- All sources of information used to prevent precisely this type of accident were either inaccurate or incomplete.

- The review process was weak, did not catch the locational error, and did not consult anyone who might have been able to prevent this tragedy.

The United States is, as I speak, continuing to conduct an in-depth review of this tragic incident. Based on our initial findings, it is clear that this terrible mistake occurred not because of just one organization, or because of one individual.

The U.S. government is actively implementing a series of corrective actions to prevent such mistakes in the future. They include the following:

- Intelligence and Defense organizations have strengthened their internal mechanisms and procedures for selecting and verifying targets and have placed the highest priority on keeping our data bases current.
- The Department of State will explicitly report whenever foreign embassies move or are rebuilt. This information will then be forwarded and incorporated into our intelligence and military data bases.
- The United States Government will seek direct contact with other governments to obtain their assistance in identifying and locating their facilities and places of interest or concern in areas of potential future conflict.

Experience tells us that humans err. Knowing that, we constructed elaborate procedures to check and double-check our work. In this specific case, the checks and balances failed.

Our procedures are being improved to ensure our information is as current as possible. Our goal is to ensure that such a mistake does not happen again.

The United States sincerely regrets the loss of life in this tragic incident and offer our condolences to the Chinese people and especially to the families of those who lost their lives or were injured as a result of this mistaken attack.

Press & Media



Presse & Médias



20 June/juin 1999

COMMUNIQUE
PR (1999)101**STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATO**

I have been informed by the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe that all FRY military and police forces (VJ/MUP) have now departed Kosovo in compliance with the Military Technical Agreement (MTA) signed by the Commander of KFOR and representatives of the FRY Government on 9th June 1999.

Acting under the authority granted to me by the North Atlantic Council, I have accordingly decided to terminate with immediate effect the air campaign, which I suspended on 10th June 1999.

In making this statement I wish once more to express my thanks to all those who have contributed to Operation Allied Force and to underline the need for all parties to comply fully with the MTA and UNSCR 1244. KFOR will continue to work towards the establishment of a secure environment for all the people of Kosovo, regardless of ethnic origin.

↓
Attention Coreq Schulke

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
002a. note	SG(99)0872. To Permanent Representatives from Secretary General. Subject: Letter to UN Secretary General. [NATO] (1 page)	06/10/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

Operation Allied Force

2008-0994-F
vz6342

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
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PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
002b. letter	SG(99)0869. Secretary Javier Solana to Secretary General Kofi Annan. [NATO] (1 page)	06/10/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

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National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
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UNCLASSIFIED

ALLIED FORCE ASSESSMENT (220400L MAY 1999)

ALLIED FORCE operations against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) are now in their 60th day. Strike operations continue around the clock and throughout the depth and breadth of the country. To date, over 24,000 strike and support sorties have been flown by 13 NATO nations against over 295 fixed targets, with over 157 tactical engagements against fielded forces. **ALLIED FORCE** continues to destroy and degrade FRY military and security forces, as well as erode the military-industrial base which sustains them.

ARMY AND POLICE force operations are increasingly disrupted by allied attacks, particularly those of the 3rd Army in and around Kosovo.

- Nearly one-third of the armored vehicles (tanks/APCs) and over one-half of the artillery deployed in Kosovo are assessed as destroyed or damaged.
- Over half of the 3rd Army's infrastructure and most of its ammo and fuel storage capacity have been destroyed.
- Distribution networks for all supplies (particularly fuel and ammo) have been severely disrupted – especially in and around Kosovo.

AIR DEFENSE/C3: Attacks and suppression of air defense and command & control targets have reduced FRY military effectiveness and permitted operations over the entirety of Yugoslavia.

- Nearly 80% of modern fighters and strategic SAMs destroyed.
- Sustained air operations severely degraded by destruction of airfield maintenance and support facilities.
- Long term missile repair/maintenance essentially destroyed.
- National level C3 facilities to include two presidential residences, headquarters of the Ministry of Defense, army, air force, air defense force, Socialist Party of Serbia and national security services have been damaged or destroyed.

POL

- 100% of national petroleum refinery capability destroyed.
- Over two-fifths of military reserve fuel storage and more than one-fifth of industrial fuel storage damaged or destroyed.
- Nationwide fuel distribution capability significantly degraded.
- Serbian fuel imports hampered with damage to facilities along Danube

INDUSTRY/LOCS

- Aircraft repair and sustainability degraded by about 70%.
- Ammunition production capacity reduced by nearly two-thirds.
- Half of Serbia's explosive/propellant production infrastructure damaged.
- Over one-third of nationwide ground equipment production and sustainment capabilities damaged or destroyed.
- After a slower than anticipated repair of national electric power network, power has been returned to Nis, Novi Sad and Belgrade.
- Rail capacity into Kosovo fully interdicted; primary road approx 50%.

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
003. paper	Options for Task Force Thunder. (3 pages)	04/22/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

Operation Allied Force

2008-0994-F
vz6342

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UNCLASSIFIED

ALLIED FORCE ASSESSMENT (090800L MAY 1999)

ALLIED FORCE operations against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) are now in their 46th day. Strike operations continue around the clock and throughout the depth and breadth of the country. To date, over 17,000 strike and support sorties have been flown by 13 NATO nations against approximately 270 targets. **ALLIED FORCE** continues to successfully destroy and degrade FRY military and security forces, as well as erode the military-industrial base which sustains them.

ARMY AND POLICE force operations are increasingly disrupted by allied attacks, particularly those of the 3rd Army in and around Kosovo.

- Over one-fifth of the armored vehicles (tanks/APCs) and one-third of the artillery deployed in Kosovo are assessed as destroyed or damaged.
- Over half of the 3rd Army's infrastructure and most of its ammo and fuel storage capacity have been destroyed.
- Distribution networks for all supplies (particularly fuel and ammo) have been severely disrupted – especially in and around Kosovo.

AIR DEFENSE/C3: Attacks and suppression of air defense and command & control targets have reduced FRY military effectiveness and permitted operations over the entirety of Yugoslavia.

- More than 70% of modern fighters and strategic SAMs destroyed.
- Sustained air operations severely degraded by destruction of airfield maintenance and support facilities.
- Long term missile repair/maintenance essentially destroyed.
- National level headquarters of the army, air force, air defense force and national security services have been damaged or destroyed.

POL

- 100% of national petroleum refinery capability not operational.
- One third of military reserve fuel storage and one-fifth of industrial fuel storage damaged or destroyed.
- Nationwide fuel distribution capability significantly degraded.

INDUSTRY/LOCS

- Aircraft repair and sustainability degraded by about 70%.
- Ammunition production capacity reduced by two-thirds.
- Half of Serbia's explosive/propellant production infrastructure damaged or destroyed.
- Nearly one third of nationwide ground equipment production damaged or destroyed.
- About two-thirds of Serbia and all of Belgrade is without electric power.
- Rail capacity into Kosovo fully interdicted; road approx 50%

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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004. email	Charles Skinner to Donald Bandler. Subject: Naumann's Valedictory. (10 pages)	05/05/1999	P1/b(1)
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COLLECTION:

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Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
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2008-0994-F
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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
005. map	Serbia: Electric Power Network Status. (1 page)	05/04/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

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National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
006. report	[Task Force Thunder Deployment] (1 page)	05/07/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

Operation Allied Force

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
007a. email	Theresa Whelan to HINZPS@State.gov, et al. Subject: [TF Thunder, Revision 1] (2 pages)	05/14/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

Operation Allied Force

2008-0994-F
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C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
007b. map	Task Force Thunder - Lost Opportunities [NATO] [Duplicate of vz6305_002b, this case] (1 page)	05/14/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

Operation Allied Force

2008-0994-F
vz6342

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
008a. memo	For Samuel Berger from Matthew Vaccaro. Subject: Deployment of Task Force Thunder. [Record ID: 9903755] (3 pages)	05/15/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
008b. map	[Duplicate of 006b and vz6305_002b, this case] (1 page)	05/15/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

Operation Allied Force

2008-0994-F
vz6342

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
009a. briefing paper	Victory Thunder. (16 pages)	05/00/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
009b. report	[Duplicate of 005] (1 page)	05/07/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

Operation Allied Force

2008-0994-F
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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
010. memo	Some Thoughts on Kosovo at the NATO Summit. (2 pages)	04/15/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

FOLDER TITLE:

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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011. paper	Discussion paper. Subject: OPLAN 10601 - Targeting. [with fax cover] (4 pages)	04/02/1999	P1/b(1)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Kosovo Office (Schulte, Gregory)
OA/Box Number: 1709

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

(San Francisco, California)

For Immediate Release

April 15, 1999

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO AMERICAN SOCIETY OF NEWSPAPER EDITORS

Fairmont Hotel
San Francisco, California

12:05 P.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Mr. Seaton, distinguished officers and members of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the crisis in Kosovo, why we're there, what our objectives are, how this fits in with our larger vision of the future.

Since I'm here I can't help noting that one of the truly striking aspects of this moment is the stark contrast it illuminates between a free society with a free press, and a closed society where the press is used to manipulate people by suppressing or distorting the truth.

In Belgrade today, independent journalists are being persecuted. This week, one brave editor was murdered in cold blood. Meanwhile, the government-run press has constructed an alternative reality for the Serbian people in which the atrocities their soldiers are committing in Kosovo simply don't exist. Under those conditions, decent people can remain in denial, supporting policies that lead them to political and economic ruin.

Thank goodness our press, and free press throughout the world, have tried to get at and get out the truth, to ensure that words like refugees, displacement, ethnic cleansing don't become stale and lifeless, but remain causes for action.

The tragedy in Kosovo is the result of a meticulously planned and long-premeditated attack on an entire people simply on the basis of their ethnicity and religion; an attack grounded in a philosophy that teaches people to dearly love a piece of land while utterly dismissing the humanity of those who occupy it.

That is what Mr. Milosevic has been doing ever since Yugoslavia started breaking up in 1989. For a decade, he has been trying to build a greater Serbia, by using military force to rearrange the ethnic character of the nations which emerged from Yugoslavia. That is what he did for years in Croatia and, horribly, in Bosnia -- what he is doing in Kosovo now.

Last year, he drove hundreds of thousands of people from their homes into the frigid mountains, and let them back only after NATO threatened to use force. He is now determined to crush all resistance to his rule even if it means turning Kosovo into a lifeless wasteland.

As these difficult days proceed, it is important to remember that we have no quarrel with the Serbian people. They were our allies in World War II; they have often been our allies. In a sense, they are victims of this tragedy, too. And we must understand the anguish of Serbian Americans who, like Albanian Americans, are worried about their loved ones back home. Americans should not blame Serbs or look down on Serbian Americans because we disagree with the Milosevic government. We must not let his ethnic cleansing provoke us to ethnic bias.

We and our 18 NATO allies are in Kosovo today because we want to stop the slaughter and the ethnic cleansing; because we want to build a stable, united, prosperous Europe that includes the Balkans and its neighbors; and because we don't want the 21st century to be dominated by the dark marriage of modern weapons and ancient ethnic, racial and religious hatred. We cannot simply watch as hundreds of thousands of people are brutalized, murdered, raped, forced from their homes, their family histories erased -- all in the name of ethnic pride and purity.

NATO was pivotal to ending the killing and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. We can do so again, and this time we have responded more quickly. Were we to stand aside, the atrocities in Kosovo would go on and on. Neighboring democracies, as you see, would be overwhelmed by permanent refugees, and demoralized by the failure of democracy's alliance.

The Kosovar Albanians would become a people without a homeland; a burden to host countries; a magnet for radical ideologies; a breeding ground for unending warfare in the Balkans. NATO would be discredited -- yes, because it made promises not kept, but more important, because its values and vision of Europe would be profoundly damaged. Ultimately, the conflict in Kosovo would spread anyway, and we would have to act anyway.

Now, when we decided to launch the air campaign, after Mr. Milosevic rejected peace, we believed there was at least a possibility that our readiness to act would deter him from moving forward as it had in the past. But we also understood clearly that with 40,000 troops and over 250 tanks massed in and around Kosovo he might intensify his repression and go on with his planned attack, as I made clear in my address to the nation the night the air strikes began.

There was only one possibility that we and our NATO allies were not willing to entertain -- that the international community would look the other way in the face of this brutality. Now the NATO air campaign has been underway for three weeks, often interrupted or limited by bad weather. This is, however, a good time to assess what has been accomplished and where we're going.

Mr. Milosevic's strategy has been to complete the ethnic cleansing, then break the unity of NATO by taking the bombs and offering phony concessions. But NATO is more united today than when the operation began. Whether they are conservatives in Spain, socialists in France, New Labor in Britain, or Greens in Germany, the leaders of Europe and the people they represent are determined to maintain and intensify our attacks until Mr. Milosevic's forces leave Kosovo and the refugees return under the protection of an international force, or until his military is weakened to the point when he can no longer keep his vice-like grip on Kosovo.

At the beginning of the operation, we focused, properly, on Serbia's highly-developed air defenses, to reduce the risks to our pilots. There are still significant air defenses up and, therefore, there is still risk with every mission. But we have degraded the system to the point that now, NATO can fly 24 hours a day, not simply at night. We've struck at Serbia's machinery of repression, at the infrastructure that supports it. We've destroyed all of Serbia's refineries, half of its capacity to

produce ammunition. We've attacked its bridges and rail lines and communications networks to diminish its ability to supply, reinforce and control its forces in Kosovo. Increasingly now, we are striking the forces themselves, hitting tanks, artillery, armored personnel carriers, radar missiles and aircraft.

As the allies have said -- all of us, repeatedly -- Mr. Milosevic can stop NATO's bombing by meeting these conditions: One, Serbian security forces must leave Kosovo. Two, the displaced Kosovars must be able to return. Three, there must be an international security force to protect all Kosovars, including the Serb minority there, as they work towards self-government.

If he refuses, our military campaign will continue to destroy as much of his military capability as we can so that each day his capacity for repression will diminish.

Meanwhile, his actions -- though absolutely devastating to the civilian population, and horribly burdensome to the front-line states of Macedonia and Albania -- have not destroyed the armed opposition among Kosovars. Indeed, their numbers and determination are growing. Ultimately, Mr. Milosevic will have to choose -- either to cut his mounting losses, or lose his ability to maintain his grip on Kosovo.

As for NATO, we are prepared to continue this effort as long as necessary to achieve our objectives. Our timetable will be determined by our goals, not the other way around.

In the meantime, we must do more to aid the refugees. They are pouring out of Kosovo. We must help to preserve their lives and health, and their hope of return. This week, NATO approved Operation Allied Harbor, under which 8,000 troops will work with relief agencies in Albania to establish camps, provide logistical support, deliver aid, and ensure security. Thus far, we have contributed in the United States \$150 million to this effort.

Conditions at the borders are beginning to improve. Now we are most concerned about the fate of the refugees -- hundreds of thousands of them -- trapped inside Kosovo. They are unable to leave, but afraid to go home. Mr. Milosevic apparently wants to use them as hostages and human shields, and he's preventing relief groups from getting to them. People of goodwill all around the world today are trying to find ways to overcome this cruel and cynical manipulation of innocent human beings.

Mr. Milosevic also continues to hold on to the three American servicemen his forces seized in Macedonia. He continues to flout his obligation to allow the Red Cross to visit them. I want to say again as clearly as I can: The United States will hold him personally responsible for their welfare.

Now, the stand we have taken, first in Bosnia, now in Kosovo, against organized ethnic hatred is a moral imperative. But it is also a strategic imperative. And I'd like to talk with you a little about that and ask all of you to ask yourselves how you view the history of the last 50 years and how you imagine the next 50 years unfolding.

The history of the United States, for a very long time, was dominated by a principle of nonintervention in the affairs of other countries, even when we strongly disagreed. Indeed, for most of our history, we have worn the principle of nonintervention as a badge of honor, beginning with George Washington's warning against entangling alliances.

The 20th century changed all that, with two world wars, the Cold War, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Panama, Lebanon, Grenada, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and others. Our steadily increasing involvement with the rest of the world -- not for territorial gain, but for peace and freedom, and security -- is a fact of recent history.

During the Cold War, it can be argued that on occasion we made a wrong judgment, because we tended to see the world solely through the lenses of communism or anti-communism. But no one suggests that we ever sought territorial advantage. No one doubts that when America did get involved, we were doing what at least we thought was right for humanity.

Now, at the end of the 20th century, we face a great battle between the forces of integration and the forces of disintegration; the forces of globalism versus tribalism; of oppression against empowerment. And the phenomenal explosion of technology, including that of advanced weaponry, might be the servant of either side -- or both.

The central irony of our time, it seems to me, is this: Most of us have a vision of the 21st century world with the triumph of peace and prosperity and personal freedom; with respect for the integrity of ethnic, racial and religious

minorities; within a framework of shared values, shared power and shared plenty; making common cause against disease and environmental degradation, against terror, organized crime and weapons of mass destruction.

This grand vision, ironically, is threatened by the oldest demon of human society: our vulnerability to hatred of the other, those who are not like us. In the face of that, we cannot be indifferent -- at home or abroad. That is why we are in Kosovo.

Kosovo is a very small place on a very large fault line, on the borderlands of Central and Eastern Europe, at the meetingplace of the Islamic world and the Western and Orthodox branches of Christianity, where people have settled in a complex patchwork of ethnic and religious groups and where countless wars have been fought -- over faith, land and power.

Kosovo is far from unique in its region. It is surrounded by nations with similar challenges of history and diversity. The only difference today is that they -- think of them -- Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Bosnia -- are now at least struggling to realize the vision of multiethnic democracy that Mr. Milosevic is struggling to kill.

Much of the former Soviet Union faces a similar challenge, including Ukraine and Moldova, southern Russia, the Caucasus nations of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, the new nations of Central Asia. These nations spent most of the last half-century under communist rule. In the years when Western Europe was overcoming its old animosities, by integrating its economies and embracing democracy, in the years when Americans began confronting our own legacy of racial hatred through open debate and political activism, these nations saw their problems frozen in time -- kept in place by a rigid system that allowed no talk of change.

They projected to the world a picture of stability, but it was a false picture -- a stability imposed by rulers whose answer to ethnic tensions was not to resolve them, but to suppress and deny them. When the weight of communist repression was lifted, these tensions naturally rose to the surface, to be resolved by statesmen, or exploited by demagogues.

The potential for ethnic conflict became, perhaps, the greatest threat to what is among our most critical interests: the transition of the former communist countries toward

stability, prosperity and freedom. We are in Kosovo because we care about saving lives and we care about the character of the multiethnic post-Cold War world.

We don't want young democracies that have made the right choices to be overwhelmed by the flight of refugees and the victories of ethnic hatred. We don't want to see Europe re-fight with tanks and artillery the same battles they fought centuries ago with axes and arrows. And because stability in Europe is important to our own security, we want to build a Europe that is peaceful, undivided and free; a Europe where young Americans do not have to fight and die again to deal with the consequences of other people's madness and greed.

Who is going to define the future of this part of the world? Who will provide the model for how the people who have emerged from communism resolve their own legitimate problems? Will it be Mr. Milosevic, with his propaganda machine and his paramilitary thugs, who tell people to leave their country, their history and their land behind, or die? Or will it be a nation like Romania, which is building democracy and respecting the rights of its ethnic minorities? Or Hungary, which has accepted that ethnic Hungarians can live beyond its borders with security and freedom? Or Macedonia, which is struggling to maintain a tolerant, multiethnic society under the unimaginable pressures of the human and economic costs imposed by Mr. Milosevic's policies?

Now, after our recent experience in Bosnia and Kosovo, it's easy to forget that despite all the violence and turmoil they have experienced, the people of this region have, in fact, found ways to live together through the years. If the nations of the Balkans had truly experienced a thousand years of unceasing ethnic cleansing, their ethnic makeup wouldn't be anything like what it is. They would be utterly homogenous, not so diverse. Today, most of those countries are democracies. Most are trying to resolve their problems by force of argument, not force of arms.

We cannot allow the Milosevic vision -- rooted as it is in hatred and violence and cynicism -- to prevail. But if we truly want a more tolerant, inclusive future for the Balkans and all of southeast Europe, we will have to both oppose his efforts and offer a better vision of the future, one that we are willing to help build.

Now, what does all this mean for the future of Kosovo and the region as a whole, starting from where we are right now? What many Kosovars want is independence. That is certainly understandable; after what they've been through, it's only natural that they should equate sovereignty with survival. But I continue to think it is not the best answer. Kosovo lacks the resources and infrastructure to be viable on its own. Moreover, Yugoslavia's long-suffering neighbors fear that an independent Kosovo would be unstable, and that the instability itself would be contagious.

Finally, we must remember the principle we and our allies have been fighting for in the Balkans is the principle of multiethnic, tolerant, inclusive democracy. We have been fighting against the idea that statehood must be based entirely on ethnicity.

Some people think the best way to solve Kosovo's problems, and Serbia's and Bosnia's, is to withdraw their borders and rearrange their people to reflect their ethnic distinctions. Well, first of all, a lot of people who say that haven't looked very closely at the maps. It is a problem of staggering complexity. Once it starts, it would never end. For every grievance resolved, a new one would be created. For every community moved to a new place, another community would, by definition, be displaced.

If we were to choose this course, we would see the continuous fissioning of smaller and smaller ethnically-based, inviable states, creating pressures for more war, more ethnic cleansing, more of the politics of repression and revenge. I believe the last thing we need in the Balkans is greater Balkanization.

The real question today is not whether Kosovo will be part of Serbia. The real question is whether Kosovo and Serbia, and the other states in the region, will be part of the new Europe. The best solution for Kosovo, for Serbia, for Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia and all the countries of southeast Europe is not the endless re-jiggering of their borders, but greater integration into a Europe in which sovereignty matters, but in which borders are becoming more and more open, and less important in a negative sense.

It is to affirm the principle that Mr. Milosevic has done so very much to undermine -- that successful modern states make a virtue, not a blood feud, out of ethnic and religious

diversity. That is the solution that Western Europe accepted -- not too long ago, really, when you think of it -- after Europe had been consumed by two of the bloodiest wars in all of human history; after the Holocaust almost erased an entire people from the face of the Earth.

It is hard to visualize today, hard to remember, when you drive across Belgium and Holland, across the border between France and Germany, that twice in this century millions of people spilled blood fighting over every inch of that land. It is hard to imagine the immediate postwar Europe Winston Churchill described as a rubble heap, a charnel house, a breeding ground of pestilence and hate. But because of the changes which have occurred, it is not unimaginable today that the nations of Southeastern Europe will choose integration and peace, just as their Western neighbors have.

To achieve that future, we must follow the example of the World War II generation, by standing up to aggression and hate, and then by following through with a post-conflict strategy for reconstruction and renewal. If we don't want people to remain mired in the miseries of yesterday, we must give them a better tomorrow to dream of and work for.

Even as we fight this conflict, we must look beyond it to what the Balkans, Southeastern Europe, indeed the whole continent of Europe should look like in 10 or 20 years. We should try to do for Southeastern Europe what we helped to do for Western Europe after World War II, and for Central Europe after the Cold War -- to help its people build a region of multiethnic democracies, a community that upholds standards of human rights, a community in which borders are open to people in trade, where nations cooperate to make war unthinkable.

That is why my request to Congress for supplemental funding for our military and humanitarian operation in Kosovo will also support emergency assistance to Yugoslavia's neighbors, which do not want their dreams of democracy and integration undermined by a flood of refugees and the fear of violence. That is why we've been working to help the countries of the region consolidate democratic reform, and build professional armed forces under civilian control.

We need to intensify these efforts, and to work with the European Union and the international financial institutions to mobilize more support for these countries. And we need to condition this help, just as we did with Western Europe 50 years

ago, on closer cooperation among the beneficiaries and a new understanding of their sovereignty.

This will take constant, steady American engagement, together with our European allies, old and new. It will demand keeping institutions, including NATO and the European Union, open to new nations who make the right choices. It will take money in the form of investment and aid. It will require a willingness to provide material and moral support to people and leaders across the region who are standing up for multiethnic democracy.

Realistically, it will require a democratic transition in Serbia, for the region's democracies will never be safe with a belligerent tyranny in their midst. It will demand from us a recognition that there is no easy way out of the region's troubles, but there is a solution that advances our interests and keeps faith with our values -- if we are ready to make a long-term commitment.

Of course, all of this will take time and effort. In the meantime, the people of Kosovo should have protection, security and self-government. That can only be assured by an international security force with NATO at the core.

As in Bosnia, this force should also include members of NATO's Partnership for Peace that represent the whole range of ethnic groups in Europe. This is precisely the kind of mission we envisioned for the Partnership for Peace when it was created five years ago, and the kind of mission I very much hope Russia could join as well, just as it did so constructively in Bosnia.

In the long run, our goal for Kosovo should not be independence, but interdependence. Our watchword for the region should be integration, not disintegration. The ultimate answer for Kosovo, for Serbia, for Bosnia, Croatia, all the Balkans is not to withdraw behind barriers of mistrust and insecurity, but to join a Europe where borders unite rather than divide; to build a richly-textured fabric of civilization that lifts all God's children and resists those who would tear it apart by appealing to the dark recesses of the soul that lead only to dead ends.

The Balkan War that began in Kosovo 10 years ago must end in Kosovo. It should be the last conflict of the 20th century. It should not be the defining conflict of the 21st century.

The United States has the opportunity and the responsibility to make that decision come out right -- for our children and our grandchildren. We can help to lead to a new day for the people of this long-suffering region, a more peaceful time for Europe and a better future for the United States.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. SEATON: The President has kindly agreed to take questions. You must be an ASNE member to ask a question. I would invite you to go to the floor mikes, as I see you're doing. Please identify yourself and your newspaper.

Q Mr. President, would you help us sort out what happened yesterday on the road from Przin to Kukes? According to press accounts -- you had your choices, I guess -- NATO aircraft either bombed a convoy that included refugees, or the Serbs attacked the Albanians in response to our bombing.

Did we screw up? Can the prosecution of this war be sustained -- can it sustain the support of Americans if the newspapers of this country are publishing front-page stories showing dead civilians? And what word went out from you and Sandy Berger today, to the Pentagon and to the NATO High Command about yesterday's events?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, what we believe happened is that the pilot thought it was a military convoy and that there were apparently civilians in the convoy who were killed. That is regrettable. It is also inevitable in a conflict of this kind -- with planes traveling at high speeds, doing their best to fulfill their mission.

And if the requirement is that nothing like this can ever happen, then we're saying it's okay with us if Mr. Milosevic displaces over a million Kosovars, kills and rapes thousands upon thousands of them. And keep in mind, in Bosnia there were more than 2 million refugees and a quarter of a million people killed.

You cannot have this kind of conflict without some errors like this occurring. This is not a business of perfection. I ask you to think about the hundreds and hundreds of sorties which have been flown in the last three weeks and the small number of civilian casualties. It should be obvious to everybody in the world that we are bending over backwards to hit

military targets, to hit security targets, even to hit a lot of targets late at night where the losses in human life will be minimized. These efforts have been made and they have been remarkably successful.

So, certain regrettable things will happen. We will do our best. The military will evaluate this incident, as it does every other one; so will the NATO command. But I have to tell you, if anyone thinks that this is a reason for changing our mission, then the United States will never be able to bring military power to bear again, because there is no such thing as flying airplanes this fast, dropping weapons this powerful, dealing with an enemy this pervasive who is willing to use people as human shields, and never have this sort of tragic thing happen. It cannot be done.

I believe when the scales are weighed, it will be obvious that this is a result of Mr. Milosevic's policies. If he doesn't want this to happen, he ought to get out of Kosovo, let the Kosovars come home and let people come in there who can protect them. That is the answer to this.

Q Mr. President, thank you very much for coming to speak to us yourself. If the people -- the hundreds of thousands of people hiding in the hills in Kosovo, the Albanian Kosovars, perish from natural causes or as a result of this slaughter of paramilitary forces, won't NATO's hoped-for victory from bombing be hollow? And won't we have failed to prevent the kind of repeat of the Holocaust that you've said is what we don't want to enter the 21st century with?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I believe that our strategy will prevail. We do have, as I said, a very difficult problem here, to figure out what to do about the refugees within Kosovo. We are working at it; the international relief agencies are working at it. A lot of countries that have some relationship with Serbia are working at it. And we are doing our best to try to figure out how to resolve it.

I think the answer is, what is the alternative? So far, we still don't have as many refugees and nowhere near as many people dead as we did in Bosnia. And I think it's because we have moved more quickly. I think we have a chance to put this back together without having as much wreckage as we had there. And we are working as hard as we can to do it. It is a difficult situation, but we are working as hard as we can. And we are doing it while keeping this NATO Alliance together.

And keep in mind, that is also very important, I think, that this is not an action by the United States alone, this is not one we engineered or dominated, this is a decision we made as partners with the 18 other NATO allies, and we are doing our best to deal with it.

And I assure you that we're trying to deal with all the contingencies. I do not think it is -- including trying to figure out what's the worst thing that can happen and how to avoid it. But we're doing our best to deal with that.

It's not possible to fly helpless cargo planes over and do air drops to people, for example, if we know there is a better than 50 percent chance they won't get the supplies in the first place, and a much better than 50 percent chance that the planes would be shot out of the air, even though they are not war planes at all. So we're struggling to come to grips with this. But I think we moved very quickly and we've made a lot of progress in a short time in dealing with the massive refugee problem on the borders in the other countries, and I hope in the next few days we'll have some progress to report on this.

Q Mr. President, I haven't listened to any talk radio today, but, I apologize, I do often. And I'm often reminded of your wife's comment about the right wing conspiracy, the critics who want to get at you for anything and undermine your presidency and discredit you, personally. But there is a common drumbeat on the airwaves now and it is that you, personally, lack the moral authority to be Commander-in-Chief.

And certainly, I guess there is a powerful inclination to ignore those criticisms. But if you had to address it to an Air Force pilot, who had listened to the same radio shows and perhaps been persuaded to that point of view, how would you address that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't have to address it to the Air Force pilot. I am his Commander-in-Chief, and they swore an oath to the Constitution, and they have performed admirably. And they don't deserve to hear that.

I just have seen a lot of our Air Force pilots. I just went down to Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana. I spent endless amounts -- I spent hours talking to the families, the friends, the people that were there, encouraging people to say what they think. One person said something

critical. Several hundred said, we believe in what we're doing; it is the right thing to do; thank you for doing it; we are proud to do it; this is what we signed on for.

This is a democracy, and people can say whatever they want to say. But I have found that the American people, vast majorities of them, at least, appreciate it when I don't spend my time responding to them, and instead I spend my time working for the American people and trying to do what I think is right. I let other people be their judge about whether they think I should or shouldn't do something. But I have no response, except to get up every day and try to do my job.

And I think that this country is in a better place than it was six years and three months ago, because we have followed that policy instead of being totally consumed with spending all of our time answering our critics. I'd rather work on what I can control, and the opinion of some of the talk show people is something that's way beyond my control, and happily so.
(Laughter and applause.)

MR. SEATON: We have time for only one more question. and if I could, I'd like to break the line over here.

Q I really have an important question.

MR. SEATON: Okay, but if Len Downey would get his question right afterward.

Q Mr. President, we're a center for chemical warfare, training and storage in Anniston, Alabama, and Pentagon officials confirmed to us the chemical weapons capability of the former Yugoslav forces. How does that availability of weapons of mass destruction among the Serbs impact American and NATO operations in the Kosovo conflict. And what is your administration's policy of response or retribution in the however unlikely event of enemy use of such weapons of mass destruction against insurgents or refugees, or even the NATO Alliance?

THE PRESIDENT: My response would be swift and overwhelming. And we have obviously intelligence about the capabilities of the Serbs in a number of areas militarily, just as we do with other countries. But I think they are quite well aware of the dangers of overly escalating this. And I think that's all I should say about it right now.

Q I'm the only woman in line, so I'd like -- (laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: I'll take a couple more. (Applause.) You know what's going on, don't you? The people that help me don't trust you not to write a story that's about something other than Kosovo, and they think the longer I stay up here, the greater my chances of screwing up. (Laughter.) That's really what's going on here. And it's wonderful when you're not running for anything, you can say just exactly what's on your mind. (Laughter.)

But have at it, go ahead. (Laughter.)

Q Okay, great. Thank you. Knowing your interest in human rights and having had you referred to all God's children, I'd like you to focus some attention for just a moment on some of God's children in Afghanistan. And what I'm speaking about is this is a country that's under the harsh rule of the Taliban, some of whose leaders we helped finance and arm in their fight against the Soviet Union.

In Afghanistan today, there are 11.5 million women and children, women and girls, who are virtually under house arrest. Male doctors are not permitted to treat women and girls, and female doctors are not allowed to practice. Women are kept in their homes and may only leave if they're in the company of a brother, a father or a husband. Windows of homes where women live are painted black so that no man may, per chance, see them without their burkha. When they go outside, they're totally shrouded. A 70-year old woman was beaten severely because her ankles showed to a man. A teenage girl was almost stoned to death because her ankles showed when she was riding her bicycle. Women in this country are not permitted to do anything except stay in their homes, unless they leave in the company of a man.

It's a terribly repressive regime. And a number of people think that we have some obligation to these 11.5 million women and girls, because of our relationship -- former relationship to these people who are in power. What do you think?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I absolutely do, and I think we would even if we hadn't supported the Taliban on "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" principle years ago. I think independent of that, we do. I think that what has happened to the women and children of Afghanistan is atrocious.

The First Lady and I had an event at the White House to highlight that on Human Rights Day, including having two Afghan women there who talked to the press about what was going on. I met with a group of leaders from the Feminist Majority the other day and talked about how we could do more to bring more to the United States, what other things we could do to put pressure on Taliban and on other states, other countries, to try to help us to change conditions.

And I think it is very, very important to do. I think it is one of the worst examples of systematic human rights abuses in the world today, and a terrible perversion of Islam.

MR. SEATON: We asked Len Downey to raise a question that was of concern to ASNE, so I invite him to do so, if he could.

Q Mr. President, a growing number of newspaper editors and broadcast news executives are very concerned about the relatively little reliable information and specific information that has been released so far by the Defense Department about the bombings and the other military activities so far during Operation Allied Force. Much less information, for instance, than was provided daily during the Persian Gulf War or Operation Desert Fox. In view of the need, Mr. President, that you discussed today to have the American people support this military action, will you instruct the Defense Department to provide us and the American people with more specific information about the bombing?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Mr. Downey, you know, late last week the Defense Department had a big, long briefing, and there are basically two issues here and we're trying to resolve them. I actually had a rather extended conversation yesterday with two of the other leaders of the NATO Alliance about this because I think it's important, not just in the United States, but throughout Europe, to get more information out more quickly.

There have been two problems from the point of view of the Pentagon. One is trying to work through the NATO command structure and let them do the daily briefings and try to determine by consensus, if you will, what should be gotten out and how; and then to have the Pentagon play a supporting role in that.

The other problem is a practical one, which is sometimes, it takes -- in the Gulf, when we fought in Iraq, in Desert Storm, and later, when we had our actions there, neither the

weather, nor the terrain presented the barriers to actually assessing quickly what the impact of the action was that is presented in the Balkans. So sometimes there is just an inevitable delay, which is one of the reasons that -- last week I talked to Secretary Cohen and General Shelton about having the Pentagon do a big briefing to be much more detailed about what, in fact, had happened, and what conclusions we drew from it.

So all I can tell you is, I'm aware that this is a difficulty. I agree that we should try to do more, more simultaneous with the actions. And I am working on it, and trying to get NATO to do more as well. Unless there is some specific security-related reason that some issue shouldn't be talked about, I think the more information we can get out there the more quickly, the better off we are.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: But I know that whenever there's a conflict between any government and the press, there's always the assumption that there is some deliberate scheme at work here. And I don't think that's the case here. I think really, we're trying to work through -- NATO has never done this kind of operation before, in this way, and there are a lot of things that have to be worked through. But I am working on it, and I hope that most of you will be generally satisfied within the next few days.

MR. SEATON: Want to take a couple more?

THE PRESIDENT: We could -- he's been standing there a long time. (Laughter.)

Q I'm the only resident from Vancouver, Washington, standing here, so -- (laughter.) Mr. President, my question has two parts. The first is, as you near the end of your second term in office and deal with such issues as the Balkans, what legacy do you believe you are leaving to the American public? Secondly, would you be specific, sir, in telling us ways in which America is better off for your presidency?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think, first of all -- let me answer the first question first. I think others will determine the legacy of this administration, and most of it will have to be done when all the records are there and time passes and people without an axe to grind one way or the other have a chance to have their say.

I can only tell you what I have tried to do. I have tried to lead America into a new century and into a whole new era in the way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. And I have tried to help build a world that was more peaceful, more prosperous and more secure.

I think that among the things that people will say this administration did and made progress on was, we gave the United States a modern economic policy and got out of 12 years of horrible deficit spending during which we quadrupled the debt. I think that the work we did to support the solution of social problems in reducing the welfare rolls by half, and reducing the crime rate, and putting 100,000 police on the street would be important. I think the work we did in education will be important.

I think the systematic effort we made to promote reconciliation among people of different racial groups will be important. I think the work we have done in the Middle East to Northern Ireland promoting peace will be important. I think the work we've done in Latin America, through the summit of the Americas, and the work we've done with our other allies in Central America will be important. I think there are a lot of things that will altogether add up to preparing America for the 21st century, building a stronger American community and repairing the social fabric.

And let me just say one thing. When I got off the airplane today there were a bunch of young people who are AmeriCorps volunteers. That's a program we started back in the second year of my presidency. And one young woman said to me, I'm 30 years old, you're the first President I ever voted for. I've kept up, you did what you said you'd do and it's worked. And her saying that to me meant more than just about anything any American could say.

When I was in New Hampshire for the 7th anniversary of the New Hampshire primary, there were schoolchildren along the highway waiting in the cold rain. And person after person said to me, you had to come to these little town meetings in 1991 and we listened to you and you've done what you said.

So what I think what will also happen is people will see Americans can solve their problems; government has a role to play and it can produce. So I think there's a sense of possibility, a sense of optimism, a sense of eagerness about the

future that the present difficulties in Kosovo cannot begin to overshadow. And I think the country is clearly better off than it was six years ago.

Q Mr. President, part of a little known function of this convention is to help train young journalists. There are some journalists here who produce the AS&E report. I'd like to ask them to stand because they gave me this question. If you all would stand, please. (Applause.)

Their question was, and you made an indirect reference to this in your speech -- you didn't mention the Marshall Plan by name, but that seemed to be what you were talking about as a way to resolve this later. And their question was, could a greater effort have been made after the fall of the Berlin Wall to do more along the lines of a Marshall Plan, particularly in the Balkans, and might that have prevented something like we're facing today?

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps. I wasn't President then and I don't know -- I don't say that in a blameworthy sense, I just wasn't. And I don't think it's fair for me to make judgments where I don't have all the facts and I can't say. I don't mind saying that I missed the boat somewhere, if I know it, or if I know enough about somebody else to say that. But I don't know the answer to that.

Let me say it in another way. I am convinced that after communism fell, that the work that -- we had a chance after the Berlin Wall fell, after the end of communism, to build a Europe that was united, democratic and at peace for the first time in history. You go back, since the rise of nation states on the continent of Europe that had never been true before. There had always been some conflict, there had always been some division, there had always been some absence of democracy -- never before possible.

At that moment there were three great challenges, I would argue, to that vision. One is, what happens to Russia? Does Russia become a democracy? Does it become stable? Can it be prosperous enough in the painful transition? The other was, what happens to all the states around that were communist, non-Russian states -- basically, the Balkans and Central Europe and Southeastern Europe. Second question.

Third question is, would there be a conflict between Islam and the Orthodox branch of Christianity, manifest most obviously

in the tension between Greece and Turkey, but also up in the Balkans? If those three things could be resolved in a satisfactory way, then we could build a Europe that was united, democratic, and at peace.

Now, what happened? The Germans took on East Germany, in an act of patriotism and generosity, and costliness of staggering proportions. They're still paying the economic price today, but it was a brave and good and generous thing to do.

The major countries in Europe supported the European Union. NATO took in Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. There was a massive effort made to try to deal with Russia. The United States put a lot of money into the denuclearization program and other things.

After all is said and done, where are we? And we dealt with the Balkans in a more halting way. I think everyone would have to admit that. And we've continued without great success to resolve the difficulties between Greece and Turkey, but they haven't gotten worse, either. And we may have some Americans of both heritages here today that could have some ideas about that.

So where are we today? Today we're concerned that Russia has maintained its democracy, but it's economy has been so burdened, it's caused all kinds of other problems, and that takes a lot of time for us. We're working on that. We're trying to maintain our strategic partnership with them even as we disagree about the conflict in the Balkans.

Central Europe is in very good shape -- Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. Romania, Bulgaria, a lot of other countries -- Slovenia -- are doing better than most people would have imagined they would do. But the Balkans are in trouble, and the trouble in the Balkans has exacerbated the tensions with Russia, at least in the short run.

And all I can tell you is -- I don't know whether we could have done more before. I always prefer to look to tomorrow. I'm not blaming anybody for what happened before; I can't do that, I don't know enough to know. Everybody had their hands full, and there were so many changes going on at once I'm not sure anyone could have figured out more to do.

But I can tell you that if you want to think about what you want your children to live like, you could imagine what do you want to happen in Asia, how are we going to work out our

relationships with China and deal with the remaining security threat in North Korea and try to help Japan and the other countries come back -- how are we going to have the strongest-possible alliance in Latin America, what kind of new partnership can we have with Africa -- but it all could come a cropper unless we have a united, democratic and free Europe and the three things are what I said -- our relationship with Russia, what happens in the Balkans and Southeastern Europe, and will Islam and Christianity be able to coexist in a positive way in the underbelly of Europe.

And so I would say, maybe more could have been done; I don't know. I just know now, right now, all those people are fighting over smaller and smaller pieces of land. It's like life is a zero-sum game. You kick me out of my village, I'll kick you out of your village.

The Bible says, wisely, where there is no vision, the people perish. We need to have an alternative vision. They need to be brought into the vision of a prosperous Europe. They need to have more to gain by working together than they do by having constant fights with one another. They need to have -- and we need to reach out and lift up, there.

So, however this conflict ends, or whenever it ends -- I think I know how it's going to end -- but whenever it ends, we have some building to do. They have to have something to live for. You just can't tell people what they can't do, they've got to have something to be for, something to dream of, a future to build. And we ought to be a part of it.

Thank you. (Applause.)

1:05 P.M. PDT

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12 April 1999****THE SITUATION IN AND AROUND KOSOVO****Statement Issued at the Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council
held at NATO Headquarters Brussels
on 12th April 1999**

1. The crisis in Kosovo represents a fundamental challenge to the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, for which NATO has stood since its foundation. We are united in our determination to overcome this challenge.

2. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) has repeatedly violated United Nations Security Council resolutions. The unrestrained assault by Yugoslav military, police and paramilitary forces, under the direction of President Milosevic, on Kosovar civilians has created a massive humanitarian catastrophe which also threatens to destabilise the surrounding region. Hundreds of thousands of people have been expelled ruthlessly from Kosovo by the FRY authorities. We condemn these appalling violations of human rights and the indiscriminate use of force by the Yugoslav government. These extreme and criminally irresponsible policies, which cannot be defended on any grounds, have made necessary and justify the military action by NATO.

3. NATO's military action against the FRY supports the political aims of the international community: a peaceful, multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo in which all its people can live in security and enjoy universal human rights and freedoms on an equal basis. In this context, we welcome the statement of the UN Secretary-General of 9th April and the EU Council Conclusions of 8th April.

4. NATO's air strikes will be pursued until President Milosevic accedes to the demands of the international community. President Milosevic knows what he has to do. He must:

- ensure a verifiable stop to all military action and the immediate ending of violence and repression;

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- ensure the withdrawal from Kosovo of the military, police and paramilitary forces;
- agree to the stationing in Kosovo of an international military presence;
- agree to the unconditional and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons and unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organisations;
- provide credible assurance of his willingness to work on the basis of the Rambouillet Accords in the establishment of a political framework agreement for Kosovo in conformity with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

5. Responsibility for the present crisis lies with President Milosevic. He has the power to bring a halt to NATO's military action by accepting and implementing irrevocably the legitimate demands of the international community.

6. We underline that NATO is not waging war against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We have no quarrel with the people of the FRY who for too long have been isolated in Europe because of the policies of their government.

7. We are grateful for the strong and material support we have received from our Partners in the region and more widely in the international community in responding to the crisis.

8. The Alliance shares a common interest with Russia in reaching a political solution to the crisis in Kosovo and wants to work constructively with Russia, in the spirit of the Founding Act, to this end.

9. As a result of President Milosevic's sustained policy of ethnic cleansing, hundreds of thousands of Kosovar people are seeking refuge in neighbouring countries, particularly in Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹. Others remain in Kosovo, destitute and beyond the reach of international relief. These people in Kosovo are struggling to survive under conditions of exhaustion, hunger and desperation. We will hold President Milosevic and the Belgrade leadership responsible for the well-being of all civilians in Kosovo.

10. NATO and its members have responded promptly to this emergency. We have activated with our Partners the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre. NATO forces in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have constructed emergency accommodation for refugees and have cared for them. NATO troops are also being deployed to Albania to support the humanitarian efforts there and to assist the Albanian authorities in providing a secure environment for them. We will sustain and intensify our refugee and humanitarian relief operations in cooperation with the UNHCR, the lead agency in this field.

¹ Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

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NATO-led refugee and humanitarian aid airlift operations for both Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are already under way and they will increase. The steps being taken by NATO and the efforts of other international organisations and agencies, including the European Union, are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

11. We pay tribute to NATO's servicemen and women whose commitment and skill are ensuring the success of NATO's military and humanitarian operations.

12. Atrocities against the people of Kosovo by FRY military, police and paramilitary forces violate international law. Those who are responsible for the systematic campaign of violence and destruction against innocent Kosovar civilians and for the forced deportation of hundreds of thousands of refugees will be held accountable for their actions. Those indicted must be brought before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague in accordance with international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. Allies reaffirm there can be no lasting peace without justice.

13. NATO has repeatedly stated that it would be unacceptable if the FRY were to threaten the territorial integrity, political independence and security of Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We have consulted closely and at a high level with both countries on their specific concerns. We will respond to any challenges by the FRY to the security of Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia stemming from the presence of NATO forces and their activities on their territory.

14. We are concerned over the situation in the Republic of Montenegro. We reaffirm our support for the democratically elected government of President Milo Djukanovic which has accepted tens of thousands of displaced persons from Kosovo. President Milosevic should be in no doubt that any move against President Djukanovic and his government will have grave consequences.

15. The Kosovo crisis underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to the stabilisation of the crisis region in south-eastern Europe and to the integration of the countries of the region into the Euro-Atlantic community. We welcome the EU initiative for a Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe under the auspices of the OSCE, as well as other regional efforts including the South Eastern Europe Co-operation initiative. We are strengthening the security dialogue between NATO and countries of the region with a view to building a dynamic partnership with them and have tasked the Council in Permanent Session to develop measures to this end. We look forward to a time when the people of Serbia can re-establish normal relations with all the peoples of the Balkans. We want all the countries of south-eastern Europe to enjoy peace and security.

Press & Media



Presse & Médias



PRESS COMMUNIQUE S-1 (99)62

For immediate release
23rd April 1999

STATEMENT ON KOSOVO

Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting
of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C.
on 23rd and 24th April 1999

1. The crisis in Kosovo represents a fundamental challenge to the values for which NATO has stood since its foundation: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is the culmination of a deliberate policy of oppression, ethnic cleansing and violence pursued by the Belgrade regime under the direction of President Milosevic. We will not allow this campaign of terror to succeed. NATO is determined to prevail.

2. NATO's military action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) supports the political aims of the international community, which were reaffirmed in recent statements by the UN Secretary-General and the European Union: a peaceful, multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo where all its people can live in security and enjoy universal human rights and freedoms on an equal basis.

3. Our military actions are directed not at the Serb people but at the policies of the regime in Belgrade, which has repeatedly rejected all efforts to solve the crisis peacefully. President Milosevic must:

- Ensure a verifiable stop to all military action and the immediate ending of violence and repression in Kosovo;
- Withdraw from Kosovo his military, police and para-military forces;
- Agree to the stationing in Kosovo of an international military presence;
- Agree to the unconditional and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons, and unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organisations; and
- Provide credible assurance of his willingness to work for the establishment of a political framework agreement based on the Rambouillet accords.

-2-

4. There can be no compromise on these conditions. As long as Belgrade fails to meet the legitimate demands of the international community and continues to inflict immense human suffering, Alliance air operations against the Yugoslav war machine will continue. We hold President Milosevic and the Belgrade leadership responsible for the safety of all Kosovar citizens. We will fulfill our promise to the Kosovar people that they can return to their homes and live in peace and security.

5. We are intensifying NATO's military actions to increase the pressure on Belgrade. Allied governments are putting in place additional measures to tighten the constraints on the Belgrade regime. These include intensified implementation of economic sanctions, and an embargo on petroleum products on which we welcome the EU lead. We have directed our Defence Ministers to determine ways that NATO can contribute to halting the delivery of war material including by launching maritime operations, taking into account the possible consequences on Montenegro.

6. NATO is prepared to suspend its air strikes once Belgrade has unequivocally accepted the above mentioned conditions and demonstrably begun to withdraw its forces from Kosovo according to a precise and rapid timetable. This could follow the passage of a United Nations Security Council resolution, which we will seek, requiring the withdrawal of Serb forces and the demilitarisation of Kosovo and encompassing the deployment of an international military force to safeguard the swift return of all refugees and displaced persons as well as the establishment of an international provisional administration of Kosovo under which its people can enjoy substantial autonomy within the FRY. NATO remains ready to form the core of such an international military force. It would be multinational in character with contributions from non-NATO countries.

7. Russia has a particular responsibility in the United Nations and an important role to play in the search for a solution to the conflict in Kosovo. Such a solution must be based on the conditions of the international community as laid out above. President Milosevic's offers to date do not meet this test. We want to work constructively with Russia, in the spirit of the Founding Act.

8. The long-planned, unrestrained and continuing assault by Yugoslav military, police and paramilitary forces on Kosovars and the repression directed against other minorities of the FRY are aggravating the already massive humanitarian catastrophe. This threatens to destabilise the surrounding region.

9. NATO, its members and its Partners have responded to the humanitarian emergency and are intensifying their refugee and humanitarian relief operations in close cooperation with the UNHCR, the lead agency in this field, and with other relevant organisations. We will continue our assistance as long as necessary. NATO forces are making a major contribution to this task.

10. We pay tribute to the servicemen and women of NATO whose courage and dedication are ensuring the success of our military and humanitarian operations.

-2-

-3-

11. Atrocities against the people of Kosovo by FRY military, police and paramilitary forces represent a flagrant violation of international law. Our governments will co-operate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to support investigation of all those, including at the highest levels, responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. NATO will support the ICTY in its efforts to secure relevant information. There can be no lasting peace without justice.

12. We acknowledge and welcome the courageous support that states in the region are providing to our efforts in Kosovo. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania have played a particularly important role, not least in accepting hundreds of thousands of refugees from Kosovo. The states in the region are bearing substantial economic and social burdens stemming from the current conflict.

13. We will not tolerate threats by the Belgrade regime to the security of its neighbours. We will respond to such challenges by Belgrade to its neighbours resulting from the presence of NATO forces or their activities on their territory during this crisis.

14. We reaffirm our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries in the region.

15. We reaffirm our strong support for the democratically elected government of Montenegro. Any move by Belgrade to undermine the government of President Djukanovic will have grave consequences. FRY forces should leave the demilitarised zone of Prevlaka immediately.

16. The objective of a free, prosperous, open and economically integrated Southeast Europe cannot be fully assured until the FRY embarks upon the transition to democracy. Accordingly, we express our support for the objective of a democratic FRY which protects the rights of all minorities, including those in Vojvodina and Sandjak, and promise to work for such change through and beyond the current conflict.

17. It is our aim to make stability in Southeast Europe a priority of our transatlantic agenda. Our governments will co-operate urgently through NATO as well as through the OSCE, and for those of us which are members, the European Union, to support the nations of Southeast Europe in forging a better future for their region - one based upon democracy, justice, economic integration, and security co-operation.

1 Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

ORGANISATION DU TRAITE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

B - 1110 Bruxelles

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PRESS AND MEDIA SERVICE

SERVICE DE PRESSE ET DES MEDIAS

TELEFAX FROM : Dr. Harald BUNGARTEN
TELECOPIE DE : Head of Press & Media Service

TELEPHONE : (Int'l) 32.2/707.50.39

TELEFAX :
TELECOPIE : /707.50.57

DATE : 27.03.99

TO / A : WHITE HOUSE

Please pass urgently to Greg SCHULTETELEFAX /
TELECOPIEUR N° : 1-202-757-2678N° PAGES / INCL. COVER PAGE : 2
/ PAGE DE GARDE COMPREND :

MESSAGE/REMARQUE: Greg,

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He asks you to call him urgently.

Harald

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27 March 1999

Statement by the Secretary General of NATO, Javier Solana, on the initiation of a broader range of air operations in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

A few moments ago, I directed SACEUR to initiate a broader range of air operations in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

I have taken this decision with the support of all Allied governments, which are determined to bring a halt to violence in Kosovo and to prevent further humanitarian catastrophe.

With this aim in mind, the broader range of operations will allow NATO Commanders to intensify their action against Yugoslav forces.

Let me reiterate once again: NATO is not at war with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The responsibility for the current crisis rests with President Milosevic who has refused to stop his violent action in Kosovo and has refused to negotiate in good faith. NATO's ultimate objective remains to contribute to the achievement of a political solution to the crisis in Kosovo.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 16, 1999

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the massacre of civilians by Serb security forces that took place last night in the village of Racak in Kosovo. This was a deliberate and indiscriminate act of murder designed to sow fear among the people of Kosovo. It is a clear violation of the commitments Serbian authorities have made to NATO. There can be no justification for it.

The perpetrators must be brought to justice. The Serb authorities must act immediately to identify those responsible. They must cooperate with the Kosovo Verification mission and the International War Crime Tribunal. They must withdraw security forces, carry out all the commitments they have made to NATO and cease their repression.

We are in close contact with Secretary-General Solana and our NATO allies. Together, we will work to stop the repression and prevent an escalation of fighting.

It is urgent that these murders not trigger a spiral of reprisals. Both sides have a responsibility to work towards a peaceful resolution of this crisis, and for a settlement that allows the people of Kosovo the self-government they so clearly deserve.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 24, 1999

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
ON KOSOVO

The Briefing Room

2:15 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. United States forces, acting with our NATO allies, have commenced air strikes against Serbian military targets in the Former Yugoslavia.

I will address the nation more fully tonight on why this action is necessary, but I wanted to say a few words now.

We and our NATO allies have taken this action only after extensive and repeated efforts to obtain a peaceful solution to the crisis in Kosovo. But President Milosevic, who over the past decade started terrible wars against Croatia and Bosnia, has again chosen aggression over peace. He has violated the commitments he, himself, made last fall to stop the brutal repression in Kosovo. He has rejected the balanced and fair peace accords that our allies and partners, including Russia, proposed last month -- a peace agreement that Kosovo's ethnic Albanians courageously accepted.

Instead, his forces have intensified their attacks, burning down Kosovar Albanian villages and murdering civilians. As I speak, more Serb forces are moving into Kosovo, and more people are fleeing their homes -- 60,000 in just the last five weeks, a quarter of a million altogether. Many have headed toward neighboring countries.

Kosovo's crisis now is full-blown, and if we do not act, clearly, it will get even worse. Only firmness now can prevent greater catastrophe later.

Our strikes have three objectives: First, to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's opposition to aggression and its support for peace. Second, to deter President Milosevic from continuing and escalating his attacks on helpless civilians by imposing a price for those attacks. And, third, if necessary, to damage Serbia's capacity to wage war against Kosovo in the future by seriously diminishing its military capabilities.

As I have repeatedly said to the American people, this action is not risk-free; it carries risks. And I ask for the prayers of all Americans for our men and women in uniform in the area. However, I have concluded that the dangers of acting now are clearly outweighed by the risks of failing to act -- the risks that many more innocent people will die or be driven from their homes by the tens of thousands; the risks that the conflict will involve and destabilize neighboring nations. It will clearly be much more costly and dangerous to stop later than this effort to prevent it from going further now.

At the end of the 20th century, after two world wars and a Cold War, we and our allies have a chance to leave our children a Europe that is free, peaceful and stable. But we must -- we must -- act now to do that. Because if the Balkans once again become a place of brutal killing and massive refugee flights, it will be impossible to achieve.

With our allies, we used diplomacy and force to end the war in Bosnia. Now trouble next door in Kosovo puts the region's people at risk again. Our NATO allies unanimously support this action. The United States must stand with them, and stand against ethnic violence and atrocity.

Our Alliance is united. And I am particularly grateful for the support we have received from members of Congress from both parties. As we go forward I will remain in close contact with Congress -- I have spoken with all the leaders today -- and in contact with our friends and allies around the world. And I will have more to say about all of this tonight.

Thank you.

END

2:20 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 24, 1999

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

The Oval Office

8:01 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: My fellow Americans, today our Armed Forces joined our NATO allies in air strikes against Serbian forces responsible for the brutality in Kosovo. We have acted with resolve for several reasons.

We act to protect thousands of innocent people in Kosovo from a mounting military offensive. We act to prevent a wider war; to diffuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results. And we act to stand united with our allies for peace. By acting now we are upholding our values, protecting our interests and advancing the cause of peace.

Tonight I want to speak to you about the tragedy in Kosovo and why it matters to America that we work with our allies to end it. First, let me explain what it is we are responding to. Kosovo is a province of Serbia, in the middle of southeastern Europe, about 160 miles east of Italy. That's less than the distance between Washington and New York, and only about 70 miles north of Greece. Its people are mostly ethnic Albanian and mostly Muslim.

In 1989, Serbia's leader, Slobadan Milosevic, the same leader who started the wars in Bosnia and Croatia, and moved against Slovenia in the last decade, stripped Kosovo of the constitutional autonomy its people enjoyed; thus denying them their right to speak their language, run their schools, shape their daily lives. For years, Kosovars struggled peacefully to

get their rights back. When President Milosevic sent his troops and police to crush them, the struggle grew violent.

Last fall our diplomacy, backed by the threat of force from our NATO Alliance, stopped the fighting for a while, and rescued tens of thousands of people from freezing and starvation in the hills where they had fled to save their lives. And last month, with our allies and Russia, we proposed a peace agreement to end the fighting for good. The Kosovar leaders signed that agreement last week. Even though it does not give them all they want, even though their people were still being savaged, they saw that a just peace is better than a long and unwinnable war.

The Serbian leaders, on the other hand, refused even to discuss key elements of the peace agreement. As the Kosovars were saying "yes" to peace, Serbia stationed 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo in preparation for a major offensive -- and in clear violation of the commitments they had made.

Now, they've started moving from village to village, shelling civilians and torching their houses. We've seen innocent people taken from their homes, forced to kneel in the dirt and sprayed with bullets; Kosovar men dragged from their families, fathers and sons together, lined up and shot in cold blood. This is not war in the traditional sense. It is an attack by tanks and artillery on a largely defenseless people, whose leaders already have agreed to peace.

Ending this tragedy is a moral imperative. It is also important to America's national interest. Take a look at this map. Kosovo is a small place, but it sits on a major fault line between Europe, Asia and the Middle East, at the meeting place of Islam and both the Western and Orthodox branches of Christianity. To the south are our allies, Greece and Turkey; to the north, our new democratic allies in Central Europe. And all around Kosovo there are other small countries, struggling with their own economic and political challenges -- countries that could be overwhelmed by a large, new wave of refugees from Kosovo. All the ingredients for a major war are there: ancient grievances, struggling democracies, and in the center of it all a dictator in Serbia who has done nothing since the Cold War ended but start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division.

Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where World War I began. World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region. In both wars Europe was slow to recognize the dangers,

and the United States waited even longer to enter the conflicts. Just imagine if leaders back then had acted wisely and early enough, how many lives could have been saved, how many Americans would not have had to die.

We learned some of the same lessons in Bosnia just a few years ago. The world did not act early enough to stop that war, either. And let's not forget what happened -- innocent people herded into concentration camps, children gunned down by snipers on their way to school, soccer fields and parks turned into cemeteries; a quarter of a million people killed, not because of anything they have done, but because of who they were. Two million Bosnians became refugees. This was genocide in the heart of Europe -- not in 1945, but in 1995. Not in some grainy newsreel from our parents' and grandparents' time, but in our own time, testing our humanity and our resolve.

At the time, many people believed nothing could be done to end the bloodshed in Bosnia. They said, well, that's just the way those people in the Balkans are. But when we and our allies joined with courageous Bosnians to stand up to the aggressors, we helped to end the war. We learned that in the Balkans, inaction in the face of brutality simply invites more brutality. But firmness can stop armies and save lives. We must apply that lesson in Kosovo before what happened in Bosnia happens there, too.

Over the last few months we have done everything we possibly could to solve this problem peacefully. Secretary Albright has worked tirelessly for a negotiated agreement. Mr. Milosevic has refused.

On Sunday I sent Ambassador Dick Holbrooke to Serbia to make clear to him again, on behalf of the United States and our NATO allies, that he must honor his own commitments and stop his repression, or face military action. Again, he refused.

Today, we and our 18 NATO allies agreed to do what we said we would do, what we must do to restore the peace. Our mission is clear: to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course. To deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military's capacity to harm the people of Kosovo. In short, if President Milosevic will not make peace, we will limit his ability to make war.

Now, I want to be clear with you, there are risks in this military action -- risks to our pilots and the people on the ground. Serbia's air defenses are strong. It could decide to intensify its assault on Kosovo, or to seek to harm us or our allies elsewhere. If it does, we will deliver a forceful response.

Hopefully, Mr. Milosevic will realize his present course is self-destructive and unsustainable. If he decides to accept the peace agreement and demilitarize Kosovo, NATO has agreed to help to implement it with a peace-keeping force. If NATO is invited to do so, our troops should take part in that mission to keep the peace. But I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war.

Do our interests in Kosovo justify the dangers to our Armed Forces? I've thought long and hard about that question. I am convinced that the dangers of acting are far outweighed by the dangers of not acting -- dangers to defenseless people and to our national interests. If we and our allies were to allow this war to continue with no response, President Milosevic would read our hesitation as a license to kill. There would be many more massacres, tens of thousands more refugees, more victims crying out for revenge.

Right now our firmness is the only hope the people of Kosovo have to be able to live in their own country without having to fear for their own lives. Remember: We asked them to accept peace, and they did. We asked them to promise to lay down their arms, and they agreed. We pledged that we, the United States and the other 18 nations of NATO, would stick by them if they did the right thing. We cannot let them down now.

Imagine what would happen if we and our allies instead decided just to look the other way, as these people were massacred on NATO's doorstep. That would discredit NATO, the cornerstone on which our security has rested for 50 years now.

We must also remember that this is a conflict with no natural national boundaries. Let me ask you to look again at a map. The red dots are towns the Serbs have attacked. The arrows show the movement of refugees -- north, east and south. Already, this movement is threatening the young democracy in Macedonia, which has its own Albanian minority and a Turkish minority. Already, Serbian forces have made forays into Albania from which Kosovars have drawn support. Albania is a Greek minority. Let a fire burn here in this area and the flames will

spread. Eventually, key U.S. allies could be drawn into a wider conflict, a war we would be forced to confront later -- only at far greater risk and greater cost.

I have a responsibility as President to deal with problems such as this before they do permanent harm to our national interests. America has a responsibility to stand with our allies when they are trying to save innocent lives and preserve peace, freedom and stability in Europe. That is what we are doing in Kosovo.

If we've learned anything from the century drawing to a close, it is that if America is going to be prosperous and secure, we need a Europe that is prosperous, secure undivided and free. We need a Europe that is coming together, not falling apart; a Europe that shares our values and shares the burdens of leadership. That is the foundation on which the security of our children will depend.

That is why I have supported the political and economic unification of Europe. That is why we brought Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO, and redefined its missions, and reached out to Russia and Ukraine for new partnerships.

Now, what are the challenges to that vision of a peaceful, secure, united, stable Europe? The challenge of strengthening a partnership with a democratic Russia, that, despite our disagreements, is a constructive partner in the work of building peace. The challenge of resolving the tension between Greece and Turkey and building bridges with the Islamic world. And, finally, the challenge of ending instability in the Balkans so that these bitter ethnic problems in Europe are resolved the force of argument, not the force of arms; so that future generations of Americans do not have to cross the Atlantic to fight another terrible war.

It is this challenge that we and our allies are facing in Kosovo. That is why we have acted now -- because we care about saving innocent lives; because we have an interest in avoiding an even crueler and costlier war; and because our children need and deserve a peaceful, stable, free Europe.

Our thoughts and prayers tonight must be with the men and women of our Armed Forces who are undertaking this mission for the sake of our values and our children's future. May God bless them and may God bless America.

Rationale for NATO Military Action

Our objective in Kosovo is to stop the killing and achieve a durable peace that prevents further repression and provides for democratic self-government for the Kosovar people.

We have three strong interests at stake in the Kosovo conflict: averting a humanitarian catastrophe; preserving stability in a key part of Europe; and maintaining the credibility of NATO.

First, Belgrade's sustained and accelerating repression in Kosovo again is creating a humanitarian crisis of staggering dimension:

- Estimates are that up to 30,000 Kosovars have been displaced from their homes and villages just since the adjournment of the Paris talks on March 19;
- More than 60,000 Kosovars have been displaced since the end of the first round of peace talks in late February;
- The total number of displaced in Kosovo is estimated at 250,000;
- There are already 18,500 Kosovar refugees in Albania, 10,000 in Macedonia, and 25,000 in Montenegro with more on the way;
- In north central Kosovo, Serb forces in recent days have burned villages. Homes throughout the region have been looted and are smoldering;
- Nearly the entire population of one small city in north central Kosovo fled as Serb commandos stormed in over the weekend.
- 40,000 Serbian security forces (military and police) are now positioned in and around Kosovo, poised for a military offensive.

Second, instability in Kosovo directly threatens peace in the Balkans and the stability of Europe. There is no natural boundary to this violence. Continued fighting in Kosovo has the potential to:

- Re-ignite chaos in Albania;
- Destabilize Macedonia;
- Exacerbate rivalries between Greece and Turkey, two NATO allies;

- Create thousands more refugees and create a breeding ground for international criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists.

We should not forget that World War I began in this tinderbox. If we do not stop this conflict now, it will spread and we will be drawn into a much larger conflict, at greater cost and risk.

Third, NATO's credibility is at stake in Kosovo. Last fall NATO's credible threat of force was decisive in obtaining Milosevic's agreement to a cease-fire and to establishment of the OSCE and NATO verification regimes. That enabled thousands of Kosovars to come down from the hills and return to their homes as winter approached. In January, NATO warned Milosevic that it would respond if his intransigence was responsible for failure to reach agreement at the talks; he did not come into compliance with the October agreements; and his repression continued. All these conditions now exist.

Our preference has been to achieve our objectives through peaceful means. Since the eruption of fighting in February 1998, we have been actively engaged seeking resolution of the conflict through diplomacy under the auspices of the Contact Group backed up by NATO. Those intensive efforts led to the Rambouillet and Paris talks which produced a fair agreement, one that keeps Kosovo in Serbia but gives Kosovars the self-government they deserve. The Kosovar Albanians have signed the agreement.

Belgrade has refused to sign and has to date rejected out of hand all efforts to achieve a peaceful solution. The Contact Group clearly assigned exclusive responsibility for failure to reach agreement to Belgrade.

While we are mindful that the Kosovo Liberation Army also frequently violated the cease-fire and its provocations added to the overall tensions, it is the Belgrade regime which has systematically followed a policy of undermining last October's agreements and thwarted all efforts to arrive at a just solution.

Since October, Milosevic has been out of compliance with solemn commitments to NATO and the OSCE. Serb security forces have:

- consistently and blatantly violated the cease-fire;
- moved troops and police out of garrison in violation of his commitments;

- refused to cooperate with, and impeded the work of, the Kosovo Verification Mission and international relief agencies; and
- committed atrocities such as the mid-January Racak massacre.

Even still, NATO military action can be avoided, but only if Milosevic makes a sharp and immediate turn and chooses peace instead of repression. If he does not, we will be compelled to take action.

Should military action be required, NATO would have three objectives:

- demonstrate NATO's seriousness of purpose in order to make clear to Milosevic the imperative of reversing course;
- deter Belgrade from launching an all-out offensive against helpless civilians;
- seriously damage Belgrade's military capability to take repressive action against Kosovars.



PRESS COMMUNIQUE S-1 (99)62

For immediate release
23rd April 1999

STATEMENT ON KOSOVO

Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting
of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C.
on 23rd and 24th April 1999

1. The crisis in Kosovo represents a fundamental challenge to the values for which NATO has stood since its foundation: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is the culmination of a deliberate policy of oppression, ethnic cleansing and violence pursued by the Belgrade regime under the direction of President Milosevic. We will not allow this campaign of terror to succeed. NATO is determined to prevail.

2. NATO's military action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) supports the political aims of the international community, which were reaffirmed in recent statements by the UN Secretary-General and the European Union: a peaceful, multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo where all its people can live in security and enjoy universal human rights and freedoms on an equal basis.

3. Our military actions are directed not at the Serb people but at the policies of the regime in Belgrade, which has repeatedly rejected all efforts to solve the crisis peacefully. President Milosevic must:

- Ensure a verifiable stop to all military action and the immediate ending of violence and repression in Kosovo;
- Withdraw from Kosovo his military, police and para-military forces;
- Agree to the stationing in Kosovo of an international military presence;
- Agree to the unconditional and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons, and unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organisations; and
- Provide credible assurance of his willingness to work for the establishment of a political framework agreement based on the Rambouillet accords.

4. There can be no compromise on these conditions. As long as Belgrade fails to meet the legitimate demands of the international community and continues to inflict immense human suffering, Alliance air operations against the Yugoslav war machine will continue. We hold President Milosevic and the Belgrade leadership responsible for the safety of all Kosovar citizens. We will fulfill our promise to the Kosovar people that they can return to their homes and live in peace and security.

5. We are intensifying NATO's military actions to increase the pressure on Belgrade. Allied governments are putting in place additional measures to tighten the constraints on the Belgrade regime. These include intensified implementation of economic sanctions, and an embargo on petroleum products on which we welcome the EU lead. We have directed our Defence Ministers to determine ways that NATO can contribute to halting the delivery of war material including by launching maritime operations, taking into account the possible consequences on Montenegro.

6. NATO is prepared to suspend its air strikes once Belgrade has unequivocally accepted the above mentioned conditions and demonstrably begun to withdraw its forces from Kosovo according to a precise and rapid timetable. This could follow the passage of a United Nations Security Council resolution, which we will seek, requiring the withdrawal of Serb forces and the demilitarisation of Kosovo and encompassing the deployment of an international military force to safeguard the swift return of all refugees and displaced persons as well as the establishment of an international provisional administration of Kosovo under which its people can enjoy substantial autonomy within the FRY. NATO remains ready to form the core of such an international military force. It would be multinational in character with contributions from non-NATO countries.

7. Russia has a particular responsibility in the United Nations and an important role to play in the search for a solution to the conflict in Kosovo. Such a solution must be based on the conditions of the international community as laid out above. President Milosevic's offers to date do not meet this test. We want to work constructively with Russia, in the spirit of the Founding Act.

8. The long-planned, unrestrained and continuing assault by Yugoslav military, police and paramilitary forces on Kosovars and the repression directed against other minorities of the FRY are aggravating the already massive humanitarian catastrophe. This threatens to destabilise the surrounding region.

9. NATO, its members and its Partners have responded to the humanitarian emergency and are intensifying their refugee and humanitarian relief operations in close cooperation with the UNHCR, the lead agency in this field, and with other relevant organisations. We will continue our assistance as long as necessary. NATO forces are making a major contribution to this task.

10. We pay tribute to the servicemen and women of NATO whose courage and dedication are ensuring the success of our military and humanitarian operations.

11. Atrocities against the people of Kosovo by FRY military, police and paramilitary forces represent a flagrant violation of international law. Our governments will co-operate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to support investigation of all those, including at the highest levels, responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. NATO will support the ICTY in its efforts to secure relevant information. There can be no lasting peace without justice.

12. We acknowledge and welcome the courageous support that states in the region are providing to our efforts in Kosovo. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ and Albania have played a particularly important role, not least in accepting hundreds of thousands of refugees from Kosovo. The states in the region are bearing substantial economic and social burdens stemming from the current conflict.

13. We will not tolerate threats by the Belgrade regime to the security of its neighbours. We will respond to such challenges by Belgrade to its neighbours resulting from the presence of NATO forces or their activities on their territory during this crisis.

14. We reaffirm our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries in the region.

15. We reaffirm our strong support for the democratically elected government of Montenegro. Any move by Belgrade to undermine the government of President Djukanovic will have grave consequences. FRY forces should leave the demilitarised zone of Prevlaka immediately.

16. The objective of a free, prosperous, open and economically integrated Southeast Europe cannot be fully assured until the FRY embarks upon the transition to democracy. Accordingly, we express our support for the objective of a democratic FRY which protects the rights of all minorities, including those in Vojvodina and Sandjak, and promise to work for such change through and beyond the current conflict.

17. It is our aim to make stability in Southeast Europe a priority of our transatlantic agenda. Our governments will co-operate urgently through NATO as well as through the OSCE, and for those of us which are members, the European Union, to support the nations of Southeast Europe in forging a better future for their region - one based upon democracy, justice, economic integration, and security co-operation.

1 Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.