Mr. Speaker, I want to

address the House today. I want to call

attention to a very, very serious crisis

in the world and that is in the Province

of Yugoslavia called Kosovo.

We read about it in the paper today

on the front page, that there were several

massacres, that bodies were found

of innocent civilians, men, women and

children, as the Serbian police forces

and military units continue their campaign

of genocide and ethnic cleansing

against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

Kosovo is a place where over 92 percent

of the population, 2 million people,

are ethnic Albanians, and they are

totally dominated and ruled by Belgrade,

by the Serbs who comprise less

than 10 percent of the population.

These people for 10 years have had no

freedoms, no political freedoms, no

economic freedoms, no social freedoms.

Unemployment is rampant, 80 percent,

90 percent. No hope. And on the ground,

the situation gets worse and worse and

worse.

We have to take a stand before we see

Bosnia repeat itself. Bosnia is indeed

repeating itself. That ended up with

200,000 innocent people slaughtered.

Kosovo could be even worse.

Now, I have called and I will call

again and say it again, we read in the

paper today that NATO is considering

air strikes in order to stop the Serbs

from killing innocent civilians. We

have been saying this time in and time

out. Actions speak louder than words.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for action. We

need to have immediate NATO air

strikes on Serbian positions in Kosovo

so that the innocent civilians will not

continued to be slaughtered.

We now have at least 300,000 homeless

civilians, more than a tenth of the entire

population, some people would say

it is as much as a quarter of the entire

population, driven from their homes,

and the pattern is like this. First Serbian

artillery shells the villages, causing

innocent civilians to flee in panic,

fleeing into the hills and into the

mountains. Then the next thing they

do after the civilians have left is they

come in and loot the houses and they

steal everything they can. And then finally

they burn the houses down to the

ground.

So we have a situation where refugees

now cannot have a place to go

back to. And we are facing, as winter is

approaching, perhaps another week or

two at the most, where we need to get

in so that innocent civilians can have

humanitarian aid. The Serbs are keeping

out humanitarian relief workers to

get food and lodging and clothing to

these people. Will the West again wait

until it is too late?

I have a letter signed by 18 of our colleagues

on both sides of the aisle calling

on the President to issue immediate

air power with our NATO allies

to stop the carnage; to indict Slobodon

Milosevic, the leader of Yugoslavia,

who is responsible for this, who because

of Serbian nationalism has

again, as he did in Bosnia, caused the

death of innocent people.

The short-term problem, Mr. Speaker,

is that we need to get aid to these

people because what is going to start

to happen is they are going to start to

die because of the cold and because of

starvation. And that is the immediate

concern that the world should have.

Of long range concern is what to do

in Kosovo, and I have said time and

time again and will say it again, selfdetermination

for the people of Kosovo

is the only answer. Why should the Albanians

in the former Yugoslavia be

treated any different than any of the

other peoples that were allowed to

form their own nation? The Croats, the

Bosnians, the Slovenians, the Macedonians

and so on and so forth.

Self-determination is a basic principle

in which we in America believe,

and if it is good enough for all the

other ethnic groups in the former

Yugoslavia, it should be good enough

for the Albanians as well, particularly

since this is the group that was getting

the worst end of the stick in Yugoslavia,

and certainly now that we are

seeing genocide and ethnic cleansing

rear its ugly head on the continent of

Europe.

The time for action is now. The only

thing that Mr. Milosevic understands is

the credible use of force. He will only

stop as he did in Bosnia, when we had

NATO air strikes and he knew that

NATO and, more importantly, the

United States meant business. If he

thinks these threats are empty, and

quite frankly they have been empty for

months upon months upon months. We

have said that we would threaten, we

have threatened him, we have said that

we would bring in NATO air power, we

have done all kinds of flying, but he

knows it does not mean a hill of beans.

The only thing he will understand is if

he knows the West is ready to take action.

Now, shamefully our allies in Germany

and Italy are trying to say that

the United Nations Security Council

needs to approve before NATO could

move forward. I did not know the

United Nations had a veto on what

NATO can do. I think the NATO alliance

needs to take action and needs to

take action now, from a humanitarian

point of view. Also, the thing is that

this can explode into a wider war and

drag our NATO allies in if we do not

act now. The time for military strikes

is now.