Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, again, I commend the

gentleman for agreeing to make that change. Perhaps that sets a

precedent for more fair rules going forward in the remainder of the

106th Congress.

I think it is also a mistake that we are spending such little time to

debate this issue. This is a very critical issue for the Nation, and I

am afraid that this underscores the way this House is going to operate

on issues that should be addressed in a bipartisan manner. I would

encourage my colleagues to oppose this rule even as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the H. Con. Res.

82, H.J. Res. 44, and H.R. 1569 and in support of S. Con. Res. 21.

All of us are concerned whether the United States through the North

Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is taking the prudent position with

regard to airstrikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. All of

us are just as concerned and even repulsed by the actions of the

Milosevic Government to ethnically cleanse Kosovo of non-Serbs creating

the worst human tragedy Europe has witnessed since WWII. The conflict

involves a part of the world where ethnic violence has been commonplace

since the fourteenth century and the scene of intense fighting in this

century's two world wars.

At the same time, how can the free and democratic nations of the

world, in particular the nations comprising NATO, which won the cold

war against communist aggression, sit idly by and allow a dictator to

use his military and police apparatus against innocent civilians and

noncombatants, causing death and destruction of property and wreaking

havoc on his neighboring sovereign states?

We must weigh the costs of engagement and non-engagement in the

affairs of one nation which will impact the stability of others with

consequences for the U.S. To do nothing and withdraw would send a

message, I believe, to Yugoslavian President Milosevic that ethnic

cleansing is an acceptable practice at the end of the millennium. It

would send that same message to other would be dictators that barbaric

treatment of your own citizens is an immoral but acceptable sovereign

practice. But perhaps more important, allowing Milosevic to drive those

citizens he does not want into other countries will only destabilize

Albania and Macedonia. What right does a dictator have to shed his

unwanted citizens whom he has not killed to another sovereign state?

Finally, if the U.S. decides to cut and run, where does that leave

NATO? NATO, under U.S. leadership helped rebuild European democracies

and create political stability after World War II, which has been of

great benefit to the U.S. Stability in Western Europe through NATO led

to the end of the Cold War and to the collapse of the Soviet Union,

while at the same time preserving a strong market for U.S. goods and

services. After fifty years of success is it time to abandon the

partnership of NATO? I think not.

The Campbell resolutions calling for a declaration of war or removal

of all U.S. military personnel are premature and misguided. First, we

are involved in an air campaign jointly with our NATO allies in an

effort to stop Milosevic's brutal campaign of aggression against the

ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. For the U.S. to unilaterally declare war

outside of NATO undermines the alliance and its efforts. Second, to

call for the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from the NATO exercise

would only serve to enhance Milosevic's position, which I oppose, and

weaken NATO's. And, it would completely undermine NATO and the U.S.

leadership position in the alliance.

The Goodling legislation, H.R. 1569, would prohibit the use of any

funds of the Department of Defense for the deployment of ground

elements, including personnel and material to the FRY. This is both

premature and sends the wrong message. I have stated publicly that I

oppose the introduction of ground troops into the FRY at this juncture,

but I also support our efforts as part of NATO to end the ethnic

cleansing in Kosovo and bring stability to the region. It is premature

for the Congress to prospectively limit the U.S.'s options because

there is currently no plan to send ground troops in a military

situation at this time. If at any time such a plan is developed, the

Congress can move immediately to prohibit such activity.

I am also concerned about the limited exceptions in the Goodling

bill, which would hamper the ability of U.S. and NATO commanders to

gather intelligence necessary to prosecute the airstrike operation.

Further, it would not allow U.S. and NATO commanders to pre-position

tanks and military equipment, or allow for pre-emptive strikes based on

intelligence reports. These exceptions would eliminate on-the-ground

intelligence gathering and the use of special forces, which would

impair NATO's decision making ability and its ability to obtain

critical military information. Worst of all, this bill sends the wrong

message to Milosevic at a critical time that the U.S. is not serious

about pursuing a peaceful settlement which includes the repatriation of

Kosovar refugees.

Finally, we should adopt the same resolution adopted by the Senate to

endorse the U.S. participation in the NATO air operation. Regardless of

the outcome of the Goodling resolution, we should unequivocally state

our support for NATO. To do otherwise at this point would greatly

weaken the NATO alliance, serving only to threaten the lives of the

men and women pursuing our military objectives, and weakening the

international standing of the United States.