Mr. Speaker, the most solemn responsibility

a Member of Congress has is the consideration of a declaration of war.

The four measures before us today which concern our military actions in

Kosovo also concern our nation's standing in the world and the very

future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

I support our brave men and women in uniform and all of the allied

troops who are part of the NATO operations in Kosovo. Many of those who

are flying missions in Kosovo are from Whiteman Air Force Base in my

home state of Missouri. I thank them and the other men and women who

are there serving our country, the Alliance, and the people of Kosovo.

I pray for their safe return from a successful mission.

At the historic 50th anniversary of NATO summit, the leaders of the

Alliance convened and reached consensus that Slobodan Milosovic's

violence against the ethnic Albanians is abhorrent and must stop. As

the leader of the free world, the United States is compelled to join in

action to prevent the horrendous acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing

that are taking place in Kosovo. In addition, we share a humanitarian

obligation to assist the more than 550,000 refugees who have been

forcibly evicted from their homes, and in many cases separated from

their families. Until stability returns to this region, the United

States and its NATO allies must provide an example to the world of

generosity, compassion and commitment to those who are suffering at Mr.

Milosovic's hand. The rebuilding process of both physical structures

and people's lives must begin as soon as peace and stability is

achieved.

Mr. Campbell has introduced two resolutions which we will vote on

today--H. Con. Res. 82 and H.J. Res. 44. I am opposed to both of these

measures. The gentleman from California assumes only two choices exist

for Congress: to declare war or to abandon our allies. These

resolutions are partisan in nature and are merely intended to place the

President in the politically untenable position of having to make an

extreme choice, knowing that either alternative would undermine his

ability to effectively act as Commander in Chief. The situation in

Kosovo does not present a simple dichotomy of choices. We have entered

into this conflict as part of the NATO Alliance, and for the U.S. to

pull out now or to declare war as an individual country would directly

contradict the agreements reached at the summit concluded just three

days ago here in Washington.

The resolution introduced by Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Goodling, and others,

H.R. 1569, would prohibit the Department of Defense from using funds

for ``ground elements'' without the authorization of Congress. I agree

with the premise that Congress must protect the checks and balances

laid out by the framers of the Constitution. During the ``Gulf of

Tonkin'' crises 35 years ago a misinformed Congress conceded its

foreign policy powers to the President. The resulting unchecked

escalation of forces in Vietnam should never be repeated. While

Congress has the responsibility to be vigilant, the President has

assured us in writing that he will not commit ground troops without

authorization from the Congress, making H.R. 1569 unnecessary. Further,

passage would tie the hands of NATO leaders and seriously jeopardize

NATO's chances of successfully completing its mission. This measure

would also jeopardize our own leadership role in this most critical

alliance, and would send the wrong message to Mr. Milosovic, thus

undermining much of our efforts to date. For these reasons, I oppose

this measure.

S. Con. Res. 21, passed in the Senate April 20, authorizes the

President of the United States to conduct military air operations and

missile strikes in cooperation with our NATO allies against the Federal

Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). I support this

resolution. It is consistent with the goals and objectives of the

United States and is key to NATO's ongoing military strategy.

Fifty years ago, at the end of World War II, President Harry Truman,

whose hometown is in the Congressional District I am proud to

represent, had a vision to reunite and rebuild Europe to avoid world

war in the future. The successful result is NATO. Our country is the

foundation and security that NATO requires to succeed in its mission of

peace in Europe. For our armed services to succeed in their current

mission we must support them with our actions. Let us learn from

history and support the young American men and women who carry our flag

into jeopardy. Let us support our President, Secretaries of State and

Defense, our Joint Chiefs of Staff, our battlefield commanders, and the

NATO allies we lead that we are unified in our resolve to end this

inhumanity. We proclaim to the world, those who support us and those

who would not, that we act in defense of American's core values; life,

liberty, the pursuit of happiness and, of course, justice for all.