Mr. Speaker, these four important votes concerning NATO

Operation Allied Force in Kosovo cause me tremendous difficulty. We

hold this debate today because the mission, the means and the mentality

behind this operation are unclear. There are no good options before us,

only some less bad than others.

People speak of winning, people speak of losing. People speak of sins

of omission and sins of commission. But, we have no agreed definitions

for those terms so we stutter and speak similar words with disparate

meanings. Look at the history of the Balkans and you can understand one

thing--no one's hands are clean and everything is colored in shades of

gray. We must look to the President of the United States to lead and

give us common definitions and meaning for our involvement, to define

the political objectives we seek to achieve, and to determine how we

can best achieve them.

On March 11, over a month ago, we debated our interests in Kosovo. At

that time I had not heard from the President an unambiguous statement

of our interests and goals in Kosovo. Today, we cover some of the same

ground and yet still do not have an articulation of the central

strategic national interest involved. That suggests at best an

unfortunate lack of communication, consultation and evolution, at

worst, a complete muddle on the part of the administration.

Given this environment, it is proper that we pass legislation that

puts a check on escalation to ground forces.

As one who seeks to maintain our leadership in international trade

issues, I understand the arguments of maintaining international

stability, NATO credibility, of assisting in the humanitarian relief,

and on standing firm against the kind of atrocities that have been

taking place in Kosovo. For those reasons I am willing to give the

President and NATO leaders the benefit of the doubt on their air

campaign strategy. In any event, it is the reality of where we are

today, the level at which we are now engaged. That is why I support S.

Con. Res. 21 which authorizes the President to conduct military air

operations and missile strikes against Yugoslavia.

Following those same arguments, I also stand opposed to the immediate

removal of our military forces under section 5(c) of the War Powers

Resolution as H. Con. Res. 82 would have us do. But, those arguments do

not convince me that the situation warrants the United States of

America declaring war on the Federal Republic of Serbia; so, I oppose

H.J. Res. 44. I trust the President shares this letter view since he

himself has not asked Congress for a declaration of war.

Let me also mention that none of the above in any way diminishes the

importance of passing an emergency appropriation bill to pay for the

cost of what has already been done. The number of missiles and

munitions already expended in Operation Allied Force is extraordinary.

This action in addition to Desert Fox, Afghanistan and other operations

has exceeded all forecasts and expectations. Therefore, we need to

replenish the stocks and give the military the resources they need to

maintain their equipment through this campaign. But none of us should

be under any illusion; if this air war continues, this will not be the

last supplemental appropriation bill we will see on this floor.