Mr. Speaker, I wish to share my remarks today on the

current situation in Kosovo with my colleagues and the American public.

The systematic campaign of brutality by Slobodan Milosevic has forced

the United States and NATO to take forceful action. As the human

tragedies mount--a growing number of refugees existing in desperate

conditions, families being ripped apart, torture, rape and murder--the

House considered important measures about how the United States should

proceed.

I joined my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in supporting H.R.

1569 to assert the constitutional authority of Congress. We made it

clear that the President cannot commit the United States military to a

ground war without the explicit consent of Congress. The House today

made it clear that the President must first receive the approval of

Congress should the nature of the mission require a shift in military

operations. At this time, the President and his military advisors have

not signaled a change in the current strategy of air strikes, but if

and when they do, I want the opportunity to vote on whether or not it

is in fact necessary to deploy ground troops to end the genocide.

I cast a vote in favor of Resolution 21 explicitly authorizing the

President to conduct military air operations and missile strikes in

Yugoslavia. By doing so, I put myself firmly on record in support of

the United States and our NATO allies in this moral struggle to rescue

the victims of ethnic cleansing and to put an end to such atrocities.

As an American who believes in freedom and a Jew who remembers the

lessons of the Holocaust, I could do no less.

Even as we engage in these air strikes, the United States must place

the highest priority on exploring and implementing all diplomatic

options to end the conflict and to redouble our commitment to

humanitarian relief.