Mr. Leader, it is good to see you again. We are

glad to have you here.

As you recall, you and I also made a trip. For the longest time

there were not many of us. You, me, Joe Lieberman, a few others,

who were the thorn in the side of our colleagues in the Senate and

Bush and Clinton.

Let me make a statement, and just tell me whether you agree

with it or not. By the way, I note parenthetically that Tony Blair

is saying all the right things, but he is making all the wrong policies.

Blair said that we should use force, but that NATO needs a U.N.

mandate first. We are not going to get a U.N. mandate. Russia will

veto that in all probability. We should try, but they are going to

veto it, and so it seems to me we are not going to get the support

the President needs from the U.N.

We are also not likely to get a voluntary response from the rest

of NATO unless we make it an absolute demand privately. I think

the only thing that is going to embolden the President to use force,

if we have to use it alone, which I think we should do if we have

to, is if he gets support from here, from the Congress.

That is what happened last time. It was not until we convinced

the Congress that anyone was emboldened enough to go it alone,

and only after we said we were going to go it alone, and I am oversimplifying

slightly, did NATO decide to come along.

And so can you see any other prescription, other than that? I

cannot figure out how to do it, other than that.

He did. The first visit that I made was in April

1993, which has been publicized by our friend Mr. Milosevic. I had

a long 3-hour meeting with Mr. Milosevic, and at one point in his

office, it was late at night, he looked across this little, tiny table

from me and he said, ‘‘what do you think of me?’’ I said, ‘‘I think

you are a gosh-darned war criminal, and I think you should be

tried as one.’’

The reason I recite that is his response. He looked at me, cool

as a cucumber and said, in effect, ‘‘lots of luck in your senior year.’’

I mean, ‘‘have a good day. By the way, do you want to speak with

Radavan Karadzic?’’ I said, ‘‘I thought you had no control over

him.’’ He said, ‘‘well, I don’t. Would you like to speak to him?’’

It was 11 at night. He dialed the telephone in his office. Fifteen

minutes later, a guy with hair I wish I had, a brain I am glad I

do not, and an attitude I do not wish on anyone came up the stairs,

out of breath, literally gasping for air—my word to this—walked in

the room, sat down next to Milosevic and said, ‘‘Mr. President, I

am sorry I am late. I am sorry.’’

And I looked at Milosevic and said, ‘‘no control, huh?’’

This guy has control. The only thing he has ever responded to

is force, nothing else. The real questions are, are we going to go

it alone, and then maybe bring people along, and, second, are we

going to make it clear to the KLA that we are not looking for an

independent Kosovo? That is not our purpose.

It is a difficult spot. The longer we delay, the worse it is. But I

am delaying opportunity for my colleagues to ask questions.

Mr. Chairman, there is a third aspect to this,

and that was, it stopped a worse resolution. I was not for this, but

you had a good friend and colleague from Texas and Senator Byrd,

whom no one takes lightly, offering a resolution saying, we are out

by a date certain, and we reduce numbers by a date certain.

I was able to be pure on this one, but I am not sure if I—given

the choice of this versus the other—might have voted for this, although

it was a bad idea all around.

It would be nice if you could.

I think you have been the most thoughtful person writing about

this in the press, and the thing I appreciate so much is your candor

that the further down the road we get, there is no good solution.

We are getting to the point where any decision we make is problematic,

and I would like to explore just a little of that with you

if I may, but we have less than 3 minutes now to vote.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, or Mr. Ambassador, I think a piece of this is always

missing. I found the biggest struggle in a personal sense that

I had in making the case here about the Balkans beginning in 1992

was, understandably convincing our colleagues and the American

people what is America’s security interest.

Where does America’s national interest lie? I mean, what difference

does it make? What difference does it make whether or not

there is a Greater Serbia that includes all of Bosnia or Croatia and

whether or not Kosovo is the victim of an ethnic cleansing that

works.

I wonder if you agree with the first part of what I would like to

discuss with you, namely that the disintegration of Kosovo, which

is increasing geometrically every day, has the genuine seeds for a

third Balkan War. By that Balkan War, I want to explain to folks

who may be listening to this, I mean, a war that envelops Macedonia,

Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey.

I mean, a serious, serious European conflict that affects our interest

in significant ways, whether it is NATO unity, or the spread

of that conflict within Central and Eastern Europe. So I think the

stakes are very, very high here.

So my first question to you is, is this really a humanitarian concern

you are expressing, or do you believe there is a vital U.S. interest

in settling the situation in Kosovo?

That is exactly right, precisely, and I think that

is one of the reasons why the KLA is doing what they are doing.

I might note parenthetically that I have it on authority from

sources whom I put some stock in, that there is not a conscious policy

arrived at as expressed in the *New York Times* today by the

KLA to target Serb civilians.

There is no evidence at this point that that is a concerted policy

arrived at like the Serbs in Bosnia arrived at. About 3 years ago

on the first trip, when Senator Dole came, and my third trip to

Bosnia they were targeting children in the Muslim sector of Sarajevo

for the purpose of scaring parents out onto the streets because

their children were being victimized. There is no sense of that at

this point in Kosovo in my view, and I say that for the press that

is here, because I do not think the *New York Times* assertion is correct.

But the longer we wait it seems to me the closer we are to a pure

Hobson’s Choice, because the independence of Kosovo at this moment

under these circumstances might very well find us in a position

where we are talking about a Greater Albania, which would

have a significant impact on destabilizing the region.

So I agree with your proposition that whatever happens has to

happen quickly, which leads me to my second question. I was the

first guy to call for air strikes in Bosnia, and I wrote that lift and

strike policy and all of that, so I have been through this before—

I do not say that out of pride of authorship.

I believe that significant, sustained air strikes in Serbia would

be a very different deal than they were in Bosnia, because we are

dealing with a much more sophisticated military. I think the President

would have to say, that there is likely to be collateral civilian

damage and damage to American forces—this will not be without

cost. This will not be painless.

Second, because the first thing we would have to do is suppress

the Serbian air defense system, there is likely to be collateral civilian

damage on the ground in Serbia, because we would have to

strike in areas near Belgrade, maybe in Belgrade, but I am suggesting

that if all else fails, we should do that.

I want to be up front about this. I am not suggesting that this

would be a painless undertaking. Are you still prepared to support,

if all other avenues fail, and I mean in the near term, the use of

significant air power, knowing what our military tells me—and I

believe them—that there is likely to be both collateral damage as

well as possibly loss of U.S. lives, U.S. airmen’s lives?

Well, one of the good pieces of news is that I

think to date Prime Minister Nano of Albania is acting very responsibly

As a matter of fact, he has just come out for Kosovo’s

becoming a republic within Yugoslavia, but without the right of secession.

That happens to be exactly what I advocated here 2 weeks

ago.

But the point I am making is this. Nano’s statement does not

bode well for the notion of a Greater Albania. In other words, you

do not have the Albanian prime minister making statements that

would invite the KLA to in effect become part of Albania. I think

this is a very helpful step in dealing with what is to the naked eye

a very intractable problem. There are no good answers left here.

I do, too, but my point is that I am pleased, and

I want to publicly acknowledge that the Albanian prime minister

is playing a constructive role at this point. If Milosevic were the

prime minister of Albania, he would be calling for a Greater Albania

now. He would be calling for and appealing to the nationalism

of all Albanians in the region.

So I just wanted to state for the record that even though I said

the alternative for Greater Albania is also destabilizing, my staff

reminded me that I should point out that this is not what the Albanian

Government is calling for.

I agree with that, and that is why I would again

reemphasize my agreement with your point that time is of the essence.

Now, let me ask you one last question, if I may, and I appreciate

the chairman’s giving me this much time. By the way, I was not

being solicitous before I left about your thoughtful writing.

You know, when we were going through the debate on Bosnia in

1994 in the Foreign Relations Committee room in a closed session,

I was in a very heated discussion about what we should be doing

in lifting the embargo and using air power and crossing the Drina

if need be. One of my colleagues asked me a question that brought

into sharp focus something I wondered about all through my college

and graduate school years.

Here I was, sitting in a seat that may very well have been occupied

by Vandenberg as the senior member of the Foreign Relations

Committee, and I could never understand how we could have failed

to act in the thirties in the face of what was so patently obvious

what was going on, and then I realized how, and I am not being

facetious when I say this.

One of my colleagues looked at me and said, ‘‘OK, Joe, you may

be right. Your argument seems logical, but can you guarantee me

that no American will be killed?’’ All of a sudden it struck me that

this must have been the standard being applied back in 1937 and

1938 and 1939, when we knew we had the force to be able to do

something even as weak as we were.

The reason I keep saying this is that I do not want to be accused

of not having been straightforward about this from the outset, or

of promising—not that my colleagues would put any more stock in

my statements than anyone else’s—of promising anyone this is an

easy road, or that the price may not be higher using force, even if

it is only air power, in Serbia, than it was using it in Bosnia.

The targets, it seems to me, have to be the ones you have stated.

One of the things I have observed about the Balkans, no matter

what country you are talking about, is that whatever little booty

is possessed, people are desirous of keeping it.

Let me be more precise about that. The Yugoslav Army is real,

but it has limited assets and resources, notwithstanding the fact

that they are significant relative to Bosnia. I am operating on the

assumption that Milosevic’s circumstance politically is tenuous

enough because his policies are not widely shared by the average

citizen in Serbia in my view. Nonetheless, we should not misunderstand,

Kosovo and Kosovo Field near Pristina, in particular, are

viewed as the cradle of Serbian nationality, Serbian identity, so we

should not kid ourselves about that.

Still, support for his policies is not widespread. I am of the view

that if the Serbian Officer Corps believes that the price they have

to pay to sustain Milosevic’s policy is that they will run the risk

of being badly disabled, I think it has the possibility of impacting

upon Milosevic.

So my question to you is, what is your view about the popular

reaction to dedicated air strikes on military targets over a period

of time? Some suggest that they would just embolden and rally the

people of Serbia around Milosevic, and others of us say that they

are likely to be the only thing to get his attention, because they

may very well undermine him with the only element of Serbian nationalism

that has any oomph left, and that is the military.

Do you have a view on that?

Mine as well. I thank you, and thank you, Mr.

Chairman.