This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records
Subgroup/Office of Origin: Speechwriting
Series/Staff Member: Michael Waldman
Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 14477
FolderID:

Folder Title: Kosovo

Stack: S
Row: 92
Section: 4
Shelf: 7
Position: 1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE</th>
<th>SUBJECT/TITLE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>RESTRICTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001. draft</td>
<td>President William Jefferson Clinton New York Times Op-Ed on Kosovo (6 pages)</td>
<td>May 23, 1999</td>
<td>P5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COLLECTION:**
Clinton Presidential Records
Speechwriting
Michael Waldman
OA/Box Number: 14477

**FOLDER TITLE:**
Kosovo

**RESTRICTION CODES**
Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

- C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor’s deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(5) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(5) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
We are in Kosovo for a simple reason. It is to uphold a principle at the very heart of America's responsibility to lead in the world. Indeed, as a country, we are approaching two significant dates that remind us of how fundamental this reason has been in explaining America's engagement during this momentous century. Next Monday, on Memorial Day, and again the following Saturday, on June 5, the 55th anniversary of D-Day, we will remember the millions of Americans, who sacrificed, often with their lives, to defend that principle: the preservation of freedom.

Throughout the course of the 20th century, we as Americans have been called repeatedly to defend freedom against forces that would threaten it. From the Somme Valley in World War I, to the beaches of Normandy and the sands of Iwo Jima in World War II, to the twilight struggle against communism of the Cold War, and beyond, generations of Americans rose to that challenge. They did it because they believed that the freedom we have enjoyed since our birth as a nation placed a special obligation on us to help other people turn back threats to their own freedom. They did it, as well, because they understood that certain threats to freedom in other parts of the world, if left unchallenged, had a high likelihood of resulting in threats to our own freedom. Now, we are stepping up to our own obligations to redeem the sacrifices that secured freedom during the century we are leaving, so that we will not face even greater threats in the century we are entering.

We know that we cannot answer all threats to freedom everywhere. But in Kosovo, we are faced with two compelling forces that, taken together, require us to act.

First, this threat to freedom is in the heart of Europe. Every time in this century, when we have turned our backs on assaults on freedom in Europe, we have paid a much higher price at a later time. In the 1920s and 1930s, our country turned inward, failing to help the European powers to establish a new order out of the devastation of World War I. We did not respond early as the forces of fascism increasingly used their power to overrun one free nation after another, forcing us to make a much more costly commitment in World War II than might otherwise have been necessarily. On the other hand, after World War II, we remained engaged and helped the European powers rebuild and stay on the course of democratic reform and freedom. A major part of that commitment was to make it clear to our adversaries during the Cold War that any further encroachment on the freedom of Europe's democracies would unquestionably lead to dire consequences. Our dedication to those principles over four decades led, eventually, to the triumph of democratic forces in the Eastern European nations that had been denied their freedom for far too long. The lesson of this century is clear: A threat to freedom in Europe by force a threat to our own freedom and stability, and we fail to act at our own peril.

The second force we find in Kosovo is related. [Make Genocide point here. This threat to freedom is all too similar to the most horrible threats of this century. Pick up some of his language.]

[Next, move to why this is working. Bottom of page 2 gets at this.]

[Then on to how this use of force is aimed at specific and definable objectives.]

[End on bringing it back to Memorial Day and D-Day.]
Why are we in Kosovo? To defend America’s enduring national interest in the stability of Europe. And to uphold a fundamental principle: the right of a people to exist on their land, without being singled out for destruction, displacement and deportation for no other reason than their ethnicity and faith.

The violence in Kosovo is the result not just of ethnic hatred, but the manipulation of hatred by leaders to hold on to power. The tools of this manipulation are familiar now. Spreading hate through the media. Killing moderate leaders. Destroying records. Arming paramilitaries and ordering soldiers to conduct planned campaigns of murder and expulsion. Refugees are not a byproduct of this fighting; the fighting is designed to create refugees.

When governments adopt as systematic policy the dehumanization of an entire people, the potential for destruction is limitless. The conflicts that result leave legacies of anger and instability that last generations and become self-perpetuating. Our ability to prevent them, and to end them, will help decide the future of much of the world in the next century, from central Europe to Russia to the Middle East to South Asia to most of Africa -- for across much of the world ethnic differences exist, to be resolved by statesmen, or exploited by demagogues.

We cannot respond to ethnic violence everywhere, but this does not mean that we must, for the sake of consistency, respond to it nowhere. Had we faltered in Kosovo, at the doorstep of NATO where we have forces deployed and allies willing to act, the result would have been a moral and strategic disaster. The Kosovars would have become a people without a homeland, living in difficult conditions in some of the poorest countries in Europe, overwhelming new democracies with their presence and their grievances. The Balkan conflict that began when Yugoslavia
collapsed would have continued indefinitely, posed a real risk of a wider war, and led to a permanent state of tensions between NATO allies and Russia. NATO itself would have been discredited for failing to defend the very values that bind its members and give it meaning. Those who say Kosovo is too small to be of great importance forget these simple facts.

President Bush understood that a conflict in Kosovo could spark a larger Balkan powder keg, and warned President Milosevic in 1992 that we would respond to the use of force. For six years, my administration pressed Milosevic to restore autonomy to the Kosovars, and made clear that Serbia would not be fully free of economic sanctions until he did. When the violence in Kosovo began in early 1998, we exhausted every diplomatic avenue for a settlement.

Last October, under the threat of force, Mr. Milosevic agreed to withdraw some of his forces from Kosovo and to allow an unarmed international presence. That is the solution advocates of compromise with the Serbian leader propose today. But it failed last fall. Milosevic broke his promises, poured more troops into Kosovo, poised for an offensive he had been planning for months. When it began, we had to act – to stop it if possible, to reverse it if necessary.

We are seeking to achieve several related objectives in Kosovo, and our strategy must embrace each.

First, and most important, we must restore the Kosovars to their homes, so their lives can resume, so history will record that Mr. Milosevic failed in his design. For this to happen, Serbian forces must leave Kosovo. An international security force must deploy to protect all the people there. Such a force must have NATO at its core, which means it must have NATO command and control and NATO rules of engagement, with special arrangements to accommodate non-NATO countries, just like our force in Bosnia. Our military campaign will continue until these conditions are met – not because we are stubborn or arbitrary, but because these are the only conditions under which the refugees will go home in safety and the only
conditions under which the insurgent Kosovo Liberation Army will have any incentive to disarm -- the basic requirements of a resolution that will work.

Second, NATO must meet these objectives as an alliance. This is not an American effort; it is a transatlantic enterprise conducted by 19 diverse democracies. While there may be differing domestic circumstances, cultural ties to the Balkans, and ideas on tactics, there is no question about our goals and our will to prevail. I have worked hard to shape our present consensus; 60 days into the air campaign, NATO is even more unified on Kosovo than it was a month or a year before it began.

Third, we must do this in a way that at the very least seeks to avoid feeding Russian nationalism and a dangerous confrontation, and at best, as in Bosnia, ultimately strengthens our relationship. That means trying to involve Russia in a diplomatic solution to the crisis as an intermediary working out a way for Belgrade to meet our conditions. It means turning a source of tension into an opportunity for cooperation by including Russian troops in the force that will keep the peace in Kosovo.

Finally, in the end, we must build arrangements to ensure that the forces pulling southeastern Europe together are stronger than the forces tearing it apart. We must do for this region what we did for western Europe after World War II, and for central Europe after the Cold War. That means supporting democratic governments and institutions, rebuilding struggling economies, relieving debts, encouraging trade and investment, and helping the nations of the region join NATO and the European Union. Already, the region’s democracies are responding to the pull of integration, by sticking with their reforms, taking in refugees, and supporting NATO’s campaign. A democratic Serbia that respects the rights of its people and its neighbors can and should join them. If it does, we will help to restore it to its rightful place among European nations.

But first we must bring this conflict to a successful conclusion.
Second, NATO must meet its objectives as an alliance. For that to happen, every ally must sometimes be willing to give ground to preserve our common ground, and that is fine as long as there is no question about our goals and our will to prevail. I have worked hard to shape our present consensus; 60 days into the air campaign, NATO remains far more unified on Kosovo than it was a month or a year before it began.

Third, we must do this in a way that preserves our relationships with Russia and China. That means involving Russia in a diplomatic solution to the crisis, not as a messenger, but as an intermediary working out a way for Belgrade to meet our conditions. It means turning a source of tension into an opportunity for cooperation by welcoming Russian troops in the force that will keep the peace in Kosovo. It also requires meeting China’s legitimate concerns about our accidental bombing of its embassy and not losing sight of our mutual interest in a constructive relationship, without conceding anything fundamental because of the tragedy.

Finally, we must ensure that the forces pulling southeastern Europe together are stronger than the forces tearing it apart, by doing for this region what we did for western Europe after World War II, and for central Europe after the Cold War. That means supporting democratic institutions, promoting regional integration, rebuilding struggling economies, encouraging trade and investment, and helping the nations of the region join NATO and the European Union. Already, the region’s democracies are striving to act as the allies they wish to be, sticking with their reforms, taking in refugees, and supporting NATO’s campaign. A democratic Serbia that respects the rights of its people can and should join them. If it does, we will help to restore it to its rightful place among European nations.

But first we must bring this conflict to a successful conclusion. There is no question in my mind that we will.
Sometimes, we are so preoccupied with the challenges we face that we fail to see the predicament our adversary is in. We should remember that when the NATO campaign began, Mr. Milosevic thought he could divide or outlast us. He has failed. Instead of disunity in Brussels, there is disaffection in Belgrade. More Serbian soldiers are abandoning their posts; more Serbian civilians are protesting the dead-end policies of their leader. Our air campaign has already destroyed a brigade’s worth of Serbian tanks, and one of every three Serbian military vehicles in Kosovo. The KLA, far from being eliminated, is winning new recruits and has begun to go on the offensive against Serbian forces that are hunkered down to hide from air strikes.

Mr. Milosevic faces the certainty of a steadily intensifying air campaign, and the prospect of explaining to his supporters why they had to sacrifice so much, when in the end the outcome will be the same. The question before him is not whether his ethnic cleansing will be reversed, but how much of his military he is willing to see destroyed along the way.

That we have been able to do this without putting our troops on the ground in Kosovo is good for us, and probably a source of great frustration for Serbian commanders in Kosovo, who keep taking damage without being able to strike back effectively. I believe our air campaign will succeed. But I have not taken any options off the table. The means we use will be determined by the outcome we seek, not the other way around.

This will not be easy, and it may take more time. But we should remember that the last time we faced ethnic cleansing in the Balkans – in Bosnia – it took three years for NATO to get organized to respond. By then, 250,000 people were dead; over 2 million had fled – and many have still not returned. When all is said and done, people will look back on Kosovo and say that this time, because we acted soon enough, more lives were saved, and the refugees came home. The Balkan conflict that began 10 years ago in Kosovo will have ended in Kosovo – a goal worth every measure of our common effort.
When the NATO campaign began, Mr. Milosevic thought he could divide or outlast us. He has failed. Instead of disunity in Brussels, there is disaffection in Belgrade. More Serbian soldiers are abandoning their posts; more Serbian civilians are protesting the dead-end policies of their leader. Our air campaign has already destroyed or damaged one of every three Serbian armored vehicles in Kosovo, half its artillery, most of its ability to produce ammunition, all its capacity to refine fuel. Far from eliminating the insurgent KLA, Milosevic has strengthened it. It has begun to go on the offensive against Serbian forces that are hunkered down to hide from air strikes. The question before him now is not whether his ethnic cleansing will be reversed, but how much of his military he is willing to see destroyed along the way.

For all these reasons, I believe NATO’s air campaign is working, and we are determined to continue it. I do not believe in other means. The bottom line is that we will prevail.

This will not be easy, and it may take more time. But we should remember that the last time we faced ethnic cleansing in the Balkans – in Bosnia – it took three years for NATO to get organized to respond. By then, 250,000 people were dead; over 2 million had fled – and many have still not returned. When all is said and done, people will look back on Kosovo and say that this time, because we acted soon enough, more lives were saved, and the refugees came home. The Balkan conflict that began 10 years ago in Kosovo will have ended in Kosovo – a goal worth every measure of our common effort.