

bashful about his enthusiasm. [Laughter] He might be out there—if he were out there, he'd be cheering louder than all of you.

Let me say also I am delighted to be here with our United Nations Ambassador, Madeleine Albright; Brian Atwood, the Director of the Agency for International Development; Dick Holbrooke, who did such a fine job in making this peace that you are here to help enforce; Ambassador Hunter. And I'd like for the Members of Congress who have come with me to be recognized. I want you to make them welcome. If it weren't for them, none of us would be here today. Thank you, gentlemen, and—[applause]—thank you.

I also want to say a special word of regard for General Bill Bell, who had to leave because of his wife's illness. I know he's here in spirit. And I know that all of you will send him your thoughts and prayers.

Men and women of the 21st Theater Army Area Command, 1st Armored Division, the 29th Support Group, the 30th Medical Brigade, all of you who are taking part in Operation Joint Endeavor, I am very, very proud to be here with you today. A few moments ago, General Abrams briefed me on all you have achieved here in Hungary. As many of you know, General Abrams' father gave his name to the M1-A1 tank that is helping you to keep the peace in Bosnia. I have just reviewed a company of those tanks that are about to convoy to Tuzla. And when I look out at you, I can't help but think that those tanks are a good symbol for this whole operation. The Abrams is the best all-around tank in the world, and you are the best all-around fighting force. Like the tank, you are proven, fast, tough, and, if you have to be, lethal. But I did find one difference between the Abrams and the men and women of Operation Joint Endeavor: the Abrams is very, very quiet. [Laughter]

I'm going from here to Tuzla. You know, I meant to go from Tuzla to here, but the clouds made it impossible for us to land, and I had to come here, and that's why you had so much advance notice of our being here. [Laughter] I can't believe you got up such a crowd, General, on such short notice, but I think, speaking for all of us, we're delighted to see you.

I want to say for those of you heading to Tuzla, I have been fully briefed on the operation there. I'd like to be able to report that when you get there, you will find deluxe accommoda-

tions. [Laughter] I'd like to be able to report that. But even for a political leader that's stretching the truth a little more than it will bear. [Laughter]

I do understand they've got showers and heaters and Red Horse tents with hard floors and electricity. Some soldiers have turned their MRE boxes into dressers, shelves, and tables. They're even doing some custom conversions on Humvees, complete with car stereos. And I was told just before I got off the plane that with a little bit of ingenuity and a lot of plywood, duct tape, and sandbags, some of our soldiers are making Tuzla the next best thing to Tazsar.

The most important thing I can say to you, seriously, is that Task Force Eagle is heavily armed and very well prepared. The airfield and communications are up and running. J-STAR aircraft are patrolling high above the clouds. The Navy and the Marines are keeping watch from the Adriatic. *Apache* gunships are flying the treetops. The Special Forces are everywhere. The operation in Bosnia is moving ahead, step by step, steadily, surely, and safely.

Let me say to those of you who are based here in Hungary, none of this could happen without you. You know that. You provide the beans, the bullets, the black oil that keep our people fed, armed, and ready to roll. As of today, in just a single month—think of it—12,000 troops, 700 trucks, 200 trains have passed through this point.

Our airplanes have flown 400 sorties. You've got a 300-bed hospital up and running that I just drove by and a tent city for 7,000 troops. That's a pretty impressive track record. You should feel proud of the job you're doing. I am very proud of the job you are doing.

I came here also to tell you that this is a very important job. Just before I left Washington I signed an Executive order that creates a new campaign medal. It's called the Armed Forces Service Medal, to be awarded to all those who serve our Nation in significant noncombat military missions, such as peacekeeping operations. And I'm pleased to announce that as participants in Operation Joint Endeavor, each of you will receive America's newest military honor.

While I'm here, I also want to express my gratitude to the people of Hungary, to their government and their military for their hospitality, their cooperation, their professionalism. Remember that just 6 years ago, Hungary was