

20,000 strong, have set up camp in Bosnia. We know you fought rain and floods to bridge the Sava River in our biggest military river crossing since 1945. We know that in only 2 weeks, more than 2,000 vehicles—M1's, Bradleys, Humvees and more—have rolled across the waters and rumbled into town. We know you have secured your base of operations and established base camps throughout your sector.

I just came from Outpost Lima, manned by the Charlie Rock Company of the 3d Battalion. I saw for myself that the "Third Herd" and everyone else at the outpost are doing a great job in what might be called less than great conditions.

You took an airfield that had no lights or navigational equipment, turned it around and opened it for business 24 hours a day, at least when the fog permits. You've strung nearly 5 miles of phone and cable wire to build a massive modern communications network.

You're working with soldiers from more than two dozen other nations, and I have met some of their leaders here today. Among them are former adversaries who are now our friends—Polish and Czech combat battalions, Hungarian engineering corps, soldiers from the Baltic States, an entire Russian brigade—and, of course, the Nordic brigade that has been here for some time now. From the ashes of war in Bosnia, you and they together are raising the torch of a new undivided Europe. Step by steady step, you are making history here in Bosnia. Don't you ever forget that, even when this extraordinary mission may seem routine.

I am told that some of you have compared life here with the Bill Murray movie "Groundhog Day," where the same day keeps repeating itself over and over and over again. I'm also told that there are really only two kinds of weather conditions here in Tuzla. When it snows, the mud freezes, and when it rains, the mud thaws. Even the dining hall apparently is in on the act, dishing out the same food every morning and night.

Just remember this: The military promised you square meals. And when you get your eggs each morning, you know the military has kept its commitment to you. I see you laughing about that, and I want you to be able to laugh. I hope you'll be laughing tomorrow morning at breakfast.

But I am very serious when I tell you that your mission is anything but routine. There has

never been anything quite like it before. The Bosnian people have chosen peace, but they cannot do it alone. You and our allies must give them the confidence they need to follow the rules they have agreed to. We have a strong interest here in seeing peace take hold. The people of Bosnia have suffered so much; Europe's stability, so crucial to our own, has been threatened; and we all want a safer, better world for our children.

The Bosnian people are exhausted by war. You can give them the strength they need for peace. This mission requires your strength and your skill, separating former enemies, avoiding the dangers of mines, making sure the cease-fire holds, creating a stable environment. From the days on your feet in the rain and the snow to the nights you must sleep in your Bradleys, this mission requires your strength, your skills, your determination.

The people around you know you are prepared, heavily armed, ready to meet any threat to your safety. They know that our J-STAR aircraft are patrolling high above the clouds, tracking the smallest movement; that out in the Adriatic the Navy and the Marine Corps are ready to project power at a moment's notice; that just above the treetops, the Army's *Apache* gunships are scouring the ground below; and that our Special Forces are here, there, and everywhere.

I have said it before and I will say it again: You can see from this operation that America looks out for its own. I know the burden of our leadership weighs heavily on you and your loved ones back home. Just as your commanders and I are committed to protecting your safety, so we are working to help your families, to keep them informed and in touch with you, to help them with the things that matter most, like day care and health care and paying the bills. The pride your families have in you is shared by Americans all across our Nation. We look at you all and we look at all you're doing here, confident, compassionate, disciplined, and strong, and we see in you the best our country has to offer.

Before I left Washington to be with you, I signed an Executive order that creates a new campaign medal. It's called the Armed Forces Service Medal. It will be awarded to all those who serve our Nation in significant noncombat military missions, such as peacekeeping. I am pleased to announce that as participants in Op-