

*July 10 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998*

Happy birthday. Congratulations to all of you. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:34 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Charles C. Krulak, USMC,

Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps, and his wife, Zandra; Lt. Col. Timothy W. Foley, USMC, Director, United States Marine Band; and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Robert R. Ingram.

## Statement on Senate Action on Higher Education Reauthorization Legislation

*July 10, 1998*

The bill passed last night by the Senate will help my effort to usher more Americans through the doors of higher education, doors we have opened wide since 1993. There are still serious fiscal and policy issues that need to be resolved, and I am committed to working with Congress to do that. But I am pleased that the Senate bill endorses the new low interest rate for student loans that I proposed to save students \$11

billion; improves teacher recruitment and training provided by our colleges; takes important steps in response to my call for colleges to help children at high-poverty schools prepare for and attend college; expands access to quality distance learning technologies; and creates what would be the Government's first performance-based organization, an innovation recommended by our reinventing Government effort.

## Joint Statement on United States-Polish Relations

*July 10, 1998*

President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek of Poland met today at the White House to discuss Poland's anticipated entry into NATO, common efforts to advance regional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe and steps to deepen the close bilateral relations between the United States and Poland. Vice President Gore met separately with the Prime Minister earlier today and hosted a luncheon for the Prime Minister, his delegation and members of the Polish-American community.

The President and Prime Minister Buzek stressed the paramount importance of the U.S. Senate vote on NATO enlargement. They welcomed Poland's entry into the Alliance. Prime Minister Buzek declared that this step will fulfill the aspirations of the Polish people to belong to the Transatlantic community, guaranteeing the security of a sovereign and democratic Poland. President Clinton responded that Poland's membership in the Atlantic Alliance will advance the interests of the American people in a secure, undivided Europe. Both leaders agreed that

NATO is the essential foundation of transatlantic security and reaffirmed their support for NATO's "open door" policy for aspiring new members, as an indispensable instrument to strengthening stability and eliminating the old dividing lines in Europe.

President Clinton expressed strong support for Poland's strides in building ties with its neighbors and efforts to promote stability, democracy, and free market economics throughout Central and Eastern Europe. The two leaders discussed efforts already under way to establish trilateral economic cooperation among the United States, Poland and Ukraine, as well as Poland's efforts to establish peacekeeping battalions with Ukraine and Lithuania. They resolved that, as allies, they should expand such common efforts to strengthen democracy and regional stability.

The President applauded Poland's active role as Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and thanked Prime Minister Buzek for Poland's strong contribution to the international effort

to create stability in the Former Yugoslavia. He particularly praised Poland's participation in both IFOR and SFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

President Clinton praised Poland for the bold, free-market reforms it has pioneered since 1989 as proof that the legacies of communism can be overcome. Prime Minister Buzek expressed profound gratitude for the American assistance provided during the difficult early years of its free market transformation. The leaders noted that Polish effort and sacrifice combined with United States assistance has produced several important successes in the transformation of the Polish economy. They noted particularly that:

Poland's progress in banking reform enabled the 10 contributing governments to authorize release to Poland in April of the \$450 million (\$221 million U.S.) they had contributed to the Polish Bank Privatization Fund, set up in 1992.

The Polish-American Enterprise Fund (PAEF) has used \$257 million provided by the U.S. government for capital and technical assistance to great effect in supporting the emergence of Poland's vibrant, free market economy. The two leaders discussed the future of the PAEF. They agreed that final disposition of the PAEF's assets can be achieved in ways that further enhance Polish-American relations and advance our mutual interests in building a prosperous and democratic Europe.

The remaining U.S. government assistance is now being used to help the Polish government to continue this transformation in a number of critical areas, including local government and pension reform.

Given Poland's remarkable progress and integration into the competitive global economy, both governments took note of the new phase in our economic relationship based on investment, trade and other forms of cooperation, with private sectors in the lead. Both governments pledged to take steps to help bolster mutually beneficial trade and investment, noting that the U.S. is already the leading foreign investor in Poland. The U.S. Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs will visit Warsaw soon to develop this bilateral consultative mechanism on economic issues in Polish-American relations.

Poland and the United States welcomed their intense and regular bilateral dialogue in other areas as well. They noted the accomplishments of our Bilateral Working Group on Defense Matters and agreed to continue to use this as a key mechanism to prepare Poland for full integration into NATO's military structures. They also agreed to hold regular consultations on regional and global issues.

Both governments will work to increase cooperation on law enforcement. As part of this effort, the United States will work with Poland to conduct cooperative prosecutor and police training in Poland and regionally to strengthen our ability to combat transnational crime. The United States applauds Poland's efforts to develop a Polish International Training Center for Specialist Police Forces which will serve an important role in regional efforts to combat crime.

The United States and Poland welcome the enlargement of the European Union as an essential step in completing construction of a Europe that is truly whole and free. The United States supports timely accession of Poland to the EU and looks forward to Poland's early and active participation in the Transatlantic Dialogues. Both governments pledge their support for the further development of transatlantic cooperation beneficial for all countries involved.

The President also recognized Poland's considerable contributions to multilateral peacekeeping efforts around the world and announced the U.S. Government's readiness to use the Enhanced International Peacekeeping Capabilities Initiative (EIPC) to further develop Poland's already strong capabilities in this area. The President expressed appreciation for Poland's participation in the international coalition which pressed the Iraqi government to comply with UNSC resolutions, as well as day-to-day representation of U.S. interests in Baghdad. The two leaders expressed their determination to work together with other interested parties to promote diplomatic resolution to this continuing challenge to stability in the Persian Gulf.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.