

of service. I am extremely proud to call Robert Ingram a friend."

On that battlefield so many years ago, Robert Ingram performed truly heroic deeds, and asked for nothing in return. At long last, it is time to honor him.

Mr. Ingram, on behalf of all Americans, we thank you for your service, for your courage, for your determination, for your loyalty to comrades and country. We are all proud to call you an American. Hillary and I are proud that you are in the White House with us today, and I am very proud to award you the Medal of Honor.

Major Everhart, read the citation.

[At this point, Maj. Carlton Everhart, USAF, Air Force Aide to the President, read the citation, and Lt. Comdr. Wes Huey, USN, Naval Aide to the President, assisted the President in presenting the medal.]

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rear Adm. A. Byron Holderby, USN, Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Navy, who offered the invocation.

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.