

sion and sacrifice in time of peace. We have seen the around-the-clock flights of the Berlin airlift. We saw you in Mig Alley in Korea. We saw the longest humanitarian airlift in history during the war in Bosnia. We saw you in the skies over Baghdad in Desert Storm. And just a few days ago, we saw the nine crewmembers of the C-141 perish off the coast of Africa after carrying a team of experts to help support our demining efforts in Namibia.

We have seen you rise to the challenges of our time, from the development of the air expeditionary forces that give me an invaluable tool in time of crisis, to last week's deployment of Commando Solo aircraft to help prevent the enemies of peace in Bosnia from sabotaging the Dayton agreement.

We have seen your vision and commitment to excel as you sharpen your technological edge to dominate the battlefields of the future. And perhaps most important, we see in the 12 outstanding Airmen of the Year the best traditions, the best hope, and the brightest future of the Air Force, the leadership and talent and dedication that make you second to none.

I want you to know on behalf of all Americans, I am proud of them and proud of all of you who serve in the United States Air Force. To the pilots, the flight crews, the Red Horse engineers, the technicians, the security police, the space and missile operators, all who contribute to the strength of America in the skies, and to all the families who support you, our Nation is profoundly grateful.

Today is a well-earned day of celebration for your golden legacy of achievement. But as you know better than anyone, there is never a day of rest. We pay tribute to the last 50 years with a determination to look to our Air Force men and women to help us meet the challenges of the next 50 years. We know we can always count on you; we always have. Aim high, and reach for new horizons.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. in the Courtyard at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Ralph Eberhart, USAF, Vice Chief of the Air Force; Maj. Gen. William J. Denlinger, USAF, Chief of Chaplains; and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Eric Benkin, USAF.

Statement on the Helicopter Tragedy in Bosnia-Herzegovina

September 18, 1997

I am deeply saddened by the deaths in Bosnia yesterday of five dedicated Americans serving the cause of peace. David Kriskovich, Deputy Commissioner of the International Police Task Force (IPTF); Leah Melnick, Human Rights Officer with the Office of the High Representative; Livio Beccaccio, Senior Advisor to Deputy Commissioner Kriskovich; Marvin Padgett, IPTF Training Coordinator and Police Monitors; and William Nesbitt, Bosnia Program Manager for the Justice Department's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) perished when a UN helicopter crashed on its way from Sarajevo to Bugojno and Brcko.

Also lost in this tragic accident were five German citizens, including Ambassador Gerd Wagner, Senior Deputy High Representative, as well as a British and a Polish citizen.

These men and this woman were serving the cause of peace and reconciliation, dedicated to building under exceptionally difficult circumstances what was envisioned at Dayton almost 2 years ago. The selfless commitment of such talented people is inspiring. We are determined to carry forward their vital work.

My heartfelt sympathy is extended to the Kriskovich, Melnick, Beccaccio, Padgett, and Nesbitt families as well as the families of their colleagues. May they take comfort in the good works of their loved ones, for as the scripture tells us, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

Message to the Congress Transmitting Australia-United States Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Treaty and Documentation

September 19, 1997

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and