

I could do more good for the country by finishing this trip, and I think that was the right decision.

I wanted to be there, not only because it was in my home State and it was a heart-breaking, mammoth, awful thing, but I have spent an inordinate amount of time in that part of Arkansas. The mayor in the town has been my friend a long time—the county judge and all these people that I've known forever. I just—it was an awful thing for me personally, and I just grieve for those people.

**Mr. Donaldson.** What can you say to them? What do you say to parents who have lost a child this way, or to the relatives of the teacher who was killed? Is there anything that can be said?

**The President.** I don't have anything to say other than what I said in my message to them right now. I think that their friends need to hold them close, and they need to just—it takes a long time to heal. And one of the things that I have learned even more since I've been President is that a lot of things happen in this life that cannot be explained or justified, and lot of living is overcoming the unjustifiable, the madness, and somehow going on.

I would say that I believe the children who perished and the teacher who perished, from all reports, had lived extremely good lives and were extremely good people, and they would want their parents, their siblings, the spouses—the young teacher's husband—they would want them to go on living, to look for positive things to live for, to be grateful for the time they had with the children and the teacher.

And at some point you have to lay down the loss. You can never give it up. You can never stop hurting. You can never stop missing. But a choice has to be made to go on and to make the most of whatever is left in life. And I think that's what most people—most good people who die too young in an unfair way, if they could speak across space and time to their loved ones, would try to lift them up and ease their pain. They wouldn't want them to stay in the grip of hatred. They wouldn't want them to be paralyzed by grief. So I hope they'll be able to find peace and healing and go on.

### **President's Trip to Africa**

**Mr. Donaldson.** Finally, Mr. President, are you happy to be going tomorrow?

**The President.** You bet. I'm really glad—I'm getting tired now. We've worked very hard on this trip. But it's been a good thing for our country, I think. It certainly has been an enlightening experience, I believe, for everyone on this trip. I've been immensely impressed by the energy, the intelligence, the passion of the people I've met in positions of power and in the small villages in the countryside.

And I think that we can make a strong partnership with people in Africa that we will need in the 21st century. Among other things, I think most Americans were surprised to learn that American investment in Africa earns a return of 30 percent a year, which is higher than investment on any other continent. We can do well for ourselves by making a good partnership with Africa, and I hope as we go home there will be broad bipartisan support for continuing to deepen this partnership. And I hope it will be followed by a lot of private citizens, business people, and others coming over here and getting involved.

There is a lot to be done here and a great future here, and I want us to be a part of it.

**Mr. Donaldson.** Thank you, Mr. President. Thanks for sitting down with us.

**The President.** Thank you, Sam.

NOTE: The interview began at 8:45 p.m. at Le Meridien President Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Andrew Golden, 11, and Mitchell Johnson, 13, accused killers in the Jonesboro, Arkansas, middle school murders; Karen Curtner, principal, Westside Middle School; Mayor Hubert A. Brodell of Jonesboro, Arkansas; and Roy (Red) Bearden, Craighead County judge. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

### **Exchange With Reporters in Dakar**

*April 2, 1998*

#### **Dismissal of Paula Jones Lawsuit**

**The President.** Good morning.

**Q.** Did you get some good news last night, Mr. President?

**The President.** Well, obviously I'm pleased by the decision, and I think the judge's opinion speaks for itself. Let me say, though, I'm also immensely pleased by this trip, and I'm very much looking forward to going home and continuing the work of the very ambitious agenda we've got there.

**Q.** Mr. President, the suit was thrown out, but it did not clear your name. Are you disappointed by that?

**The President.** Well, the nature of the motion would not permit that, but the most important thing is that I can go back now and continue the work that I'm doing. That's the most important thing to me. I want to get back to the business of the people.

#### **Independent Counsel's Investigation**

**Q.** Mr. Starr says it has no effect on his investigation. Is that your view, sir?

**The President.** I don't have any comment on Mr. Starr.

**Q.** Mr. President, how have these last 3 years affected the institution of the Presidency? Has this been a good thing for the Presidency?

**The President.** Well, let me say, I've done my best to do what every President who has commented on this, from George Washington forward, has said the President should do, which is that for the period of your service, insofar as possible, you should cease to be an individual citizen and spend all your time and energy on the country. And that's what I've tried to do. And I've done my best at it, and the results have been satisfactory, I think, for the American people. And that's what I intend to continue to do. Others should evaluate that question, but I need to keep working on the people's business, and that's what I intend to do.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:52 a.m. at the Le Meridien President Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

#### **Remarks at Goree Island, Senegal April 2, 1998**

Thank you, Mr. President, for that magnificent address. Thank you so much.

Now, all my friends will have to tell me if the translation is working. Yes, it's working? [Applause] Hurray!

Mr. President, Madame Diouf, the ministers and officials of the Senegalese Government, Governor, Mayor; to the students who are here who have sung to us and with whom we have met from the Martin Luther King School, the John F. Kennedy School, the Miriama Ba School here on Goree Island, and the Margaret Amidon Elementary School in Washington, DC, the residents of Goree Island, the citizens of Senegal, my fellow Americans and our delegation, ladies and gentlemen. I'd also like to say a special word of thanks to the curator, Boubacar N'diaye, who toured me through the Slave House today. Thank you, sir.

Here, on this tiny island in the Atlantic Ocean, Africa and America meet. From here, Africa expands to the east, its potential for freedom and progress as great as its landmass. And to the west, over the horizon, lies America, a thriving democracy built, as President Diouf said, through centuries of sacrifice.

Long after the slave ships stopped sailing from this place to America, Goree Island, still today, looks out onto the New World, connecting two continents, standing as a vivid reminder that for some of America's ancestors the journey to America was anything but a search for freedom, and yet still, a symbol of the bright new era of partnership between our peoples.

In 1776, when our Nation was founded on the promise of freedom as God's right to all human beings, a new building was dedicated here on Goree Island to the selling of human beings in bondage to America. Goree Island is, therefore, as much a part of our history as a part of Africa's history. From Goree and other places, Africa's sons and daughters were taken through the door of no return, never to see their friends and families again. Those who survived the murderous middle passage emerged from a dark hold to find themselves, yes, American. But it would be a long, long time before their descendants enjoyed the full meaning of that word.

We cannot push time backward through the door of no return. We have lived our