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Thank you very much. God bless America, and *vive la France*.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:30 p.m. at Liberty Place. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Guy Passarat de la Chapelle of Perouges, France; Mayor Christian Bussy of Meximieux, France; and Philippe Ritter, Prefect of the Ain.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Jacques Chirac of France in Lyons

June 27, 1996

Terrorist Attack in Saudi Arabia

Q. Mr. President, is there any way the tragedy in Saudi Arabia could have been avoided, given the history of terrorism in the Middle East, especially in the aftermath of the agency bombing in Beirut? Why weren't those airmen protected?

President Clinton. Well, as you know, they were behind a fence that gave them a 35-yard cushion, and the bomb was just bigger than anyone calculated could be gotten in that close to the building.

So I think the casualties were far smaller than they would have been had not the security precautions been taken. But you may be sure that the Defense Department and the others who are in charge of this are reviewing the security operations to see what else should be done, to see if we can even do better in the future.

Q. Is there any indication yet who is responsible for that?

President Clinton. We're working on it, but I don't want to announce a conclusion until I know what the facts are. We're working very hard, and so are the Saudis. And I want to thank, I might say if I could, I'd like to thank President Chirac for his expression of condolences and support for the United States. And he said to me—and I hope that you will have some statement coming out later today.

President Chirac. I just want to say to the American press how deeply horrified the French people were at this barbaric act that has been perpetrated in Saudi Arabia. And I can assure you that you have the heartfelt condolences of France to the families of the victims and those who have been wounded and to the American people.

NOTE: The exchange began at 3 p.m. at the Prefecture. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom in Lyons, France

June 27, 1996

Terrorist Attack in Saudi Arabia

Q. Mr. President, what do you do if you discover that there was a state sponsorship behind the Saudi Arabian incident? What happens?

President Clinton. Well, I will take whatever action I believe is appropriate based on what the facts are. But let's wait until we see what the facts are.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—has said that there was intellectually a very strong case for the bombers. What is your reaction to that?

Prime Minister Major. I haven't seen the context of what he said, but I can see no case, intellectual or any other sort of case, for the sort of activity in Dhahran. It is indefensible by any tenet.

Q. Do you think there are further measures which you can agree here jointly with the other leaders to combat both the sort of terrorism