

Apr. 15 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

Statement on the Fire in Mina, Saudi Arabia

April 15, 1997

I was deeply saddened to learn today of the tragic loss of life in Saudi Arabia among the pilgrims performing the Hajj. I have sent condolences to King Fahd on behalf of the American

people and extend our deepest sympathy to the families of those who were killed or injured in the fire.

Exchange With Reporters in Queens, New York

April 15, 1997

Jackie Robinson Commemorative Coins

The President. Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio], did you give out any autographs today over at the school?

Q. Thank you, sir, that was very kind of you.

The President. It's a great school, isn't it? Very impressive.

You all know this is the design for the Jackie Robinson coin. And Mrs. Robinson and her family consulted on it—do you want to just tell them?

Rachel Robinson. Yes. The gold coin represents the total man, and we wanted that because we have been trying to impress people with Jack's life in its totality. And we think that's going to be a very rare piece. We're very excited about it. We love the design, and we love the concept, and we're very happy to have it. The silver coin will represent the baseball period and that, of course, he's had an illustrious career. So of course we're proud of that. But we wanted to commemorate both aspects of him—or total aspects of him. And we will sell out. [*Laughter*] We are already marketing and—

The President. We're hawking the coin. Anybody in our press corps would like to buy one, we can make one available. [*Laughter*]

Q. What denomination is it? How much money is it worth? What is the face value of it?

The President. What's the sale price?

Mrs. Robinson. The final price hasn't been determined. It's around \$250 on the gold and about \$35 on the silver. And the Jackie Robinson Foundation will receive surcharges from the coins, which we will invest in our permanent endowment fund.

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Q. Mr. President, what do you think of all the attacks on your Attorney General? What do you think of all the attacks on your Attorney General for the decision she made yesterday on the independent counsel? Newt Gingrich said today he likened that position to something that John Mitchell would do.

The President. That cries out for an answer, I guess. Let me say, I think that—I don't have anything to add to what I've already said. She had to make a legal decision on a legal question. And as I understand it, she consulted her career staff people there and made a decision. And that's all I know. So I don't have any other comment about it. It should not be a political matter; it should be a legal matter. And that's the way everybody ought to leave it.

Q. Thank you.

Jackie Robinson 50th Anniversary Cap

Mrs. Robinson. On behalf of the Jackie Robinson Foundation, we would like to present you with our anniversary cap, since we know that you wear caps—

The President. I do.

Mrs. Robinson. —we hope to see this on your head. [*Laughter*]

The President. I hope you see me running and playing golf.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 6:40 p.m. at Shea Stadium during a meeting with Rachel Robinson, widow of Jackie Robinson, and other family members. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.