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U.S. forces are equipped for combat, the evacuation has been undertaken solely for the purpose of protecting American citizens and property. United States forces will redeploy as soon as evacuation operations are complete and enhanced security at locations in and around Freetown is no longer required.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action to protect American citizens and the American Embassy in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 2.

Statement on the Oklahoma City Bombing Trial

June 2, 1997

I cannot comment on the jury's verdict, but I will say that this is a very important and long overdue day for the survivors and families of those who died in Oklahoma City. And I am very, very proud of the work of Attorney General Janet Reno, the prosecutors, the FBI, and the ATF.

Two years ago, I spoke to the families of 168 people who lost their lives at the Murrah Federal building. I told them that though they had lost much, they had not lost everything—and they had not lost America. I pledged then and I pledge now that we will stand with them for as many tomorrows as it takes. Today I say to the families of the victims, no single verdict can bring an end to your anguish, but your courage has been an inspiration to all Americans. Our prayers are with you.

Interview With Sarah Staley and Bill Brand of VH1

June 3, 1997

President's Musical Interests

Q. Starting off with just present day, being President, it comes with a lot of "Pomp and Circumstance" and "Hail to the Chief." What has music meant to you personally and publicly as President?

The President. First of all, it gives a lot of meaning to being President, because the President has the Marine Band, and then whenever we have a state visit here a marching band from the Army in colonial costumes with old instruments performs. So a lot of being President is the reminder of the music here. The Air Force, the Navy, the Army, all have dance bands; they play here at the White House for events. So that's a good part of it.

The second thing that I would say is that one of the nice things about being President is nearly anybody will come perform for you. So I've gotten to be friends with people that I've loved for 20 or 30 years, James Taylor, Carly Simon, Barbra Streisand, Aretha Franklin, countless others, and then to bring a lot of other new people in and give people a chance to be heard. We've had—working with public television here, we've had a country music concert reflecting women in country music; we've done jazz music; we've done blues. It's just been fascinating. Just last week we had Yo Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, and Mark O'Malley in here to do their wonderful Appalachian music. So all of that has been very, very important.