

Mar. 24 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998

Kangolo, master of ceremonies; Milli Mukyala, dairy distribution operator; and Robinah Balidawa, business owner. The President also re-

ferred to the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA).

## Statement on the Attack at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas March 24, 1998

Like all Americans, Hillary and I are deeply shocked and heartbroken by this afternoon's horrifying events at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

We don't know now and we may never fully understand what could have driven two youths to deliberately shoot into a crowd of their classmates.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families, and the entire Jonesboro community.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to Andrew Golden, 11, and Mitchell Johnson, 13, students at Westside Middle School, who fired on other students during a fire drill, killing four students and a teacher.

## Remarks on Departure from Entebbe, Uganda, and an Exchange With Reporters March 25, 1998

### *Jonesboro Incident*

*The President.* Just before I left the hotel this morning, I talked to the Governor of Arkansas and extended my personal condolences and sorrow about the terrible incident in Jonesboro yesterday. I attempted to call the mayor who is an old friend of mine, but I haven't reached him yet.

I just want to say again how profoundly sad I am and how disturbed I am. I've been thinking about this for the last several hours. This is the third incident in the last few months involving young children and violence in schools, and I'm going to ask the Attorney General to find whatever experts there are in our country on this and try to analyze this terrible tragedy to see whether there are any common elements in this incident and the other two, and whether it indicates any further action on our part.

Today the people in my home State and a town I know very well are grieving. They're suffering losses. And we should focus on that. But I do think, in the weeks to come, we have to analyze these incidents and see whether or not we can learn anything that will tell us what we can do to prevent further ones.

*Q.* Do you have any thoughts about how to stop this? I mean, if you've been thinking about it, anything come to mind, sir?

*The President.* I don't want to say too much until we have a chance to analyze them. I don't know enough about the facts of this incident. The facts of this incident are just now coming out. I've read, obviously, all the latest wire reports I can get, and frankly I'm not sure I know enough about the other two to draw any conclusions.

I don't want the American people to jump to any conclusions, but when three horrible tragedies like this involving young people who take other people's lives and then in the process destroy their own, we have to see if there are some common elements. And we'll look and do our best to do the right thing.

*Q.* Do you suspect that there are some common elements, sir?

*The President.* Well, the circumstances certainly seem to have a lot in common. What we need to know is what's behind the circumstances. As I said, I think that the American people today should send their thoughts, their prayers, their hopes to the people in Jonesboro.

But in the weeks ahead, we need to look into this very closely and see what, if anything, we can find. And then, if we do find some patterns, we ought to take whatever action seems appropriate.

*President's Visit to Rwanda*

*Q.* Your trip to Rwanda, could you give us just a little advance word of what you hope to accomplish there, sir?

*The President.* Obviously, I hope that my trip there will help to avoid further killing along the ethnic lines and bring the attention of the world to this in a way that will have an impact on ethnic conflicts in other parts of the world.

And then I'm going to come back here to the regional meeting that President Museveni has agreed to host, and I hope we'll come out with a statement there that will allow us to make further progress.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. at Entebbe Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas; Mayor Hubert A. Brodell of Jonesboro, AR; and President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks to Genocide Survivors in Kigali, Rwanda

*March 25, 1998*

Thank you, Mr. President. First, let me thank you, Mr. President, and Vice President Kagame, and your wives for making Hillary and me and our delegation feel so welcome. I'd also like to thank the young students who met us and the musicians, the dancers who were outside. I thank especially the survivors of the genocide and those who are working to rebuild your country for spending a little time with us before we came in here.

I have a great delegation of Americans with me, leaders of our Government, leaders of our Congress, distinguished American citizens. We're all very grateful to be here. We thank the diplomatic corps for being here and the members of the Rwandan Government and especially the citizens.

I have come today to pay the respects of my Nation to all who suffered and all who perished in the Rwandan genocide. It is my hope that through this trip, in every corner of the world today and tomorrow, their story will be told; that 4 years ago in this beautiful, green, lovely land, a clear and conscious decision was made by those then in power that the peoples of this country would not live side by side in peace.

During the 90 days that began on April 6 in 1994, Rwanda experienced the most extensive slaughter in this blood-filled century we are about to leave: families murdered in their homes, people hunted down, as they fled, by

soldiers and militia, through farmland and woods as if they were animals.

From Kibuye in the west to Kibungo in the east, people gathered seeking refuge in churches by the thousands, in hospitals, in schools. And when they were found, the old and the sick, the women and children alike, they were killed, killed because their identity card said they were Tutsi or because they had a Tutsi parent or because someone thought they looked like a Tutsi or slain, like thousands of Hutus, because they protected Tutsis or would not countenance a policy that sought to wipe out people who just the day before, and for years before, had been their friends and neighbors.

The Government-led effort to exterminate Rwanda's Tutsi and moderate Hutus, as you know better than me, took at least a million lives. Scholars of these sorts of events say that the killers, armed mostly with machetes and clubs, nonetheless did their work 5 times as fast as the mechanized gas chambers used by the Nazis.

It is important that the world know that these killings were not spontaneous or accidental. It is important that the world hear what your President just said: They were most certainly not the result of ancient tribal struggles. Indeed, these people had lived together for centuries before the events the President described began to unfold.