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makes it far less likely that these things will be repeated. And I would think that any parent would want to do that.

Q. How much help do you think this guide will be, sir?

The President. Well, I think it might be quite a bit. One of the things that, frankly, I must say, I was not aware of until I started studying the facts more closely, is that if you look at the Jonesboro case, the Kentucky case, the Mississippi case, the Pennsylvania case, some other cases where there were shootings but not killings, as well as the one here, in quite a number of the cases, there was some behavior on the part of the young people involved which indicated that they were—they might do something very out of the ordinary. Now, if you're not—if you can't—first of all, these kinds of things are almost unimaginable. So, unless you have some way of knowing that what kind of behavior should set off the biggest warning signal in your mind, and you have something constructive to do about it, you know, where you can take these children and what you can do. Normally, what happens is people are just disturbed, and then they go on with their lives until something terrible happens. So, I really believe there's a chance, if we can get this guide up, if we can get it widely discussed in our schools, and people can talk about it, not in a paranoid or negative way but just in a open way, that there's a good chance it will really do some good.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:24 p.m. at Portland International Airport. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon

June 13, 1998

Thank you. First of all, I want to thank all of you for coming today, and I want to particularly thank the families who just met with me whose children were wounded and, in two cases, killed.

I thank Mr. Bentz and Superintendent Kent and Mr. Petersen of the school board, and Mayor Morrisette. I'd like to thank the Members of your congressional delegation who came down with me today, Senators Wyden and Smith and Representatives Hooley and Blumenauer who came with me, and of course, Congressman DeFazio who represents this community.

I was, frankly, glad but somewhat concerned when you—some of your leaders were kind enough to invite me to come down here today, because I didn't want to do anything to add to your burdens, and I was afraid all I could do was to tell you that your country has been thinking about you and praying for you and pulling for you. But after I had the chance to spend the time I did with the families, I'm very, very glad I came. And I thank you for giving me the chance just to meet all of you and to listen to you.

Let me say that this has been not only a horrible and traumatic experience for you; this has been a traumatic experience for all of America. As all of you know, there have been a series of these school shootings with terrible consequences, in Paducah, Kentucky; in Pearl, Mississippi; in Edinboro, Pennsylvania; and in my home State, in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

The first thing I'd like to tell you is that I am immensely impressed and proud of you for the way you're coming back from this and going on, the way you're determined to rebuild your communities, the way the school began to function again, the way you held your commencement and started your athletic competitions again.

The second thing I would say, that I know from my own experience with the community in Arkansas, which I know very well and I know a lot of the people who were involved there, you should feel good about your community and good about your school. And you should know that these terrible acts of violence are occurring at a time when the overall juvenile crime rate is actually going down in America, where our young people on the whole are doing better and doing better at staying out of trouble, getting into more positive endeavors.

I think we have to be honest, though, and see, as so many of the families said to me today, including the fathers of Mikael and Ben, we want something constructive to

come out of this. Well, we have to acknowledge the fact that what we have is, in America, a very small number—nobody knows how many—of kids that are really troubled and disturbed and may have a lot of rage. With easy access to guns in a culture where they've been exposed to lots and lots and lots of violence, and there are literally scores and scores of serious studies which show that the younger you are and the more you're exposed to it, the more kind of desensitized you are to it. And those three things can be a combustible combination.

So what I hope we can do is to do a better job of kind of alerting ourselves and identifying kids that may have problems, before these things happen, and then acting with greater strength and discipline to go forward. Many of the parents today gave me a lot of specific suggestions. I thank you for those. I know that Senator Wyden and Senator Smith just yesterday introduced a bill that said that any young person who brought a gun to school, which is in violation of Federal law, should be held for a 72-hour period of evaluation. And I think that's a very good suggestion.

Today I instructed the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General to prepare a guidebook to be ready when school opens next year in every school in America, for teachers and parents and for students as well, to describe all the kinds of early warning signals that deeply troubled young people sometimes give, not just bringing a gun to school but maybe the other things as well.

Not to scare our people all across America or to trouble them, but everybody who has looked at you knows that this is a good community that they'd be proud to live in, and therefore, it could happen anywhere. So what we have to try to do is to, all of us, learn more about the people with whom we live and the kinds of signals that are coming out. And then we've got to make sure that we have the capacity to actually do something about these problems if we can find them out before they get out of hand.

And I know that—I believe, at least, that's what your commitment is. That's what a lot of people have told me, as I worked my way around the room today, as I met with your officials at the airport.

And so all I can tell you is, we'll do our very best to continue to help with whatever residual challenges you have here. And I'll do my very best to listen to what you have said to me today, and then to make something really positive happen in the country to increase our ability to prevent such things in the future.

I hope you will go on with your healing and go on with your lives and take a great deal of pride in the way your school and your community has responded to a terrible thing, in a human, strong, very positive way. For me and for all the people who came here with me today, this has been a great inspiration that we will never, ever forget.

Again, I thank all of you for coming out. And more than anything, let me say again to all the families who came to meet with me, I know it couldn't have been easy, but it meant more to me than I can possibly convey.

God bless you all, and good luck. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Bentz, principal; Jamon Kent, superintendent, and Alan Petersen, school board chairman, Springfield Public Schools; Mayor William W. Morrisette of Springfield; and Michael Nickolauson, father of Mikael E. Nickolauson, and Mark Walker, father of Benjamin A. Walker, the two students who died as a result of a May 21 attack in the high school cafeteria.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Beverly Hills, California

June 13, 1998

Thank you very much. I don't need to say anything, do I? [*Laughter*] Let me join all of you in thanking Lew and Edie for another wonderful evening. I love to come here. I'm always happy. I don't think the place has ever been more beautiful. And that's the nicest Presidential seal I have ever seen, Lew. [*Laughter*] And the only one that smelled intoxicatingly wonderful. [*Laughter*]

I do thank all of you for coming. I thank you for your support of our party. I thank Steve Grossman and Len Barrack for their