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Reagan & Bush

Reagan Bush Committee

901 South Highland Street, Arlington, Virginia 22204 (703) 685-3400

Statement of Pres. Carter re Hostages

Nov. 2, 1980

The Iranian Parliament today has finally taken a position on the release of our hostages. This is a significant development. We have long been aware that there would be no resolution of this problem until the new Iranian government was in place and the parliament had acted. Many months ago we made clear the steps that we would be prepared to take when the hostages are released. Ever since the American hostages were illegally seized in Iran, I have affirmed that our policy is based on two fundamental objectives. Protecting the honor and the vital interest of the United States and working to ensure the earliest possible safe release of the hostages. As we understand the parliament's proposals, they appear to offer a positive basis for achieving both of these objectives. We are pursuing the matter through diplomatic channels. Any action taken by our government will be in full accordance with our laws and with our Constitution. I know that I share with the hostages, with their families, and with the people of this country the desire for a prompt return of those for whom we have waited so long. I know also that all Americans will want that return to be on a proper basis which is worthy of the suffering and sacrifice which the hostages have endured.

Let me conclude with a final comment. We are within two days of an important national election. Let me assure you that my decision on this crucial matter will not be affected by the calendar. We are in contact with the bipartisan leadership of

the Congress, with Governor Reagan, with Congressman Anderson, and we will keep the American people informed. I wish that I could predict when the hostages will return. I cannot. But whether our hostages come home before or after the election, and regardless of the outcome of the election, the Iranian government and the world community will find our country, its people and the leaders of both political parties united in desiring the early and safe return of the hostages to their homes, but only on the basis that preserves our national honor and our national integrity.

Thank you very much.