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Q. Mr. Prime Minister, I just want to wish you the great success in your performing your duties in this very crucial time in Israel and the Middle East. While I'm wishing you this, I would like very much to ask you, Mr. Prime Minister, to release the Palestinian——

Prime Minister Peres. Be careful with your timing.

Q.—to release the Palestinian prisoners as soon as possible so they will go back to their families and we will really have peace in the region, especially in the Authority. Thank you.

The President. Let me say, first of all, about the elections, I expect them to go forward; I expect them to be successful; I expect them to be held in a way that is generally applauded for their integrity. And I expect to go back to the Middle East at an appropriate time, but I don't have a trip scheduled. I think I'd like it to be in the context of another advance for the cause of peace. And that's where we are.

Prime Minister Peres. Before Christmas, 450 villages in the West Bank and all the major cities, as well as Gaza and Jericho, will be under the rule of the Palestinians for the first time in history. Israel has implemented one of our greatest moral promises: not to rule another people. Believe me, it makes us content and complete by doing so.

Part of the agreement was to release another thousand prisoners before the elections. I hope we shall release a little bit more than that but for the people that have blood stains on their hands. Until now, we kept every promise, every word. We were ahead of time. And I thought the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin puts an extra responsibility upon me to really do everything true to the commitment.

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 110th news conference began at 1:14 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to King Hussein of Jordan, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria..

Statement on Action To Protect Retirement Plans

December 11, 1995

Hard-working Americans are doing their part to save for the future. Americans who work to support their families and save for retirement should not have to worry that the money they earned won't be there when they need it most.

Today, my administration is taking action to give the Government the tools necessary to assure American workers they can put their 401(k) savings into a system that is as safe as Fort Knox.

Every American should be encouraged to set aside money for their retirement and make investments in their economic future. Our action will assure millions of Americans that they can put their savings and their trust into a financially sound retirement plan. My administration will continue to do its part to stand guard over Americans' retirement funds.

Proclamation 6857—To Modify the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States, To Provide Rules of Origin Under the North American Free Trade Agreement for Affected Goods, and for Other Purposes

December 11, 1995

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Section 1205(a) of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (''the 1988 Act'') (19 U.S.C. 3005(a)) directs the United States International Trade Commission (''the Commission'') to keep the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (''HTS'') under continuous review and periodically to recommend to the President such modifications in the HTS as the Commission considers necessary or appropriate to accomplish the purposes set forth in that subsection.

2. Section 1206(a) of the 1988 Act (19 U.S.C. 3006(a)) authorizes the President to proclaim modifications to the HTS, based on the recommendations of the Commission