

*Volunteer.* You're very welcome, very welcome.

*The President.* Appreciate you.

*Volunteer.* Thank you.

*The President.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. at the Alamo Regional Command Reception Center.

## Statement on Military Operations in Iraq *September 1, 2008*

Today in Iraq, responsibility for security in Anbar Province was transferred to Iraqi civilian authorities. Iraqi forces will now take the lead in security operations in Anbar, with American troops moving into an overwatch role. Not long ago, Anbar was one of the most dangerous Provinces in Iraq. Al Qaida was in control of almost every major population center, and its leaders intended to turn Anbar Province into a safe haven from which to plan and launch further attacks against Iraqis and others in the region as well as here at home.

Today, Anbar is no longer lost to Al Qaida; it is Al Qaida that lost Anbar. Iraqis, like countless other Muslims across the world, witnessed Al Qaida's brutality firsthand and rejected it. As a result, Anbar has been transformed and reclaimed by the Iraqi people. This achievement is a credit

to the courage of our troops, the Iraqi Security Forces, and the brave tribes and other civilians from Anbar who worked alongside them.

Today's ceremony returns the 11th of 18 Provinces to Provincial Iraqi control. Al Qaida and Iranian-backed special groups remain a threat, but the United States and the nations of Multi-National Forces—Iraq continue to stand with the Iraqis as they work to defeat these enemies and build a democracy in the heart of the Middle East. The success of Iraq will make the American people more secure and help yield the peace we all desire.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

## Remarks Prior to a Cabinet Meeting *September 2, 2008*

Members of my Cabinet have assembled here, and I thank you all for coming. We recognize that the prestorm efforts were important, and so is the followup efforts; in other words, what happens after the storm passes is as important as what happens prior to the storm arriving.

And so our discussion today is about energy. The Gulf Coast region produces a lot of energy for the United States. And we're now in the process of assessing any

damage done to the infrastructure and right—a little early right now to come up with a solid assessment. There is some encouraging signs. For example, during Katrina, rigs would be—rigs moved because of the force of the storm, and their anchors dug across pipelines, which caused there to be infrastructure damage. We didn't see much of that this time, although I will tell you that it's a little early to be making any forecasts.

It's not too early, however, for the Federal Government to continue to coordinate with the State and local people. That's why Secretary Bodman was in touch with Governor Jindal. We want to make sure that we're in touch with these energy-producing States, to help assess what took place and what needs to happen.

One thing is for certain: When Congress comes back, they've got to understand that we need more domestic energy, not less, that—and one place to find it is offshore America, lands that have been taken off the books, so to speak, by congressional law. And now they need to give us a chance to find more oil and gas here at home. I'd much rather American consumers be buying gasoline produced from American oil than from foreign oil. I'd rather our dollar stay at home than go overseas.

And I know the Congress has been on recess for a while, but this issue hasn't gone away. And this storm should not cause the Members of Congress to say, "Well, we don't need to address our energy independence." It ought to cause the Congress to step up their need to address our dependence on foreign oil. And one place to do so is to give us a chance to explore in environmentally friendly ways on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:33 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Piyush "Bobby" Jindal of Louisiana. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Request *September 2, 2008*

*Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and as contemplated by section 446 of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act as amended in 1989, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's 2009 Budget Request Act. This transmittal does not represent an endorsement of the contents of the D.C. government's requests.

The proposed 2009 Budget Request Act reflects the major programmatic objectives

of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia. For 2009, the District estimates total revenues and expenditures of \$10.1 billion.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.