

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 pre-storm efforts were important and so is the follow-up 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 are 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. 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.

Satellite Remarks to the Republican National Convention

September 2, 2008

Thank you, Laura, and good evening. As you know, my duties have me here in Washington tonight to oversee the Federal Government's efforts to help citizens recover from Hurricane Gustav. We are thankful that the damage in New Orleans and across the gulf coast was less than many had feared.

I commend the Governors of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas for their sure-handed response and seamless coordination with the Federal Government. I thank all the wonderful volunteers who stepped forward to help their brothers and sisters in need. We know that there is still risk even after the storm has passed, so I ask citizens across the region to listen closely to local officials and follow their instructions before returning to their homes. All of us are keeping the people of the gulf coast in our thoughts and our prayers.

As you gather tonight in St. Paul, I want to share some thoughts about our nominee, a great American, and the next President of the United States, John McCain.

Before I do so, I want to say hello to two people in the hall with you tonight. I could have no finer examples of character, decency, and integrity than my mom and dad. And I love you a lot.

I know what it takes to be President. In these past 8 years, I've sat at the Resolute desk and reviewed the daily intelligence briefings, the threat assessments, and the reports from our commanders on the frontlines. I've stood in the ruins of buildings knocked down by killers and promised the survivors I would never let them down. I know the hard choices that fall solely to a President. John McCain's life has prepared him to make those choices. He is ready to lead this Nation.

From the day of his commissioning, John McCain was a respected naval officer who made decisions on which the lives of others depended. As an elected public servant, he

earned the respect of colleagues in both parties as a man to follow when there's a tough call to make.

John McCain's life is a story of service above self. Forty years ago in an enemy prison camp, Lieutenant Commander McCain was offered release ahead of others who had been held longer. His wounds were so severe that anyone would have understood if he'd accepted; John refused. For that selfless decision, he suffered nearly 5 more years of beatings and isolation. When he was released, his arms had been broken, but not his honor.

Fellow citizens, if the Hanoi Hilton could not break John McCain's resolve to do what is best for his country, you can be sure the angry left never will.

As the father of seven sons and daughters, John has the heart of a protector. He and his wonderful wife, Cindy, are adoptive parents. John is a leader know—who knows that human life is fragile, that human life is precious, that human life must be defended.

We have seen John McCain's commitment to principle in our Nation's Capital. John is a steadfast opponent of wasteful spending. As President, he will stand up to the high-tax crowd in Congress and make the tax relief permanent. He will invest in the energy technologies of tomorrow and lift the ban on drilling for America's offshore oil today.

John is an independent man who thinks for himself. He's not afraid to tell you when he disagrees. Believe me, I know. [*Laughter*] No matter what the issue, this man is honest and speaks straight from the heart.

Last year, John McCain's independence and character helped change history. The Democrats had taken control of Congress and were threatening to cut off funds for our troops. In the face of calls for retreat, I ordered a surge of forces into Iraq. Many in Congress said it had no chance of working. Yet one Senator above all had faith in our troops and the importance of their mission, and that was John McCain. Some told him that his early and consistent call for more troops would put his Presidential campaign