

those citizens who listened carefully to the local authorities and evacuated. And I want to thank my fellow citizens in Texas and in other States for welcoming these folks in open arms. The State of Texas is a generous State. And, Governor, I wanted to thank you and your team for being so kind to the people.

And it's very important for those who have been evacuated to listen very carefully to the officials in their respective States before they decide to return. This storm is yet to pass. It's a serious event. And as the Governor mentioned, the people of east Texas got to be prepared for a possible flooding event.

All in all, what I look for is to determine whether or not assets are in place to help, whether or not there's coordination, and whether or not there's preparation for recovery. And to that end, I feel good about this event.

And I do want to thank Gail McGovern of the American Red Cross for joining us, and thank a lot of the other organizations that are preparing to go help people in need. These organizations, such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army, require the support of our citizens.

And if you're interested in how you can help once the storm passes, please call up the different web sites of these organizations and donate your time or your money so that the recovery effort is as compassionate and complete as possible.

Governor, thanks for having me. I want to thank your team for all the hard work they're doing. I'm looking forward to going in with you in the room next door to say thanks to the people that are working the long hours. And we're going to go down to San Antonio and see a staging area there and thank the people there for working so hard, not only on behalf of the citizens of Texas, but on behalf of the people of the region.

Appreciate it. It's good to be home.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. J. Richard Perry of Texas; Sen. Kathryn A. "Kay" Bailey Hutchison; Gov. Robert R. Riley of Alabama; Gov. Piyush "Bobby" Jindal of Louisiana; Gov. Haley R. Barbour of Mississippi; and Gail J. McGovern, president and chief executive officer, American Red Cross.

Remarks at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas *September 1, 2008*

The President. You know, one of the great things about our country is the number of people who volunteer during one of these incidents. Here are some Red Cross volunteers. They are—they symbolize the thousands that will help.

And my call to our fellow citizens is that—find out how you can help. You can help by volunteering. You can help by contributing to the Red Cross or the Salvation Army. Somebody is going to say, "Well, I don't know how to." Well, it's pretty easy. You can get on the web page. If you're

interested in the Red Cross, just call up Red Cross on your—and they'll steer you to the way to help.

Anyway, America is a great country. It's great because we've got great people. Nobody is happy about these storms; everybody is praying for everybody's safety. But I'm confident that after the storm passes and there's a human need, it will be met because of the generosity of the American people.

And I want to thank you all for setting such a good example.

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.