AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

dedicated to alleviating your struggles and advancing your dreams. You are calling for action. Now is the time for those of us in Washington to live up to our responsibilities.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:15 p.m. on January 30 in the Library at the White House for broadcast on January 31. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 30 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 31.

Statement on Provincial Elections in Iraq
January 31, 2009

I congratulate the people of Iraq on holding significant Provincial elections today. Millions of Iraqi citizens from every ethnic and religious group went peacefully to the polls across the country to choose new Provincial councils. It is important that the councils get seated, select new governors, and begin work on behalf of the Iraqi people who elected them.

The elections were managed and organized by the Iraqi Government with vital assistance from the United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq. Iraqi police and military forces helped secure the polling sites and protected voters as they cast their ballots. This important step forward should continue the process of Iraqis taking responsibility for their future.

The United States is proud to have provided technical assistance, along with the United Nations and other international organizations, to Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission, which performed professionally under difficult circumstances.

Interview With Matt Lauer of NBC's "Today"
February 1, 2009

The President's Mother-in-Law

Mr. Lauer. We're here in the Map Room at the White House with the 44th President of the United States. President Obama, it's great to be with you. How you doing?

The President. I'm doing great, Matt, thank you.

Mr. Lauer. So you've been President 12 days. So let me ask the question that's on everyone's mind right now: How's it going living with your mother-in-law? [*Laughter*]

The President. Fortunately, I love my mother-in-law and——

Mr. Lauer. I'm just asking. I'm not trying to start trouble.

The President. She is actually—she defends me whenever I screw up. So, Michelle, you know, she's about to come down hard, my mother-in-law comes in, intercedes so——

Mr. Lauer. Everything's copacetic.

The President. The longer she stays, the better off I'm going to be.

The First Family's Transition to Life in the White House

Mr. Lauer. I was driving over here, Mr. President; I was thinking about this enormous transition that you've been through taking on the reins as Commander in Chief, Mrs. Obama becoming the First Lady. But you've got a daughter, 10, and a daughter, 7, and this is a huge game-changer for them as well. How are they doing?

The President. You know, they—I said this, I think, in an earlier interview—people think I'm cool; nobody is cooler than my two girls. They just seem to take whatever comes with, you know, happiness and steadiness. And they're loving school, they're making friends—in fact, they've got some friends from school over today—and they've already joined some clubs. And Sasha, you know, I think maybe to endear myself to her, she decided she wanted to join a basketball team, so what more could I want?