On November 14, in his first press conference since his reelection victory over Mitt Romney, President Barack Obama ’83CC addressed a topic not mentioned in any of the three presidential debates, the last of which took place on the day Hurricane Sandy was born in the Caribbean.

“As you know,” he told reporters in the East Room, “we can’t attribute any particular weather event to climate change. What we do know is that the temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even ten years ago. We do know that the Arctic ice cap is melting faster than what was predicted even five years ago. We do know that there have been an extraordinarily
large number of severe weather events here in North America, but also around the
globe. And I am a firm believer that climate change is real, that it is impacted by
human behavior and carbon emissions, and as a consequence, I think we have an
obligation to future generations to do something about it.”

Obama went on to say that he didn’t know what either Democrats or Republicans
were prepared to do, since this was “not just a partisan issue. I also think there are
regional differences.” He suggested that action on climate change had to be linked
to job creation and growth in order to win popular support.

The next day, Obama traveled north for the second time to visit areas stricken by
Sandy, including Cedar Grove Avenue in Staten Island (above). He promised federal
support, thanked local leaders and first responders, spoke with residents, called on
insurance companies to fulfill their obligations, announced that Housing and Urban
Development secretary Shaun Donovan would be the White House point person on
rebuilding efforts, and vowed to work with Congress to do “everything we can do”
to get the resources needed.

“During difficult times like this,” he said, “we’re reminded that we’re bound
together and we have to look out for each other. And a lot of the things that seem
important, the petty differences, melt away, and we focus on what binds us
together and that we as Americans are going to stand with each other in their hour
of need.”

Afterward, Obama returned to Washington, where, that evening, he attended a
private screening of *Lincoln*.

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