

we come back stronger, and together, we will do that once more.

Thanks. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 7 p.m. on October 31 in the Map Room

at the White House for broadcast on November 3. In the address, the President referred to PO Daniel Todd, USCG, rescue swimmer. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 2, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on November 3.

Remarks at Federal Emergency Management Agency Headquarters *November 3, 2012*

Well, listen, I just completed not only a meeting with our team here at FEMA and all of our Cabinet officers who are involved in the recovery process along the East Coast, but we also had a conference call with the Governors of Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, as well as many of the municipalities who have been directly affected by this crisis and this tragedy.

We still have a long way to go to make sure that the people of New Jersey, Connecticut, New York, and some of the surrounding areas get their basic needs taken care of and that we start moving back to normalcy.

A couple of things that we've emphasized: Number one, that it is critical for us to get power back on as quickly as possible. And just to give people an example of the kind of work we're doing, the military, DOD, thanks to the work of Leon and others, have been able to get military transport facilities to move cherry pickers and personnel from as far away as California to get that equipment into the area so that we can start getting some of the power back on as quickly as possible. It is a painstaking process, but we're making progress.

Number two, we're getting assets in to pump as much water out as possible. Lower Manhattan obviously is a particularly acute example, but there are problems with flooding that are affecting substations throughout the region. That's going to continue to be a top priority.

Number three, making sure that people's basic needs are taken care of. As we start seeing the weather get a little bit colder, people can't be without power for long periods of time, without heat for long periods of time.

And so what we're doing is starting to shift to identify where we can have temporary housing outside of shelters so people can get some sense of normalcy. They can have a hot meal; they can have the capacity to take care of their families as their homes are being dealt with.

Number four, debris removal, still important. Number five, making sure that the National Guard and other Federal assets are in place to help with getting the transportation systems back up and running, that's going to be critical.

What I told the Governors and the mayors is what I've been saying to my team from the start of this event, and that is, we don't have any patience for bureaucracy, we don't have any patience for redtape, and we want to make sure that we are figuring out a way to get to yes, as opposed to no, when it comes to these problems.

The other thing I emphasize, though, is that it is much easier for us to respond if we know what these problems are out in these areas, so if everybody can help publicize the number 800-621-FEMA, 800-621-FEMA, then individuals can register with FEMA and immediately get the assistance that they need.

And so the more that folks in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut understand that there are a lot of resources available for them, not just with respect to housing, but also with respect to childcare, medicine, a whole range of support, then we want to make sure that they contact us as soon as possible if they're in distress, because help is available.

Let me just close by saying this: Obviously, we've now seen that after the initial search and rescue, the recovery process is difficult, and it's painful. But the Governors at the local level—

Governors Christie, Cuomo, and Malloy—they are working around the clock; their teams are working around the clock. We are incredibly grateful to the heroism and hard work of our first-responders, many of whom themselves have had their homes flooded out. Our hearts continue to go out to those families who have been affected and who have actually lost loved ones; that's obviously heartbreaking.

But I'm confident that we can continue to make progress, as long as State, local, and Federal officials stay focused. And I can assure you everybody on this team, everybody sitting around the table, has made this a number-one priority and this continues to be my number-one priority.

There's nothing more important than us getting this right. And we're going to spend as

much time, effort, and energy as is necessary to make sure that all the people in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut know that the entire country is behind them in this difficult recovery effort. We are going to put not just 100 percent, but 120 percent behind making sure that they get the resources they need to rebuild and recover.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 8:55 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Dannel P. Malloy of Connecticut; Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York; Gov. Christopher J. Christie of New Jersey; and Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Mentor, Ohio November 3, 2012

The President. Hello, Ohio! Hello, Cardinals! The—let me begin by just saying how grateful I am for Kevin for that great introduction, but also how proud I am of Erin and her sisters and their whole family. Give them a big round of applause. There they are right there.

Now, the only thing I have to say is, is that Erin—she was pretty excited about meeting me, but she saw Justin Bieber the other day—[laughter]—so I'm, like, the second most exciting person she's met in the last few days. [Laughter]

My understanding also is that this band right here just won the State championship. Best band in Ohio right here! In the house! Congratulations. And the football team is in its first playoff game tonight. So the Cardinals got a lot going on right now.

And despite all that, the fact that you guys still came out I'm grateful for, so thank you.

Now, for the past several days, all of us have been focused on one of the worst hurricanes in our lifetimes. And each day, I've been getting on calls with mayors and Governors, county officials, just trying to make sure that people are getting help. And I tell them that the entire country is behind them. We mourn those who were lost. We will walk with the people whose

lives have been upended by the storm every step of the way in this long, hard road for recovery. And I hope everybody is out there—I hope everybody understands this will be a—not just a couple of weeks, but it's going to be months of recovery for a lot of these families. So those of you who can still help out through the Red Cross, please do so. And for the first-responders who are here today, it's just a reminder of how important you are, because when you see our firefighters, our police officers, our EMS folks out there every single day working, it's amazing.

And so, despite this tragedy, we've also been inspired by what we've seen over the last several days, over the last week. You see heroes running into buildings, wading into water to help their fellow citizens; neighbors helping neighbors cope with tragedy; leaders of different political parties working together to fix what's broken. It's a spirit that says no matter how bad a storm is, no matter how tough times are, we're all in this together. We rise or fall as one Nation and as one people.

And that spirit has guided this country along its improbable journey for more than two centuries. It's carried us through the trials and tribulations of the last 4 years.