



# Obama Faces The Press

*Will Obama Answer The Following Questions After Avoiding Them For Months?*

## AFTER AVOIDING QUESTIONS FOR MONTHS, OBAMA WILL FACE THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORPS TODAY

**Obama Will Hold His First Press Conference Since His Re-Election On Wednesday.** "When President Barack Obama holds a news conference on Wednesday, it will be the 16th solo, formal White House press conference of his presidency. It will be his first since winning re-election and since the resignation of his CIA director over an affair - both topics likely to come up on Wednesday." ("Obama To Hold 16<sup>th</sup> Full Press Conference Of Presidency," [CNN's Political Ticker](#), 11/13/12)

- **Obama Has Not Formally Taken Questions From The White House Press Corps On U.S. Soil Since June 8.** "The White House press corps has not formally been given the opportunity to ask questions of the president on U.S. soil since his appearance in the briefing room on June 8 (when he said 'the private sector is doing fine.')" (Jake Tapper, "President Obama Takes Questions From People Mag, Entertainment Tonight, Disses White House Press Corps," [ABC News](#), 8/16/12)

## WILL OBAMA FINALLY LAY OUT A SECOND TERM AGENDA?

**Obama Has "Done Little To Outline His Priorities For The Next Four Years."** "Yet President Obama has done little to outline his priorities and promises for the next four years, and with just 19 days left until Election Day, some are calling on the president to be more specific." (Leigh Ann Caldwell, "With 19 Days To Go Until Election Day, Obama Stays Vague," [CBS News](#), 10/18/12)

**The Washington Post's Dan Balz: Obama Has Been "Rightly Criticized For Not Being More Specific About His Second-Term Agenda."** "The president has rightly been criticized for not being more specific about his second-term agenda. What economic policies does he have that he hasn't already tried? What is he truly prepared to do on the deficit?" (Dan Balz, "For Obama and Romney, Monday's Debate Is Crucial," [The Washington Post](#), 10/20/12)

**Democrat Strategist: "The Obama Campaign Made A Strategic Choice To Avoid Talking About The Future."** "Another Democratic strategist told CBS News that the Obama campaign 'made a strategic choice' to avoid talking about the future and instead focus on tearing down his opponent Mitt Romney. The decision, the strategist said, was a response to the mood of the electorate, the status of the economy and likely a host of other factors. There's no reason to think the president will now change tactics and offer additional details about his agenda." (Leigh Ann Caldwell, "With 19 Days To Go Until Election Day, Obama Stays Vague," [CBS News](#),

10/18/12)

- **“Obama’s Decision to Offer Relatively Few Details Concerning Agenda Differs From His 2008 Presidential Run.”** “Mr. Obama’s decision to offer relatively few details concerning his agenda differs from his 2008 presidential run, when he promised to pass health care reform, immigration reform, climate change legislation, an increase in the minimum wage, an expansion of Pell grants and he vowed to close Guantanamo Bay.” (Leigh Ann Caldwell, “With 19 Days To Go Until Election Day, Obama Stays Vague,” [CBS News](#), 10/18/12)

## WILL OBAMA BEND TO LABOR’S PRESSURE ON ENTITLEMENTS?

**Meeting With Obama, Labor Leaders “Drew A Line In The Sand” Over Taxes And Entitlement Programs.** “Labor and progressive leaders who met with President Obama Tuesday drew a line in the sand on taxes, unemployment insurance, and entitlements—all of which are subject to change under the looming fiscal cliff deadline.” (Julia Edwards, “Labor Leaders Draw Line In The Sand At White House Meeting,” [National Journal](#), 11/13/12)

- **Labor Leaders Said They Want “Tax Hikes For The Wealthiest Americans” And Protections For Entitlement Programs.** “A cadre of top labor leaders is headed to the White House on Tuesday to press their concerns about the fiscal cliff. Topmost on their list: Tax hikes for the wealthiest Americans, and protection from cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and other programs for low income families.” (Jennifer Liberto and Adam Aigner-Treworgy, “Labor To Press Obama On Tax Hike For Wealthy,” [CNN Money](#), 11/13/12)

## WILL OBAMA RENEW THE QUEST FOR CAP AND TRADE?

**Obama’s “Has Said That The Most Important Policy He Could Address In His Second Term Is Climate Change.”** “The President has said that the most important policy he could address in his second term is climate change, one of the few issues that he thinks could fundamentally improve the world decades from now.” (Ryan Lizza, “The Second Term: What Would Obama Do If Reelected?” [The New Yorker](#), 6/11/12)

- **Obama: “We’re Going To Deal With Climate Change In A Serious Way.”** OBAMA: “We have to have an even more robust energy policy if we’re going to create the kind of jobs in this new energy sector that are needed and we’re going to deal with climate change in a serious way.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks At A Campaign Event](#), San Francisco, CA, 2/17/12)

**Obama Administration Could Back Carbon Taxes As A Part Of Fiscal Reform.** “A senior Treasury Department official said Tuesday that the Obama administration could back carbon taxes as part of a wider fiscal reform deal, but with a big caveat: Republicans would have to show that they want to play ball.” (Ben Geman, “Treasury Official: Administration Open To Carbon Tax If GOP Takes Lead,” [The Hill’s E2 Wire](#), 11/13/12)

**Obama’s EPA Still Pushing To Implement His Failed Cap-And-Trade Legislation Through Piecemeal Rules And Regulations Imposed On Industries.** “President Obama’s use of executive authority and his Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) interpretation of existing laws might have laid the groundwork for renewed cap-and-trade efforts, political experts said Wednesday. The courts have approved many of the EPA’s pollution regulations, giving Obama license to propose new rules, former EPA Administrator Carol Browner said during a Politico-hosted panel discussion at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C. And though comprehensive cap-and-trade legislation might be off the table for now, there are opportunities for piecemeal progress as industries implement the new EPA rules, she said.” (Zack Colman, “Obama, EPA actions Make Cap-And-Trade More Likely,” [The Hill](#), 9/5/12)

**Former EPA Administrator Carol Browner Notes Obama Would Use Executive Authority, The**

**Clean Water Act, And The Clean Air Act “To Go Even Further” To Push Cap-And-Trade In A Second Term.** “Browner offered that Obama would use the CWA and CAA to go even further in his attempts to regulate air pollution if he wins a second term. She said he might propose pollution limits on existing coal-fired power plants, taking a significant leap from the first-ever limits on new coal-fired power plants EPA proposed in March. ‘You’re highly likely to see the president and the administration continue to use their existing authority,’ she said. She later added, ‘The president has been willing to use his executive authority ... I think you’ll see that kind of leadership.’” (Zack Colman, “Obama, EPA actions Make Cap-And-Trade More Likely,” [The Hill](#), 9/5/12)

**Once A Top Priority, Cap-And-Trade Has Been Shelved.** “Cap-and-trade legislation also stands out as something that’s been placed on the permanent back burner in part because of how Obama handled the issue. Once the subject of countless white papers and bipartisan compromise talks, Obama’s failure to get the measure across the finish line has resulted in angry screeds from the likes of Gore, who wrote in a Rolling Stone essay this summer that the president ‘has never presented to the American people the magnitude of the climate crisis.’” (Darren Samuelsohn, “Obama’s Green Losing Streak,” [Politico](#), 9/21/11)

- **Vice President Al Gore: “After The House Passed Cap And Trade, He Did Little To Make Passage In The Senate A Priority.”** (John M. Broder, “Gore Criticized Obama For Record On Climate,” *The New York Times*, 6/23/11)
- **“President Obama, Who Campaigned In Part On A Cap-And-Trade Program, Has Stopped Talking About It.”** (Wyatt Buchanan, “Climate Program On Shaky Ground,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 6/12/11)

**Obama: “We Still Don’t Have All The Energy Policies In Place That We Need To Free Ourselves From Dependence On Foreign Oil And Adequately Deal With Climate Change.”** “We still don’t have all the energy policies in place that we need to free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil and adequately deal with climate change, despite the fact that we’ve doubled fuel economy standards on cars and made enormous progress on clean energy -- and that means that I’m going to need another term to finish the job.” (President Barack Obama Delivers Remarks At Campaign Event #2, [New York](#), NY, 11/30/11)

## **WILL OBAMA EXPLAIN HIS CONFLICTING ANSWERS ON BENGHAZI?**

**In A Previously Unreleased Clip From His September 12<sup>th</sup> “60 Minutes” Interview, Obama Confirmed That He Had Avoided “The Use Of The Word Terrorism In Connection With The Libya Attack.”** CBS’s STEVE KROFT: “Mr. President, this morning you went out of your way to avoid the use of the word terrorism in connection with the Libya attack, do you believe that this was a terrorism attack?” OBAMA: “Well it’s too early to tell exactly how this came about, what group was involved, but obviously it was an attack on Americans. And we are going to be working with the Libyan government to make sure that we bring these folks to justice, one way or the other.” (CBS’s “[60 Minutes](#),” 9/12/12)

**In Obama’s September 12th Rose Garden Remarks, “He Did Not Explicitly Refer To The Benghazi Attack As An ‘Act Of Terror,’ Though He Did Use Those Words.”** “Romney said during Tuesday night’s debate that it took 14 days for Obama to acknowledge that the attack was a terrorist attack, while Obama and CNN’s Candy Crowley agreed that Obama said so Sept. 12 in remarks in the Rose Garden. In those remarks, journalists noticed, he did not explicitly refer to the Benghazi attack as an ‘act of terror,’ though he did use those words. ‘No acts of terror will ever shake the resolve of this great nation, alter that character, or eclipse the light of the values that we stand for,’ he said.” (Josh Rogin, “Obama Did Call Benghazi Attack ‘An Act Of Terror’ - In Colorado,” [Foreign Policy’s The Cable](#), 10/16/12)

- **Obama “Did Seem To Suggest In His Rose Garden Speech That A Reason For The Benghazi Attack Was The Video.”** “The president did seem to suggest in his Rose Garden speech that a reason for the Benghazi attack was the video. Obama said: ‘Since our founding, the United States has been a nation that respects all faiths. We reject all efforts to denigrate the religious beliefs of others. But there is absolutely no justification to this type of senseless violence. None.’” (“FactChecking The Hofstra Debate,” [FactCheck.org](http://FactCheck.org), 10/17/12)

**PolitiFact: In The Days After Obama’s Rose Garden Remarks, “Neither He Nor All The Members Of His Administration Spoke Consistently On The Subject.”** “Romney said it took the president 14 days before he called the Libya attack terror. In fact, Obama described it in those terms the day after the attack. But in the days that followed, neither he nor all the members of his administration spoke consistently on the subject. There were many suggestions that the attack was part of demonstrations over an American-made video that disparaged Islam. We rate the statement Half True.” (Jon Greenberg, “Romney Says Obama Waited 14 Days To Call Libya Attack Terror,” [PolitiFact](http://PolitiFact), 10/17/12)

- **“It Is Also True That Obama, After The Rose Garden Speech And Las Vegas Event The Same Day, Refrained From Characterizing The Attack As An Act Of Terrorism.”** (“FactChecking The Hofstra Debate,” [FactCheck.org](http://FactCheck.org), 10/17/12)
- **On September 16, U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice Denied There Was A “Terrorist Element” To The Benghazi Attack, Saying It Appeared To Be “Almost A Copycat Of The Demonstrations Against Our Facility In Cairo, Which Were Prompted Of Course By The Video.”** NBC’s DAVID GREGORY: “You talked about this as spontaneous. Can you say definitively that the attacks that killed Ambassador Stevens and others there was spontaneous? Was it a planned attack? Was there a terrorist element to it?” AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: “The best information we have at present, first of all, there’s an FBI investigation that’s ongoing and we look to that investigation to give us the definitive word as to what transpired. But putting together the best information that we have available to us today, our current assessment is that what happened in Benghazi was in fact initially a spontaneous reaction to what had just transpired hours before in Cairo. Almost a copycat of the demonstrations against our facility in Cairo, which were prompted of course by the video. What we think then transpired in Benghazi is that opportunistic extremist elements came to the consulate as this was unfolding. They came with heavy weapons, which unfortunately are readily available in post revolutionary Libya and it escalated into a much more violent episode. Obviously, that’s our best judgment now. We’ll await the results of the investigation, and the president has been very clear we’ll work with the Libyan authorities to bring those responsible to justice.” (NBC’s “Meet The Press,” 9/16/12)
- **On September 20, White House Press Secretary Jay Carney Confirmed That The White House Had Not Previously Called The Libya Assault A Terrorist Attack.** QUESTION: “Can you - have you called it a terrorist attack before? Have you said that?” CARNEY: “I haven’t, but -- I mean, people attacked our embassy. It’s an act of terror by definition.” QUESTION: “Yes, I just hadn’t heard you --” CARNEY: “It doesn’t have to do with what date it occurred.” QUESTION: “No, I just hadn’t heard the White House say that this was an act of terrorism or a terrorist attack. And I just --” CARNEY: “I don’t think the fact that we hadn’t is not -- as our NCTC Director testified yesterday, a number of different elements appear to have been involved in the attack, including individuals connected to militant groups that are prevalent in eastern Libya, particularly in the Benghazi area. We are looking at indications that individuals involved in the attack may have had connections to al Qaeda or al-Qaeda’s affiliates, in particular al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.” (Jay Carney, [PressGaggleAboardAirForceOne](http://PressGaggleAboardAirForceOne), En Route Miami, FL, 9/20/12)



**“Obama Refused To Characterize It As A Terrorist Attack Even After Others In The Administration Said It Was.”** “Obama refused to characterize it as a terrorist attack even after others in the administration said it was. Matt Olsen, head of the National Counterterrorism Center, testified on Sept. 19 that it was a ‘terrorist attack.’ He also said the administration still lacked ‘specific intelligence that there was a significant advanced planning or coordination for this attack.’ A day later, White House press secretary Jay Carney said it is ‘self-evident that what happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack.’ Yet, when asked on ABC’s ‘The View’ whether it was a terrorist attack, Obama refused to say.” (“FactChecking The Hofstra Debate,” [FactCheck.org](http://FactCheck.org), 10/17/12)

- **On September 20, Obama Contradicted His Administration When He Said We Still Did Not Know If Terrorists Had Attacked The Benghazi Compound, Claiming, “What We Do Know Is That The Natural Protests That Arose Because Of The Outrage Over The Video Were Used As An Excuse By Extremists...”** QUESTION: “We have reports that the White House said today that the attacks in Libya were a terrorist attack. Do you have information indicating that it was Iran, or al Qaeda was behind organizing the protests?” OBAMA: “Well, we’re still doing an investigation, and there are going to be different circumstances in different countries. And so I don’t want to speak to something until we have all the information. What we do know is that the natural protests that arose because of the outrage over the video were used as an excuse by extremists to see if they can also directly harm U.S. interests –” QUESTION: “Al Qaeda?” OBAMA: “Well, we don’t know yet.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks At The Univision Town Hall](http://Remarks.At.The.Univision.Town.Hall), Miami, FL, 9/20/12)
- **On September 24, Obama Appeared On The View And Again Refused To Call The Attack Terrorism, Only Saying That The Attack “Wasn’t Just A Mob Action.”** “President Barack Obama said Monday that the Sept. 11 attack that claimed the life of the U.S. ambassador to Libya and three other Americans ‘wasn’t just a mob action,’ but he stopped short of explicitly labeling the assault as an act of terrorism. Obama’s comments came as he taped an interview with ‘The View’ during a brief trip to New York to address the annual United Nations General Assembly. He had been asked whether the attack on the U.S. Consulate compound in the city of Benghazi was a terrorist act.” (Olivier Knox, “Obama: Libya Attack ‘Wasn’t Just A Mob Action,’” [Yahoo News’ The Ticket](http://Yahoo.News/The.Ticket), 9/24/12)
- **“Obama Continued To Resist Saying The ‘T’ Word, Instead Repeatedly Bringing Up The Video, Even In A Speech To The U.N. General Assembly On Sept. 25.”** “More to Romney’s point, Obama continued to resist saying the ‘t’ word, instead repeatedly bringing up the video, even in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 25. On Sept. 26--15 days after the attack-- the White House spokesman felt compelled to assert ‘it is certainly the case that it is our view as an administration, the President’s view, that it was a terrorist attack.’” (Glenn Kessler, “Fact Checking The Second Presidential Debate,” [The Washington Post’s Fact Checker](http://The.Washington.Post’s.Fact.Checker), 10/17/12)