

Missed Opportunities

Here's the good news for Mitt Romney. In the first two debates, he has established himself as President Obama's equal on the events of the day. The governor is well versed on the issues and has shown a mastery of the both foreign and domestic policy.

Here's the bad news: he has failed to pin the president down on his obvious policy shortcomings.

As someone who makes a nice living debating on television, I watch the president and governor go after each other with a professional eye. And I can't understand why Romney doesn't close the deal. Three examples.

First, when Barack Obama says that his energy programs are helping the nation, all Romney has to do is keep it simple and ask: "why, then, have gas prices more than doubled on your watch, Mr. President? That doesn't sound like a good policy to me."

Second, the president continues to say that he has created millions of jobs. But all Romney has to do is retort: "so what? The average income for working class households in America is down almost \$5,000, Mr. President. Workers are getting hosed and your policies are at fault."

Finally, number three, the Libyan deal. This is crazy. There are just two vital questions, and Romney has not asked them: who pulled two American security teams out of Libya in August despite the concerns of slain Ambassador Christopher Stevens? And, who ordered U.N. Secretary Susan Rice and White House spokesperson Jay Carney to mislead the world about what happened?

If the President doesn't know, he looks incompetent. If he does know and won't say, he looks corrupt. If he does answer

the questions, Romney wins just by asking.

The problem with many politicians when they debate is that they cram so much information into their heads in anticipation of spitting it out there, that they don't actually listen to what their opponent is saying. In any debate, simple is best. Just state the facts clearly and ask obvious questions about your opponent's weaknesses.

Governor Romney has a big advantage over President Obama in the debates, because Obama has to defend a record that contains some massive screw-ups. Nobody really cares about Romney's record in Massachusetts, and he could easily pettifog any specific questioning of it.

But with the economy sluggish after almost four years, four dead Americans in Libya, and Iran still chugging along the nuclear weapons highway, the president has a good deal of Ricky Ricardo 'splainin' to do. But, the governor has not put him on the spot in a precise enough way.

Next Monday, Romney will have one final chance to pin the president against the rhetorical wall. The foreign policy debate opens up Libya big time. If Romney wants to win – he'll keep it simple and demand some answers.