

In Case You've Forgotten

✘ During Monday's Presidential debate on foreign policy, Governor Romney reminded us of President Obama's apology tour in 2009. As if I could forget it! (By the way, that's President Obama bowing to the King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia although the spin was that he tripped...)

Just in case you've forgotten, here's a sampling of our President's apologies to the world for America.

Just one week after his inauguration, the President chose Arab television, Al Arabiya, to give his first sit-down interview and said "... America was not born as a colonial power," he told the Arab viewing audience – implying we are now. And he regretfully confessed, "We sometimes make mistakes. We are not perfect."

At the G-20 Summit in London, he said, "I would like to think that with my election and the early decisions that we've made, that you're starting to see some restoration of America's standing in the world."

A day later in Strasbourg, he said, "There have been times where America has shown arrogance and been dismissive, even derisive." And further said, "I believe in American exceptionalism, just as I suspect that the Brits believe in British exceptionalism and the Greeks believe in Greek exceptionalism." In other words, no country is truly exceptional.

Apologizing for "certain interrogation practices," he said in that same speech, "I don't believe that there is a contradiction between our security and our values. And when you start sacrificing your values, when you lose yourself, then over the long term that will make you less secure" implying that we had lost our way.

How about when he spoke in Ankara in April 2009 and said, "The United States is still working through some of our own darker periods in our history."

Then, during the same month, in Trinidad and Tobago, he said, "While the United States has done much to promote peace and prosperity in the hemisphere, we have at times been disengaged, and at times we sought to dictate our terms."

In 2010, the President, apparently embarrassed by our country's exceptionalism, refused to allow our flag to fly in Haiti after its horrific earthquake even though France's, Britain's and Croatia's flags flapped in the wind and even though our contributions dwarfed the rest of the world's.

Then, of course, you have the President in May apologizing to Mexican President Calderon when he said Arizona's Immigration Law was "a misdirected expression of frustration."

Also in May, during talks about human rights with China, of all countries, the State Department raised examples of problems on American soil and cited Arizona's Immigration Law as an example of "racial discrimination."

Was President Obama apologizing for the U.S. bombing of Hiroshima when he sent the U.S. Ambassador to Japan to the 65th anniversary of the attack in August of 2010, something no other President had ever done?

And, let's not forget his backing of the Ground Zero mosque, basically apologizing for the 70% of Americans who oppose the building of it at that location.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.

Betting on Romney Begins to Make Sense Again

✘ It is two hours since the first presidential debate ended, and guess what: The money boys suddenly are looking at Mitt Romney with respect. On Intrade, the Irish-based futures market that allows you to bet legally on political races, the value of contracts favoring Romney over President Obama began shooting up in value as the debate wound to a close. There can be little doubt that Romney won the debate. Even Obama's most faithful supporters are conceding that. And on Intrade, where the Romney candidacy had dwindled to a pathetic longshot during the dog days of September, Romney has pulled off his own version of the October Surprise.

One cannot overestimate the importance of the first presidential debate. Remember 1980, when Ronald Reagan made a fool of Jimmy Carter? Carter never recovered, and lost a lopsided election. Remember 1960, the year the TV debates were first held, when Richard Nixon scared little children and their parents too with his 5 o'clock shadow and sinister scowl?

I would estimate that the first debate is three times more important than the remaining debates combined, because it sets the tone. Obama seemed tired and disinterested, as though he wanted to go back to Vegas, where he had prepped for the debate.

Romney, exhibited before a large TV audience without having to pass through the filter of the pro-Obama mainstream media, came across as an extremely articulate and well-informed challenger, eager to take on the task of sending America back

on the road to economic and social recovery.

Some of the pundits said that Obama may have learned his lesson and will come out swinging in the second debate, and he may indeed. But Romney and his team are smart enough to anticipate that, and to come up with the tactics required to effectively counter it.

Before the two national conventions, the bettors on Intrade already were giving Obama an edge. The consensus had him as a 55 percent favorite, perhaps because he was the incumbent, with the incumbent's normal edge at the start of a campaign.

I should point out that this did not mean he was expected to win 55 percent of the vote, but rather that he had a 55 percent chance of winning the election.

During poor Romney's march to Golgotha after the conventions, especially in the wake of former President Clinton's magic speech on behalf of Obama, the oddsmakers on Intrade boosted the President to a 78 percent favorite, close to a sure thing.

But the Obama balloon started leaking early this week, as the bettors became nervous about the impact of the debates. Going into Debate Number One, Obama was down to 73 percent.

What a difference one scintillating evening can make! Obama is dropping on the Intrade market as we speak, and is down to around 65 percent. That is not unimpressive, but I am going to bed soon, and I expect to find him lower still when I wake from my beauty sleep.

Then, let the pollsters go back to the swing states, and let Romney show a boost from the debate, and it wouldn't surprise me if Romney pulls even or takes the lead.

If you want to check the tally yourself, go to www.intrade.com.

I must confess that I didn't go into the debate expecting such

a onesided result. I figured that Obama would play Mr. Personality, as usual, and make his jokes, and mute whatever serious things his opponent had to say.

Not so. There were even times when Romney was vigorously telling Obama what was wrong with his administration, and Obama seemed to be nodding in agreement.

Wow! This campaign has legs after all.