



Second Term Uncertainty

Two Debates Down, Still No Second Term Agenda From Obama

LAST NIGHT WAS OBAMA'S CHANCE TO FINALLY LAY OUT HIS PLANS FOR A SECOND TERM

The Washington Post's Dan Balz: If Obama Has "Something Important To Say About A Second Term, Tuesday Night Affords Him The Opportunity To Say It." "He has been vague about this throughout the campaign, preferring to focus on criticisms of Romney and defense of his first-term achievements. If he has something important to say about a second term, Tuesday night affords him the opportunity to say it." (Dan Balz, "Obama, Romney Face A Truly Crucial Week," [The Washington Post](#), 10/13/12)

- ***"There's One Other Weakness In Obama's Message: The Question Of What His Second-Term Agenda Actually Is."*** (Dan Balz, "Obama, Romney Face A Truly Crucial Week," [The Washington Post](#), 10/13/12)

VOTERS WALKED AWAY KNOWING JUST AS MUCH AS THEY DID WALKING INTO THE DEBATE

TIME's Mark Halperin: "The President Did Not Lay Out A Second Term Agenda." MARK HALPERIN: "I just want to say one thing we haven't brought up yet but it's incredibly important. The President did not lay out a second term agenda. And if there's an undercurrent here, that could really hurt him, not in the room, because it wasn't evident, it was absent. He didn't lay out a second term agenda any more than he did in the first debate. And that is where he is the weakest. And he didn't address it, I thought at all." (MSNBC's ["Morning Joe"](#), 10/17/12)

MSNBC's Joe Scarborough: Obama "Has Laid Out No Plan For The Next Four Years. No Plan." MSNBC'S JOE SCARBOROUGH: "Looking for a way forward, you want to know what's going to be different over the next four years and you just didn't get that from Barack Obama. Now you don't get that from Mitt Romney either but Barack Obama's the guy that's asking to be hired again. And I just gotta see, gotta think after the second debate this President has laid out no plan for the next four years. No plan. That's gotta be devastating in some voters' eyes." (MSNBC's ["Morning Joe"](#), 10/17/12)

NBC News' David Gregory: Obama Was "A Little Light On His Vision For The Future." "I think liberals can breathe a sigh of relief. It's not curtains for the President. He showed up and showed up big tonight. He was more aggressive; he had a lot of fight in him. A little light on his vision for the future, Brian." (Jonathan Sanger and M. Alex Johnson, "First Take: Obama, Romney 'Throw Down' On Long Island," [NBC News](#), 10/17/12)

CNN's John King: "I've Been Traveling The Last Few Weeks, This Is What People Say, I Want To Vote For Him, But He Hasn't Told Me What He's Going To Do." CNN's JOHN KING: "If people think you have a plan, likability comes into play. The president has still left a whole lot of people, as I've been traveling the last few weeks, this is what people say, I want to vote for him, but he hasn't told me what he's going to do." (CNN's "Debate Night In America, 10/16/12)

- **King: "Moms Still Want To See The President Make A Case For The Second Term."** CNN's JOHN KING: "Romney scored points for having a five-point plan. Moms still want to see the president make a case for the second term." (CNN's "Debate Night In America, 10/16/12)

The New York Times' Tom Friedman: Obama's Weakness Is The Question Of "How Will The Next Four Years Really Be Different?" TOM FRIEDMAN: "I continue to believe Obama has a weakness when it comes to the question of will the next four years really be different? Do you have a plan that excites you and me to get out of my chair and say that's the guy, that's it, that's the person I want to follow now. He has not closed that deal." (MSNBC's ["Morning Joe,"](#) 10/17/12)

The New York Times' Peter Baker: "Nor did he offer an extensive articulation of what his forward-looking agenda would be for a second term beyond, essentially, arguing that electing his opponent would be moving back to failed policies of the past." (Peter Baker, "For The President, Punch, Punch, Another Punch," [The New York Times](#), 10/17/12)

TIME's Joe Klein: "Obama's Greatest Weakness Is That His Proposals For The Future Are Nonexistent." (Joe Klein, "The Hofstra Debate: No Clear Winner," [TIME's Swampland](#), 10/16/12)

Tampa Bay Times' Adam Smith: "The President Did Little To Lay Out An Agenda For A Second Term." (Adam C. Smith, "Second Debate Brings Out Assertive Obama, Tough Romney," [Tampa Bay Times](#), 10/17/12)

Newsweek's John Avlon: "He still hasn't offered a clear second-term agenda, a persistent weakness of his campaign." (John Avlon, "Romney's Missed Opportunity," [CNN](#), 10/17/12)

Politico's Ben White: "Obama Was Far Less Effective In Making An Affirmative Case For A Second Term" And Decided To Pursue A "Disqualification Effort Against Romney Rather Than Making A Strong Pitch For A Second Term Vision." "But Obama was far less effective in making an affirmative case for a second term, saying only that he wanted to create more manufacturing jobs and reduce the debt and deficit and keep investing in alternative energy sources. Romney had his strongest moments ripping up Obama's first term record, citing the persistently high jobless rate, the rising debt and the lack of action on Social Security, Medicare and immigration reform. Obama mainly tried to refresh his campaign's initial - and largely successful - disqualification effort against Romney rather than making a strong pitch for a second term vision." (Ben White, "Debate A Bare-Knuckle Brawl," [Politico's Morning Money](#), 10/17/12)

The Wall Street Journal Editorial Headline: "A President Without A Plan" ("A President Without A Plan," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/17/12)

- **The Wall Street Journal Editorial: "The Question We Kept Asking As The Evening Wore On, However, Is What Does He Want To Do For The Next Four Years?"** ("A President Without A Plan," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/17/12)
- **The Wall Street Journal On Obama's Plans For The Next Four Years: "He Wants To Invest In 'Solar And Wind And Biofuels, Energy-Efficient Cars,' Which Probably Means More Solyndras And A123s (See Nearby)."** "He wants to invest in 'solar and wind and biofuels,

energy-efficient cars,' which probably means more Solyndras and A123s (see nearby). He wants to raise taxes on the rich—that's one thing he's really passionate about. Oh, and he does want to pass the immigration reform he said he'd propose four years ago but never did propose in his first two years when his party controlled Congress and he might have passed it. But otherwise, what's his case for four more years? Judging by Tuesday's debate, the President's argument for re-election is basically this: He's not as awful as Mitt Romney. Mr. Obama spent most of his time attacking either Mr. Romney himself (he invests in Chinese companies), his tax plan as a favor for the rich ('that's been his history') or this or that statement he has made over the last year ('the 47%,' which Mr. Obama saved for the closing word of the entire debate)." (Editorial, "A President Without A Plan," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/17/12)

- ***The Wall Street Journal*: "Mr. Romney Will Have A Chance To Do Better On Foreign Policy Next Week, But Mr. Obama Seems Out Of Ammunition For The Next Four Years."** (Editorial, "A President Without A Plan," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/17/12)

Former Governor Eliot Spitzer (D-NY): "You Didn't Leave Last Night With A Real Tangible Sense Of What The Second Term Agenda Is Going To Be." "We shouldn't be blind to what continues to be the soft underbelly of the president's campaign, which is that when all is said and done, you didn't leave last night with a real tangible sense of what the second term agenda is going to be." (Current TV's "Full Court Press," 10/17/12)