



# Giving Peace A Chance

BY KATHLEEN PARKER  
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ORLANDO, Fla. — Forget “horses and bayonets.” The most important word uttered during the third presidential debate was “peace.”

Mitt Romney, the un-bellicose, used it several times to set the tone for what his foreign policy would be. Anyone who was expecting saber-rattling and bring-it-on rhetoric was disappointed.

This may include some Republicans who had hoped to witness another round on the attack in Benghazi and the Obama administration’s mixed messages in the aftermath, but Romney chose not to go there. It would have been a distraction and created friction that ultimately would have undermined the sense Romney was trying to convey — that he picks his battles carefully.

The real point of Romney’s rendition of commander in chief was to reveal himself as the stalwart of America’s power to promote peace and freedom through strength, character and an unyielding defense of American principles.

Without ever using the word, he was laying out a blueprint of American exceptionalism. Romney reiterated his belief that the United States has a vital role in leading the world, in providing succor to nations trying to gain a toehold in democracy, in helping those who would overthrow oppressive governments.

He got his best shot at Barack Obama when he quoted the president’s comments during what Romney characterized as an “apology” tour in 2009, in which Obama conceded that the United States has at times “dictated” to other nations and been “dismissive” and “derivative.”

“We don’t dictate to nations,” Romney said. “We free nations from dictators.”

Obama seized on Romney’s use of the word “apology” and noted that every fact-checker and reporter who had looked into it said it wasn’t true.

Interestingly, where Romney declined to use “exceptionalism,” a belief in which Obama does not share, Obama inserted a different term: “America remains the one indispensable nation,” he said. This has a nice ring to it. How could the world do without an America? We may yet find out.

Obama may have chosen this phrase to make up for past statements that were less than ringing endorsements of America’s special place in defense of human liberty. When asked once whether he thought America was exceptional, he said he supposed it was in the



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same way other countries think they’re exceptional. “Peace” was the word Romney seemed to like best, followed closely by “tumult,” which is a strange Romney-esque word that he used five times. He used the word “peace” 12 times (Obama none), especially in the context of Middle East policy, and managed to tie our mission of peace to the economy:

“Our purpose is to make sure the world is more — is peaceful. We want a peaceful planet. We want people to be able to enjoy their lives and know they’re going to have a bright and prosperous future and not be at war. That’s our purpose. And the mantle of — of leadership for promoting the principles of peace has fallen to America. We didn’t ask for it, but it’s an honor that we have it.

“But for us to be able to promote those principles of peace requires us to be strong, and that begins with a strong economy here at home, and unfortunately, the economy is not stronger.”

Both candidates seemed more at home on the domestic front and spent too much time on small details that have been covered previously. However, focus groups indicated approval each time Obama brought the conversation back to nation-building at home.

The low point of the evening, though most certainly celebrated by Obama supporters, was when the president sarcastically schooled his opponent on the need, or lack thereof, for Navy ships.

Romney was asserting his plan to rebuild the Navy, which he said (incorrectly) is smaller than at any time since 1917. (According to FactCheck.org, there are slightly more ships now than at the low point under President George W. Bush.)

Rather than correct Romney’s figures, Obama treated him like a child.

“Well, Governor, we also have fewer horses and bayonets because the nature of our military’s changed. We have these things called aircraft carriers where planes land on them. We have these ships that go underwater, nuclear submarines.”

The president got some laughs, but probably no new votes. Snark is a winning trait on Twitter, but not so much in the Oval Office. The higher road belonged to Romney, who succeeded in his mission, which was to remind Americans that their nation is more than indispensable. It is exceptional — and they need a president who believes it.

Kathleen Parker’s email address is [kathleen-parker@washpost.com](mailto:kathleen-parker@washpost.com).

# About Those Binders ...

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.  
Tribune Media Services

About those “binders full of women ...”

That, of course, is the infelicitous phrase Mitt Romney used in last week’s second presidential debate when he was asked how he would address paycheck inequity between the sexes. Romney responded with a homily about how, as the newly elected governor of Massachusetts in 2002, he became concerned that the only job applications that crossed his desk seemed to be from men.

“I went to a number of women’s groups,” said Romney, “and said, ‘Can you help us find folks?’ And they brought us whole binders full of women.”

And there, the ridicule began. The phrase “binders full of women” leapt across the Internet like some digital prairie fire, wits and twits from Facebook to Twitter to Tumblr all laughing at Romney’s expense. Indeed, there’s a good chance someone in a “binders full of women” costume will knock at your door on Halloween.

But, though there seems to be general agreement that there is something off-putting about what Romney said, there seems relatively little discussion of what that something is. As CNN’s Piers Morgan put it, “I don’t get what’s wrong with it. I don’t get why it made him a laughing stock.” His confusion reflects the fact that people seem to have sensed something here they have not always been able to articulate. So let’s start articulating.

And let’s begin by acknowledging the obvious: Romney didn’t answer the question. But then, he hardly invented the unresponsive response. Most politicians bob and weave like Ali when confronted with questions they’d rather not answer. That’s not what people are reacting to.

No, what was irksome about the governor’s answer is that it seemed 30 years out of date, a relic of a time when the person who wanted to seem concerned about diversity performed some act of ostentatious outreach, collected binders full of women (or Cubans, gays or



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whatever) from their various advocacy groups in order to make sure they were part of the candidate pool.

That would have sounded enlightened in 1985. But as the answer to a question about gender inequity in 2012, it just makes you wonder: Were the governor and his men really so isolated from capable women as recently as 2002 that they had to ask women’s groups for help? Were strong women really a species so exotic the governor needed a native guide to their world?

A pattern takes shape here. Between Romney’s binders full of women, and Rush Limbaugh branding a woman a “slut” because she thinks contraception should be part of her health insurance package, between Rep. Todd Akin’s belief that the uterus somehow filters out unwanted sperm and Rep. Allen West’s chastisement of an opponent’s failure to act like a “lady,” it becomes increasingly obvious some socially conservative men are stuck in a time warp. Akin, West and Limbaugh hunker down like Davy Crockett at the Alamo, behind modes of sexist condescension that were getting old when the Beatles broke up. Romney tries to show he “gets it” by disinterring a trope from the era of Jheri curls and Max Headroom.

When’s the last time any of these boys had a date?

In the world outside their time bubble, women run states and nations, fight fires and litigate cases, perform surgeries and grab rebounds. And yes, they still tend boo-boos and fix meals, too.

Some men are apparently still holdouts from that world, like Japanese soldiers on remote Pacific islands who fought World War II into the 1970s. But as those soldiers had to learn — the world moves on, whether you accept it or not.

To his credit, Romney at least made the effort. But the next time he’s looking for capable women, one hopes someone gives him some apparently needed advice.

Close the binder and open your eyes.

Leonard Pitts is a columnist for the *Miami Herald*, 1 Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla., 33132. Readers may contact him via e-mail at [lpitts@miamiherald.com](mailto:lpitts@miamiherald.com).

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## OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

# ‘Blaming China’ – The Chinese View

CHINA DAILY, Beijing (Oct. 24): As expected, President Barack Obama and his Republican rival Mitt Romney resorted to the same old blame China song in the presidential debate in the United States on Oct. 22, albeit with a softer tone.

Both candidates have clung to a get-tough-on-China strategy and done their best to throw mud at China throughout their White House race, so whoever wins the election on Nov 6 is going to need to do a rapid reality check.

Each summarized their stance toward the country during the debate. In an attempt to show he has already got tough on China, Obama boasted that he has brought more cases against China for violating trade rules than the previous administration did in two terms.

Romney’s line was that China has done everything it can to harm the U.S., ranging from “manipulating” its currency to “stealing” U.S. intellectual property and patents.

However, a reality check will show them that although they blame China for causing trade imbalances and complain that Chinese companies and their U.S. counterparts are not competing on a level playing field, the protectionist measures that Obama bragged about have not only served to dampen Chinese investment in the U.S. that could have created jobs, but cost Americans a lot more.

A reality check would also show them the yuan’s continual appreciation against the U.S. dollar and the extent to which China has strengthened its IP protection.

The most unbelievable part of the debate was the moment when both candidates said they would press Beijing to “play by the rules” in shaping ties with China.

A reality check will show them that, in international politics and trade, China has been faithfully observing the principles of justice and fairness enshrined in both the UN Charter and WTO rules.

They might want to ask themselves to what extent the U.S. can say the same. ...

## THE VIEWS PAGE

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## TODAY IN HISTORY

### By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Oct. 25, the 299th day of 2012. There are 67 days left in the year.

**Today’s Highlight in History:** On Oct. 25, 1962, in a dramatic confrontation before the U.N. Security Council, U.S. Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson II demanded that Soviet Ambassador Valerian Zorin confirm or deny the existence of Soviet-built missile bases in Cuba; when Zorin declined to respond, Stevenson said he was prepared to wait “until hell freezes over” for an answer. Stevenson then presented photographic evidence of the bases to the Council.

**On this date:** In 1760, Britain’s King George III succeeded his late grandfather, George II.

In 1812, the frigate *USS United States*, commanded by Stephen Decatur, captured the British vessel *HMS Macedonian* during the War of 1812.

In 1854, the “Charge of the Light Brigade” took place during the Crimean War as an English brigade of more than 600 men charged the Russian army, suffering heavy losses.

In 1912, the song “My Melancholy Baby” by Ernie Burnett and George Norton was first published under the title “Melancholy.” Country comedian Minnie Pearl was born Sarah Ophelia Colley in Centerville, Tenn.

In 1929, former Interior Secretary Albert B. Fall was convicted in Washington, D.C., of accepting a \$100,000 bribe from oil tycoon Edward L. Doheny. (Fall was sentenced to a year in prison and fined \$100,000; he ended up serving nine months.)

In 1939, the play “The Time of Your Life,” by William Saroyan, opened in New York.

In 1945, Taiwan became independent of Japanese colonial rule.

In 1957, mob boss Albert Anastasia of “Murder Inc.” notoriety was shot to death by masked gunmen in a barber shop inside the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York.

In 1962, American author John Steinbeck was named winner of the Nobel Prize in literature.

In 1971, the U.N. General Assembly voted to admit mainland China and expel Taiwan.

In 1982, the situation comedy “Newhart,” starring Bob Newhart as a Vermont innkeeper, premiered on CBS.

In 1992, Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Roger Miller, 56, died in Los Angeles.

**Ten years ago:** U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., was killed in the crash of a private plane in northern Minnesota along with his wife, Sheila, daughter Marcia and five others, a week and a-half before Election Day; he was 58. Actor Richard Harris died in London at age 72.

**Five years ago:** President George W. Bush visited Southern California, telling residents weary from five days of wildfires: “We’re not going to forget you in Washington, D.C.” The Boston Red Sox beat the Colorado Rockies 2-1 at Fenway to take a 2-0 World Series lead.

**One year ago:** Deposed Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, his son Muatassim and former Defense Minister Abu Bakr Yunis were buried at dawn in a secret location, five days after Gadhafi was slain by revolutionary fighters.

**Today’s Birthdays:** Former American League President and Baseball Hall of Famer Lee MacPhail is 95. Former American League president Dr. Bobby Brown is 88. Singer-actress Barbara Cook is 85. Actress Jeanne Cooper is 84. Actress Marion Ross is 84. Country singer Jeanne Black is 75. Basketball Hall of Famer Bobby Knight is 72. Author Anne Tyler is 71. Rock singer Jon Anderson (Yes) is 68. Political strategist James Carville is 68. Singer Taffy Danoff (Starland Vocal Band) is 68. Rock musician Glenn Tipton (Judas Priest) is 65. Actor Brian Kerwin is 63. Actor Mark L. Taylor is 62. Movie director Julian Schnabel is 61. Rock musician Matthias Jabs is 56. Actress Nancy Cartwright (“The Simpsons”) is 55. Country singer Mark Miller (Sawyer Brown) is 54. Rock musician Chad Smith (Red Hot Chili Peppers; Chickenfoot) is 51. Actress Tracy Nelson is 49. Actor Michael Boatman is 48. Actor Kevin Michael Richardson is 48. Singer Speech is 44. Actor Adam Goldberg is 42. Actor-singer Adam Pascal is 42. Rock musician Ed Robertson (Barenaked Ladies) is 42. Actress Persia White is 42. Country singer Chely Wright is 42. Violinist Midori is 41. Actor Craig Robinson is 41. Actor Michael Weston is 39. Actor Zachary Knighton is 34. Actor Mehcad Brooks is 32. Actor Ben Gould is 32. Actor Josh Henderson is 31. Rhythm-and-blues singer Young Rome is 31. Pop singer Katy Perry is 28. Rock singer Austin Winkler (Hinder) is 28. Singer Ciara is 27. Actress Conchita Campbell (“The 4000”) is 17.

**Thought for Today:** “You can tell the size of a man by the size of the thing that makes him mad.” — Adlai E. Stevenson II, American statesman (1900-1965).

## FROM THE BIBLE

*I thank Him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord. 1 Timothy 1:12.* Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

## YOUR LETTERS

### State Champs!

Warren Brenner, Yankton Coach, YHS soccer team

As varsity boys soccer coach, I would like to thank everyone for their overwhelming support of our team at the State Soccer Tournament and afterwards. From press coverage, to radio coverage, to school announcements, all the calls, texts and messages, we knew we were supported in spirit if not in person. Also thank you to the girls team and their parents for staying for our championship game. Hearing the cheers and “Go Big Red” helped motivate us to play our best.

Thank you, parents, for your support. Thank you, assistant coaches, Wes Chambers and Riley Smith, who supported me and always believed we could do it. Most especially, thank you to the players, for attending

every day, for conditioning when they didn’t want to, and for playing with their hearts and pride for each other and YHS.

The State Tournament was exciting, challenging and rewarding. On paper, we weren’t the fastest team, the oldest team, or the biggest team, but we had qualities you can’t define with statistics. We were well-conditioned, we played with the most heart, the most teamwork, the most determination, and in the end, those were the things that made the difference. No one gave us that championship, we didn’t get lucky, it wasn’t a fluke. The team worked hard and earned it. I couldn’t be more proud of the way these gentlemen played and the sportsmanship they displayed. Congratulations to these fine young men and thank you to the community for your support of their efforts.

### CONTACT US

PHONE:  
(605) 665-7811  
(800) 743-2968  
NEWS FAX:  
(605) 665-1721  
ADVERTISING FAX:  
(605) 665-0288  
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