What Obama needs to do before the next debate

by Mario T. García

NCR Today

I came away from watching the first presidential debate with a great deal of disappointment and frustration.

I couldn't believe that President Barack Obama did not adequately respond to Gov. Mitt Romney's aggressive and spirited challenge. The president seemed ill-prepared and passive. Surely his advisers must have sensed Romney would come out as the aggressor, so why didn't they have a strategy of counterattack? The president not only should have taken on Romney in body language, but he should have done more to expose Romney's deceptions and flip-flops in his presentation of his positions, as a good debater would have done.

Borrowing from Ronald Reagan, the president should have had his version of "Here you go again" when Romney categorically said he would not support tax breaks for the very rich to the tune of billions of dollars, yet advocated a 20 percent across-the-board tax cut for all that will benefit the super-rich more than ordinary Americans.

But in the end, it wasn't so much the substance of the debate that seemed to matter as the styles of the two contenders. Romney was animated and Obama seemed defensive and disturbed at the attacks on his record. The president needed to go on the offensive with a great deal of spirit. He failed to do so. The question now is how much this first debate will affect voters. Whatever the polls show in the next few days, the fact is that it will be important for a very different Obama to show up at the next debate. Perhaps he needs to carefully review and take notes from Bill Clinton's masterful speech at the Democratic National Convention.

Source URL (retrieved on *04/22/2018 - 12:02am*): https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/what-obama-needs-do-next-debate

Links:
[1] https://www.ncronline.org/forward/join?clickSource=end-article
[2] https://www.ncronline.org/node/160616