#### China is pursuing energy efficiency, including shutting down coal plants – but energy costs are key

Power 12 (Dr. Thomas M. Power, University of Montana, Professor Emeritus)

(“The Greenhouse Gas Impact of Exporting Coal from the West Coast” http://www.sightline.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/02/Coal-Power-White-Paper.pdf)

#### US shift away from coal multiplies exports to China tenfold

de Place 11 (Eric de Place: Senior researcher, has investigated a wide range of research topics for Sightline, from property rights in Oregon, to regional climate policies. Before coming to Sightline, he worked for the Northwest Area Foundation developing strategies to alleviate poverty in rural communities. Sightline Institute is a not-for-profit research and communications center—a think tank—based in Seattle. Sightline’s mission is to make the Northwest a global model of sustainability—strong communities, a green economy, and a healthy environment.)

(September 2011 Sightline Institute. “Northwest Coal Exports” http://www.sightline.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/02/coal-FAQ.pdf)

#### US coal exports drive Chinese coal demand – domestic production can’t keep pace

Plumer 12 (Brad Plumer is a reporter focusing on energy and environmental issues. He was previously an associate editor at The New Republic.)

“How the U.S. could influence China’s coal habits — with exports” http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/can-the-united-states-influence-chinas-coal-habits/2012/05/01/gIQAgqUpuT\_blog.html

China 1NR

#### Even if the leadership want to, fragmented bureaucracy and fierce competition makes standardization impossible

MV Ramana, physicist who works at the Nuclear Futures Laboratory and the Program on Science and Global Security, both at Princeton University, Eri Saikawa, “Choosing a standard reactor: International competition and domestic politicsin Chinese nuclear policy” Elsevier, Energy 36 (2011)

We explore this question by looking at the history of China ’ snuclear policymaking and analyzing the role of different domesticand international actors in this process. This history shows thatChinese policymakers have had different opinions on the tradeoff between reliance on indigenous reactor technology and importingmore advanced designs. These differences have been exacerbated by the increasing number of domestic organizations that havebecome involved in the nuclear energy sector. At the same time,international competition fornuclear reactor orders has intensified,with newer vendors entering the market even as older, moreestablished, vendors are yet to recoup the considerable sums theyhave spent on developing nuclear reactors of new designs. Thecompetition has been even keener in the case of China, not justbecause of its large capacity projections, but also because itprofessed to want a standard reactor type on which it wouldexpand nuclear generation in the country. Therefore, the Chinesemarket has had, at least rhetorically, a “ winner takes all ” character.In practice, the Chinese market has proved big enough,domesticelectricity generating organizations numerous enough, and deci-sion making powers fragmented enough for a number of interna-tional nuclear vendors and a couple of domestic reactor designers,to carve out shares for themselves. Thus, it has become more andmore dif ﬁ cult toagree onwhatthe standard type ofnuclear reactorshould be. In contrast to the popular image of China as a state witha centralized and powerful decision making system, our study shows that thecountrystruggles to implement stated policy calling for the standardization of nuclear reactor designs due to its frag-mented bureaucracy. The effects of this fragmentation have beenampli ﬁ ed by intense foreign competition.

Uniqueness

A2 DICK Morris

Silver 9-20

#### Consensus of polls

Cook 9-18

Charlie Cook is Editor and Publisher of The Cook Political Report, and political analyst for National Journal, September 18, 2012 Pollsters Agree: Romney Needs Something to Happen http://www.nationaljournal.com/columns/off-to-the-races/pollsters-agree-romney-needs-something-to-happen-20120918?page=1

With both party conventions over and the candidates' bounces having largely subsided, the latest national polls utilizing live callers put President Obama ahead of Mitt Romney by somewhere between 1 percentage point (ABC News/Washington Post) and 6 percentage points (CNN). The Gallup and CBS/New York Times polls have Obama's advantage at 3 points, while Democracy Corps and Fox News put it at 5 points. Private polling on both sides pegs the Obama lead at perhaps 4 or 5 points. The live-caller differential is important because interactive voice-response, or IVR, surveys (so-called “robo polls”) are legally prohibited from calling cell phones; between 30 and 40 percent of voters are now exclusively or primarily served by cell phones. Those polls utilizing cell-phone-only voters reach a constituency disproportionately younger and more likely to be minorities, thus the distinction between IVR and polls by live callers is very important. Interestingly, among these six polls, the narrowest (ABC/Washington Post) and the widest Obama margins were the two that were conducted soonest after the Democratic convention. Gallup at one point soon after Democrats left Charlotte had Obama up by 7 points, but that lead gradually narrowed and seems to have stabilized at 3 points, 48 to 45 percent for Oct. 10-16. It is the one remaining poll of the group still looking at registered voters; the rest have begun focusing on likely voters. At some point in the next few weeks Gallup is expected to begin reporting trial heats both for all voters and from among the likely-voter subgroup. Some on the GOP side say Romney's choice of Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., as his running mate gained the ticket about 2 points, but the combined effect of the conventions negated the gain, putting the Romney campaign back in the position of being down by 4 or 5 points. Contrary to what you might read might on the blogosphere, there is very little disagreement between top Democratic and Republican pollsters on where this race is right now, either on the national level or, more importantly, in the swing states. Keep in mind that there are multiple pollsters involved in each of the swing states: a presidential campaign on each side, one or more super PACs with their own pollsters, plus others done for senatorial and gubernatorial races (and their national party campaign committees) or for ballot initiatives. So there is a whole layer of very expensive, high-quality polling in this race, most of which never sees the light of day. But some pollsters or the strategists who commission such polls will agree to characterize the polling in a race on an off-the-record basis, giving, say, a 2- or 3-point range of what their data shows. Among the broadly defined 11 battleground states, Romney is best situated in North Carolina, where the Elon University poll put him ahead by 4 points at the tail end of the Republican convention. More recent private polling is said to be very close, but insiders on both sides expect it will ultimately end up in the Romney column. New Hampshire seems to be about even, give or take a percentage point. Virginia and Wisconsin are the states with the narrowest Obama leads (he is ahead by between 2 and 4 points), while Obama is thought to be up by between 2 and 5 points in Florida and Nevada. Next comes Iowa and Colorado; the Hawkeye State apparently has Obama ahead by between 3 and 6 points, Colorado between 4 and 6 points. Then come the big-ticket items: Obama ahead by between 5 and 8 points in Ohio, by 6 or more in Michigan, and the high single digits in Pennsylvania. Obviously there are dozens of permutations in the calculus for a Romney path to victory, but as long as Michigan and Pennsylvania are noncompetitive and Ohio continues to look tough for Romney, he would have to come pretty close to running the table to get the 270 electoral votes needed to win. Obama winning Colorado, Iowa, and Nevada would put 276 electoral votes in the Democratic column—six more than necessary for a win—even if Romney carried North Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Florida. At this point Romney is only ahead in one, tied in another, and trailing in the other three. This election is still quite close and could go either way, but Romney badly needs something to happen to change the trajectory of this race. If things remain as they are today, he loses. Presidential debates are scheduled for Oct. 3, 16, and 22. A vice presidential debate is scheduled for Oct. 11, and unemployment numbers are released on Oct. 5 and Nov. 2. These are six events that could prove consequential. Though debates arguably have changed campaign trajectories in 1976 and 1980, in the last seven presidential elections they didn’t materially affect the outcome of the races. Obviously, candidate gaffes or campaign miscues outside the debates can matter as well as external events, domestic or foreign. Anything involving an attack by Israel and/or the United States against Iranian nuclear facilities would certainly create an “all bets are off” situation. Major incidents elsewhere in the Middle East or around the globe—for example, North Korea—could be consequential as well.

#### Swing states

Obama will win the critical swing states – he has a significant edge

Whitesides 9-21

John Whitesides Sep 21, 2012 Analysis: Romney can still win, but it won't be easy http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/21/us-usa-campaign-romney-analysis-idUSBRE88K06G20120921

Democratic President Barack Obama has opened a slight lead over Romney in national polls, and new surveys indicate that Obama has a significant edge where it matters most: in Ohio, Virginia and Florida, the most coveted of nine politically divided "swing" states that are crucial to cobbling together the 270 electoral votes needed to win the White House.

He’s literally the worst pundit in the world

Enten 12

Harry J Enten 8 August 2012 Is Dick Morris the world's worst political pundit? http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/aug/08/is-dick-morris-worlds-worst-political-pundit

We all make silly statements. We all make poor predictions. Indeed most Washington pundits are right as often as they are wrong. One Washington prognosticator, however, stands above the rest. Step up, Dick Morris. Morris was at one time a top political operative. From his guiding of now Congressman Jerry Nadler's student government campaign to his work for Bill Clinton, Morris was a winner. He was running another Bill Clinton campaign, in 1996, when he found himself embroiled in a sex scandal. That imbroglio marked a turning point. Morris was no longer to work for Clinton. Instead, he reinvented himself as a writer and television pundit. It is this work that we celebrate here today. Morris' ability to make statements and predictions that are often so, so wrong is exceptional. He has been called the "worst pundit in America". The more cynical among us might argue that the word "America" should be replaced with "world". Indeed, to recall all of Morris's spectacular failures would require more space than Santa is allotted for his Christmas list.

1. Bush and congressional Democrats in 2002

Dick Morris on C-Span Dick Morris on C-Span (view video here) Sometimes, Morris is kind enough to offer us a two-for-one deal. In the span of two minutes, Morris said that President Bush's approval rating would remain in the 80s so long as we were fighting overseas. It did, of course, drop precipitously, into the low 50s, by the 2004 election. Morris also believed that congressional Democrats had neutralized Bush by supporting his wars. It turned out the opposite happened: 2002 was only the second time since 1934 that the president's party gained seats in the House during a midterm election.

2. North Korea and Iran will cave

Dick Morris on C-Span Dick Morris on C-Span (view video here) I guess Morris thought that if he couldn't predict elections, then he might do better with the actions of foreign governments. Apparently, Bush's foreign policy was going to bring Iran and North Korea to their knees and force them to cooperate with the United States. Eight years later, Iran continues to back the Syrian government and is as close to war with Israel as it's ever been. Oh, and North Korea is as much a mystery and a headache as ever.

3. Condi v Hillary

Dick Morris book cover Dick Morris's 2005 book, Condi Vs. Hillary, predicting the 2008 presidential contest, wrongly This book cover says it all. Morris was correct in believing that Clinton would run, but wrong that she would get the nomination. But Condoleezza Rice running for political office? She'd never run for anything, and didn't run in 2008. Plus, how in the dickens would she possibly win a primary in a pro-life party when she is pro-choice? Morris's wrongness truly boggles the mind.

4. The 2008 electoral map

Dick Morris election map What do Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and West Virginia have in common? They are all states where the Pollster.com aggregate favored John McCain over Barack Obama by at least 10 points, yet Morris, for some ridiculous reason, thought the states were toss-ups or leaned Obama? Obama lost them all by 12 to 20 points. And for good measure, Obama won the leaning-McCain state of Indiana.

5. Sarah Palin wins 2008 vice-presidential debate

Dick Morris on Fox News Well, Morris thinks Sarah Palin is Ronald Reagan, or something. Morris also manages to smack around Hillary Clinton in this video. To his point that Palin won the debate? All national polls found voters believing Biden won the debate, by at least 15 points. Some state data pointed to a closer race, but even there, voters thought Biden was more prepared to be president. Palin resigned from office less than a year later and seemingly has no future in running for political office.

6. Democrats to lose over 80 seats in the 2010 midterm elections

Dick Morris on Fox News There's a difference between being overly optimistic and being downright off the ledge. Morris crosses that line many times, and did so in calling for Republicans to win 80 new seats in the House of Representatives. Republicans would win a historic victory in 2010, but would only take 63 seats.

7. Republicans will shutdown the government over something in 2011 ... and win!

Dick Morris, via TPM TV Sometimes, I'm not even sure from where a Dick Morris prediction comes. Here, he claimed that Republicans would shut down the government after regaining control of the House in the 2010 elections, and would win that shutdown. No shutdown ever happened. I guess one almost did over the debt ceiling, but Republicans were the ones who caved to President Obama.

8. Donald Trump to run for president

Dick Morris, via Media Matters Donald Trump running for office is like a game of three-card monty. Anyone who knows anything knows that Trump likes to fool around, but at the end of the day, is never going to run. He just likes to hear himself talk. Somehow, Morris thought that Trump had great potential. Trump would plummet in the polls … and, of course, didn't run.

9. Obama to secretly take our guns away on 27 July

Dick Morris TV Did you know that President Obama was working in cahoots with the United Nations to take Americans' guns away on 27 July 2012? I didn't either. It was Obama's secret plan to foil the second amendment! Of course, the United States delegation to the UN ensured the bill failed.

10. The "real polls"

Dick Morris TV I'm just not even sure I have the words for this one, but Morris claims he has the "real polls" from a pollster he can't name. Perhaps the funniest thing of this whole clips is even the "real polls" have Romney winning only 228 electoral votes. He needs 270 to win the election. (My own estimate would be that if the election were today, then Romney would take 206 electoral votes.)

Conclusion **The guy behind the counter at Subway is as likely to be accurate at predicting political outcomes as** Dick Morris. Dick Morris, however, is far more entertaining.

FiveThirtyEight is the gold standard for elections predictions

Harris 12

Derrick Harris a technology journalist since 2003 and has been covering cloud computing, big data and other emerging IT trends for GigaOM since 2009.has a law degree from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Aug 1, 2012 5 sites that crunch data to help you predict the president gigaom.com/cloud/5-sites-thatll-help-you-predict-the-presidential-election/

This New York Times blog manned by expert statistician Nate Silver might be the gold standard for predicting elections. FiveThirtyEight is updated multiple times a week, usually tied to the release of poll data or economic numbers, and follows a consistent model for generating its forecast. The blog includes some easy-to-follow visualizations, including each candidate’s chances in each state. Also nice is that Silver gives some analysis of why the forecast is shaping up the way it is rather than just presenting the result. Latest prediction (July 31): Obama (69 percent chance of winning).

The convention fizzled – no momentum for Romney

Silver 9-3

NATE SILVER is an American statistician, sabermetrician, psephologist, and writer September 3, 2012 Sept. 2: Split Verdict in Polls on Romney Convention Bounce http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/09/03/sept-2-split-verdict-in-polls-on-romney-convention-bounce/?pagewanted=print

But the one eventuality we probably can take off the table is the notion that Mr. Romney would emerge from his convention with unmistakable momentum, as Ronald Reagan did in 1980 or Bill Clinton did in 1992. His bounce may turn out to be "just fine" once we see a few more polls, and how the numbers move after Charlotte. But Mr. Obama is unlikely to make it easy for Mr. Romney.

A2: Link Turn

Their NEI evidence just says that both like nuclear – nothing about the public.

Obama will get the credit or blame for the economy

Alan Greenblatt 11/16/2011 Can A President Really Fix A Bad Economy? http://www.npr.org/2011/11/16/141762700/can-a-president-really-fix-a-bad-economy

President Obama's problem is not unusual. Every president gets the blame when times are bad. "If there's one issue over which a president can lose an election, it's the economy," says Stephen Weatherford, a political scientist at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Presidents can influence fiscal policy, if they have the support of Congress — which Obama lacks at this point. But even when presidents can persuade Congress to go along, there are limits to how much they can influence the economy as a whole, Weatherford says. They can't force firms to hire workers or banks to lend money, for instance. Nevertheless, presidents always receive either more credit or blame than they deserve for the way things are going. "Expectations are high for the president — too high and unrealistically high," says George C. Edwards III, a presidential scholar at Texas A&M University. That's a political reality every modern president has understood. "There's such an exaggerated view of what they can do," says presidential historian Robert Dallek. President Taft said that "people think the presidents can make the grass grow and the skies turn to blue. It's simply out of their reach." Here's a quick survey of how presidents have responded to economic challenges in recent decades. Scroll down to see how three key economic indicators changed during each administration

Nuclear power is unpopular – perceived as a risky technology despite industry efforts

Ramana 11

M. V. Ramana is currently appointed jointly with the Nuclear Futures Laboratory and the Program on Science and Global Security, both at Princeton University, and works on the future of nuclear energy in the context of climate change and nuclear disarmament Ramana is a member of the International Panel on Fissile Materials and the BulletinÕs Science and Security Board. Jul 1, 2011 Nuclear power and the public SAGE Journals

Even if the public favors nuclear power, they’ll oppose its expansion

Moniz et al 3

Professor Ernest J Moniz, Director of Energy Studies, Laboratory for Energy and the Environment, Professor John Deutch, Professor Stephen Ansolabehere, Professor Emeritus Michael Driscoll, Professor Paul E Gray, Professor John P Holdren, Professor Paul L Joskow, Professor Richard K Lester, Professor Neil E. Todreas, and Eric S Beckjord, “The Future of Nuclear Power: An Interdisciplinary MIT Study,” Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2003, pg. 81

There is little question that the public in the United States and elsewhere is skeptical of nuclear power. A majority of Americans simultaneously approve of the use of nuclear power, but oppose building additional nuclear power plants to meet future energy needs. Since the accident at the Three Mile Island power plant in 1979, 60 percent of the American public has opposed and 35 percent have supported construction of new nuclear power plants, although the intensity of public opposition has lessened in recent years.1 Large majorities strongly oppose the location of a nuclear power plant within 25 miles of their home.2 In many European countries, large majorities now oppose the use of nuclear power. Recent Eurobarometer surveys show that 40 percent of Europeans feel that their country should abandon nuclear power because it poses unacceptable risks, compared with 16 percent who feel it is “worthwhile to develop nuclear power.”3

A2: Past Issues

\*\*A2 Past Issues

A2 People Have Made up Their Minds

The public can is still looking to be persuaded

**Trende 9-20**

Sean Trende is Senior Elections Analyst for RealClearPolitics September 20, 2012 State of the Race, Part 2: Why Romney Wins http://www.realclearpolitics.com/printpage/?url=http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2012/09/20/state\_of\_the\_race\_part\_2\_why\_romney\_wins\_115513-full.html

8) People haven’t made up their minds. Finally, it is important to remember that all the claims about people’s minds being set in stone don’t jibe with what respondents tell pollsters. Table 3 shows when voters have made up their minds over the past four elections. Though the percentage of late-undecideds is diminishing, unless there is a major drop-off this cycle, we can safely say that the decisions of a fairly wide swath of the electorate are not yet firm. So if the election were held today, President Obama would probably win comfortably. But the election isn’t today. In the next seven weeks, the economy, the president’s tepid job approval ratings, and Romney’s spending campaign will continue to exert gravitational forces on Obama’s re-election efforts, along with the typical gravitational forces that drag down a post-convention bounce. Can these forces move things three points in seven weeks? It’s not a particularly tall order.

When lichtman made his model it was labor day – election has contracted

Models don’t apply to this year’s election – mixed economic indicators and the election is too close

Dorning 12

Mike Dorning is a White House correspondent for Bloomberg News September 06, 2012 Election Forecast Models Clouded by Economy’s Slow Growth http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-09-06/election-forecast-models-clouded-by-economy-s-middling-growth

Moody’s Analytics says its economic- forecasting model shows President Barack Obama winning re- election with 303 electoral votes. Economist Douglas Hibbs Jr., pointing to slow income growth, predicts a Mitt Romney victory. To Yale University’s Ray Fair, the race is simply “too close to call.” While the state of the U.S. economy is the No. 1 issue in the election, even nonpartisan forecasters who crunch data and claim to have predicted the results in past presidential races can’t agree on what impact it will have on the outcome. Sophisticated models in the past have bolstered arguments that presidential elections are mostly predetermined by the economy. This time, some concede that the plodding recovery may not tilt the balance toward either candidate. I

nstead, the costly, cross-country political campaign, which these forecasters have dismissed as irrelevant, may tip the balance. “When you get down to that point, where I’m saying that it’s going to be decided by less than one percentage point, then it’s possible that the campaigns really do matter,” said Alan Abramowitz, a political science professor at Emory University in Atlanta who developed one of the most-followed forecasting models.

If model debate-----

Lichtman’s keys aren’t definite – it’s subjective, only about the popular vote, and can’t asses the margin of victory

Mathes 4-22

Michael Mathes April 22, 2012 'Keys' predict Obama win, but is he a lock in 2012? http://www.mysinchew.com/node/72894

The professor has fended off criticism, notably by Nate Silver of The New York Times, who wrote in the FiveThirtyEight blog last year that many of the keys are subjective. Lichtman argued that "the world is subjective, and can't be reduced to these equations as we know." He's stirred controversy by saying for example that Republican John McCain's status as a war hero was not enough to turn the challenger charisma key in 2008. This year he scores some keys controversially in favor of Obama, such as the president effecting "major changes in national policy," a nod to his health care reform, even though the law is unpopular. Silver and experts like University of Chicago professor John Brehm say Lichtman engages in data dredging, mining details of past elections in order to establish a winning set of criteria. Brehm points to Lichtman's deficiencies in forecasting the margin of victory, including in some elections that were "squeakers in reality but... the model predicted them to be runaways," such as John F. Kennedy's razor-thin 1960 defeat of Richard Nixon. Lichtman said he has not heard from the Romney campaign. But he has over the years fielded calls from Democratic challengers, including one from an advisor to a man Lichtman had never heard of in 1991: Arkansas governor Bill Clinton. "I shared the copy (of 'The Keys') with governor Clinton and he loved it," Kay Goss, who was senior assistant to Clinton at the time, told AFP. In the aftermath of the Gulf War George H.W. Bush had some of the highest approval ratings in history, and Democrats were avoiding running against him in 1992. Lichtman saw it differently, and wrote that based on the keys, Bush could be beaten. "I can't speak to the exact impact it had on his decision-making process," Goss said, but the book was "quite helpful to me and to many others supporting governor Clinton's successful quest for the presidency." Tobe Berkovitz, an advertising professor at Boston University and longtime political consultant, says the system provokes collegial envy and criticism. "It's a brilliant work of marketing. But, he's been accurate," Berkovitz conceded -- though he stressed Lichtman's model predicts the popular vote, not the electoral college, which allowed him to keep his perfect record in 2000 when he picked Al Gore. Gore won the popular vote, but George W. Bush won the White House. "Overall, more power to him," said Berkovitz. "But am I going to bet the farm on his prediction? No."

Even Lichtman concedes Romney winning is within the realm of possibility

Mathes 4-22

Michael Mathes April 22, 2012 'Keys' predict Obama win, but is he a lock in 2012? http://www.mysinchew.com/node/72894

Lichtman says there is still a path to victory for Romney -- albeit a negative one. "The economy could take a catastrophic dive into recession, there could be some terrible disaster abroad, and some presidential scandal. Those three things would do (Obama) in," he said.

A2: Past Issues Not Current Issues

The plan is sufficient to shift the election – the economy may frame, but doesn’t define, the election

Kuhnhenn 12

Jim Kuhnhenn Associated Press July 14 2012 Is it just the economy? Other issues may play role http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:ElUNKN4zArEJ:www.deseretnews.com/article/765589888/Is-it-just-the-economy-Other-issues-may-play-role.html%3Fpg%3Dall+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us

As the economy colors and polarizes voters' attitudes, the Election Day outcome for President Barack Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney may be decided on the margins by narrower issues that energize small but crucial slivers of the population. For three months, the economy by most measures has faltered. Yet the White House contest has remained locked in place, with the incumbent holding on to a slight national lead or in a virtual tie with his rival. Analysts from both parties have no doubt that absent a defining, unpredictable moment, the race will remain neck and neck until November.

A2: Past Issues

1 in 5 voters could still be persuaded

Page 9-19

Susan Page, USA TODAY Poll: In 2-point presidential race, Romney trips over 47% 9.19.12 http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/story/2012-09-18/obama-romney-swing-states-poll/57803524/1

Of the nine Swing States polls taken since October, in only one has either candidate scored an advantage outside the margin of error — that was Obama, in March. In seven of nine the candidates have traded a lead within 2 percentage points of one another. The survey is in the 12 states likely to decide the Electoral College: Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. The new poll of 1,096 registered voters Sept. 11-17 has a margin of error of +/-4 percentage points. That history might leave the impression that the electorate is so firmly set in their choices that there is nobody open to persuasion, despite news developments on everything from the unemployment rate to Middle East violence, and in the face of an estimated half a trillion dollars spent so far on TV ads in the swing states. But the new poll finds a surprising number of voters not yet firmly aligned with one side or the other. More than one in five registered voters say they don't know who they are going to vote for or that there is at least the possibility they will change their minds. Romney supporters are slightly more set in their choice: 21% of Obama's supporters and 14% of Romney's supporters say there is "some" or a "slight" chance they will switch their vote.

Energy will be a focal point for undecided voters

Zahodiakin 12

Phil Zahodiakin August 14, 2012 Energy Issues Could be Critical in the Battleground States http://energy.aol.com/2012/08/14/energy-issues-could-be-critical-in-the-battleground-states/

The most recent Wall Street Journal/NBC election poll found very few people who are undecided about their choice for president, which means the fight to win swing states will be ferocious. Could energy issues play a role in the outcome? Clean energy advocates say the possibility has become a reality in at least one of those states – Iowa – and it promises to influence undecided voters elsewhere, as well. "Certainly, economic issues will be front-and-center," Jeff Gohringer, national press secretary for the League of Conservation Voters, told AOL Energy. "But energy will continue to be a focal point, as well."

Russia Relations

#### Romney win crushes Russian relations – outweighs any other issue

Larison 12

[Daniel Larison has a Ph.D. in history and is a contributing editor at The American Conservative. He also writes on the blog Eunomia. Why America shouldn't panic over Putin POSTED ON MAY 10, 2012, AT 6:10 PM http://theweek.com/bullpen/column/227814/why-america-shouldnt-panic-over-putin]

Unfortunately, a stable and improving relationship with Russia seems to hinge on the outcome of our own presidential election. The U.S.-Russian relationship is more likely to decline if Mitt Romney wins in November. Romney has made a point of telling the American public and the Russians that he intends to undo most of the gains of the last three years. As Romney likes to say, he will reset the "reset," which effectively means taking the relationship back to its lowest point since the end of the Cold War. He also claims that Russia is "our number one geopolitical foe,"

and Russians will surely assume that he is going to govern accordingly. Nothing seems more likely to provoke the worst from Putin's "reactive" foreign policy.

#### Romney & Ryan can’t moderate their stance on Russia

Larison 12

Daniel Larison August 21, 2012 “Romney-Ryan and the “Reset”” http://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/romney-ryan-and-the-reset/?print=1

Romney and Ryan would be well-advised as a matter of policy to drop their Russophobia, which isn’t in the interests of the U.S. and frequently has no grounding in reality, but they didn’t start their Russia-bashing on a whim. Even if Romney’s foreign policy were nothing more substantial than rejecting whatever Obama supports, he could not credibly change his position on Russia at this point. He could stop talking about his Russia views, but no one would take seriously the idea that Romney has suddenly discovered the value of U.S.-Russian cooperation after spending years mocking the “reset” as appeasement. The about-face would be no easier for Ryan, who has also gone on the record [4] to describe the “reset” as appeasement. Had Romney and his party not chosen to make Russia policy into a political football for the last three years, he might be able to do what James recommends, but they burned that bridge a long time ago.