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By Ian Fletcher

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## Romney's Emerging Strategy: Blame China

I've just seen one of Mitt Romney's new campaign commercials, [here](#), or watch it below.

Romney's emerging economic strategy is clear: *blame China*. Not only does this get the heat off of GOP-linked (yes, I know) constituencies like Wall Street, it also skewers the administration, which has played appeaser to Beijing.

Some might call this a cynical case of scapegoating. Comparisons to the old red scare and yellow peril will doubtless be forthcoming.

But this raises an interesting question: *Is scapegoating still scapegoating when the scapegoat is guilty?* The Chinese economic threat is hardly imaginary, unless one still believes in the Pollyanna "free" (as if!) trade economic fantasies of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Cato Institute, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

I wrote before about what Romney and the Republican establishment may be up to [here](#): pivoting to economic nationalism as the only rightist economic ideology that is still viable in this country. On some level, I think that this establishment knows that it's either that or be swept away in some leftist deluge, even if not an immediate one.

As I noted in [this](#) article and [this](#) one, the data points on Romney's true intentions are unclear. But the picture does seem to be firming a little, as the more he stays on this trope, the harder it will be to walk away from it if elected.