

Energy Arena

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Driving the Conversation:

Arena Ref: [David Mark](#)

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If the president's press conference yesterday is any indication, it's going to take far more than a White House shakeup for Obama and congressional Democrats to recover ahead of the 2012 elections. In several ways, the president was asked point blank whether he still resisted "the notion that voters rejected the policy choices [he] made." His answer? Voters "are not satisfied with the *outcomes*." And again: "they're deeply dissatisfied with the *pace* of our economic recovery." (Emphases mine)

Time and again, he declined to draw the connection between his policies and those outcomes, a connection that voters saw plainly. Not all did, to be sure. In fact, it's instructive to look at two states where Obama's vision still reigns, California and New York -- two "failed states," if I may draw from the nomenclature of foreign affairs. Still in denial, a good part of the electorate in those states continues to vote for the very people and policies that have driven their welfare states into near bankruptcy, with taxpayers fleeing as tax takers flood in.

That points to a matter that has been too little noticed after Tuesday's electoral results. This election was all about the economy we're told, by the president ("there is no doubt that people's number one concern is the economy"), and especially by administration apologists anxious to shift responsibility to the condition Obama inherited.

Yes, the economy weighed heavily in the outcome. But underneath that concern, and far more important, is the moral dimension of our economic condition. States, and a nation, that spend more than they have, that promise more than they can deliver, that impose debts on future generations, and that restrain freedom and sap initiative in the collective pursuit of ends that many reject are behaving irresponsibly and immorally. We are suffocating today under massively irresponsible government. It is that message to which this administration is tone deaf.