

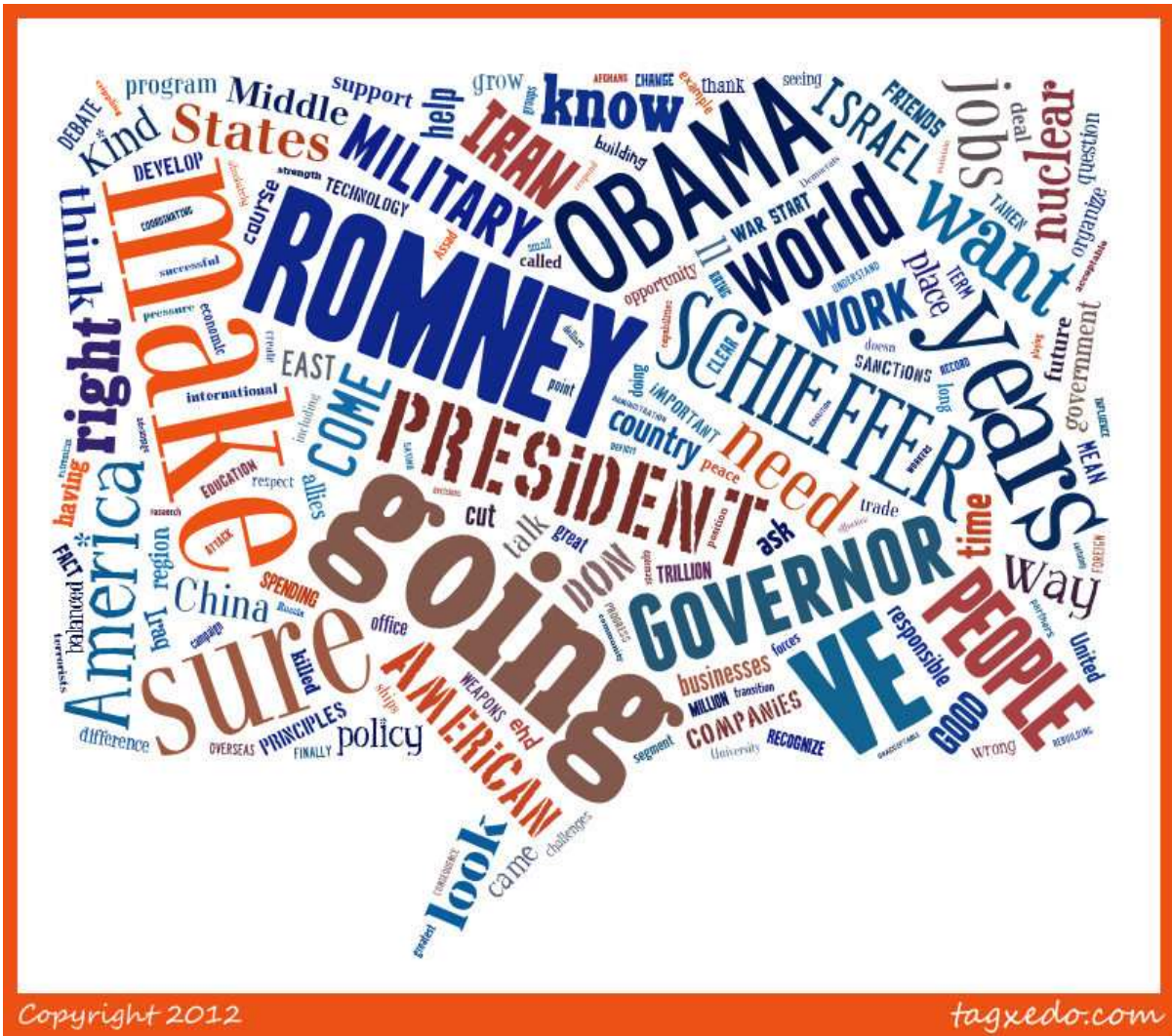
The third presidential debate in graphs

Posted by Suzy Khimm, Ezra Klein, Sarah Kliff, Dylan Matthews and Brad Plumer on October 23, 2012

They say that to know who won a debate, you should watch with the sound off. But how about if you want to know how many times Iran was mentioned versus how many times China was mentioned? Or how America's military spending looks compared to the defense budgets of our nearest competitors? Or whether America really is less influential in the world than it was four years ago?

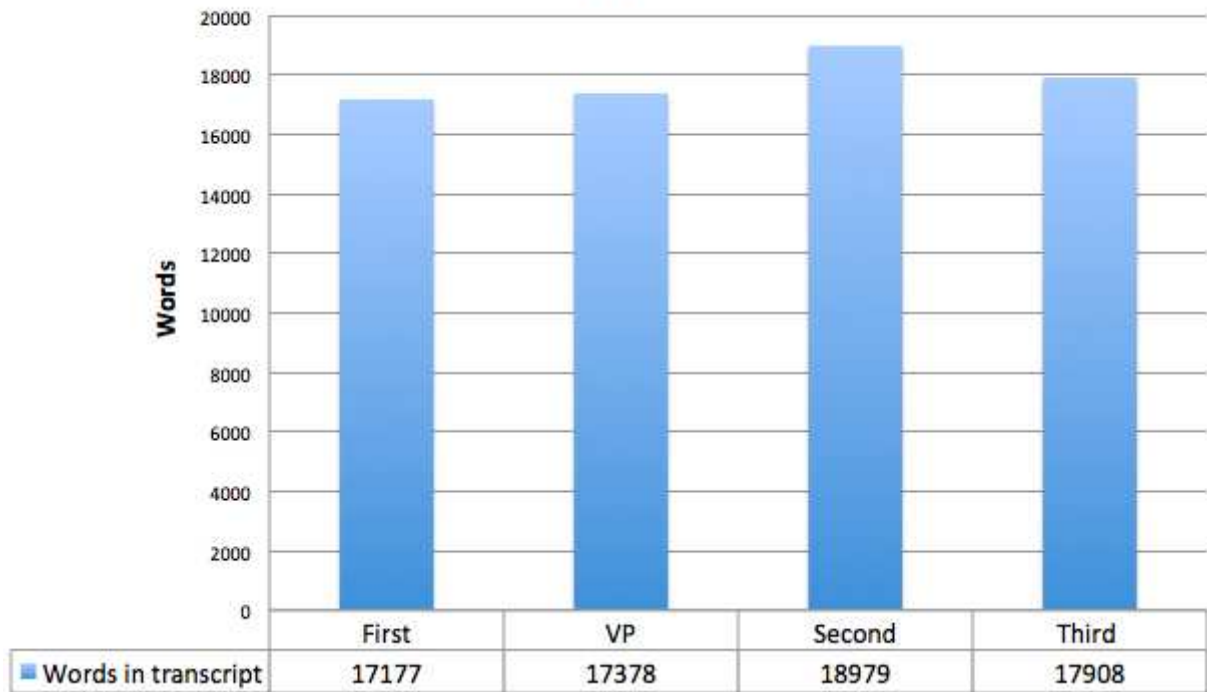
For that, you need some graphs. Luckily, Wonkblog has you covered.

1) The third presidential debate between President Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney, in one word cloud:

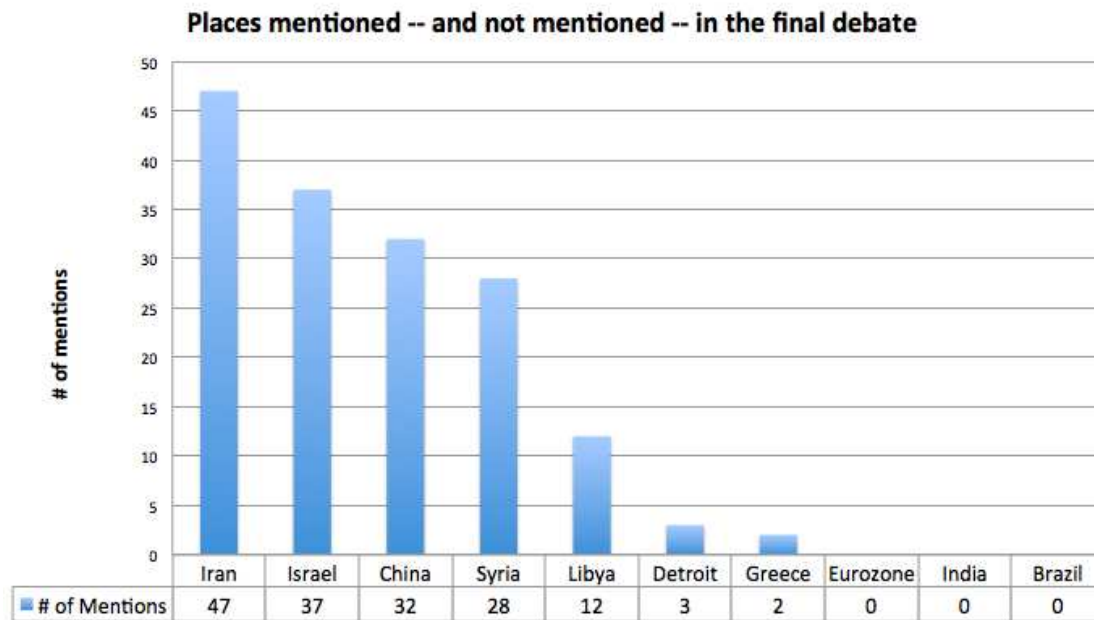


2) The debates, by word count:

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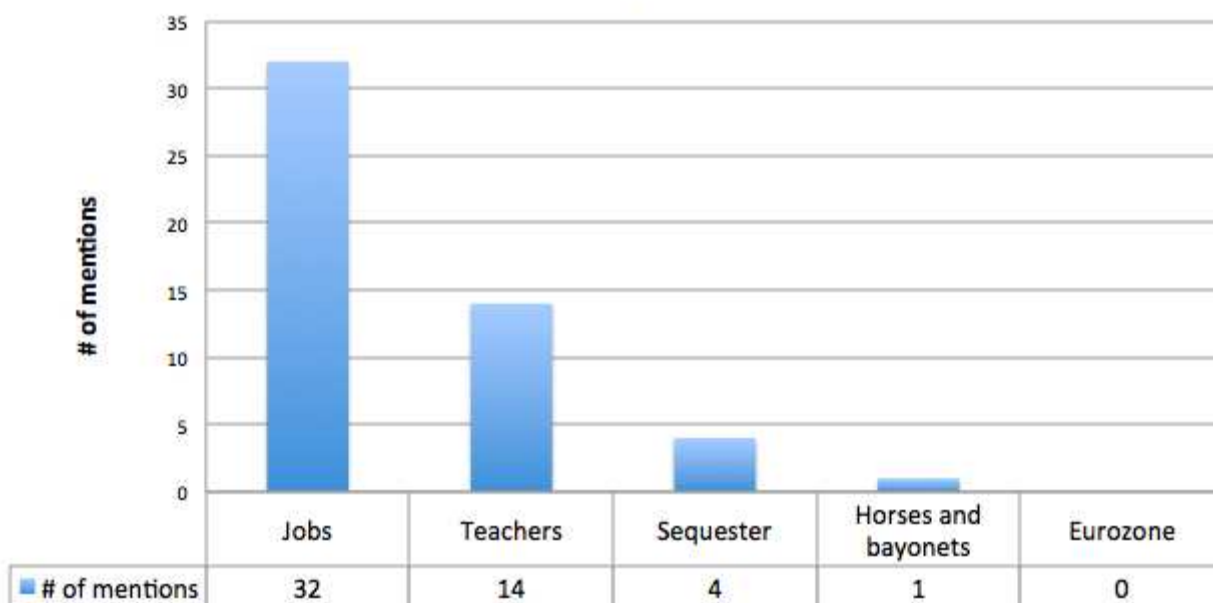


3) Oh, the places the debate didn't really go.



4) The Eurozone got short shrift:

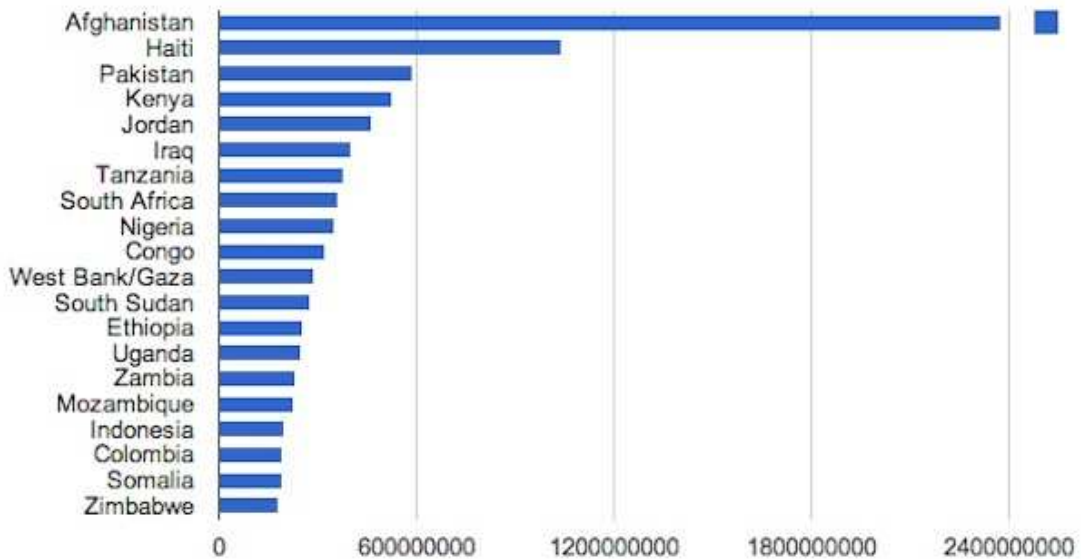
What eurozone crisis?



That's the big picture view. Now let's dig into some of the more specific claims that the candidates made.

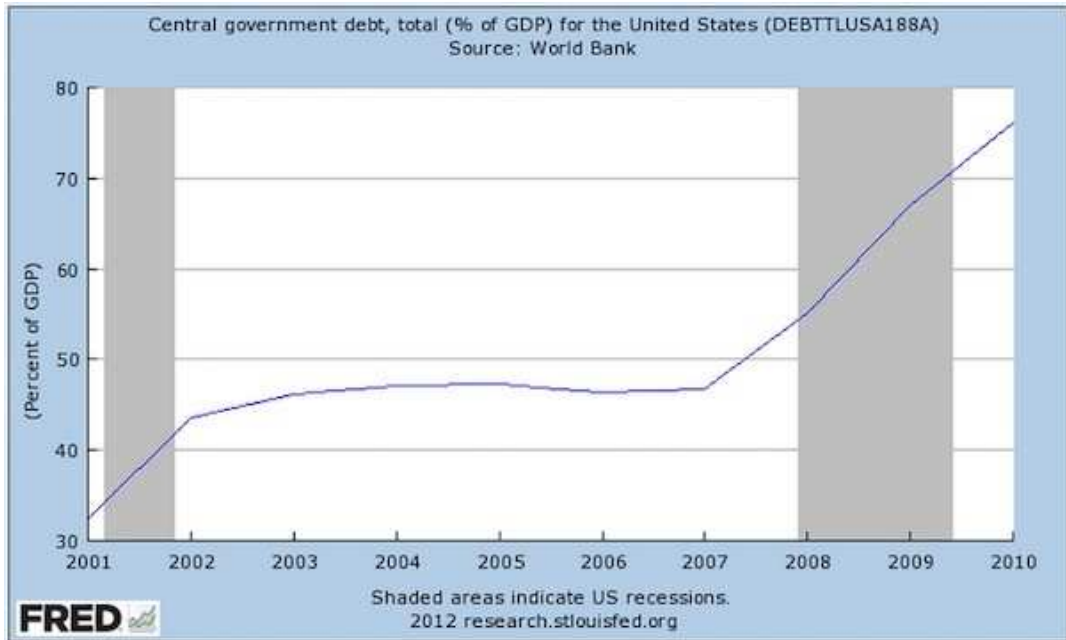
5) Romney: US foreign aid. "The right course for us is to make sure that we go after...these jihadists, but also help the Muslim world. And how do we do that? One, more economic development. We should key our foreign aid, our direct foreign investment, and that of our friends, we should coordinate it to make sure that we — we push back and give them more economic development." Here's the top 20 countries who receive foreign aid money through USAID, five of which are in the Middle East:

USAID funds by country, 2011-2012



(Source: Data from USAID)

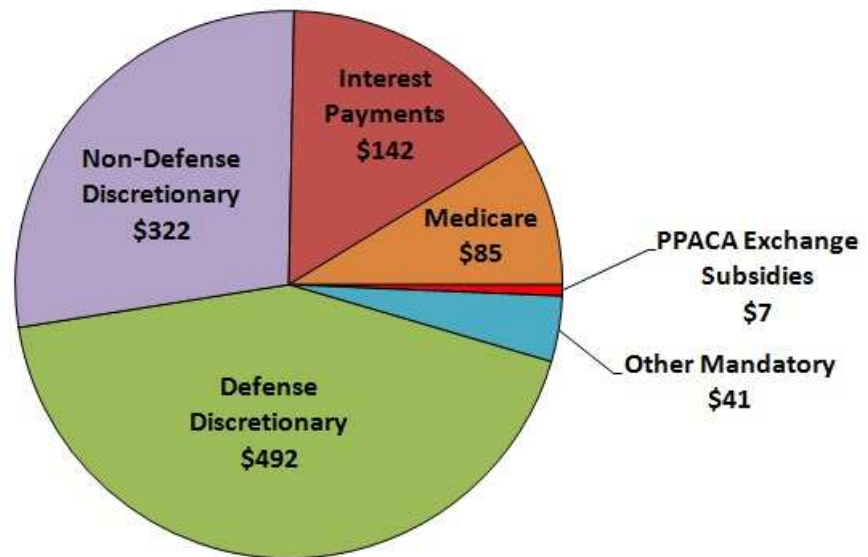
6) Romney: US Debt. "When the — when the president of Iraq — excuse me, of Iran, Ahmadinejad, says that our debt makes us not a great country, that's a frightening thing. Former chief of the — Joint Chiefs of Staff said that — Admiral Mullen said that our debt is the biggest national security threat we face." Here's how much the debt-to-GDP ratio has risen in recent years:



(Source: St. Louis Fed)

7) Romney: Defense budget cuts: "We're blessed with terrific soldiers, and extraordinary technology and intelligence. But the idea of a trillion dollar in cuts through sequestration and budget cuts to the military would change that." About \$500 billion of those cuts come from the sequester's defense discretionary spending cuts, which are scheduled to take effect in 2013 unless Congress acts:

SEQUESTER CUTS BREAKDOWN (2013-2021, IN BILLIONS OF \$)



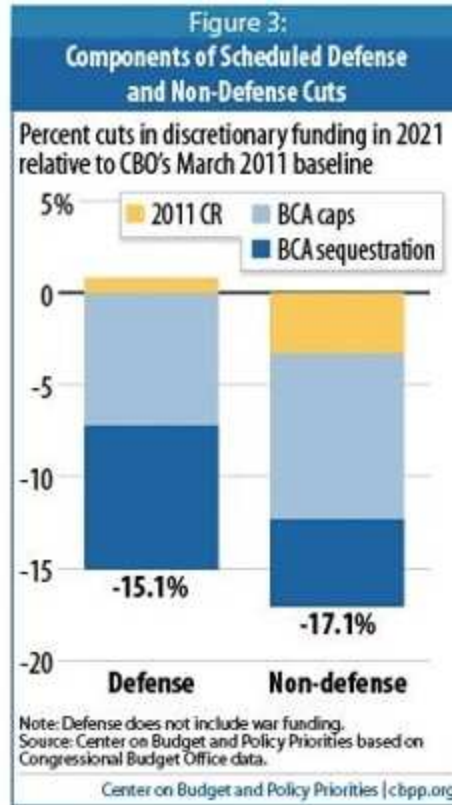
Note: For Medicare, \$85 bn is an estimate of the net Medicare cuts from the sequester. For simplicity, we assume that all \$31 billion listed by the Congressional Budget Office as "outlays resulting from sequestration of mandatory spending" come from lower Part B premium receipts, which increases net Medicare spending.

Source: Congressional Budget Office, Budget Control Act of 2011, Bipartisan Policy Center calculations
WWW.BIPARTISANPOLICY.ORG



(Source: Bipartisan Policy Center)

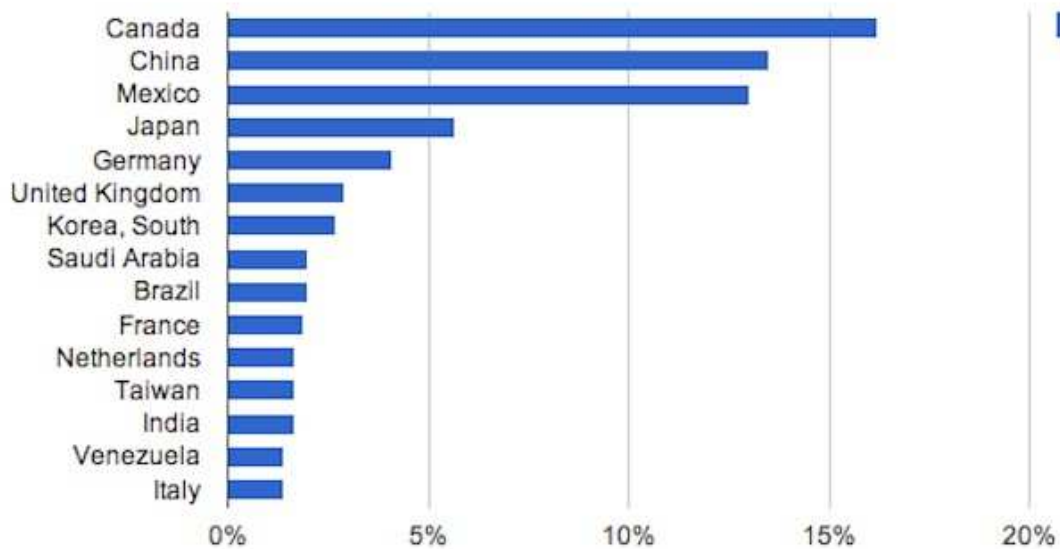
The rest of the \$1 trillion in cuts come from \$450 billion in defense reductions that already are in effect due to the spending caps that were also part of the debt-ceiling deal last August. Here's the overall impact of these cuts to defense and discretionary spending:



(Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities)

8) Romney: Trade with Latin America. “We’re going to increase our trade...We can do better than that, particularly in Latin America. The opportunities for us in Latin America we have just not taken advantage of fully.” Of the US’s top 20 trading partners, only three are in Latin America: Mexico (13 percent total trading volume), Brazil (2 percent), and Venezuela (1.4 percent):

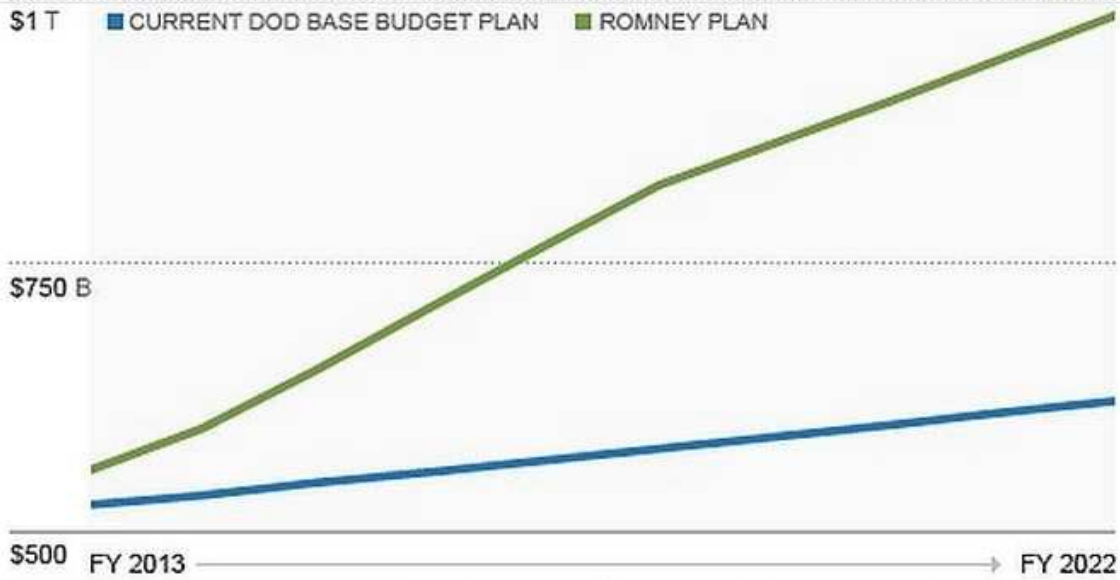
Top US Trading Partners in 2012 (% of total trade)



(Source: US Census)

9) Obama: Romney's military budget. "He then wants to spend another \$2 trillion on military spending that our military is not asking for...what you can't do is spend \$2 trillion in additional military spending that the military is not asking for." Here's how Romney plan for military spending compares to the Defense Department's budget plan:

DEFENSE SPENDING UNDER ROMNEY PLAN



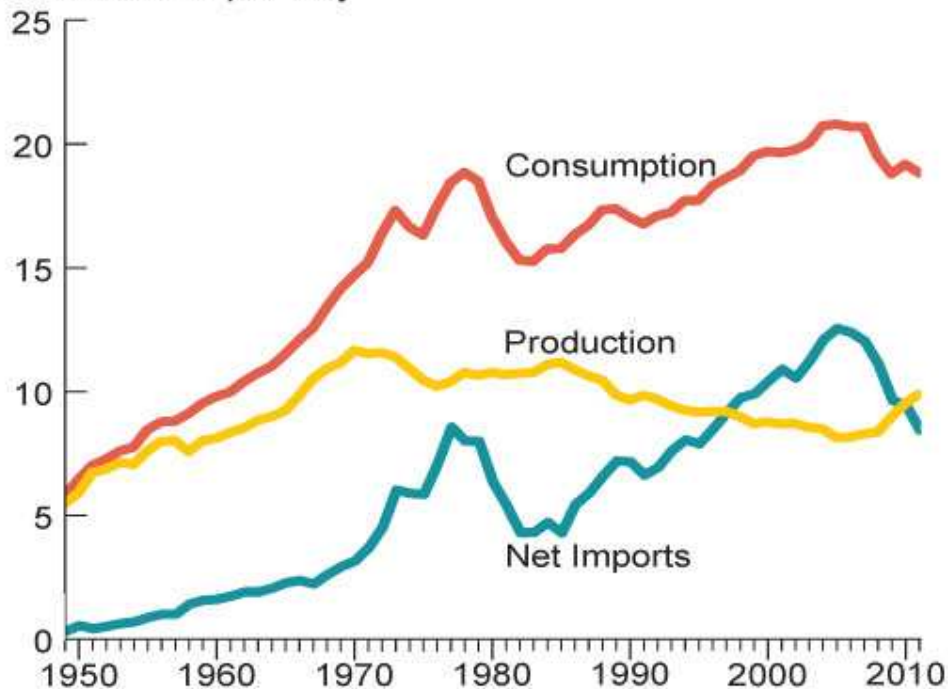
SOURCE: TRAVIS SHARP/CENTER FOR A NEW AMERICAN SECURITY

(SOURCE: CNNMONEY)

10) Obama: Cutting oil imports. "We've cut our oil imports to the lowest level in two decades because we've developed oil and natural gas." Net imports are in fact down to 42 percent of use, a 20-year low.

U.S. Petroleum and Other Liquids, Consumption, Production, and Imports (1949-2011)

million barrels per day



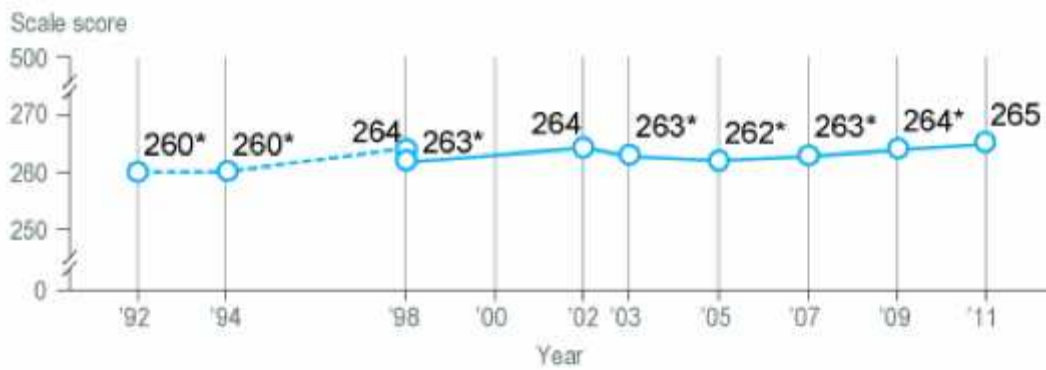
Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review*, Table 3.1 (April 2012), preliminary data, and *Annual Energy Review*, Table 5.1a (October 2011).

11) Obama: Improving schools. "You know, under my leadership, what we've done is reformed education, working with governors, 46 states. We've seen progress and gains in schools that were having a terrible time. And they're starting to finally make progress." For eighth grade reading, students did better on NAEP, the gold standard for the quantitative measurement of student learning, in 2011 than in 2009, but fourth-grade scores were unchanged:

Trend in fourth-grade NAEP reading average scores



Trend in eighth-grade NAEP reading average scores

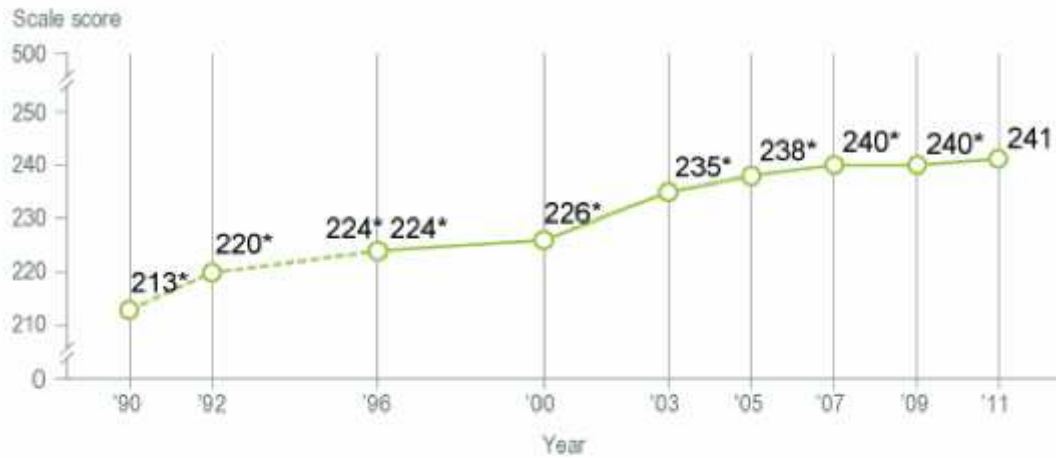


* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2011.

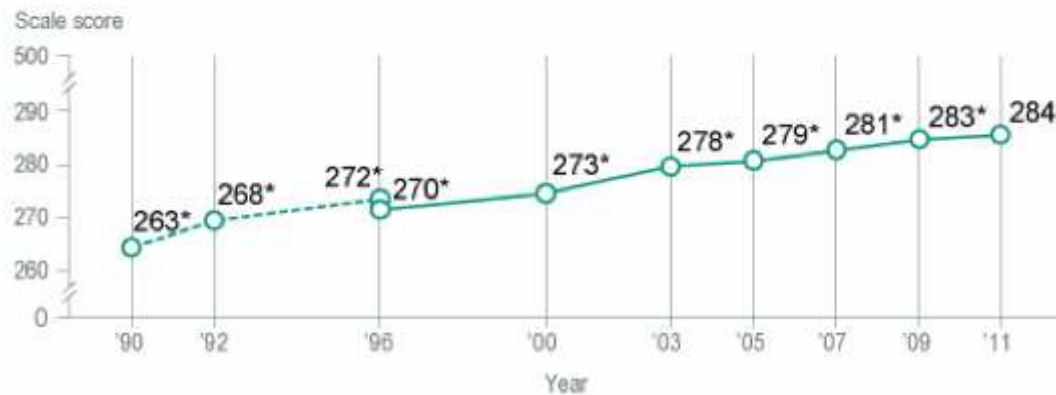
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While math scores significantly improved across the board:

Trend in fourth-grade NAEP mathematics average scores



Trend in eighth-grade NAEP mathematics average scores

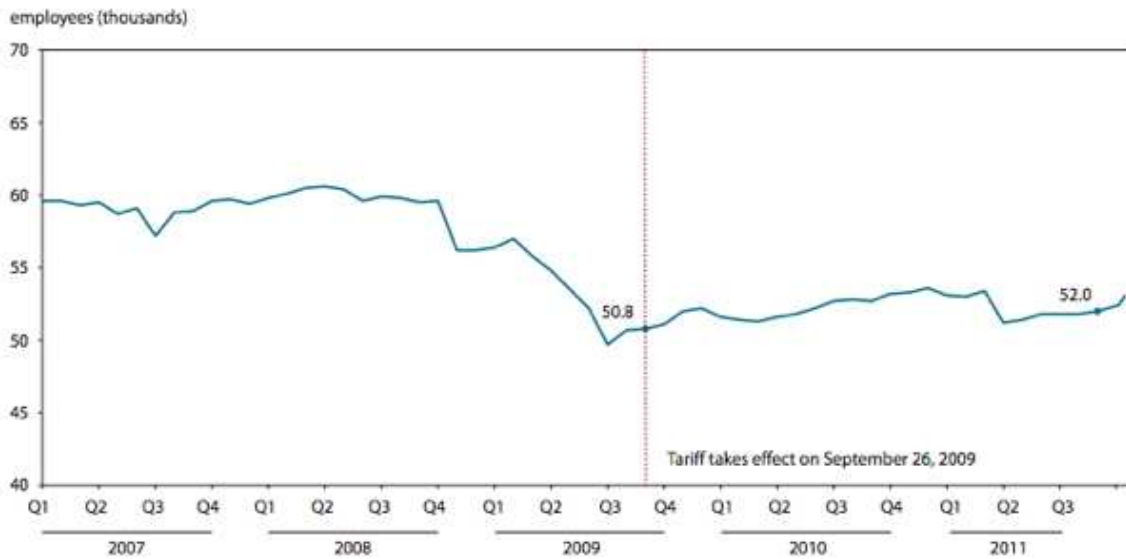


* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2011.

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12) Obama: Taking on China. "We had a tire case in which they were flooding us with cheap domestic tires — or — or cheap Chinese tires. And we put a stop to it and as a consequence saved jobs throughout America." According to Gary Clyde Hufbauer and Sean Lowry at the Peterson Institute, Obama's method for "putting a stop to it" — slapping protective tariffs on Chinese tires — cost American consumers \$1.1 billion and saved, at most, 1,200 jobs:

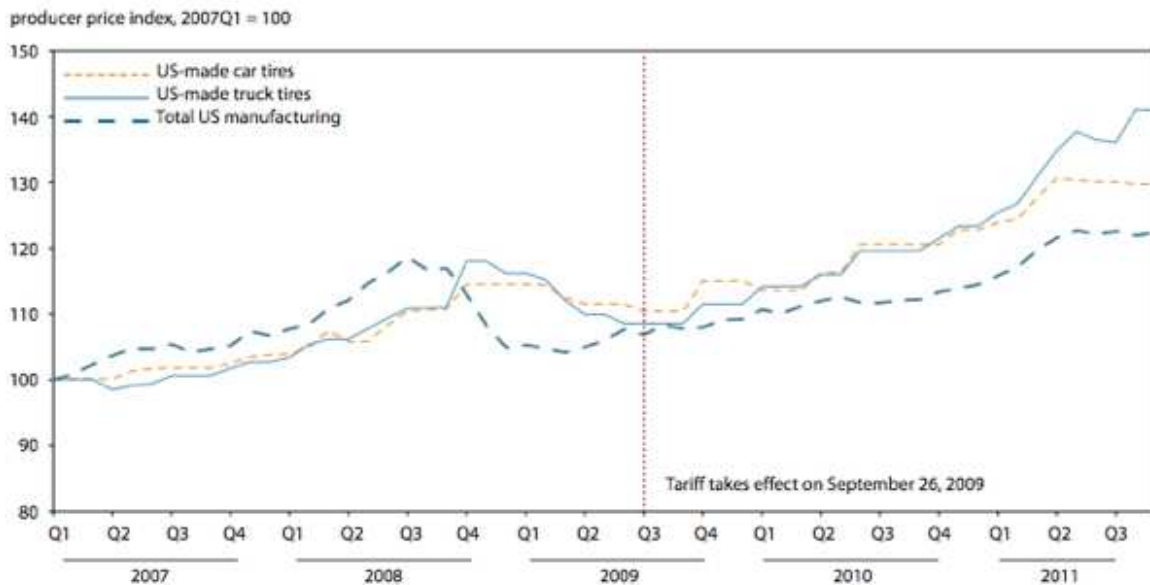
Figure 5 Employment in the US tire industry



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, authors' calculations.

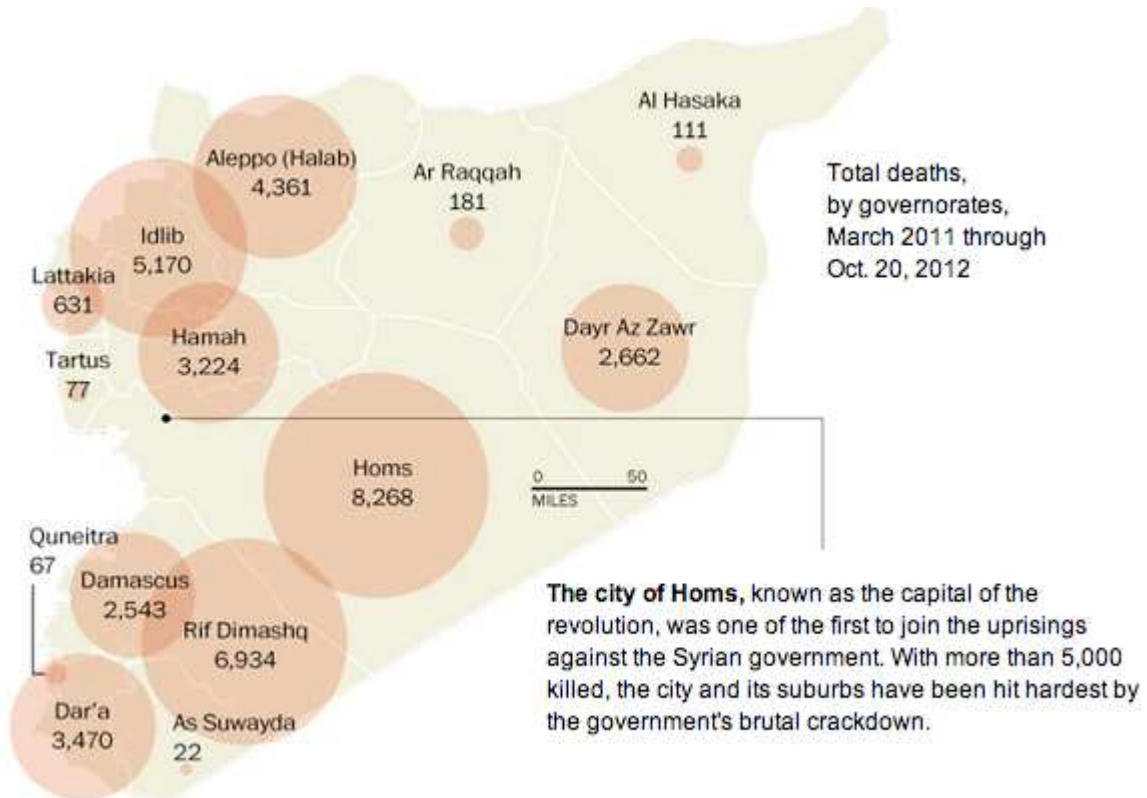
And that's a generous estimate that assumes all the jobs gained after the tariff took effect were due to that, and not the overall recovery. Meanwhile, the price of tires shot up, outstripping inflation in other manufacturing sectors:

Figure 4 US Producer Price Index

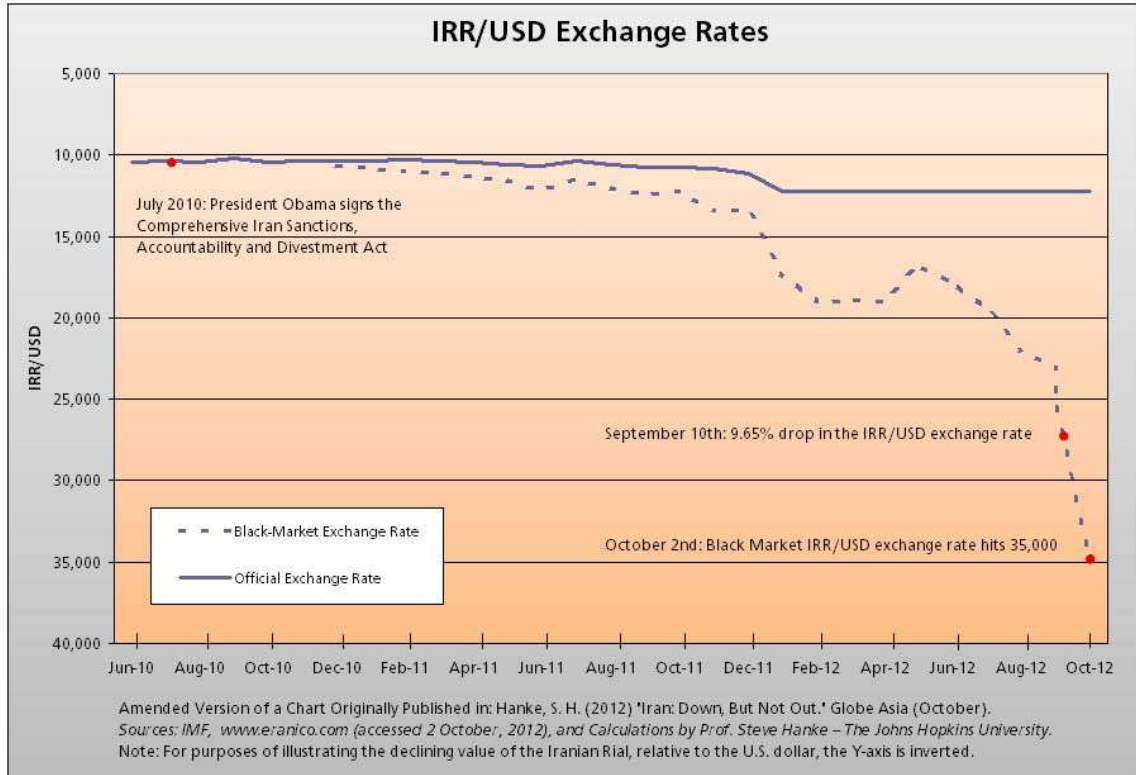


Sources: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, authors' calculations.

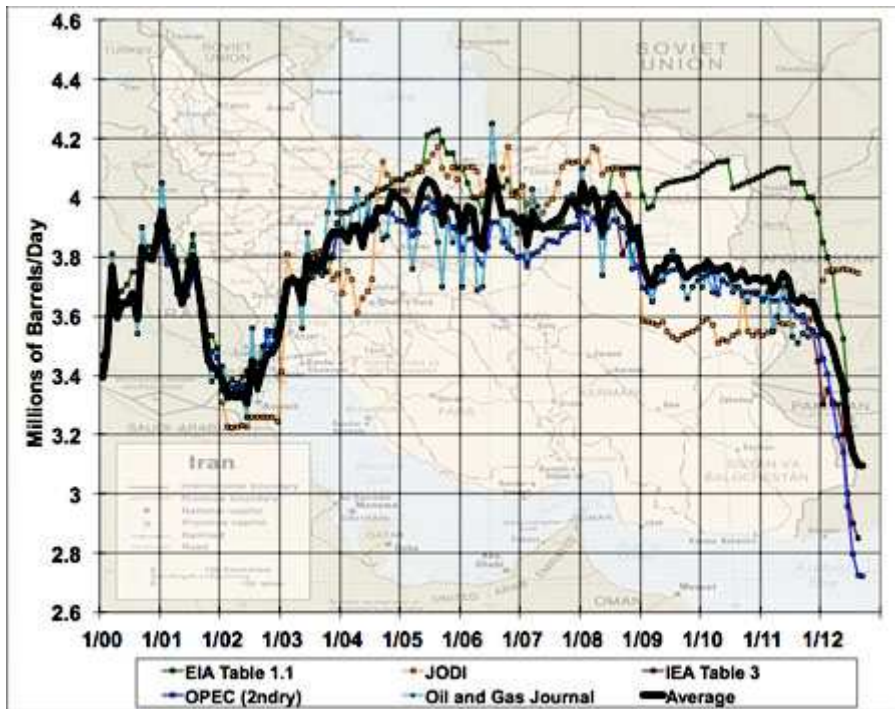
13) Romney: 30,000 deaths in Syria. "Well, let's step back and talk about what's happening in Syria and how important it is. First of all, 30,000 people being killed by their government is a humanitarian disaster." [Here's](#) the latest Washington Post map of where those deaths are occurring, as Syrian rebels fight against Bashar Al-Assad's regime:



14) Obama: Sanctions are crippling Iran's economy. "We then organized the strongest coalition and the strongest sanctions against Iran in history, and it is crippling their economy. Their currency has dropped 80 percent." Steve Hanke at the Cato Institute [has charted the stunning collapse](#) of the Iranian rial on the black market:

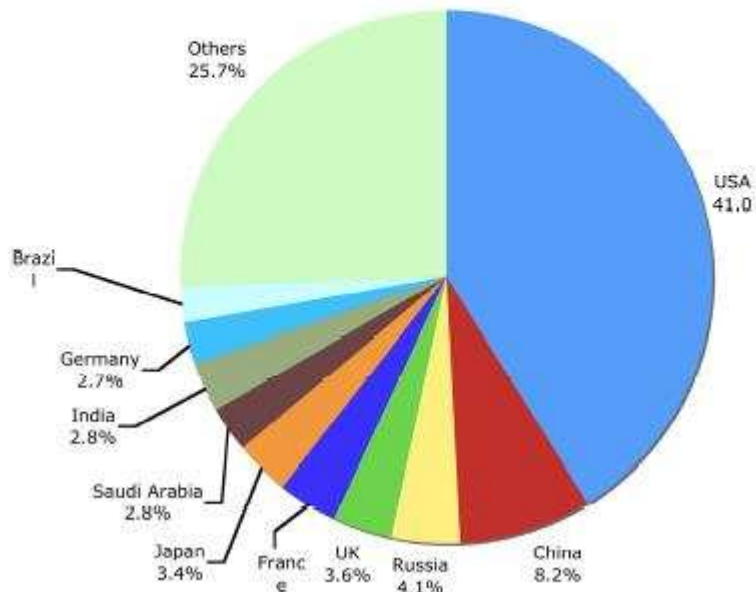


15) Obama: Sanctions are hurting Iranian oil production. "Their oil production has plunged to the lowest level since they were fighting a war with Iraq 20 years ago. So their economy is in a shambles." [Here's the chart](#) of Iran's oil collapse, via Stuart Staniford:

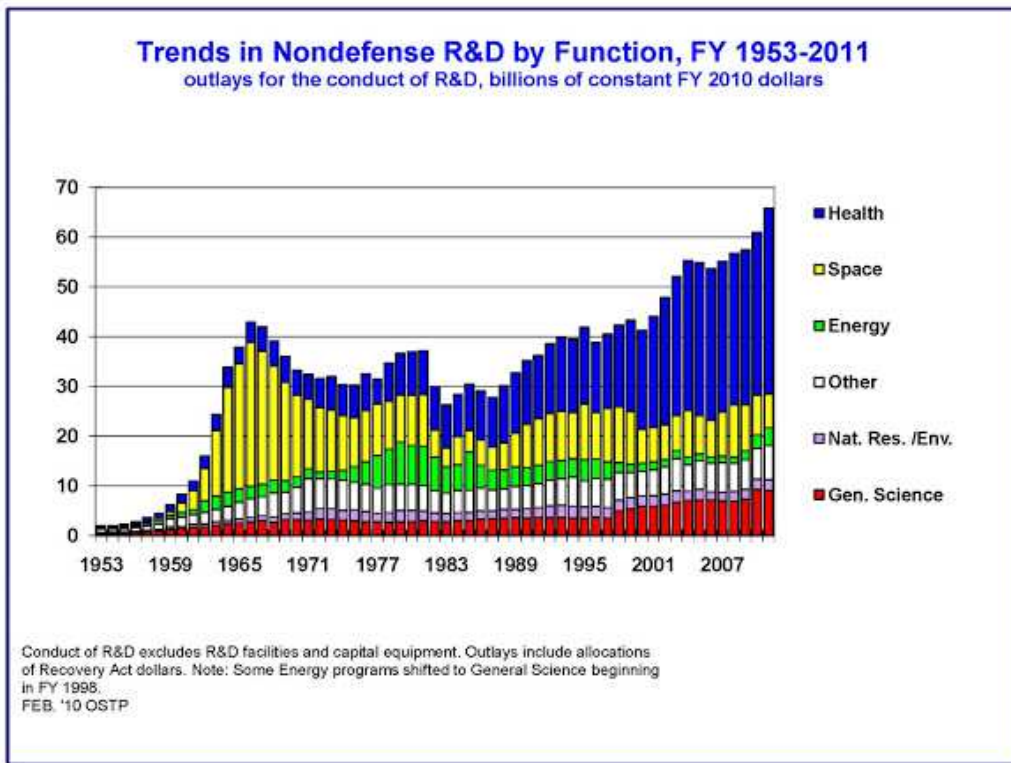


16) Obama: U.S. military spending in context. "We spend more on our military than the next 10 countries combined; China, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, you name it. The next 10." We can put that in pie chart form, thanks to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute:

Figure 1. Shares of world military spending for the top 10 spenders, 2011.



17) Romney: Research is great. “I want to invest in research. Research is great. Providing funding to universities and think tanks is great. But investing in companies? Absolutely not.” For the record, here’s how federal government spending on R&D has broken down over the years ([via Andrew Revkin](#)). Notice that energy has long gotten shortchanged:



18) Romney: American influence. “In nowhere in the world is America’s influence will grow. But unfortunately, in — nowhere in the world is America’s influence greater today than it was four years ago.” Pew surveyed 16 countries about American influence in 2007 and 2012. Here’s how they saw attitudes change.

More Now Embrace U.S. Soft Power

	2007	2012	Change
	%	%	
<i>U.S. technological and scientific advances</i>			
Admire	69	71	+2
Do not admire	28	24	-4
<i>American music, movies and television</i>			
Like	60	66	+6
Dislike	35	29	-6
<i>American ideas about democracy</i>			
Like	35	45	+10
Dislike	56	51	-5
<i>American ways of doing business</i>			
Like	32	43	+11
Dislike	49	43	-6
<i>American ideas and customs spreading here</i>			
Good	19	27	+8
Bad	76	70	-6

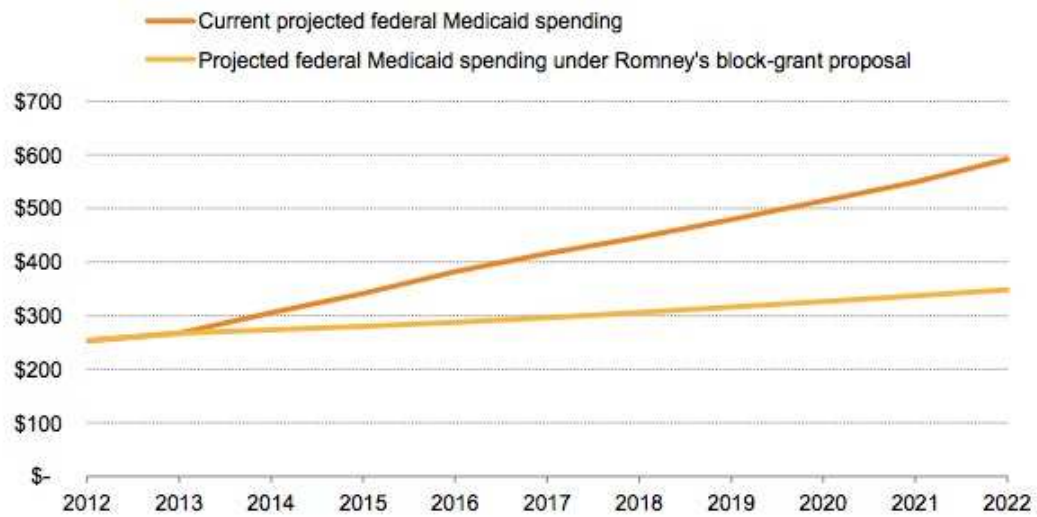
Median percentages across 16 countries surveyed in 2007 and 2012.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q54-Q58.

19) Romney: Medicaid spending. "You look at how we get to a balanced budget within eight to 10 years...We take some programs that we are going to keep, like Medicaid, which is a program for the poor; we'll take that health care program for the poor, and we give it to the states to run because states run these programs more efficiently." Romney would reduce Medicaid spending by \$1.26 trillion over the next decade, a significant chunk of the additional \$4 trillion he plans to put toward military spending.

Chart 1: Decline in Federal Medicaid Spending under Romney's Proposal

(Dollars in billions)



Source: Congressional Budget Office, August 2012 update to the budget and economic outlook (current projections)⁴; Congressional Budget Office, 2012 Long-Term Budget Outlook (projected annual increase in consumer price index)⁵

20) Romney: Pakistan's nuclear arsenal: "It's not time to divorce a nation on Earth that has 100 nuclear weapons and is on the way to double that at some point." [Here's](#) Pakistan's nuclear arsenal in international context.

