



At Least Perry Has an Excuse

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Pundits seem hell bent on singling out a dismal performance by Governor Rick Perry on Thursday night's FOX/Google debate, which was the most watched debate in history—proving voters are paying attention in record numbers as the economics tighten.

Nine Republican candidates took the stage, but only one took the hearts of Florida's Straw Poll participants on Saturday: Herman Cain. Pulling a whopping 37% in a field of nine was no small accomplishment. But wait a minute. Mitt Romney "won" that debate handily, didn't he? At least that's what pundits are declaring. He gave the right answers...spoke with confidence...demeaned Perry cunningly...railed at President Obama effectively...and of course, looked good. Campaigning non-stop for four years, he has no other job. And before this he campaigned at least four more for the last presidency. He has spent millions of his own dollars and by now we all know at least in part, his oft recited resume. So why didn't he win the straw poll?

Governor Perry has a full time job. Most recently he was off the campaign trail to handle the enormous wildfires threatening his state. And Governor Romney was right in the last debate: Massachusetts is NOT Texas. Texas is about 38 times the size of Massachusetts with a budget the size of Canada. Governor Perry is good on the economy and most social issues, but his position on illegal immigration is anathema to conservatives. Still...he stood on the stage and like a true Texan, stuck to his guns. That drew boos from the audience, but on some level, was a refreshing contrast from the former Governor of Massachusetts.

As Governor Romney chided Perry over giving in-state tuition to illegal immigrants, no one pointed out that before he was a candidate in 2008, Romney supported a "path to citizenship" for illegal immigrants.

No one reminded the audience how he hammered McCain in particular for holding the same position he once had held or how he demagogued Giuliani and Huckabee for being soft on illegal immigration.

"This could be extreme political repositioning, even for Romney," stated the Boston Globe.

While Perry was chided for signing an Executive Order to mandate a vaccine for young girls to prevent HPV, which can lead to cervical cancer, no one mentioned

the Romney-Care provision that covers abortion for fifty dollars. And no one reiterated that Perry admitted he was wrong to sign that order, while Romney stands by the healthcare plan he still boasts of, even as it bankrupts his state.

No one pointed out that Romney and his wife have been financial supporters of Planned Parenthood. And on the issue of gay marriage, no one pointed out it was Romney who forced Town Clerks to license same sex partners and change the wording on certificates from “husband” and “wife” to “Partner A” and “Partner B” BEFORE same sex marriage was even the law in Massachusetts.

And no one challenged Romney when he indicated Perry was lying about Romney omitting a sentence in his book in its most recent printing that advocated making a form of Romney-Care available all over the country. If Perry had a weak moment, it was not digging in his heels on his veracity.

Rick Perry is not an Easterner. His voice pattern is slow and deliberate. Mitt Romney would out “Trouble-in-River-City” the Music Man. But we all remember Professor Hill’s eloquence was a smoke screen for much flim and flam.

Perry seems to be honest, committed to his positions, and able to apologize when he thinks he was wrong. And from the conservative point of view, he IS terribly wrong on some things.

Florida’s straw poll results weren’t good for Perry, but they were worse for Romney. Voters may not think much of Perry’s position on immigration, but it seems they still prefer an honest hesitator over a slickster with all the answers. And if Perry did so poorly, why did he still take second place? Just asking.