

Week of Final Presidential Debate Ends With More Campaign Activities

From VOA Learning English, this is IN THE NEWS in Special English.

This week, the two main candidates for president of the United States held their final debate before the November sixth election. After the debate, opinion surveys showed a close race between President Obama and former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney.

Recently, the two men have been visiting states that could help decide the election. Each state has a set number of electoral votes based on its population. In all states but two, the candidate who wins the popular vote wins all of that state's electoral votes. The candidate receiving at least two hundred seventy electoral votes becomes president.



Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney shakes hands with President Obama on the night of their final debate.

On Wednesday, Mr. Obama declared he would pull "an all-nighter," going from California to Florida, to Virginia and then Ohio. This week, he also made campaign appearances in Nevada, Iowa, Colorado and Illinois. Mr. Romney targeted Nevada, Iowa and Ohio. Historically, no Republican Party candidate has won the presidency without first winning Ohio's electoral votes.

At some campaign stops, Mr. Obama used the term "Romnesia" -- combining his opponent's name with the word that describes someone who forgets things.

"If you can't remember what you said just a week ago, if you can't remember the plans on your own web site, and you're worried you might be coming down with a case of Romnesia, I want you to know Obamacare covers pre-existing conditions. We can make you well."

In Illinois, Mr. Obama became the first president to mark his ballot before the presidential election. A short time later, he spoke of the ease of voting early, saying the process takes the worry out of having to make sure you vote on a single day.

On Friday, Mr. Romney urged his supporters in Ohio to vote early. More than thirty states offer some form of early voting.

Earlier in the week, Mr. Romney promised to improve education and get the economy going. He also said that Mr. Obama's campaign is beginning to weaken.

"His campaign gets smaller and smaller and focused on smaller and smaller things. Our campaign is about big things. Because we happen to believe that America faces big challenges, we recognize that this a year with big choice and that Americans want to see big changes, and I am going to bring it this country." 10-25-12 cnpk US Pol

The former governor has also used his campaign events to criticize the way President Obama has directed the economy. In one speech, he asked supporters if they could deal with four more years of twenty-three million Americans looking for a good job.

As the election nears, many observers are still not sure who will win. Phil Wallach works at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC.

"I think the race has stabilized at a dead heat and I think it's likely that we will go into Election Day not knowing who's going to come out the winner."

Mr. Wallach believes that, in the end, the president will be re-elected.

But another observer, Scot Faulkner, believes Mr. Romney is now in leading in the final days of the campaign. He adds that as the end of campaign nears, both candidates are urging voters to get out and vote early.

"It's going to be energizing their base. They already know who their base votes are and making sure they get out and vote. And at the moment Romney has the fervor [excitement] factor over Obama, but Obama has the ground game over Romney so that makes for a very interesting final phase."

And that's IN THE NEWS in VOA Special English, written by Kim Varzi. I'm Christopher Cruise.