

# After four years, it's time for change

Tuesday's presidential election should hinge on the economy. It shouldn't be a close call. The obvious choice is the team of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan.

When elected, President Obama suggested that if he couldn't turn around our economy in four years, he should be a one-term president.

He hasn't, and he should be.

Yes, numbers released this past week show slight improvements, but economic growth remains slow, well behind any post-recession expansion in history. And, yes, Obama helped rescue the economy from the brink of depression. But at what cost? Debt has ballooned from \$10 trillion to a staggering \$16 trillion. Paying it off will take generations.

Obama's administration suggested the unemployment rate would fall naturally to 6 percent. Yet even after Obama's team plowed stimulus cash into the economy, the jobless rate has hovered around 8 percent for months. Count the millions who gave up looking for work, and the jobless rate would be closer to 11 percent.

Romney grew up rich. He could have just enjoyed the fruits of his family's wealth. Instead, he earned Harvard business and law degrees. He made his own fortune at Bain Capital. He rescued the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics from financial disaster. As Massachusetts governor, he worked with a Democratic Legislature to close a \$3 billion deficit.

Obama lacked practical management experience, and it shows. He promised to work with Republicans, but Democrats unilaterally pushed through Obamacare when they controlled both houses of Congress. Voters punished them in 2010.

In contrast, Romney is a leader, a doer and a fixer. His track record is proven.

Romney is better equipped to improve our economy and raise our world stature. He understands that free-market enterprise stirs job growth better than the uncertainty and rising taxes caused by Obamacare and other measures.

Part of Romney's five-point plan for job growth would take better advantage of our natural resources. He would expand exploration on federal land and approve the Keystone pipeline. He believes in exploring green energy, but not at the expense of missteps such as Solyndra, and he recognizes that green fuels alone can't end our dependence on foreign oil any time soon.

The deaths of our ambassador and three other Americans in Libya may have been preventable. This tragedy is symptomatic of Obama's laissez-faire attitude and incompetence in foreign affairs. Romney has the backbone to restore America's standing in the world community. No one will doubt his commitment to Israel and other allies.

Romney's controversial choice of Janesville Congressman Paul Ryan was gutsy. Romney knew, however, that this financial and policy wonk could be valuable as vice president. Ryan has spent his 14 years in Congress studying Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. He understands tax code fairness and is committed to closing loopholes routinely exploited by corporations. Whether or not you agree with his proposed fixes, he gets it. Obama's vice president, Joe Biden, can't match Ryan's knowledge of finances, policies and possible reforms.

Ryan is not so much a politician as a patriot. He does things for the right reasons. Romney and Ryan are caring men of character and moral standards. They believe in this country and the exceptionalism of Americans. Times are tough, and Romney and Ryan realize we must make tough choices that will be

unpopular and painful but that Americans will endure.

Together, Romney and Ryan could make a powerful team.

Critics suggest Romney waffles and points in whatever direction the winds of national sentiment suggest. Perhaps, however, these are moderate tendencies that will prove pragmatic. He may have a political tin ear, but Romney is a thinker and listens to all ideas.

Four years ago, a trusting nation put its faith in a relative unknown in Barack Obama. Great hopes have faded. Promised change has come too slowly or took us the wrong way.

It's again time for change. On Tuesday, give Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan a chance.