Would you be surprised to learn that in 2008, when John McCain was vetting vice presidential candidates, Mitt Romney provided McCain with 23 years of his tax returns?

I'd like to say that again. 23 years of Romney's tax returns were requested by – and provided to – John McCain's staff.

Evidently, the embarrassment Sarah Palin brought that campaign paled when compared to the storm that McCain's staff foresaw raging around Romney's tax records. So, the two years Romney is willing to expose now are the 2010 and 2011 returns he's polished up in anticipation of this run at the White House. He learned, in 2008, that his full tax story was the kiss of death for the campaign.

I hear progressive political commentators saying, over and over, that Romney has not articulated any plan regarding how he intends to do any of the things he says we all know need to be done. Things such as get people back to work, lower the deficit blah, blah, blah.

Articulated plans are the tools of candidates trying to persuade the "undecided" portion of the electorate. That's a very small group this time around. Most folk are pro-Barack Obama or pro-Romney and they will not be switching. This election will turn on getting the base to the polls; which is why the real Republican energy is being exerted on suppressing the vote – particularly the Democratic vote, by any means necessary. And, reports suggest Republicans are registering more new voters than Democrats. What this says to me is that there are people in this country who hate having an African-American President more than they hate being out of work.

If you're paying attention, you can discern that the Republicans are against abortion, marriage equality, returning to boom era tax levels and what they like to call "entitlements." But, you won't hear them trying to persuade the electorate that their "plan" is the sensible path to success and prosperity for the country. Rather, they will mouth what I heard described as, "word salad" – a mix of words that sound fairly intelligent without really meaning anything. You will be bombarded with lies and half-truths spun to confuse, mislead and discourage voter turnout.

When you hear the word entitlements, think social security, Medicare, unemployment benefits, food stamps and years ago I would have added welfare. But, welfare has pretty much been choked to death already.

Paul Ryan, Romney's running mate, developed the Republican budget which cuts $716 billion from the budget by repealing the Affordable Care Act without replacing it. This will shift the cost of healthcare to seniors and the poor. Then Republicans say President Obama's budget cuts $716 billion from Medicare. That's actually true, but, Obama's plan makes the cuts by eliminating overpayments to insurers and providers. All cuts are not equal.

Pay close attention to what you hear or shut your ears altogether but, register and vote.