



**MEMORANDUM TO INTERESTED PARTIES**

**RE:** The Real Romney, Translated

**TO:** Interested Parties

**FROM:** Jim Messina, Obama for America Campaign Manager

We know Mitt Romney will say anything to win, even if it's not true – just like he did in Massachusetts and the first debate. The real Mitt Romney has been running on his “severely conservative” positions for years, but now – just weeks before Election Day – he’s trying to hide them because they’ll hurt the middle class and his chances of winning.

We saw this clearly in the first presidential debate on Oct. 3, as Governor Romney cynically and dishonestly hid the self-described “severely conservative” positions he’s been running on – and there’s no doubt he’s memorizing more deceptions as he prepares for Tuesday’s second debate.

On Tuesday, Romney will be asked some simple questions by Americans from diverse backgrounds about how his plans will impact their lives. So we’ve provided some simple translations to help voters – and the media – interpret the deceptive answers he’s most likely to give in return.

***Question #1: What’s your tax plan and what will it mean for middle-class families?\_***

**What he’ll say:** “I will not, under any circumstances, raise taxes on middle-income families.” – Mitt Romney, Denver Presidential Debate, 10/3/12

**Translation:** As part of his tax plan, Romney has proposed \$5 trillion in specific tax cuts. As independent, non-partisan analysts have highlighted, to pay for his plan, Mitt Romney has promised \$1 trillion more in tax cuts for the rich than there are tax benefits to close. As a result, he would have to cut popular tax deductions that middle class families rely on, like the mortgage interest and charitable deductions, to pay for \$250,000 tax cuts to multi-millionaires. Paying for Romney’s tax cuts would mean the average middle class family with kids would see their taxes go up by \$2,000 a year.

**Reality under President Obama:** The typical middle class family has seen their taxes cut by \$3,600 by President Obama over the course of his first term, and he has a detailed plan that would keep income taxes low for 98% of families and 97% of small businesses, while asking the wealthiest to pay their fair share to help create an economy built to last.

***Question #2: What about that \$5 trillion tax cut skewed toward the wealthiest I've heard about?***

**What he'll say:** "First of all, I don't have a \$5 trillion tax cut...I'm not going to reduce the share of taxes paid by high-income people." – Mitt Romney, Denver Presidential Debate, 10/3/12

**Translation:** Mitt Romney has detailed a specific tax plan that provides \$5 trillion in tax cuts weighted towards millionaires and billionaires – a combination of a 20 percent cut in individual income taxes, eliminating the Alternative Minimum Tax, repealing the estate tax and the high-income Medicare tax, and cutting taxes for corporations by \$1.1 trillion. That math is clear, but when it comes to paying for these tax cuts, Romney hasn't specified a single loophole he'd close. Even if he eliminated every deduction for high-income taxpayers and enough loopholes to pay for his corporate tax cut, he'd still need to increase middle class taxes by \$1 trillion to pay for his plan.

**Reality under President Obama:** President Obama has already signed \$1 trillion in spending cuts as part of a balanced plan to reduce the deficit by more than \$4 trillion, while maintaining critical investments in innovation, education, and infrastructure needed to create jobs now and grow our economy in the coming decades.

***Question #3: So how can you claim your tax cuts won't result in more taxes for the middle class?***

**What he'll say:** "Six studies have guaranteed...that this math adds up...even their own deputy campaign manager acknowledged that it wasn't correct." – Paul Ryan, Vice Presidential Debate, 10/11/12

**Translation:** While Romney will cite "studies" to back up his wild suggestion that he won't raise taxes on middle-class families, independent fact checkers and journalists have noted time and time again, those so-called "[studies](#)" are actually partisan op-eds, blog posts and analyses by conservative think tanks. None have disputed the total cost of his plan or the fact that it is a large tax cut for those at the top – so none prove that he can pay for his tax plan without raising middle-class taxes. He's trying to take statements out of context to get around the truth: he's proposed \$5 trillion in specific tax cuts, and even if he closes every deduction for the wealthy, he'll still fall \$1 trillion short. That means he has to either raise taxes on middle-class families or explode the deficit.

***Question #4: How will you bridge the deep partisan divide in Washington?***

**What he'll say:** "We need to have leadership — leadership in Washington that will actually bring people together and get the job done...I've done it before. I'll do it again." – Mitt Romney, Denver Presidential Debate, 11/3/12

**Translation:** The decisions Governor Romney made in Massachusetts caused the state to fall behind badly: ranking 47<sup>th</sup> out of 50 in job creation and leading the nation in debt per capita. As

Governor, he was more interested in running for President and picking fights than building governing coalitions. His doors were closed to lawmakers – his aides even erected a velvet rope and cordoned off an elevator in the capitol for his personal use – and Massachusetts legislators have panned his tenure as Governor. His record of failed leadership and failed policies in Massachusetts included slashing funding for education and job training while raising taxes and fees on middle class families and small businesses.

**Reality under President Obama:** President Obama worked with Democrats and Republicans to sign three free trade agreements, repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” cut \$1 trillion in spending, and pass the payroll tax cut to put \$1,000 back in the pocket of the typical American worker.

***Question #5: What’s your plan for bringing our troops home from Afghanistan?***

**What he’ll say:** “We agree with a 2014 transition.” – Paul Ryan, Vice Presidential Debate, 10/11/12

**Translation:** Romney has no plan to end the war in Afghanistan and bring our troops home, and he’s been consistently blank on any details about a plan for a U.S. military withdrawal. In fact, Romney said announcing a withdrawal date from Afghanistan was President Obama’s “biggest mistake” there. And he’s failed to outline any plan to go after terrorists and say how he would finish the job against al Qaeda.

**Reality under President Obama:** President Obama promised to end the war in Iraq and bring our troops home, and he did. He is bringing the war in Afghanistan to a responsible end, after refocusing our efforts on the real reason we went to war in Afghanistan – to find the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11, to bring Osama bin Laden to justice, and to decimate al-Qaeda’s leadership.

***Question #6: What should the United States do to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon?***

**What he’ll say:** “This administration has no credibility on this issue... Under a Romney administration, we will have credibility on this issue.” – Paul Ryan, Vice Presidential Debate, 10/11/12

**Translation:** The Romney-Ryan ticket has not presented any new policies that are different from what the President is already doing and have struggled to articulate what they’d do differently regarding Iran – except blustering about recklessly taking us to war. And Romney finally admitted this week that the President’s “crippling sanctions” on Iran are working to bring its economy to its knees.

**Reality under President Obama:** President Obama has repeatedly stated that a nuclear-armed Iran is unacceptable, and he will keep all options –including a military one – on the table to prevent that from happening. And he has taken actions to put Iran under more pressure than ever before, including imposing the most crippling sanctions on Iran in history.

***Question #7: How will you support teachers to ensure a quality education for our children?***

**What he'll say:** "I love great schools...And the key to great schools: great teachers." – Mitt Romney, Denver Presidential Debate, 10/3/12

**Translation:** Just last week, Romney told the *Des Moines Register* that he didn't believe putting more teachers in classrooms would grow the economy over the next four years, and he's fought against efforts to reduce class sizes saying it hurts education. Romney would slash investments in K-12 education and Pell Grants. If applied across the board, the cuts in the Romney-Ryan budget could kick 200,000 kids out of Head Start and eliminate 65,000 jobs for educators. These same cuts could slash Pell Grants by nearly \$1,000 for almost 10 million students. Romney also claims credit for Massachusetts' schools, but he inherited one of the best school systems in the nation. He did his best to reverse that though – his drastic budget cuts in his first year led to teacher layoffs and larger class size.

**Reality under President Obama:** President Obama has a plan to recruit and prepare 100,000 science and math teachers. And he has doubled funding for Pell Grants by ending over \$60 billion in subsidies to banks acting as middlemen helping to make college affordable for nearly 10 million students and their families.

***Question #8: Do you believe the auto bailout was an important step to save American jobs?***

What he'll say: "Mitt Romney's a car guy." – Paul Ryan, Vice Presidential Debate, 10/11/12

Translation: When the American auto industry and the million jobs it supports were on the brink, Governor Romney would have just "let Detroit go bankrupt." And he didn't just write it in an op-ed, he repeated it on national television. The auto rescue saved over a million jobs; the auto industry has created nearly a quarter of a million jobs since GM and Chrysler retooled; and the Big Three are all profitable for the first time in years – but Romney thought it was a bad idea.

**Reality under President Obama:** The auto rescue saved over a million jobs; the auto industry has created nearly a quarter of a million jobs since GM and Chrysler retooled; and the Big Three are all profitable for the first time in years – but Romney thought it was a bad idea.

***Question #9: Will you stand up to China and keep them from cheating?***

What he'll say: "It's time for us to stand up to China for their cheating." – Mitt Romney, campaigning in Ohio, 10/13/12

**Translation:** Contrary to his rhetoric, we know Governor Romney wouldn't stand up to China. In his book, he criticized the President for standing up to China on behalf of American tire industry workers, calling it "decidedly bad for the nation and our workers." And while he criticized China's "cheating," he has maintained investments in China.

**Reality under President Obama:** President Obama is ensuring that American businesses and workers have a level playing field where they can compete and win, and he has brought trade

cases against China at twice the rate of the previous Administration—and we’ve won all that have been decided.

***Question #10:** Will you fight to achieve comprehensive immigration reform if elected?*

What he’ll say: “We’re going to put in place a permanent solution...I will put in an immigration reform plan.” – Mitt Romney, Univision Forum, 9/19/12

**Translation:** Despite insisting that he wants a long-term solution to our broken immigration system, the only solution Governor Romney has proposed for the 12 million undocumented immigrants in this country is “self-deportation” – making life so miserable for them that they all choose to return to their countries of origin on their own. Governor Romney is the most extreme, anti-immigration nominee in modern history. He has surrounded himself with anti-immigration advisers and promised to veto the DREAM Act – calling it a “handout” and “favoritism.”

**Reality under President Obama:** President Obama has done everything within his power to reform our immigration system—and when Congress didn’t act, his administration did, lifting the shadow of deportation for thousands of young people brought to this country as children who know no other home, and who are Americans in every way except on paper.

***Question #11:** How will a Romney presidency impact middle-class families? Do you stand for all of us?*

What he’ll say: “My campaign is about the 100 percent of America, and I’m concerned about them.” – Mitt Romney, Univision Forum, 9/19/12

**Translation:** Governor Romney famously wrote off huge chunks of the American people as victims who are dependent on government – calling 47 percent of our country “victims” who won’t ever “take personal responsibility and care for their lives.” The day after the video of Governor Romney telling his supporters this at a private fundraiser leaked, he doubled down on those comments. If Romney told his wealthy donors behind closed doors, “my job is not to worry about those people,” why should the middle class believe he’ll be President for all Americans when he tries to say it Tuesday night?

**Reality under President Obama:** When he was elected in 2008, 47 percent of the people did not vote for President Obama, but he didn’t say, “Well, I’m not going to worry about those folks.” He looked to the American people and said, even though you didn’t vote for me, I’ve heard your voices, I need your help, and I will be your President, I will fight for you, too.

***Question #12:** What’s your plan to reduce America’s dependence on foreign oil?*

What he’ll say: “I want to get America and North America energy independent, so we can create those jobs.” – Mitt Romney, Denver Presidential Debate, 10/3/12

**Translation:** Governor Romney’s so-called [energy plan](#) is devoid of any policy specifics or concrete steps that would realistically increase our nation’s energy security. Instead, Governor

Romney wants to keep giving billions of dollars in tax subsidies to the big oil and gas companies each year at a time when they've hardly been more profitable and recklessly open new sensitive areas for drilling. But he would abandon efforts to increase energy efficiency and develop our clean, homegrown energy sources. That's not a recipe for energy independence – it would only ensure that Big Oil's profits continue to soar while we cede our clean energy sector and the jobs it supports to our overseas competitors like China and Germany.

**Reality under President Obama:** After 30 years of inaction, President Obama has doubled fuel efficiency standards so our cars and trucks will go farther on a gallon of gas, helped double our production of job-creating clean wind and solar energies, and championed an all-of-the-above American energy strategy. Today, oil production is at 14-year high, natural gas production is at an all-time high, and we are less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in two decades.

***Question #13: What would you do to ensure that the Benghazi attack is never repeated?***

**What he'll say:** "Shouldn't we have a Marine detachment guarding our ambassador in Benghazi, a place where we knew that there was an al-Qaida cell with arms?" – Paul Ryan, Vice Presidential Debate, 10/11/12

**Translation:** The truth is that House Republicans have repeatedly provided less in funding for diplomatic security than President Obama has requested, and the Romney-Ryan budget could cut diplomatic security funding by as much as \$300 million. Now, Congressional Republicans, led by Congressman Ryan, are saying we should be beefing up security – but they haven't explained how they would do that with the deep cuts in the Romney-Ryan budget or why they proposed lower funding in the past. And Governor Romney is trying to take advantage of the tragedy in Libya for personal political gain, just as he did in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy and just as he [secretly promised his wealthy donors](#) he would when he was caught on video in May.

**Reality under President Obama:** Immediately after the attacks in Benghazi, President Obama referred to it as an “act of terror,” has been focused on ensuring the security of our personnel abroad getting to the bottom of what happened, and bringing those responsible to justice. And the President is squarely focused on getting all the facts about what happened, and making sure it never happens again.

***Question #14: What’s your plan to replace the Affordable Care Act?***

**What he’ll say:** “Pre-existing conditions are covered under my plan.” – Mitt Romney, Denver Presidential Debate, 10/3/12

**Translation:** Governor Romney’s plan only protects people with pre-existing conditions who have had “continuous coverage.” That means if you had to go without health insurance for a few months because you lost your job or your insurance company hiked your rate, his plan offers you no protections. Governor Romney’s “plan” would affect as many as 89 million Americans who have had gaps in their health insurance coverage and offer them nothing but a cold shoulder when they need help. Moreover, Governor Romney’s “plan” for people with pre-existing conditions is already the law. President Clinton signed a law in 1996 that protected people with pre-existing conditions if they maintain continuous coverage.

**Reality under President Obama:** Because of Obamacare, Americans will no longer be able to be denied coverage because of a pre-existing condition, women won’t be charged more than men for the same health coverage, and all Americans will have access to affordable health care.

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