

MICHI-GONE

Two days ago, I emailed Rayne with notice of yet another campaign appearance from the Obama campaign—two rallies with Michelle. These events were in addition to two Obama appearances already scheduled for today, and a huge rally in Detroit last Sunday with both Obamas and Bidens.

Given the gradual increase in Obama's lead in MI, I wondered what was up. Why had the Obama campaign virtually moved into MI? Were Obama's internals worse than the public polls? Rayne noted that some of the later events—Michelle's two and Obama's rally today in Grand Rapids—weren't exactly in Democratic strongholds (for example, Grand Rapids is where all the GOP billionaires hang out in the state). I wondered, though, what the tactical thinking was, particularly since—until a few days ago—Obama's numbers in MI were stronger than they were in PA.

And then I read this, from the Politico:

John McCain is pulling out of Michigan, according to two Republicans, a stunning move a month away from Election Day that indicates the difficulty Republicans are having in finding blue states to put in play.

McCain will go off TV in Michigan, stop dropping mail there and send most of his staff to more competitive states.

Now, the Politico didn't get a quote from the McCain campaign (frankly, admitting they were pulling out of a state that McCain won in the 2000 primary would be really telling), so maybe this isn't finalized.

But I wonder whether Obama didn't see this week as his tactical closure of the Kerry states (trading IA for NH), just as he turns for a big move on offense. Already, we're seeing Obama up the campaign stops in MO and NC, both states

that—if they're even competitive—could mark a blow-out. In any case, it seems like Obama and McCain are both responding to a dramatic shift in the shape of the campaign in the last few days, with Obama turning heavily to playing offense.

Darn. We really could have used the money that comes from ongoing, close attention.

Update: Ambinder has this:

A McCain adviser confirmed the news but noted that the Republican National Committee's independent expenditure arm is still running ads there, and that McCain will keep most of his staff in-state.

This may mean that McCain has decided—in the interest of going really negative, as widely reported—to do nothing but racist ads here.

MI is one of the swing states where racism will be most effective. The RNC and 527s are already running ads insinuating non-existent ties between Kwame Kilpatrick and Obama, I'd expect a bunch of Reverend Wright ads.

So maybe this means we'll still get the money—just that it'll be big, ugly racist money.