


LET THE GOVERNANCE BEGIN

Remember how, during the 2000 recount, the Bush team made a visible show of beginning their transition to power? That was about the last smart thing the Bush Administration did. It got people accustomed to the idea of Bush governing even before SCOTUS cast its vote.

In a similar move, Obama is beginning to tailor his events to **show** how he will govern, rather than just **telling** how he will do so. I strongly suspect that's what his half-hour TV buy will do next week—it'll look and feel like a presidential press conference, and he will presumably introduce what he would like to be included in the post-election stimulus package and beyond to fix the economy.

Similarly, at a campaign event in Florida today, Obama is showing the kinds of people he will listen to—and how he will listen (CNN stream [here](#)). Obama has brought a bunch of swing state governors (Strickland, Granholm, Richardson—and I think Ritter, too), Paul Volcker, Google CEO Eric Schmidt, and a small business owner to discuss how they would foster job growth. Sure, Obama got to make a speech about how he would invest in new jobs. And sure, most of the speakers reinforced Obama's own policies (though, as an example, Richardson is disagreeing with him now, and telling him to ditch NCLB). But it puts Obama in the role he will be in—guiding the discussion of a lot of experts and listening. And he gets to make cracks like this:



I'm going to show the kind of leadership
I'm gonna show in the White House.
Anyone who wants to can take off their
jackets. It's really warm in here. This
is how we're going to do things in the
White House—use some common sense.

All of which provides Obama with an opportunity

to further ease the concerns of people who like Obama, but are just not yet comfortable enough he's got the experience to be President.

To be honest, both of these events (the half hour presser and this jobs conference) are great politics. The presser gives Obama one last opportunity to get a bump from people seeing him and liking his calm on TV. This jobs conference pitches to a number of swing states—Granholm's Michigan, Strickland's Ohio, Richardson's New Mexico, and Ritter's Colorado. At the same time, it builds the pressure on Charlie Crist for his lukewarm support for McCain, even while providing a new twist on a campaign rally in Florida; in particular, Obama keeps bringing the general points back to issues that apply to Florida.

But just as importantly, it cements the image of Obama governing in an effective, but non-presumptuous way.

Update: One more cute exchange. After Obama talks about what went wrong with the mortgage market and how we have to stabilize the housing industry, he turns to Paul Volcker and asks if he wants to add anything:

Volcker: I don't know why I'm here—you give my speech better than I do.