

OBAMA HEADS TO (?!?!?) MICHIGAN

Update: Per martha, either Jane and I misheard or MSNBC doesn't realize that there are GM plants all through the Midwest—Obama is going to Janesville, Wisconsin. And Wisconsin does, in fact, have a presidential primary well before 2012, so it takes no guesswork to figure out why Obama would go to a GM plant in Wisconsin. Thanks martha! And sorry for misleading you all.

I heard NBC report (and Jane confirms that she heard it too) that Obama will head to Michigan tomorrow to give a speech at GM about the economy. Last I checked, there wasn't a presidential primary or caucus scheduled in MI anytime before 2012. So what's going on?

First, understand that I haven't heard anything about a electoral mulligan from within MI—I've seen national reports of such a mulligan, but nothing from inside the MDP (though, of course, I'm in DC, not MI right now). Last week, MDP Chair Mark Brewer met with Obama supporters to explain how the uncommitted delegates will be assigned—so at least as far as has been said publicly, MI will proceed to assign delegates based on the grand clusterfuck.

So why is Obama headed to MI, rather than OH, to talk about the economy?

I've got several speculations—I'll try to find a real answer in the next few days.

Possibility 1, the most likely: this is a bid for Edwards support

Note the timing. Obama was due to go request Edwards' support yesterday, but then rescheduled. That means this speech at GM will happen before Obama heads to North Carolina to ask for Edwards' support. Knowing that Edwards' priority is fighting for the economically disenfranchised, making a big speech on the economy—in the state with the worst economy in

the country—is a pretty good way of auditioning.

Possibility 2, just as likely: this is a bid for Edwards' supporters' support

As I said, the MDP is working with the assumption that we're going to assign delegates based on the clusterfuck. That would mean Hillary would get 55% of the delegates, and "uncommitted" would get 40%. Or rather, Hillary would get 55% and Edwards' and Obama's supporters would fight over those 40%.

Now I suspect some of those delegates can be tied to specific supporters—"uncommitted" won my county, which has 40,000 students in it, many of them likely Obama supporters. And Conyers was advertising for "uncommitted" in Detroit, in support of Obama. So Obama can probably rightly claim a big chunk of the uncommitted delegates in places where he's got very strong support. But if Obama has to fight for those 40% of MI's delegates, he's got to persuade Edwards' supporters.

And if you think about it—those MI delegates are one of the very tangible things that Edwards would have to give Obama, if he gave him his support.

Possibility 3: What better place to talk about clusterfuck economy than Michigan?

In addition to having the biggest electoral clusterfuck in the nation, we have the biggest economic clusterfuck (yeah us!). So if Obama's planning to make a big policy speech—one that will resonate in the almost as cluserfucky Ohio—doing so in the wake (in all sense of the word) of GM's abysmal results from last year makes for good theater. Remember the saying, "as goes GM, so goes the nation"? It is not as true as it used to be, but it sure seems true in the Midwest.

Possibility4: MI is gearing up for an electoral mulligan

I don't think we're there yet—ready to start

renting out caucus locations, the same ones we had rented until early January when it became clear our clusterfuck would be an election and not a caucus. But if Obama did know we were going to get an electoral mulligan, an appearance tomorrow would mean he'd get the privilege of spending the first campaign cash in Michigan. Trust us. We're desperate, we'd be pretty happy with it. I doubt this possibility is the right answer—given that several top present and former NAACP figures (like Julian Bond) are calling to seat the clusterfuck delegates, I suspect people are getting ready to screw MI royally.

Of course, several of these possibilities may be true. If Option 1, 2, and 3 were all true, it'd be a pretty shrewd move on Obama's part.