

MITT HIDES WITH THE MOOCHERS IN UT

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In the last several weeks, Mitt's campaign has suffered one after another self-inflicted wounds. Here's how the horse race pundits summarize the damage.

All campaigns have their ups and downs, but the last three weeks for Mitt Romney have been about as brutal as we can remember for any presidential candidate, especially this close to the election. First, the biggest speech of Romney's life got overshadowed by the Clint Eastwood stunt. Then came President Obama's significant bounce in the polls after the two political conventions. After that, Romney found himself on the defensive for his reaction to embassy attacks in Egypt and Libya. Next, Politico reported about infighting and disorganization inside the Romney campaign. Finally, all of these events were capped off yesterday by the surreptitiously recorded video of Romney – provided to the liberal magazine *Mother Jones* and later to NBC News – telling wealthy donors that “47%” of the country “who are dependent on government” and “who believe they are victims” will vote for Obama no matter what.

I find this latest video useful because—in my goal to make Mitt the poster child for everything that is wrong with our looting-for-profit economy—it has made even charitable pundits like Jonathan Chait see him as the sneering plutocrat he is.

The revelations in this video come to me as a genuine shock. I have never hated Romney. I presumed his ideological

makeover since he set out to run for president was largely phony, even if he was now committed to carry through with it, and to whatever extent he'd come to believe his own lines, he was oblivious or naïve about the damage he would inflict upon the poor, sick, and vulnerable. It seems unavoidable now to conclude that Romney's embrace of Paul Ryanism is born of actual contempt for the looters and moochers, a class war on behalf of his own class.

Which is why I find Byron York's concerns so curious: Mitt has largely left the campaign trail.

He had one public appearance on his schedule Monday, Sept. 17, a speech to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in Los Angeles.

He had one appearance scheduled Sunday, an airport rally in Pueblo, Colo., but it was canceled after a small plane crash there killed one person.

Romney had no public events Saturday. On Friday, he attended a single rally, at Lake Erie College in Painesville, Ohio. On Thursday, he attended a single rally, at a park in Fairfax, Va. On Wednesday, he was scheduled to hold a single campaign event at his headquarters in Jacksonville, Fla., but instead appeared at a hastily organized press conference to denounce President Obama's response to the embassy crises in Libya and Egypt. On Tuesday, Romney had one event, a speech to the National Guard Association convention in Reno, Nev. And on the day before that, another single rally, in Mansfield, Ohio.

Today, Mitt is visiting one of his three homes—and some of his Mormon donors—in UT.

Even as Mitt's campaign is falling apart, he's spending time in what will probably be his strongest state, purportedly to raise money.

Perhaps this reflects an effort within his campaign to revamp the campaign. Perhaps—as Charlie Pierce predicted—his campaign has gone almost dark to dream up the nastiest campaign imaginable.

Maybe Mitt has simply lost his will to fight, as he struggles to come to grips with the fact that people don't believe he's entitled to the Presidency just because he had the misfortune of being born a very rich white man.

But I wonder whether it isn't something else, though.