



JUST THE FACTS!

TITLE: "GOOD-BYE FOR NOW..."

EPISODE #: 47

HOST

Welcome back to Just the Facts! the weekly vid-cast from FactCheck.org. I'm Emi Kolawole and since this is our last episode of the year and also as a weekly series, we decided that we would spend it looking at what's left of the 2008 election cycle.

GRAPHIC: CORRECTION

But, before we get started, I have a correction from last week. I had said that 1928 marked the *re*-election of Herbert Hoover. That's wrong. Hoover was elected in 1928 and never served a second term. Now, back to the 2008 circus tent:

In ring number one we have the repeatedly answered, but persistent question of the president-elect's citizenship. We have received numerous e-mails from people questioning Obama's status as a natural-born U.S. citizen even *after* we published multiple reports on the fact that Obama had furnished the documentation necessary to prove that he is, indeed, a U.S. citizen.

GRAPHIC: FACTCHECK E-MAILS

One reader wrote to us and claimed that because we received the birth certificate from the Obama campaign, it came from a "tainted source." Another claimed we did not look at the genuine birth certificate, since it lacked footprints and hand-prints. And yet others claimed that because Obama,, held dual U.S. and Kenyan citizenship when he was a child (he lost his Kenyan citizenship after he turned 21), he was not considered a natural-born citizen. Then there was one reader who just called us "lowlife anti constitutional dirtbags."

GRAPHIC: SUPREME COURT

But, regardless of what some may think of our reporting, the Supreme Court has rejected a challenge by New Jersey resident Leo Donofrio who alleges that because Obama held dual U.S. and Kenyan citizenship as a child he cannot legally be considered

a natural-born U.S. citizen. The high court made no comment as to why they rejected the case.

And there is at least one, other challenge outstanding from Philip Berg, a Pennsylvania lawyer who alleges that Obama was born in Kenya and not in Hawaii. Berg has produced no proof to support his claim.

GRAPHIC: HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH NEWS RELEASE

And according to the Hawaii Department of Health, state law prohibits the release of certified birth certificates to “persons who do not have a tangible interest in the vital record.” But, Dr. Chiyome Fukino, director of the Hawaii department of health, confirmed, in a statement, that she and the registrar of vital statistics have seen and verified that Sen. Obama’s birth certificate is on record in accordance with the law.

Besides, Berg’s case has already been dealt a blow, since it was thrown out of federal courts in Pennsylvania.

So, if you’re planning on sending us a message on this topic, alleging that Obama was transported by underground pathway from Kenya to the U.S., we suggest you save your bandwidth.

And now, in ring number two we turn to the Minnesota recount. Yes, that’s right, Minnesota is still short one senator...

GRAPHIC: MINNESOTA RESULTS

...even though the formal hand recount of 2.9 million votes [ended](#) on Dec. 5 with incumbent Sen. Norm Coleman leading comedian Al Franken by as many as 687 votes, [according](#) to the Minnesota Secretary of State’s office. But there were still 133 missing ballots that had yet to be located (although it has been [reported](#) that Minneapolis officials have stopped looking) and slightly less than [5,000](#) ballots that were contested by the Coleman and Franken campaigns. So, the Franken/Coleman race is still undecided, and the Minnesota secretary of state has requested the process end, somehow, by Dec. 18.

And now in ring number three we have yet another empty Senate seat, this time in Illinois.

GRAPHIC: ILLINOIS STATE LAW

But let’s start with some background. According to Illinois law the governor, and no one else, is responsible for appointing someone to fill a vacant U.S. Senate seat. The law [says](#) that: “When a vacancy shall occur in the office of United States Senator from this

state, the Governor shall make temporary appointment to fill such vacancy until the next election of representatives in Congress, at which time such vacancy shall be filled by election, and the senator so elected shall take office as soon thereafter as he shall receive his certificate of election.”

But, hold the FBI wire-tapped phone, Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich was arrested on Dec. 9 for attempting to sell or trade Obama’s vacant Senate seat for campaign donations and political favors, among other acts of corruption. But, even behind bars and out on bond, Blagojevich [did not lose the right](#) to appoint someone to the empty seat, since he had not been impeached or chosen to resign.

GRAPHIC: BLAGOJEVICH’S OPTIONS

So Blagojevich could do any of the following: appoint someone from prison, or while out on bond, [temporarily step aside](#), resign or [call the legislature in for a special session](#) so they may attempt to divest him of his power of appointment. The fourth option would risk his impeachment since, according to *The Chicago Tribune*, a “growing chorus of state lawmakers” have called for it. If Blagojevich stepped aside or resigned, the next person in line of succession, Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn, would be responsible for appointing someone to the open Senate seat.

And that’s it for this, the last episode of Just the Facts for 2008. I look forward to bringing back Just the Facts! in 2009 on a periodic basis. So, thanks for watching, I’m Emi Kolawole and see you in 2009.