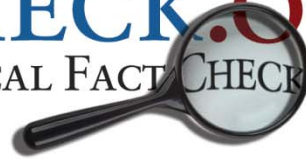




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JUST THE FACTS!

TITLE: "ENTER THE SMEAR!"

EPISODE #: 4

HOST

Welcome back to Just the Facts, the weekly vid-cast from FactCheck.org, where every Friday we try to give you a leg-up on the week's spin. I'm Emi Kolawole.

GRAPHIC: MCCAIN/DNC

It appears that Sen. John McCain of Arizona will be the Republican presidential nominee. And the Democratic National Committee, in an e-mail signed by party chairman Howard Dean, gave us a peek at their attack n' spin playbook. At one point, the e-mail reads:

GRAPHIC: DNC E-MAIL

HOST

"On the war, McCain scoffed at Bush's call to leave troops in Iraq for 50 years, saying 'Maybe a hundred!'"

That's a gross distortion of what McCain actually said at this Jan. 3 town hall meeting:

VIDEO: MCCAIN TOWNHALL

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN

Maybe a hundred. ... We've been in...Japan for 60 years. We've been in South Korea for 50 years or so. That would be fine with me, as long as American, as long as Americans are not being injured or harmed or wounded or killed.

HOST

That's a long military presence – sure --, but it's not "endless war," as the Democrats claim.

Along with the war, corruption also looks to be on the DNC docket when it comes to attacks against McCain. The e-mail goes on to claim:

GRAPHIC: DNC E-MAIL

...[McCain] looked the other way as Jack Abramoff bought and paid for the Republican Party and the Culture of Corruption.

Abramoff probably wishes McCain “looked the other way.” But as chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, McCain pursued an intense investigation of Abramoff and his associates. He later applied pressure to federal prosecutors who slapped lobbyist Abramoff and Ohio GOP Representative Bob Ney with prison sentences.

GRAPHIC: MCCAIN/DNC GRAPHIC

HOST

But the Dems’ attack plan doesn’t stop there. The mailer also quotes McCain on economics:

GRAPHIC: DNC MAILER

HOST

I know a lot less about economics than I do about military and foreign policy issues. I still need to be educated.

The quote is accurate, but the Democrats’ two top competitors, Sens. Obama and Clinton, have no formal training in economics either and both have accumulated fewer years in federal government than Sen. McCain – combined. So McCain may be no Alan Greenspan – but Clinton and Obama aren’t either.

But the DNC wasn’t off the mark on all counts. This claim is accurate:

GRAPHIC: DNC E-MAIL

“McCain has vowed to appoint judges who would overturn Roe v. Wade.”

GRAPHIC: MCCAIN/DNC GRAPHIC

McCain has said almost exactly that on his website:

GRAPHIC: MCCAIN WEBSITE

“John McCain believes Roe v. Wade is a flawed decision that must be overturned, and as president he will nominate judges who understand that courts should not be in the business of legislating from the bench.”

GRAPHIC: MCCAIN/DNC GRAPHIC

That distortions and all-out fabrications are going to be a part of this race is not in question. But now you know at least some of the tactics one side, in this case the Democrats, and what they'll be using against the other. And that's it for this episode of Just the Facts. To see our analysis of Ron Paul's dubious claims about the fictional NAFTA Super Highway and a trillion dollar overstatement, along with other misleads check out our website, at www.factcheck.org I'm Emi Kolawole. Thanks for watching, and see you next week.