



Lies Presidential Candidates Told This Week: The Republican Debate Edition

In which we double-down on Ted Cruz's fibs on immigration and 'carpet-bombing' because, well, that's what happens when you're on the way up.

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For once, Donald Trump didn't steal the show. At Tuesday night's fifth (!) Republican presidential debate, the still-leading real estate mogul-in-chief had to take a bit of a backseat to the other eight candidates scratching and clawing to make a mark before voters get distracted by their new BB-8 toys and ignore politics until January.

There was talk of WWIII, Trump's plan to shut down "areas" of the Internet and suddenly-surgingly Texas Sen. Ted Cruz's vow to destroy ISIS. Because we can't just pack it up for two weeks, we've gift-wrapped another edition of "Lies Presidential Candidates Told This Week."

We've rated their truth-warping on our patented 1-5 ~_(\`)/_~ scale:

Hey, Ted Cruz, 'Carpet Bombing' Doesn't Mean What You Think It Means

The Lie: His 1950s Clark Kent hair and soft, searching eyes might not betray it, but Cruz is *areally* tough guy. Before the debate he told an Iowa audience that "we will utterly destroy ISIS. We will carpet bomb them into oblivion. I don't know if sand can glow in the dark, but we're going to find out."

Because that applause line worked so well, he reiterated it in the debate, explaining that "carpet bombing" entails "not a city, but the location of the troops," using "embedded special forces to direct the air power."

The Truth: Here's the thing. ISIS doesn't really have a fixed location, which is why it's been so hard to fight the amorphous terror group. Also, carpet bombing is a kind of indiscriminate military strategy that often involves a lot of collateral damage. One military expert told the New

York Times that, while technically legal, “our adversaries know that, understand the results, and therefore minimize their assembling in the kind of mass that would make carpet-bombing of value.”

Plus, what Cruz described is the kind of precision, non-carpet-bombing our troops typically do today — so *not* carpet-bombing at all.

In other words: ISIS isn’t going to all pile into one spot so we can easily wipe them out and hang a “mission accomplished” banner. Also, it’s been proven that ISIS has embedded among civilians and has used them, including children, as human shields, so... good luck with that plan.

How Bent?: ^_(\ツ)_/^- ^_(\ツ)_/^- ^_(\ツ)_/^- ^_(\ツ)_/^-

Rand Paul Tries To Make Marco Rubio Seem Like An Immigration Idiot

The Lie: Kentucky Sen. Paul needs a break. He’s basically been stuck in neutral for months and isn’t gaining any ground . So he figured his best bet was to take a hard shot at rising-in-the-polls Sen. Rubio using the same argument pretty much everyone in the GOP race has trotted out: Rubio’s work on a failed 2013 bipartisan immigration bill.

“He thinks he wants to be this ‘Oh I am great and strong on national defense,’ but he is the weakest of all the candidates on immigration,” Paul said. “He is the one for an open border that is leaving us defenseless.”

The Truth: Rubio has endlessly been painted as a traitor to the conservative cause for supporting the 2013 immigration bill. But his ultimate position on it was pretty similar to Paul’s during the debate that year, advocating for seriously intensifying border security and then discussing some way to provide a legal path for those illegally in the country.

During Tuesday’s debate Rubio basically repeated the same plan and said he doesn’t think the American public trusts the government to change immigration laws before they get a handle on illegal immigration.

As PolitiFact pointed out, “If Sen. Rubio was really for open borders, the Gang of Eight bill wouldn’t have been 1,198 pages long while doubling the size of border patrol,” according to immigration expert Alex Nowrasteh of the libertarian Cato Institute. Rubio has never said he wants to just let people move as they wish back and forth across the border.

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Cruz Is Terrible At Math, Great At Manipulating Immigration Numbers

The Lie: This is what happens when you are on the up, Sen. Cruz. You get the double-down. And in this case, it’s a double-double because we’re mentioning you again and putting a pin in another one of your full-of-hot-air immigration balloons. After saying we need to “stop the Obama administration’s policy of releasing criminal illegal aliens,” Cruz hopped on board the imaginary numbers bus with this claim. “Do you know how many aliens Bill Clinton deported?”

12 million. Do you know how many illegal aliens, George W. Bush deported? 10 million.” Wow, that’s a lot!

The Truth: Here’s the thing, though. Just like “carpet bombing,” the word “deportation” has a meaning. In this case, as just about everyone has pointed out, Cruz was playing fast and loose with the definition of the word. During the Clinton years, there were millions who made a “return,” which is “a confirmed movement of an inadmissible or deportable alien out of the United States not based on an order of removal.” That’s where those big numbers you see for Bush and Clinton mostly come from.

By contrast, the Obama administration has significantly increased the rate of “removal,” which is when that same person is formally removed from the U.S. and “has administrative or criminal consequences place on subsequent reentry.” Cruz later clarified that he meant that the numbers he cited were “a combination of both removal and return.”

Returns during Clinton’s administration were around 11.4 million (while removals were 870,000) while Bush deported two million while 8.3 million returned. The numbers completely flipped under Obama, with removals reaching all-time highs.

But, you know, that’s not what Cruz said on TV, because that would not have sounded as tough and scary.

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