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Iraq War. But when this didn't seem to damage his opponent, McCain tried to make issues out of Obama's relationships with Reverend Jeremiah Wright and 1970s terrorist William Ayers. But these issues, like several others, couldn't erase Obama's hold over his opponent's ties to Bush.

One of the rare McCain forays against Obama occurred with the Joe the Plumber episode, which exposed a crack in Obama's tax proposals which eventually subjected him to be labeled a Socialist. But the gain was short-lived.

Palin has helped to spread McCain's message and she was effective in drawing crowds to campaign rallies and getting media attention. But recent polls showed there was no real gain in McCain's campaign progress and some factions in the GOP eventually openly criticized her presence on the ticket.

As the campaign reached its latest stages, Obama's amazing financial edge has also asserted itself, enabling him to flood the airwaves with political ads intensifying his anti-McCain messages. The huge money edge has also enabled Obama to carry his final push for support into key electoral vote states, helping to minimize McCain's efforts in these vital areas.

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