



Tell the Truth! 2004

Media Reality ✓ Check

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Running-Mate Debate Host Has Likened Conservatives to Terrorists, Truck Bombers, and Assassins

PBS's Gwen Ifill: No Moderate Moderator

As we learned in the first debate, moderators can help shape the outcome. PBS host Jim Lehrer asked tough questions to President Bush about his record, but failed to do the same for John Kerry. He asked Kerry to list Bush's "colossal misjudgments," and then to list the President's lies. But he never once asked Kerry about his 20-year Senate record. Will PBS's Gwen Ifill do better in the running-mate debate? The evidence suggests here comes liberal moderator number two:

■ **Don't Bash Coke Dealers.** "Why are people particularly outraged when people with last names like Cabrera, and people from India and Korea, and Indonesia and China, all of a sudden get, there just seems to be a lot of foreigner bashing as a subtext in some of the criticism." — Then-NBC reporter Ifill on PBS's *Washington Week in Review*, October 25, 1996, dismissing the Clinton campaign-money scandal, including DNC donor and cocaine smuggler Jorge Cabrera, arrested in a bust netting nearly three tons of cocaine. He had photos taken with Hillary and Al Gore.

■ **Clinton's Not Liberal Enough.** "Is this welfare bill your great vulnerability on this subject? Your supporters, your critics, they all say that, perhaps, you are abandoning minorities and the poor." — Ifill interviewing President Clinton on race relations, June 16, 1997 *Today*.

■ **Campaign "Reform" Opponents Like Terrorists.** "It was a bill that was doomed to die. The last time you heard people so eager to claim responsibility for something like this, they were terrorists." — Ifill on opponents of a campaign "reform" bill, *Washington Week*, Feb. 27, 1998.

Gwen's Partisan Take on Team Bush

"Now, on to the new Bush Cabinet. Which nominee has suggested that sexual harassment cases threaten to make America a nation of cry babies? Which one accepted an honorary degree from Bob Jones University? And which one has worked as a lobbyist for a lead paint manufacturer?" — **PBS *Washington Week* host Gwen Ifill mocking Bush nominees Linda Chavez, John Ashcroft, and Gale Norton with the day's liberal talking points, January 5, 2001.**

■ **Republican Assassins.** "In the end it was a procedural assassination. Republicans drove up the cost of the bill by attaching unrelated amendments, then said it was too expensive." — Ifill on *Today*, June 18, 1998.

■ **Ken Starr's "Truck Bomb."** "There's very little they can do about this, when someone drives, as one House Judiciary Committee member put this some weeks ago, a truck bomb up to the steps of the Capitol and just dumps it on them....it is in some ways, politically, a very violent action for Ken Starr to leave this on them weeks before an election when they're trying to decide how to deal with it." — Ifill during live MSNBC coverage of the Starr Report arriving on Capitol Hill, September 9, 1998.

■ **Red-Baiting Century.** "After World War II, then we went through decades of Red-hunting, Red-baiting, fear of communists, and then all of a sudden the Berlin Wall, that symbol of everything that happened, fell." — PBS host Ifill reviewing the century on *Washington Week*, December 31, 1999.

■ **"Record High" Misery?** "The unemployment rate is at record highs, and somehow he [Bush] says this is Congress's fault." — PBS host Ifill somehow forgetting the Great Depression in describing 6.1 percent unemployment, *Washington Week*, May 2, 2003.

It would be nice if the campaigns and commissions could find a moderator capable of asking a few questions conservative voters would like answered, instead of just the soggy, Kerry-protecting consensus of the liberal elites.

— Tim Graham and Rich Noyes

Read the Media Research Center's analysis of tomorrow's vice-presidential debate at www.mrc.org.

To schedule an interview with an MRC spokesman, please contact Tim Scheiderer at (703) 683-5004