



**Tell the Truth! 2004**

# Media Reality ✓ Check

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*Expert Documentation of the Latest Liberal Media Bias* ☼ **Monday, October 25, 2004**

*Charles Gibson Devoted Half of His Presidential Interview Emphasizing the Human Costs of the War*

## ABC Asks Bush How He'll Lose, Leave Iraq

You know it's crunch time when both candidates grant interviews to network morning shows. Today, ABC interviewed George W. Bush (as well as Bill Clinton), and NBC questioned John Kerry and Dick Cheney.

The most notable morning interview was Charles Gibson's Bush interview on ABC's *Good Morning America*. Gibson's theme? Building up pessimism about Bush's chances and taking another gloomy set of swings about the cost of war in Iraq.

The chat, taped Sunday at the Bush ranch, began with horse-race questions. Then Gibson demanded Bush pledge to avoid post-election litigation: "Mr. President, in the post-9/11 world, can we afford another election mess like we had in 2000? Would you urge your opponent and say yourself that we shouldn't be litigious about this after the election's over, let's accept whatever the electoral college says?"

Gibson prodded Bush to explore the notion on ABC's airwaves that he would be a loser next week. (See box.) Gibson also asked about the burden of the presidency: "Does it wear you down? Does it depress you? Does it feel burdensome?" Can we spare you all that, sir?

At least half of Gibson's interview was devoted to the human cost of the Iraq war: "Before a commander-in-chief or President commits kids to war, is there a calculus of war? Do you say to yourself, in a risk-benefit analysis, the ends of this war are worth X or Y? If I had said to you on March 19, 2003, we're going to lose 1100 kids and counting, we're going to have 8,000 kids wounded, and we're going to spend \$140 billion of our treasury and counting, would you say removing Saddam Hussein was worth it?"

Bush declared you can't put a price on a person's life, but Gibson continued: "But is there a point where the cost is too great, Mr. President?" When Bush countered that "the cost is too great if the American President withdraws before

the mission is complete," Gibson offered pessimistically: "If we lose another thousand kids, if you have to ask for \$50 or \$60 billion more after the election, as people expect?" Bush replied: "It's essential we succeed in Iraq at this point, Charlie."

Gibson also hit Bush on John Kerry's charge of a "backdoor draft" of National Guard and Reserve forces into Iraq: "We have talked to soldiers at four different bases who are being told if they don't re-enlist, they're going to get sent to Iraq and will be in danger. Isn't that a backdoor draft, Mr. President?"

Twice, Gibson urged the President to get in a bidding war to see who can withdraw faster: "Can you tell those soldiers that you'll get them home sooner than the other guy?...Can you give them a guarantee that you'll get them home sooner than the other guy? Can you give them a date?" Bush did not budge: "I don't think you want your commander-in-chief giving artificial timelines because of politics in the midst of a political campaign."

Gibson promised more controversy for the President to come: "And tomorrow on the broadcast, we'll have more from my interview with President Bush, including a discussion of faith and whether he believes Christians and Muslims pray to the same God. And also, at one point he says the Republican platform is straight-out wrong."

— Tim Graham

### **Mr. Bush, Please Talk About Losing**

**"This thing is tight as a tick, and many politicians have said to me, to be fair to yourself in your private moments, you have to consider the possibility of losing. You have to think about it, how you would react to it. Otherwise, it's hard for you. In your private moments, do you think about it?"** — ABC's Charles Gibson to Bush on today's *Good Morning America*.

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