



Campaign 2004 Media Reality Check

QUICK TAKE

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WHY WON'T ABC ASK McCAIN ABOUT DEMOCRATS SUBVERTING
McCAIN-FEINGOLD LAW WITH THEIR NEW ANTI-BUSH ADS?

ABC CAN'T STOP BLABBING ABOUT KERRY-McCAIN "DREAM TICKET"

Today on *Good Morning America*, co-host Charles Gibson interviewed Republican Sen. John McCain on Senate hearings into steroids in pro sports, but Gibson couldn't resist asking: "A lot of Democrats say a **dream ticket** would be if John Kerry would reach across the aisle, take you as a vice-presidential candidate. Are you going to say no, no how, no way, you won't do it?"

When McCain scoffed "It's impossible to imagine," Gibson insisted: "Let me imagine it. If he asked you, if he came across the aisle and asked you, would you even entertain the idea, or would you rule it out for good and all and ever right now?" McCain saw "no scenario" of that. Apparently, TV news stars get shivers up their spine at the thought of President Bush facing his media-darling primary rival again, the hero of campaign "reformers," a cause which Gibson in 2000 called "very worthy work."

This is the third time in a week ABC has touted Democratic dreams. On the March 3 *Good Morning America*, ABC reporter Claire Shipman claimed the Kerry-McCain was somehow "**everybody's wishful thinking** that he might switch parties and join his Vietnam buddy, but he's a pretty loyal Republican, so that's unlikely, I think."

During a March 7 interview on *This Week*, George Stephanopoulos played a clip of McCain from the same show in late 2002 rejecting the running-mate idea, which the Arizona senator promptly repeated. Stephanopoulos pleaded: "But a lot of Democrats think this is the **dream ticket**. So there's no chance you'll reconsider?"

If ABC is going to ask McCain campaign questions, Gibson could have noticed both the *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* have front-page stories today on how Democratic interest groups (classified as "527" groups by the IRS) are going around McCain-Feingold campaign-finance limits to fund Bush-bashing TV ads using millions in corporate and union "soft money" with less donor disclosure required.

Why not make news instead of indulging Democrat dream scenarios?