

Stephanopoulos on charges he planted birth control question in GOP debate: ‘Factually incorrect’

By: Jeff Poor- August 15, 2013

On Laura Ingraham’s radio show on Thursday, ABC anchor George Stephanopoulos responded to allegations that he colluded with Democrats during the 2012 election cycle by planting a question about birth control in an early Republican presidential debate.

That charge had come from Kentucky Republican Sen. Rand Paul in a speech at the libertarian think tank the Cato Institute and later in appearance Paul made on Geraldo Rivera’s WABC radio show in New York City.

“The only thing I would say is that he laid out all these charges, which are completely false and the idea though that this question came out of thin air is just wrong,” Stephanopoulos said. “It’s just factually incorrect. The reason it came up was because in fact just a week before, Rick Santorum actually said it in an interview with Jake Tapper ... that he did believe states had a right to ban [contraception], that it was an open kind of a question. I was just trying to find out if Mitt Romney agreed or not.”

Stephanopoulos suggested that Priebus’ threats to limit debates on mainstream networks were just part of a desire to have fewer debates overall.

“To get to your bigger question, I think that the chairman, Reince Priebus — my guess is that he wants fewer debates anyway,” he said. “I think a lot of Republican leaders, including Priebus, believe that the primary season was too dominated by debates last time around and that created kind of a cacophony that didn’t necessarily serve the interest of the party, so he’s looking overall to get more control over that process, and he probably wasn’t all that eager, for example, for a debate on MSNBC anyway.”

Ingraham asked Stephanopoulos if he would ever consider going back to work in a presidential administration, possibly Hillary Clinton’s, should she run and win the presidency.

“No, I like what I’m doing now,” Stephanopoulos replied.