

Kerry: Pickens 'backtracks' on SBVFT dare

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., is revisiting an issue that troubled his 2004 campaign and could cause political trouble for him in 2008, The Boston Globe said. Kerry has taken up a challenge by T. Boone Pickens, a financier of the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth organization, which accused Kerry in 2004 of lying about his military record. On Nov. 6, Pickens offered \$1 million to anyone who could disprove anything the organization said about Kerry. After Kerry notified Pickens he would take the challenge, Pickens responded by insisting on conditions that were not part of his original offer -- including that Kerry provide documentation such as his journals from his Vietnam service. Kerry, who was traveling in South Africa, accused Pickens in a letter of "backtracking," the Globe reported Wednesday. "I am prepared to prove the lie and marshal all the evidence, the question is whether you are prepared to fulfill your obligation," Kerry wrote. Taking up Pickens' challenge gives Kerry an opportunity to address an issue that a potential Democratic primary opponent, Ed O'Reilly, has suggested he might use against Kerry next year. "It goes to his credibility," said Ed O'Reilly. "It needs to be cleared up."

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