



Fifty-nine Deceits in *Fahrenheit 911*

By Dave [Kopel](#)

This is a preliminary version of an article that will be published on [National Review Online](#). This report was first posted on the web on the morning of July 1. Since then, I've revised several sections in response to reader requests for clarifications, and have added additional deceits which have been pointed out by readers or journalists. As result, the number of listed deceits has been raised from 56 to 59.

Thanks to the readers who have written to point out additional deceits or to point out items which need clarification. Also thanks to the readers who have written in defense of Moore. All writers have been rational and civil. Moore's defenders have made two main points:

First, notwithstanding the specific falsehoods, isn't the film as a whole filled with many important truths?

Not really. We can divide the film into three major parts. The first part (Bush, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan) is so permeated with lies that most of the scenes amount to lies. The second, shorter part involves domestic issues and the Patriot Act. So far, I've identified only one clear falsehood in this segment (Rep. Porter Goss's toll-free number). So this part, at least arguably, presents useful information. The third part, on Iraq has several outright falsehoods--such as the Saddam regime's murder of Americans, and the regime's connection with al Qaeda. Other scenes in the third part--such as Iraqi casualties, interviews with American soldiers, and the material on bereaved mother Lila Lipscomb--are not blatant lies; but the information presented is so extremely one-sided (the only Iraqi casualties are innocents, nobody in Iraq is grateful for liberation, all the American soldiers are disillusioned, except for the sadists) that the overall picture of the Iraq War is false.

Second, say the Moore supporters, what about the Bush lies?

Well there are plenty of lies from the Bush administration which should concern everyone. For example, the Bush administration suppressed data from its own Department of Health and Human Services which showed that the cost of the new Prescription Drug Benefit would be much larger than the administration claimed. This lie was critical to passage of the Bush drug benefit bill. Similarly, Bush's characterization of his immigration proposal as not granting "amnesty" to illegal aliens is quite misleading; although the Bush proposal does not formally grant amnesty, the net result is the same as widespread amnesty.

But two wrongs don't make a right, and the right response to Presidential lies is not more lies from his political opponents. Moreover, regarding the issues presented in Fahrenheit 911, the evidence of Bush lies is extremely thin. Moore shows Bush claiming that a particular day at the ranch in Crawford, Texas, was a working vacation, but Bush appears to be dissembling. Later, after Osama bin Laden was driven into hiding but was not captured, Bush unconvincingly claims not to spend much time thinking about bin Laden. Within Fahrenheit 911, most of rest of alleged Bush administration lies actually involve Moore's fabrications to create the appearance of a lie--such as when Moore chops a Condoleezza Rice quote to make her say something when she actually said the opposite.

The one significant Bush administration lie exposed in the film involves the so-called Patriot Act; as Fahrenheit accurately claims, at least some of the material in the Patriot Act had nothing to do with 9/11, and instead involved long-sought items on the FBI agenda which had previously been unable to pass Congress, but which

were enacted by Congress under Bush administration assurances that they were essential to fighting terrorism.

There are many articles which have pointed out the distortions, falsehoods, and lies in the film *Fahrenheit 911*. This report compiles the *Fahrenheit 911* deceits which have been identified by a wide variety of reviewers. In addition, I identify some inaccuracies which have not been addressed by other writers.

The report follows the approximate order in which the movie covers particular topics: the Bush family, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. This report focuses solely on factual issues, and not on aesthetic criticism of the film.

To understand the deceptions, it helps to understand Moore's ideological position. So let us start with Moore's belief that the September 11 attacks on the United States were insignificant.

Edward Koch, the former Democratic Mayor of New York City, writes:

A year after 9/11, I was part of a panel discussion on BBC-TV's "Question Time" show which aired live in the United Kingdom. A portion of my commentary at that time follows:
"One of the panelists was Michael Moore...During the warm-up before the studio audience, Moore said something along the lines of "I don't know why we are making so much of an act of terror. It is three times more likely that you will be struck by lightning than die from an act of terror"...I mention this exchange because it was not televised, occurring as it did before the show went live. It shows where he was coming from long before he produced "Fahrenheit 9/11."

Edward [Koch](#), "Moore's propaganda film cheapens debate, polarizes nation," *World Tribune*, June 28, 2004. By the way, I don't disagree with the point that it is reasonable to consider the number of deaths from any particular problem, including terrorism, in assessing how serious the problem is. Moore's point, however, was willfully oblivious to the fact that *al Qaeda* did not intend 9/11 to be the last word; the organization was working on additional attacks, and if the organization obtained the right weapons, millions of people might be killed. More fundamentally, even if Moore's argument in London is conceded to be legitimate, it contradicts *Fahrenheit 911*'s presentation of Moore as intensely concerned about the September 11 attacks.

As we go through the long list of lies and tricks in *Fahrenheit 911*, keep in mind that Michael Moore has assembled a "war room" of political operatives and lawyers in order to respond to criticism of *Fahrenheit 911* and to file defamation suits. (Jack [Shafer](#), "Libel Suit 9/11. Michael Moore's hysterical, empty threats," *Slate.com*, June 12, 2004.) One of Moore's "war room" officials is Chris Lehane; Lehane, as an employee of Democratic presidential candidate Wesley Clark (who was also supported by Moore), apparently [spread rumors to the press](#) about John Kerry's alleged extra-marital affair.

Of course if there are any genuine errors in this report, the errors will be promptly corrected. On July 5, I removed a complaint about a Presidential approval poll number, which I had wrongly thought was not supported by data.

Conversely, because Moore has a paid expert staff which is monitoring criticism of the movie, it is reasonable to assume that—unless I have specifically retracted some item in this report—Moore and his staff have not offered a persuasive rebuttal.

In this report, I number Moore's deceits. Some of them are outright lies; some are omissions which create a false impression. Others involve different forms of deception. A few are false statements Moore has made when defending the film.

2000 Election Night Deceits 1-2

Fahrenheit 911 begins on election night 2000. We are first shown the Al Gore rocking on stage with famous musicians and a high-spirited crowd. The conspicuous sign on stage reads “Florida Victory.” Moore creates the impression that Gore was celebrating his victory in Florida.

Actually, the rally took place in the early hours of election day, before polls had even opened. Gore did campaign in Florida on election day, but went home to Tennessee to await the results. The “Florida Victory” sign reflected Gore’s hopes, not any actual election results. (“[Gore Campaigns Into Election Day](#),” Associated Press, Nov. 7, 2000.)

The film shows CBS and CNN calling Florida for Al Gore. According to the narrator, “Then something called the Fox News Channel called the election in favor of the other guy....All of a sudden the other networks said, ‘Hey, if Fox said it, it must be true.’”

We then see NBC anchor Tom Brokaw stating, “All of us networks made a mistake and projected Florida in the Al Gore column. It was our mistake.”

Moore thus creates the false impression that the networks withdrew their claim about Gore winning Florida when they heard that Fox said that Bush won Florida.

In fact, the networks which called Florida for Gore did so early in the evening—before polls had even closed in the Florida panhandle, which is part of the Central Time Zone. NBC called Florida for Gore at 7:49:40 P.M., Eastern Time. This was 10 minutes before polls closed in the Florida panhandle. Thirty seconds later, CBS called Florida for Gore. And at 7:52 P.M., *Fox* called Florida for Gore. Moore never lets the audience know that Fox was among the networks which made the error of calling Florida for Gore prematurely. Then at 8:02 P.M., ABC called Florida for Gore. Only ABC had waited until the Florida polls were closed.

The premature calls probably cost Bush thousands of votes from the conservative panhandle, as discouraged last-minute voters heard that their state had already been decided, and many voters who were waiting in line left the polling place. In Florida, as elsewhere, voters who have arrived at the polling place before closing time often end up voting after closing time, because of long lines. The conventional wisdom of politics is that supporters of the losing candidate are most likely to give up on voting when they hear that their side has already lost. (Thus, on election night 1980, when incumbent President Jimmy Carter gave a concession speech while polls were still open on the West coast, the early concession was widely blamed for costing the Democrats several Congressional seats in the West. The fact that all the networks had declared Reagan a landslide winner while West coast voting was still in progress was also blamed for Democratic losses in the West.) Even if the premature television calls affected all potential voters equally, the effect was to reduce Republican votes significantly, because the Florida panhandle is a Republican stronghold; depress overall turnout in the panhandle, and you will necessarily depress more Republican than Democratic votes.

At 10:00 p.m., which network took the lead in retracting the premature Florida result? The first retracting network was CBS, *not* Fox.

Over four hours later, at 2:16 A.M., Fox projected Bush as the Florida winner, as did all the other networks by 2:20 A.M.

CBS had taken the lead in making the erroneous call for Gore, and had taken the lead in retracting that call. At 3:59 A.M., CBS also took the lead in retracting the Florida call for Bush. All the other networks, including Fox, followed the CBS lead within eight minutes. That the networks arrived at similar conclusions within a short period of time is not surprising, since they were all using the same data from the Voter News Service. (Linda Mason, Kathleen Francovic & Kathleen Hall Jamieson, “[CBS News Coverage of Election Night 2000: Investigation, Analysis, Recommendations](#)” (CBS News, Jan. 2001), pp. 12-25.)

Moore’s editing technique of the election night segment is typical of his style: all the video clips are real clips,

and nothing he says is, formally speaking, false. But notice how he says, "Then something called the Fox News Channel called the election in favor of the other guy..." The impression created is that the Fox call of Florida for Bush came soon after the CBS/CNN calls of Florida for Gore, and that Fox caused the other networks to change ("All of a sudden the other networks said, 'Hey, if Fox said it, it must be true.'")

This is the essence of the Moore technique: cleverly blending half-truths to deceive the viewer.

2000 Election Recount Deceit 3

A little while later:

...Michael Moore shows a clip of CNN analyst Jeffrey Toobin saying that if ballots had been recounted in Florida after the 2000 presidential vote, "under every scenario Gore won the election." What Moore doesn't show is that a six-month study in 2001 by news organizations including *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and CNN found just the opposite. Even if the Supreme Court had not stopped a statewide recount, or if a more limited recount of four heavily Democratic counties had taken place, Bush still would have won Florida and the election.

Thomas Frank, "Film offers limited view," [Newsday](#), June 27, 2004.

Florida Purge of Convicted Felons from Voter Rolls Deceit 4

According to *Fahrenheit*, Bush cronies hired Data Base Technologies to purge Florida voters who might vote for Gore, and these potential voters were purged from the voting rolls on the basis of race. ("Second, make sure the chairman of your campaign is also the vote count woman. And that her state has hired a company that's gonna knock voters off the rolls who aren't likely to vote for you. You can usually tell 'em by the color of their skin.") As explained by the [Palm Beach Post](#), Moore's claim is extremely incomplete, and on at least one fact, plainly false.

The 1998 mayoral election in Miami was a fiasco which was declared void by Florida courts, because--in violation of Florida law--convicted felons had been allowed to vote. The Florida legislature ordered the executive branch to purge felons from the voting rolls before the next election. Following instructions from Florida officials, Data Base Technologies (DBT) aggressively attempted to identify all convicted felons who were illegally registered to vote in Florida.

There were two major problems with the purge. First, several states allow felons to vote once they have completed their sentences. Some of these ex-felons moved to Florida and were, according to a court decision, eligible to vote. Florida improperly purged these immigrant felons.

Second, the comprehensive effort to identify all convicted felons led to large number of false positives, in which persons with, for example, the same name as a convicted felon, were improperly purged. Purged voters were, in most cases, notified months before the election and given an opportunity to appeal, but the necessity to file an appeal was in itself a barrier which probably discouraged some legitimate, non-felon citizens from voting. According to the *Palm Beach Post*, at least 1,100 people were improperly purged.

The overbreadth of the purge was well-known in Florida before the election. As a result, election officials in 20 of Florida's counties ignored the purge list entirely. In these counties, convicted felons were allowed to vote. Also according to the *Post*, thousands of felons were improperly allowed to vote in the 20 non-purging counties.

When allowed to vote, felons vote approximately 69 percent Democratic, according to a study in the [American Sociological Review](#). Therefore, if the thousands of felons in the non-purging 20 counties had been not been

illegally allowed to vote, it is likely that Bush's statewide margin would have been substantially larger.

It seems to me that even if we presume that the 1,100 wrongly purged Florida voters would have voted Democratic at the same rate that felons do (even though some of these voters were non-felons who were the victim of mistaken identity), the net result of the 2000 purge fiasco harmed Bush: the number of votes which Gore gained as a result of 20 counties refusing to conduct the felon purge far outnumbered how many votes that Gore lost as the result of the overbroad purges in other counties.

Regardless, Moore's claim that the purge was conducted on the basis of race was indisputably false. As the *Palm Beach Post* details, all the evidence shows that Data Base Technologies did not use race as a basis for the purge. Indeed, DBT's refusal to take note of a registered voter's race was one of the reasons for the many cases of mistaken identity.

Bush Presidency before September 11 Deceit 5

The movie lauds an anti-Bush riot that took place in Washington, D.C., on the day of Bush's inauguration. Moore continues: "No President had ever witnessed such a thing on his inauguration day. And for the next eight months it didn't get any better for George W. Bush. He couldn't get his judges appointed; he had trouble getting his legislation passed; and he lost Republican control of the Senate. His approval ratings in the polls began to sink."

Part of this is true. Once Vermont Senator Jim Jeffords left the Republican party, Democrats controlled the Senate, and stalled the confirmation (not "appointment") of some of the judges whom Bush had nominated for the federal courts.

Congress did enact the top item on Bush's agenda: a large tax cut. During the summer, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives easily passed many of Bush's other agenda items, including the bill whose numbering reflected the President's top priority: H.R. 1, the Bush "No Child Left Behind" education bill. The fate of the Bush bills in the Democratic-controlled Senate, as of August 2001, was uncertain. The Senate later did pass No Child Left Behind, but some other Bush proposals did not pass.

Bush Vacations Deceits 6-7

Fahrenheit 911 states, "In his first eight months in office before September 11th, George W. Bush was on vacation, according to the *Washington Post*, forty-two percent of the time."

Shortly before 9/11, the *Post* calculated that Bush had spent 42 percent of his presidency at vacation spots or en route, including all or part of 54 days at his ranch. That calculation, however, includes weekends, which Moore failed to mention.

Tom [McNamee](#), "Just the facts on 'Fahrenheit 9/11' *Chicago Sun-Times*, June 28, 2004. See also: Mike [Allen](#), "White House On the Range. Bush Retreats to Ranch for 'Working Vacation'," *Washington Post*, August 7, 2001 (Many of those days are weekends, and the Camp David stays have included working visits with foreign leaders.)

[T]he shot of him "relaxing at Camp David" shows him side by side with Tony Blair. I say "shows," even though this photograph is on-screen so briefly that if you sneeze or blink, you won't recognize the other figure. A meeting with the prime minister of the United Kingdom, or at least with this prime minister, is not a goof-off.

The president is also captured in a well-worn TV news clip, on a golf course, making a boilerplate response to a question on terrorism and then asking the reporters to watch his drive. Well, that's what you get if you catch the president on a golf course.

Christopher [Hitchens](#), "Unfairheit 9/11: The lies of Michael Moore," *Slate.com*, June 21, 2004.

By the way, the clip of Bush making a comment about terrorism, and then hitting a golf ball, is also taken out of context, at least partially:

Tuesday night on FNC's Special Report with Brit Hume, Brian Wilson noted how "the viewer is left with the misleading impression Mr. Bush is talking about al-Qaeda terrorists." But Wilson disclosed that "a check of the raw tape reveals the President is talking about an attack against Israel, carried out by a Palestinian suicide bomber."

"[Cyberalert](#)," Media Research Center, July 1, 2004, item. 3.

September 11 Deceit 8

Fahrenheit presents a powerful segment on the September 11 attacks. There is no narration, and the music is dramatic yet tasteful. The visuals are reaction shots from pedestrians, as they gasp with horrified astonishment.

Moore has been criticized for using the reaction shots as a clever way to avoid showing the planes hitting the buildings, and some of the victims falling to their deaths. Even if this is true, the segment still effectively evokes the horror that every decent human being felt on September 11.

But remember, Moore does not necessarily feel the same way. As New York's former Mayor Edward Koch reported, Moore later said, "I don't know why we are making so much of an act of terror. It is three times more likely that you will be struck by lightning than die from an act of terror."

Like several of the other deceits identified in this report, the September 11 deceit is not part of the film itself. Several of the deceits involve claim that Moore has made when discussing the film. Like some deceits which are identified near the end of this report, the September 11 deceit involves the contradiction between Moore's purported feelings about a topic in the movie and what appear to be his actual feelings about that topic. If a Klansman made a film which feigned admiration for Rosa Parks, that too would be a form of deceit, even if the film were accurate in its portrayal of Parks as a great American hero.

Bush on September 11 Deceit 9

Fahrenheit mocks President Bush for continuing to read a story to a classroom of elementary school children after he was told about the September 11 attacks.

What Moore did not tell you:

Gwendolyn Tose'-Rigell, the principal of Emma E. Booker Elementary School, praised Bush's action: "I don't think anyone could have handled it better." "What would it have served if he had jumped out of his chair and ran out of the room?"...

She said the video doesn't convey all that was going on in the classroom, but Bush's presence had a calming effect and "helped us get through a very difficult day."

"[Sarasota principal defends Bush from 'Fahrenheit 9/11' portrayal](#)," Associated Press, June 24, 2004.

Pre-911 Briefing Deceits 10-12

Castigating the allegedly lazy President, Moore says, “Or perhaps he just should have read the security briefing that was given to him on August 6, 2001 that said that Osama bin Laden was planning to attack America by hijacking airplanes.”

Moore supplies no evidence for his assertion that President Bush did not read the August 6, 2001 Presidential Daily Brief. Moore’s assertion appears to be a complete fabrication.

Moore smirks that perhaps President Bush did not read the Briefing because its title was so vague. Moore then cuts to Condoleezza Rice announcing the title of the Briefing: “Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S.”

However, no-one (except Moore) has ever claimed that Bush did not read the Briefing, or that he did not read it because the title was vague. Rather, Condoleezza Rice had told the press conference that the information in the Briefing was “very vague.” [National Security Advisor Holds Press Briefing](#), The White House, May 16, 2002.

The content of the Briefing supports Rice’s characterization, and refutes Moore’s assertion that the Briefing “said that Osama bin Laden was planning to attack America by hijacking airplanes.” The actual [Briefing](#) was highly equivocal:

We have not been able to corroborate some of the more sensational threat reporting, such as that from a [deleted text] service in 1998 saying that Bin Laden wanted to hijack a U.S. aircraft to gain the release of “Blind Shaykh” ‘Umar’ Abd al-Rahman and other U.S.-held extremists. Nevertheless, FBI information since that time indicates patterns of suspicious activity in this country consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks, including recent surveillance of federal buildings in New York.

(Some readers have wondered how this short segment qualifies as three deceits: 1. that Bush did not read the memo, 2. that the memo's title was offered as an excuse for not reading the memo, 3. omitting that the memo was equivocal, and that the hijacking warning was something that the FBI said it was "unable to corroborate.")

Saudi Departures from United States Deceits 13-16

Moore is guilty of a classic game of saying one thing and implying another when he describes how members of the Saudi elite were flown out of the United States shortly after 9/11.

If you listen only to what Moore says during this segment of the movie—and take careful notes in the dark—you’ll find he’s got his facts right. He and others in the film state that 142 Saudis, including 24 members of the bin Laden family, were allowed to leave the country after Sept. 13.

The date—Sept. 13—is crucial because that is when a national ban on air traffic, for security purposes, was eased

But nonetheless, many viewers will leave the movie theater with the impression that the Saudis, thanks to special treatment from the White House, were permitted to fly away when all other planes were still grounded. This false impression is created by Moore’s failure, when mentioning Sept. 13, to emphasize that the ban on flights had been eased by then. The false impression is further pushed when Moore shows the singer Ricky Martin walking around an airport and says, “Not even Ricky Martin would fly. But really, who wanted to fly? No one. Except the bin Ladens.”

But the movie fails to mention that the FBI interviewed about 30 of the Saudis before they left. And the independent 9/11 commission has reported that “each of the flights we have studied was investigated by the FBI and dealt with in a professional manner prior to its departure.”

[McNamee](#), *Chicago Sun-Times*. (Note: The *Sun-Times* article was correct in its characterization of the Ricky Martin segment, but not precisely accurate in the exact words used in the film. I have substituted the exact quote. One September 13, U.S. airspace was re-opened for a small number of flights; charter flights were allowed, and the airlines were allowed to move their planes to new airports to start carrying passengers on September 14.

Although there is still conflict on the issue, there appears to have been a [charter flight from Tampa, Florida](#), which took three Saudis to Lexington, Kentucky.)

Tapper: [Y]our film showcases former counter-terrorism czar Richard Clarke, using him as a critic of the Bush administration. Yet in another part of the film, one that appears in your previews, you criticize members of the Bush administration for permitting members of the bin Laden family to fly out of the country almost immediately after 9/11. What the film does not mention is that Richard Clarke says that he OK'd those flights. Is it fair to not mention that?

Moore: Actually I do, I put up *The New York Times* article and it's blown up 40 foot on the screen, you can see Richard Clarke's name right there saying that he approved the flights based on the information the FBI gave him. It's right there, right up on the screen. I don't agree with Clarke on this point. Just because I think he's good on a lot of things doesn't mean I agree with him on everything.

[Jake Tapper interview with Michael Moore](#), ABC News, June 25, 2004.

Again, Moore is misleading. His film includes a brief shot of a Sept. 4, 2003, *New York Times* article headlined "White House Approved Departures of Saudis after Sept. 11, Ex-Aide Says." The camera pans over the article far too quickly for any ordinary viewer to spot and read the words in which Clarke states that he approved the flights.

Some Saudis left the U.S. by charter flight on September 14, a day when commercial flights had resumed, but when ordinary charter planes were still grounded. When did the bin Ladens actually leave? Not until the next week, as the the 9/11 Commission staff [report](#) explains:

Fearing reprisals against Saudi nationals, the Saudi government asked for help in getting some of its citizens out of the country....we have found that the request came to the attention of Richard Clarke and that each of the flights we have studied was investigated by the FBI and dealt with in a professional manner prior to its departure.

No commercial planes, including chartered flights, were permitted to fly into, out of, or within the United States until September 13, 2001. After the airspace reopened, six chartered flights with 142 people, mostly Saudi Arabian nationals, departed from the United States between September 14 and 24. One flight, the so-called Bin Ladin flight, departed the United States on September 20 with 26 passengers, most of them relatives of Usama Bin Ladin. We have found no credible evidence that any chartered flights of Saudi Arabian nationals departed the United States before the reopening of national airspace.

The Saudi flights were screened by law enforcement officials, primarily the FBI, to ensure that people on these flights did not pose a threat to national security, and that nobody of interest to the FBI with regard to the 9/11 investigation was allowed to leave the country. Thirty of the 142 people on these flights were interviewed by the FBI, including 22 of the 26 people (23 passengers and 3 private security guards) on the Bin Ladin flight. Many were asked detailed questions. None of the passengers stated that they had any recent contact with Usama Bin Ladin or knew anything about terrorist activity.

The FBI checked a variety of databases for information on the Bin Ladin flight passengers and searched the aircraft. It is unclear whether the TIPOFF terrorist watchlist was checked. At our request, the Terrorist Screening Center has rechecked the names of individuals on the flight manifests of these six Saudi flights against the current TIPOFF watchlist. There are no matches.

The FBI has concluded that nobody was allowed to depart on these six flights who the FBI wanted to interview in connection with the 9/11 attacks, or who the FBI later concluded had any involvement in those attacks. To date, we have uncovered no evidence to contradict this conclusion.

Bush and James Bath Deceit 17

Moore mentions that Bush's old National Guard buddy and personal friend James Bath had become

the money manager for the bin Laden family, saying, [that after the bin Ladens invested in James Bath,] “James Bath himself in turn invested in George W. Bush.” The implication is that Bath invested the bin Laden family’s money in Bush’s failed energy company, Arbusto. He doesn’t mention that Bath has said that he had invested his own money, not the bin Ladens’, in Bush’s company.

Matt [Labash](#), “Un-Moored from Reality,” *Weekly Standard*, July 5, 2004. See also: [Frank](#), *Newsday*; [Michael Isikoff & Mark Hosenball](#), “More Distortions From Michael Moore. Some of the main points in ‘Fahrenheit 9/11’ really aren’t very fair at all,” *MSNBC.com*, June 30, 2004.

Moore makes a big point about the name of James Bath being blacked out from Bush National Guard records which were released by the White House. The blackout might appear less sinister if Moore revealed that many other names were blacked out, apparently to protect the privacy of former National Guard members. It’s possible that the blacking out of many names was done solely to make the blackout of Bath’s name not seem suspicious. But Moore creates the false impression that *only* Bath was blacked out.

Bush and Prince Bandar Deceit 18

Moore points out the distressingly close relationship between Saudi Arabia’s ambassador, Prince Bandar, and the Bush family. But Moore does not explain that Bandar has been a bipartisan Washington power broker for decades, and that Bill Clinton repeatedly relied on Bandar to advance Clinton’s own Middle East agenda. (Elsa [Walsh](#), “The Prince. How the Saudi Ambassador became Washington’s indispensable operator,” *The New Yorker*, Mar. 24, 2003.)

President Clinton’s former Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Wyche Fowler, has been [earning a lucrative living](#) as a Saudi apologist and serving as Chairman of the Middle East Institute—a research organization heavily funded by Saudi Arabia. (Joel [Mowbray](#), “Feeding at the Saudi Trough,” *Townhall.com*, Oct. 1, 2003.)

I am not suggesting that Mr. Fowler is in any way corrupt; I’m sure that he is sincere (although, in my view, mistaken) in his strongly pro-Saudi viewpoint. What is misleading is for Moore to look at the web of Saudi influence in Washington only in regard to the Republican Bushes, and to ignore the fact that Saudi influence and money are widespread in both parties.

Harken Energy Deceits 19-20

Bush once served on the Board of Directors of the Harken Energy Company. According to *Fahrenheit*:

Moore: Yes, it helps to be the President’s son. Especially when you’re being investigated by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

TV reporter: In 1990 when M. Bush was a director of Harken Energy he received this memo from company lawyers warning directors not to sell stock if they had unfavorable information about the company. One week later he sold \$848,000 worth of Harken stock. Two months later, Harken announced losses of more than \$23 million dollars.

Moore:...Bush beat the rap from the SEC...

What Moore left out: Bush sold the stock long after he checked with those same “company lawyers” who had provided the cautionary memo, and they told him that the sale was all right. Almost all of the information that caused Harken’s large quarterly loss developed only after Bush had sold the stock.

Despite Moore’s pejorative that Bush “beat the rap,” no-one has ever found any evidence suggesting that he engaged in illegal insider trading. (Byron [York](#), “The Facts About Bush and Harken. The president’s story holds

up under scrutiny,” *National Review Online*, July 10, 2002.)

Carlyle Group Deceits 21-23

Moore’s film suggests that Bush has close family ties to the bin Laden family—principally through Bush’s father’s relationship with the Carlyle Group, a private investment firm. The president’s father, George H.W. Bush, was a senior adviser to the Carlyle Group’s Asian affiliate until recently; members of the bin Laden family—who own one of Saudi Arabia’s biggest construction firms—had invested \$2 million in a Carlyle Group fund. Bush Sr. and the bin Ladens have since severed ties with the Carlyle Group, which in any case has a bipartisan roster of partners, including Bill Clinton’s former SEC chairman Arthur Levitt. The movie quotes author Dan Briody claiming that the Carlyle Group “gained” from September 11 because it owned United Defense, a military contractor. Carlyle Group spokesman Chris Ullman notes that United Defense holds a special distinction among U.S. defense contractors that is not mentioned in Moore’s movie: the firm’s \$11 billion Crusader artillery rocket system developed for the U.S. Army is one of the only weapons systems canceled by the Bush administration.

Michael [Isikoff](#), “Under the Hot Lights. Moore’s movie will make waves. But it’s a fine line between fact and fanaticism. Deconstructing ‘Fahrenheit 9/11.’” *Newsweek*, June 28, 2004.

Moore [claims](#) that refusing to mention the Crusader cancellation was alright because the cancellation came after the United Defense IPO. But the cancellation had a serious negative financial impact on Carlyle, since Carlyle still owns 47% of United Defense.

Moore tells us that when Carlyle took United Defense public, they made a one-day profit of \$237 million, but under all the public scrutiny, the bin Laden family eventually had to withdraw (Moore doesn’t tell us that they withdrew before the public offering, not after it).

[Labash](#), *Weekly Standard*.

There is another famous investor in Carlyle whom Moore does not reveal: George Soros. (Oliver Burkeman & Julian Borger, “The Ex-Presidents’ Club,” *The Guardian* (London), Oct. 31, 2000.) But the fact that the anti-Bush billionaire has invested in Carlyle would detract from Moore’s simplistic conspiracy theory.

Moore alleges that the Saudis have given 1.4 billion dollars to the Bushes and their associates.

Moore derives the \$1.4 billion figure from journalist Craig Unger’s book, “House of Bush, House of Saud.” Nearly 90 percent of that amount, \$1.18 billion, comes from just one source: contracts in the early to mid-1990’s that the Saudi Arabian government awarded to a U.S. defense contractor, BDM, for training the country’s military and National Guard. What’s the significance of BDM? The firm at the time was owned by the Carlyle Group, the powerhouse private-equity firm whose Asian-affiliate advisory board has included the president’s father, George H.W. Bush.

...The main problem with this figure, according to Carlyle spokesman Chris Ullman, is that former president Bush didn’t join the Carlyle advisory board until April, 1998—five months after Carlyle had already sold BDM to another defense firm.

[Isikoff & Hosenball](#), *MSNBC.com*. (The full text of the article contains the counter-argument by Moore’s “war room” and the replies by Isikoff and Hosenball).

Saudi Investments in the United States Deceit 24

Moore asks Craig Unger: “How much money do the Saudis have invested in America, roughly?”

Unger replies “Uh, I’ve heard figures as high as \$860 billion dollars.”

Instead of relying on unsourced figures that someone says he “heard,” let’s look at the available data. According to the Institute for Research Middle Eastern Policy (a pro-Saudi think tank which tries to emphasize the importance of Saudi money to the United States), in February 2003 total worldwide Saudi investment was at least \$700 billion. Sixty percent of the Saudi investments were in the United States, so the Saudis had about 420 billion invested in the U.S.—a large amount, but less than half of the amount that Moore’s source claims he “heard.” (Tanya C. [Hsu](#) , “The United States Must Not Neglect Saudi Arabian Investment” Sept. 23, 2003.)

Special Protection for Saudi Embassy Deceit 25

Moore shows himself filming the movie near the Saudi embassy in Washington, D.C.:

Moore as narrator: Even though we were nowhere near the White House, for some reason the Secret Service had shown up to ask us what we were doing standing across the street from the Saudi embassy....

Officer: That’s fine. Just wanted to get some information on what was going on.

Moore on camera: Yeah yeah yeah, I didn’t realize the Secret Service guards foreign embassies.

Officer: Uh, not usually, no sir.

But in fact:

Any tourist to Washington, DC, will see plenty of Secret Service Police guarding all of the other foreign embassies which request such protection. Other than guarding the White House and some federal buildings, it’s the largest use of personnel by the Secret Service’s Uniformed Division.

Debbie [Schlussel](#), “FAKEN-heit 9-11: Michael Moore’s Latest Fiction,” June 25, 2004.

According to the Secret Service [website](#):

Uniformed Division officers provide protection for the White House Complex, the Vice-President’s residence, the Main Treasury Building and Annex, and foreign diplomatic missions and embassies in the Washington, DC area.

So there is nothing strange about the Secret Service protecting the Saudi embassy in Washington—especially since al Qaeda attacks have taken place against Saudi Arabia.

Alleged Bush-Saudi Conspiracy Deceit 26

Moore asks, “Is it rude to suggest that when the Bush family wakes up in the morning they might be thinking about what’s best for the Saudis instead of what’s best for you?” But his Bush/Saudi conspiracy theory is contradicted by very obvious facts:

...why did Moore’s evil Saudis not join “the Coalition of the Willing”? Why instead did they force the United States to switch its regional military headquarters to Qatar? If the Bush family and the al-Saud dynasty live in each other’s pockets...then how come the most reactionary regime in the region has been powerless to stop Bush from demolishing its clone in Kabul and its buffer regime in Baghdad? The Saudis hate, as they did in 1991, the idea that Iraq’s recuperated oil industry might challenge their near-monopoly. They fear the liberation of the Shiite Muslims they so despise. To make these elementary points is to collapse the whole pathetic edifice of the film’s “theory.”

[Hitchens](#), *Slate*. This isn’t to say that concerns about the wishes and interests of the Saudi rulers play too large a

role in American foreign policy--especially in the U.S. State Department, which has been notoriously supportive of pro-U.S. Arab dictatorships for many decades. I would much prefer that the State Department and other American foreign policymakers spent less time worrying about friendly relations with the governments of Saudi Arabia, China, and other dictatorships, and more time supporting the aspirations of people who want to free themselves from dictatorship. But complaining about the historic pro-Saudi tilt in U.S. foreign policy, a tilt which is partly the result of extensive business relations between the two countries, is not the same as propounding a tin-hat conspiracy theory that George Bush is servile tool of the bin Laden family.

Proposed Unocal Pipeline in Afghanistan Deceits 27-31

Moore mentions that the Taliban visited Texas while Bush was governor, over a possible pipeline deal with Unocal. But Moore doesn't say that they never actually met with Bush or that the deal went bust in 1998 and had been supported by the Clinton administration.

[Labash](#), *Weekly Standard*.

Moore asserts that the Afghan war was fought only to enable the Unocal company to build a pipeline. In fact, Unocal dropped that idea back in August 1998.

Jonathan [Foreman](#), "Moore's The Pity," *New York Post*, June 23, 2004.

In December 1997, a delegation from Afghanistan's ruling and ruthless Taliban visited the United States to meet with an oil and gas company that had extensive dealings in Texas. The company, Unocal, was interested in building a natural gas line through Afghanistan. Moore implies that Bush, who was then governor of Texas, met with the delegation.

But, as Gannett News Service points out, Bush did not meet with the Taliban representatives. What's more, Clinton administration officials did sit down with Taliban officials, and the delegation's visit was made with the Clinton administration's permission.

[McNamee](#), *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Whatever the motive, the Unocal pipeline project was entirely a Clinton-era proposal: By 1998, as the Taliban hardened its positions, the U.S. oil company pulled out of the deal. By the time George W. Bush took office, it was a dead issue—and no longer the subject of any lobbying in Washington.

[Isikoff & Hosenball](#), *MSNBC.com*.

On December 9, 2003, the new Afghanistan government did sign a protocol Turkmenistan and Pakistan to facilitate a pipeline. Indeed, any Afghani government (Taliban or otherwise) would rationally seek the revenue that could be gained from a pipeline. But the new pipeline (which has not yet been built) has nothing to do with Unocal. Nor does the new proposed pipeline even resemble Unocal's failed proposal; the new pipeline would the Caspian Sea, whereas Unocal's proposal did not.

Fahrenheit showed images of pipeline construction, but images have nothing to do with the Caspian Sea pipeline, for which [construction has never begun](#). Nor do they have anything to do with the Unocal pipeline, which never existed except on paper.

According to *Fahrenheit*, Afghanistan's new President, Hamid Karzai, was a Unocal consultant. This is absolutely false. [Sumana Chatterjee and David Goldstein](#), "A lowdown on the facts behind the allegations in 'Fahrenheit 9/11'," *Knight-Ridder newspapers*, July 2, 2004.

Bush Administration Relationship with the Taliban Deceit 32

Moore also tries to paint Bush as sympathetic to the Taliban, which ruled Afghanistan until its overthrow by U.S.-led forces shortly after Sept. 11. Moore shows a March 2001 visit to the United States by a Taliban envoy, saying the Bush administration “welcomed” the official, Sayed Hashemi, “to tour the United States to help improve the image of the Taliban.”

Yet Hashemi’s reception at the State Department was hardly welcoming. The administration rejected his claim that the Taliban had complied with U.S. requests to isolate Osama bin Laden and affirmed its nonrecognition of the Taliban.

“We don’t recognize any government in Afghanistan,” State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said on the day of the visit.

[Frank](#), *Newsday*.

Moore Claimed that Osama bin Laden Might be Innocent and Opposed the Afghanistan War Deceits 33-34

Fahrenheit 911 attempts in every way possible to link Osama bin Laden to George Bush. Moore even claims that Bush deliberately gave bin Laden “a two month head start” by not putting sufficient forces into Afghanistan soon enough. However:

In late 2002, almost a year after the al-Qaida assault on American society, I had an onstage debate with Michael Moore at the Telluride Film Festival. In the course of this exchange, he stated his view that Osama Bin Laden should be considered innocent until proven guilty. This was, he said, the American way. The intervention in Afghanistan, he maintained, had been at least to that extent unjustified. Something—I cannot guess what, since we knew as much then as we do now—has since apparently persuaded Moore that Osama Bin Laden is as guilty as hell. Indeed, Osama is suddenly so guilty and so all-powerful that any other discussion of any other topic is a dangerous “distraction” from the fight against him. I believe that I understand the convenience of this late conversion.

[Hitchens](#), *Slate*.

Three days after September 11, Moore demanded that no military action be taken against Afghanistan:

"Declare war?" War against whom? One guy in the desert whom we can never seem to find? Are our leaders telling us that the most powerful country on earth cannot dispose of one sick evil f---wad of a guy? Because if that is what you are telling us, then we are truly screwed. If you are unable to take out this lone ZZ Top wannabe, what on earth would you do for us if we were attacked by a nation of millions? For chrissakes, call the Israelis and have them do that thing they do when they want to get their man! We pay them enough billions each year, I am SURE they would be happy to accommodate your request....

But do not declare war and massacre more innocents. After bin Laden's previous act of terror, our last elected president went and bombed what he said was "bin Laden's camp" in Afghanistan -- but instead just killed civilians.

Michael Moore, "[War on Whom?](#)" *AlterNet*, Sept. 14, 2004.

The next day he wrote:

Trust me, *they* are talking politics night and day, and those discussions involve sending our kids off to fight some invisible enemy and to indiscriminately bomb Afghans or whoever they think will make us Americans feel good.

...I fear we will soon be in a war that will do NOTHING to protect us from the next terrorist attack.

"[Mike's Message](#)," Sept. 15, 2001. Although Moore vehemently opposed the Afghanistan War, *Fahrenheit* criticizes Bush for not putting more troops into Afghanistan sooner.

Are we any safer because the U.S. military eliminated the al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan, removed a government which did whatever al Qaeda wanted, and killed or captured two-thirds of the al Qaeda leadership? *Fahrenheit's* thesis that the Afghanistan War was solely for the pipeline and to distract attention from Saudi Arabia is inconsistent with the well-known results of the war. A sincere patriot could have opposed the Afghanistan War for a variety of reasons, such as fear that the invasion might stir up even more anti-American sentiment. But the only reason which *Fahrenheit* offers for opposing the war is the claim that not enough force was used in the early stages (a criticism contrary to Moore's 2001 opposition to the use of *any* force), and the factually indefensible claim that the results of the war did not help American security or harm terrorists.

Afghanistan after Liberation **Deceit 35**

we turn to the facts that are deliberately left out, we discover that there is an emerging Afghan army, that the country is now a joint NATO responsibility and thus under the protection of the broadest military alliance in history, that it has a new constitution and is preparing against hellish odds to hold a general election, and that at least a million and a half of its former refugees have opted to return...[A] highway from Kabul to Kandahar—an insurance against warlordism and a condition of nation-building—is nearing completion with infinite labor and risk. We also discover that the parties of the Afghan secular left—like the parties of the Iraqi secular left—are strongly in favor of the regime change. But this is not the sort of irony in which Moore chooses to deal.

[Hitchens](#), *Slate*.

John Ashcroft **Deceit 36**

Moore mocks Attorney General John Ashcroft by pointing out that Ashcroft once lost a Senate race in Missouri to a man who had died three weeks earlier. "Voters preferred the dead guy," Moore says, delivering one of the film's biggest laugh lines.

It's a cheap shot. When voters in Missouri cast their ballots for the dead man, Mel Carnahan, they knew they were really voting for Carnahan's very much alive widow, Jean. The Democratic governor of Missouri had vowed to appoint Jean to the job if Mel won.

[McNamee](#), *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Rep. Porter Goss **Deceit 37**

Defending the Patriot Act, Representative Porter Goss says that he has an "800 number" for people to call to report problems with the Act. *Fahrenheit* shoots back that Goss does not have such a number; the ordinary telephone number for Goss's office is flashed on the screen.

You'd never know by watching *Fahrenheit*, but Rep. Goss does have a toll-free number to which Patriot Act complaints can be reported. The number belongs to the Committee which Goss chairs, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. The number is [\(877\) 858-9040](tel:(877)858-9040).

Although the Committee's number is toll-free, the prefix is not "800," and Moore exploits this trivial fact to create the false impression that Goss lied about having a toll-free number.

As far as I can tell, the slam on Rep. Goss is the only factual error in the segment on the misnamed Patriot Act.

While there are a few good things in the Act, Moore's general critique of the Act is valid. The Act does contain many items which had long been on the FBI wish-list, which do not have real relation to the War on Terror, and which were pushed through under the pretext of 9/11. [Similar critiques](#) are also valid for the Clinton "terrorism" bill which was pushed through Congress in 1996. As for Moore's claim that the motive of the Patriot Act was to terrify the American people, I disagree, but it's a matter of opinion, and therefore beyond the scope of this report.

Saddam Hussein Never Murdered Americans Deceits 38-39

Fahrenheit asserts that Saddam's Iraq was a nation that "had never attacked the United States. A nation that had never threatened to attack the United States. A nation that had never murdered a single American citizen."

Jake Tapper (ABC News): You declare in the film that Hussein's regime had never killed an American ...

Moore: That isn't what I said. Quote the movie directly.

Tapper: What is the quote exactly?

Moore: "Murdered." The government of Iraq did not commit a premeditated murder on an American citizen. I'd like you to point out one.

Tapper: If the government of Iraq permitted a terrorist named Abu Nidal who is certainly responsible for killing Americans to have Iraq as a safe haven; if Saddam Hussein funded suicide bombers in Israel who did kill Americans; if the Iraqi police—now this is not a murder but it's a plan to murder—to assassinate President Bush which at the time merited airstrikes from President Clinton once that plot was discovered; does that not belie your claim that the Iraqi government never murdered an American or never had a hand in murdering an American?

Moore: No, because nothing you just said is proof that the Iraqi government ever murdered an American citizen. And I am still waiting for you to present that proof.

You're talking about, they provide safe haven for Abu Nidal after the committed these murders, uh, Iraq helps or supports suicide bombers in Israel. I mean the support, you remember the telethon that the Saudis were having? It's our allies, the Saudis, that have been providing help and aid to the suicide bombers in Israel. That's the story you should be covering. Why don't you cover that story? Why don't you cover it?

Note Moore's extremely careful phrasing of the lines which appear to exonerate Saddam, and Moore's hyper-legal response to Tapper. In fact, Saddam provided refuge to notorious terrorists who had murdered Americans. Saddam provided a safe haven for Abu Abbas (leader of the hijacking of the ship *Achille Lauro* and the murder of the elderly American passenger Leon Klinghoffer), for Abu Nidal, and for the 1993 World Trade Center bombmaker, Abdul Rahman Yasin. By law, Saddam therefore was an accessory to the murders. Saddam order his police to murder former American President George Bush when he visited Kuwait City in 1993; they attempted to do so, but failed. In 1991, he ordered his agents to murder the American Ambassador to the Philippines and, separately, to murder the employees of the U.S. Information Service in Manila; they tried, but failed. Yet none of these aggressions against the United States "count" for Moore, because he has carefully framed his verbs and verb tenses to exclude them.

According to Laurie Mylroie, a former Harvard professor who served as Bill Clinton's Iraq advisor during the 1992 campaign (during which Vice-Presidential candidate Gore repeatedly castigated incumbent President George H.W. Bush for inaction against Saddam), the ringleader of the World Trade Center bombings, Ramzi Yousef, was working for the Iraqi intelligence service. Laurie Mylroie, *The War Against America: Saddam Hussein and the World Trade Center Attacks: A Study of Revenge* (N.Y.: HarperCollins, 2d rev. ed. 2001.)

But even with Moore's clever phrasing designed to elide Saddam's culpability in the murders and attempted murders of Americans, Tapper still catches him with an irrefutable point: Saddam did perpetrate the premeditated murder of Americans. Every victim of every Palestinian terrorist bomber who was funded by Saddam Hussein was the victim of premeditated murder—including the American victims.

So what does Moore do? He tries to change the subject. Moore makes the good point that the U.S. media should focus more attention on Saudi financial aid to Palestinian terrorists who murder Americans in Israel. On NRO, I've [pointed](#) to Saudi terror funding, as have other NRO writers. But pointing out Saudi Arabia's guilt does not excuse Moore's blatant lie about Saddam Hussein's innocence.

Saddam's Threats Deceit 40

Moore's pro-Saddam allegation that Saddam "never threatened to attack the United States" is true in the narrow sense that Saddam never gave a speech in which he threatened to, for example, send the Iraqi navy and army to conduct an amphibious invasion of Florida. But although Saddam never threatened the territorial integrity of America, he repeatedly threatened Americans. For example, On November 15, 1997, the main propaganda organ for the Saddam regime, the newspaper *Babel* (which was run Saddam Hussein's son Uday) ordered: "American and British interests, embassies, and naval ships in the Arab region should be the targets of military operations and commando attacks by Arab political forces." (Stephen Hayes, *The Connection: How al Qaeda's Collaboration with Saddam Hussein has Endangered America* (N.Y.: HarperCollins, 2004), p. 94.)

Moreover, Saddam did not need to make verbal threats in order to "threaten" the United States. He threatened the United States by giving refuges to terrorists who had murdered Americans, and by funding terrorists who were killing Americans in Israel. Saddam gave refuge to terrorists who had attacked the United States by bombing the World Trade Center. In addition:

In 1991, a large number of Western hostages were taken by the hideous Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and held in terrible conditions for a long time. After that same invasion was repelled—Saddam having killed quite a few Americans and Egyptians and Syrians and Brits in the meantime and having threatened to kill many more...

....Iraqi forces fired, *every day, for 10 years*, on the aircraft that patrolled the no-fly zones and staved off further genocide in the north and south of the country. In 1993, a certain Mr. Yasin helped mix the chemicals for the bomb at the World Trade Center and then skipped to Iraq, where he remained a guest of the state until the overthrow of Saddam....On Dec. 1, 2003, the *New York Times* reported—and the David Kay report had established—that Saddam had been secretly negotiating with the "Dear Leader" Kim Jong-il in a series of secret meetings in Syria, as late as the spring of 2003, to buy a North Korean missile system, and missile-production system, right off the shelf. (This attempt was not uncovered until after the fall of Baghdad, the coalition's presence having meanwhile put an end to the negotiations.)

[Hitchens](#), *Slate*. The cited article is David E. Sanger & Thom Shanker, "A Region Inflamed: Weapons. For the Iraqis, a Missile Deal That Went Sour; Files Tell of Talks With North Korea, *New York Times*, Dec. 1, 2003.

As French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin stated on November 12, 2002, "The security of the United States is under threat from people like Saddam Hussein who are capable of using chemical and biological weapons." (Hayes, p. 21.) De Villepin's point is indisputable: Saddam the kind of person who was capable of using chemical weapons, since he had actually used them against Iraqi who resisted his tyrannical regime. As de Villepin spoke, Saddam was sheltering terrorists who had murdered Americans, and was subsidizing the murder of Americans (and many other nationalities) in Israel.

Iraq and al Qaeda Deceit 41-42

Moore declares that George Bush completely fabricated an Iraq/al Qaeda connection in order to deflect attention from his Saudi masters. But consider the facts presented in Stephen F. Hayes's book, *The Connection: How al Qaeda's Collaboration with Saddam Hussein Has Endangered America* (N.Y.: HarperCollins, 2004). The first

paragraph of the last chapter (pp. 177-78) sums up some of the evidence:

Iraqi intelligence documents from 1992 list Osama bin Laden as an Iraqi intelligence asset. Numerous sources have reported a 1993 nonaggression pact between Iraq and al Qaeda. The former deputy director of Iraqi intelligence now in U.S. custody says that bin Laden asked the Iraqi regime for arms and training in a face-to-face meeting in 1994. Senior al Qaeda leader Abu Hajer al Iraqi met with Iraqi intelligence officials in 1995. The National Security Agency intercepted telephone conversations between al Qaeda-supported Sudanese military officials and the head of Iraq's chemical weapons program in 1996. Al Qaeda sent Abu Abdallah al Iraqi to Iraq for help with weapons of mass destruction in 1997. An indictment from the Clinton-era Justice Department cited Iraqi assistance on al Qaeda "weapons development" in 1998. A senior Clinton administration counterterrorism official told the *Washington Post* that the U.S. government was "sure" Iraq had supported al Qaeda chemical weapons programs in 1999. An Iraqi working closely with the Iraqi embassy in Kuala Lumpur was photographed with September 11 hijacker Khalid al Mihdhar en route to a planning meeting for the bombing of the USS *Cole* and the September 11 attacks in 2000. Satellite photographs showed al Qaeda members in 2001 traveling en masse to a compound in northern Iraq financed, in part, by the Iraqi regime. Abu Musab al Zarqawi, senior al Qaeda associate, operated openly in Baghdad and received medical attention at a regime-supported hospital in 2002. Documents discovered in postwar Iraq in 2003 reveal that Saddam's regime harbored and supported Abdul Rahman Yasin, an Iraqi who mixed the chemicals for the 1993 World Trade Center attack...

Hayes is a writer for [The Weekly Standard](#) and much of his writing on the Saddam/Osama connection is available there for free; simply use the search engine and look for articles by Hayes.

Fahrenheit shows Condoleezza Rice saying, "Oh, indeed there is a tie between Iraq and what happened on 9/11." The audience laughs derisively. Here is what Rice [really said](#):

Oh, indeed there is a tie between Iraq and what happened on 9/11. It's not that Saddam Hussein was somehow himself and his regime involved in 9/11, but, if you think about what caused 9/11, it is the rise of ideologies of hatred that lead people to drive airplanes into buildings in New York.

I agree with Hayes that there is significant evidence suggesting possible Iraqi involvement in 9/11, but Moore deceptively cut the Rice quote to fool the audience into thinking she was making a particular claim, even though she was pointedly not making such a claim.

The preliminary staff report of the September 11 Commission [states](#), "We have no credible evidence that Iraq and al Qaeda cooperated on attacks against the United States." Some critics, as a the chief prosecutor of the World Trade Center bombers, [have argued](#) that the staff report inexplicably ignores substantial evidence of Iraqi involvement in the September 11 attacks. Whether you agree with the staff report or the critics, there is no dispute that Saddam Hussein had a relationship with al Qaeda, an organization whose only activity was terrorism. *Fahrenheit* dishonestly pretends that there was no relationship at all.

Iraq before Liberation Deceit 43

Moore shows scenes of Baghdad before the invasion (read: liberation) and in his weltanschauung, it's a place filled with nothing but happy, smiling, giggly, overjoyed Baghdadis. No pain and suffering there. No rape, murder, gassing, imprisoning, silencing of the citizens in these scenes. When he exploits and lingers on the tears of a mother who lost her soldier-son in Iraq, and she wails, "Why did you have to take him?" Moore does not cut to images of the murderers/terrorists (pardon me, "insurgents") in Iraq...or even to God; he cuts to George Bush. When the soldier's father says the young man died and "for what?", Moore doesn't show liberated Iraqis to reply, he cuts instead to an image of Halliburton.

Jeff [Jarvis](#), "Watching Michael Moore," *Buzz Machine* weblog, June 24, 2004.

The most offensive sequence in "Fahrenheit 9/11"'s long two hours lasts only a few minutes. It's Moore's file-footage depiction of happy Iraq before the Americans began their supposedly pointless invasion. You see men sitting in cafes, kids flying kites, women shopping. Cut to bombs exploding at night.

What Moore presumably doesn't know, or simply doesn't care about, is that the building you see being blown up is the Iraqi Ministry of Defense in Baghdad. Not many children flew kites there. It was in a part of the city that ordinary Iraqis weren't allowed to visit—on pain of death.

...Iraq was ruled by a regime that had forced a sixth of its population into fearful exile, that hanged dissidents (real dissidents, not people like Susan Sontag and Tim Robbins) from meathooks and tortured them with blowtorches, and filled thousands of mass graves with the bodies of its massacred citizens.

Yes, children played, women shopped and men sat in cafes while that stuff went on—just as people did all those normal things in Somoza's Nicaragua, Duvalier's Haiti and for that matter Nazi Germany, and as they do just about everywhere, including in Iraq today.

[Foreman](#), *New York Post*.

Invasion of Iraq Deceits 44-45

According to the footage that ensues, our pilots seem to have hit nothing but women and children.

[Labash](#), *Weekly Standard*.

Then—wham! From the night sky come the terror weapons of American imperialism. Watching the clips Moore uses, and recalling them well, I can recognize various Saddam palaces and military and police centers getting the treatment...I remember asking Moore at Telluride if he was or was not a pacifist. He would not give a straight answer then, and he doesn't now, either. I'll just say that the "insurgent" side is presented in this film as justifiably outraged, whereas the 30-year record of Baathist war crimes and repression and aggression is not mentioned once. (Actually, that's not quite right. It is briefly mentioned but only, and smarmily, because of the bad period when Washington preferred Saddam to the likewise unmentioned Ayatollah Khomeini.)

[Hitchens](#), *Slate*.

Major Coalition Partners Ignored Deceit 46

Q: You mock the "coalition of the willing" by only showing the tiny countries that have voiced support. But you leave out England, Spain, Italy and Poland. Why?

Moore: "This film exists as a counterbalance to what you see on cable news about the coalition. I'm trying to counter the Orwellian nature of the Big Lie, as if when you hear that term, the 'coalition,' that the whole world is behind us."

Patrick [Goldstein](#), "Truth teller or story stretcher?" *Los Angeles Times*, June 22, 2004.

If it is a "Big Lie" to mention *only* the powerful and important members of the Coalition (such as England and Australia), then it is an equally "Big Lie" to mention only the small and insignificant members of the Coalition.

Media Attitudes Deceit 47

In very selectively edited clips, Moore poses the absurd notion that the main news anchors—Peter Jennings, Dan Rather, and Ted Koppel—wholeheartedly support Bush and the War in Iraq....Has Moore forgotten the hour-long Saddam softball interview Rather did just prior to the war, [or] Jennings' condescending coverage...?

Schlüssel.

Jennings is shown delivering a broadcast in which he says, "Iraqi opposition has faded in the face of American power." But Jennings was simply stating an undeniable fact, as he stood next to a map showing that Saddam's army had collapsed everywhere, and all Iraqi cities were in Coalition hands. Despite what Moore implies, Jennings strongly opposed the liberation of Iraq. (Tim [Graham](#), "Peter's Peace Platoon. ABC's Crusade Against 'Arrogant' American Power," *Media Research Center*, March 18, 2003.)

Support for Soldiers and Veterans Deceits 48-50

Bush "supported closing veterans hospitals" says Moore. The Bush Department of Veteran's Affairs did propose closing seven hospitals in areas with declining populations where the hospitals were underutilized, and whose veterans could be served by other hospitals. Moore does not say that the Department also proposed building *new* hospitals in areas where needs were growing, and also building blind rehabilitation centers and spinal cord injury centers. (For more, see the [Final Report](#) of the independent commission on veterans hospitals, which agrees with some of the Bush proposals, and with some of the objections raised by critics.)

According to Moore, Bush "tried to double the prescription drug costs for veterans." What Bush proposed was raising the prescription co-pay from \$7 to \$15, for veterans with incomes of over \$24,000 a year. Prescription costs would have remained very heavily subsidized by taxpayers. Some, not all, veterans would have faced a doubling of their prescription co-pay, but only to a level which is common for many people with prescription insurance, and hardly a large enough increase to make a great difference in most cases.

Bush, announces Moore, "proposed cutting combat soldiers' pay by 33%." Not exactly. In addition to regular military salaries, soldiers in certain areas (not just combat zones) receive an "imminent danger" bonus of \$150 a month. In April 2003, Congress retroactively enacted a special increase of \$75, for the fiscal year of Oct. 1, 2002 through Sept. 30, 2003. At first, the Bush administration did not support renewing the special bonus, but then changed its position

Likewise, Congress had passed a special one-year increase in the family separation allowance (for service personnel stationed in places where their families cannot join them) from \$100 to \$250. Bush's initial opposition to extending the special increase was presented by Moore as "cutting assistance to their families by 60%." (Edward [Epstein](#), "Pentagon reverses course, won't cut troops' pay," *San Francisco Chronicle*, Aug. 15, 2003.)

Even if one characterizes not renewing a special bonus as a "cut," *Fahrenheit* misleads the viewer into thinking that the cuts applied to total compensation, rather than only to pay supplements which constitute only a small percentage of a soldier's income. An enlisted man with four months of experience receives an annual salary more than \$27,000. (Rod [Powers](#), "What the Recruiter Never Told You: Military Pay.")

Although Moore presents Bush as cutting military pay, Bush did the opposite: in 2003, Congress enacted a Bush administration proposal to raise all military salaries by 3.7%, with extra "targeted" pay increases for non-commissioned officer. NCOs are lower-ranking officers who typically join the military with lower levels of education than commissioned officers. (Sgt. 1st Class Doug [Sample](#), "Defense Department Targets Military Pay Increases for 2004," *American Forces Press Service*.)

(Deceits: 1. Closing veterans hospitals without mentioning of opening of veteran's hospitals, 2. Cutting combat

soldiers pay as if it were a cut in total salary, 3. Omission of Bush pay increase for military. Prescription drugs not counted as deceit, although important context is missing.)

Congressional Children in War Deceits 51-54

Early in this segment, Moore states that “only one” member of Congress has a child in Iraq. The action of the segment consists of Moore accosting Congressmen to try to convince them to have their children enlist in the military. At the end, Moore declares, “Not a single member of Congress wanted to sacrifice their child for the war in Iraq.”

Moore’s statement is technically true, but duplicitous. Of course no-one would want to “sacrifice” his child in any way. But the fact is, Moore’s opening (“only one”) and his conclusion (“not a single member”) are both incorrect.

[Sergeant Brooks Johnson](#), the son of South Dakota Democratic Senator Tim Johnson, serves in the 101st Airborne Division and fought in Iraq in 2003. The son of California Republican Representative Duncan Hunter quit his job after September 11, and [enlisted in the Marines](#); his artillery unit was [deployed](#) in the heart of insurgent territory in February 2004. Delaware Senator Joseph Biden’s son Beau is [on active duty](#); although Beau Biden has no control over he is deployed, he has not been sent to Iraq, and therefore does not “count” for Moore’s purposes.

How about Cabinet members? *Fahrenheit* never raises the issue, because the answer would not fit Moore’s thesis. Attorney General John Ashcroft’s son is on active duty. ([Fahrenheit Fact](#).)

The editing of the Congressional scenes borders on the fraudulent:

...Representative Kennedy (R-MN), one of the lawmakers accosted in Fahrenheit 9/11, was censored by Michael Moore.

According to the *Star Tribune*, Kennedy, when asked if he would be willing to send his son to Iraq, responded by stating that he had a nephew who was en-route to Afghanistan. He went on to inform Moore that his son was thinking about a career in the navy and that two of his nephews had already served in the armed forces. Kennedy’s side of the conversation, however, was cut from the film, leaving him looking bewildered and defensive.

What was Michael’s excuse for trimming the key segment? Kennedy’s remarks didn’t help his thesis: “He mentioned that he had a nephew that was going over to Afghanistan,” Moore recounted. “So then I said ‘No, no, that’s not our job here today. We want you to send your child to Iraq. Not a nephew.’”

Kennedy lambasted Moore as a “master of the misleading” after viewing the interview in question.

[Fahrenheit Fact](#).

George Stephanopoulos, of ABC News, asked Moore about the selective cuts in the Kennedy footage:

Stephanopoulos: You have a scene when you’re up on Capitol Hill encountering members of Congress, asking them if they would ask their sons and daughters to enlist ... in the military. And one of those members of Congress who appears in the trailer, Mark Kennedy, said you left out what he told you, which is that he has two nephews serving in the military, one in Afghanistan. And he went on to say that, “Michael Moore doesn’t always give the whole truth. He’s a master of the misleading.”

Moore: Well, at the time, when we interviewed him, he didn’t have any family members in Afghanistan. And when he saw the trailer for this movie, he issued a report to the press saying that he said that he had a kid in—

Stephanopoulos: He said he told you he had two nephews.

Moore:... No, he didn't. And we released the transcript and we put it on our Web site. This is what I mean by our war room. Any time a guy like this comes along and says, "I told him I had two nephews and one was going to Iraq and one was going to Afghanistan," he's lying. And I've got the raw footage and the transcript to prove it. So any time these Republicans come at me like this, this is exactly what they're going to get. And people can go to my Web site and read the transcript and read the truth. What he just said there, what you just quoted, is not true.

This Week followed up with the office of Rep. Kennedy. He did have two nephews in the military, but neither served in Iraq. Kennedy's staff agrees that Moore's Website is accurate but insists the movie version is misleading. In the film, Moore says, "Congressman, I'm trying to get members of Congress to get their kids to enlist in the Army and go over to Iraq." But, from the transcript, here's the rest:

Moore: Is there any way you could help me with that?

Kennedy: How would I help you?

Moore: Pass it out to other members of Congress.

Kennedy: I'd be happy to — especially those who voted for the war. I have a nephew on his way to Afghanistan.

[This Week](#), ABC News, June 20, 2004.

So while *Fahrenheit* pretended that Kennedy rebuffed Moore, Kennedy agreed to help Moore.

Fahrenheit shows Moore calling out to Delaware Republican Michael Castle, who is talking on a cell phone and waves Moore off. Castle is presented one of the Congressmen who would not sacrifice his children. What the film omits is that Rep. Castle [does not have any children](#).

Are Congressional children less likely to serve in Iraq than children from other families? Let's use Moore's methodology, and ignore members of extended families (such as nephews) and also ignore service anywhere except Iraq (even though U.S. forces are currently fighting terrorists in many countries). And like Moore, let us also ignore the fact that some families (like Rep. Castle's) have no children, or no children of military age.

We then see that of 535 Congressional families, there are two with a child who served in Iraq. How does this compare with American families in general? In the summer of 2003, U.S. troop levels in Iraq were raised to 145,000. If we factor in troop rotation, we could estimate that about 300,000 people have served in Iraq at some point. According to the [Census Bureau](#), there were 104,705,000 households in the United States in 2000. (See Table 1 of the Census Report.) So the ratio of ordinary U.S. households to Iraqi service personnel is 104,705,000 to 300,000. This reduces to a ratio of 349:1.

In contrast the ratio of Congressional households to Iraqi service personnel is 535:2. This reduces to a ration of 268:1.

Stated another way, a Congressional household is about 23 percent *more* likely than an ordinary household to be closely related to an Iraqi serviceman or servicewoman.

Of course my statistical methodology is very simple. A more sophisticated analysis would look only at Congressional and U.S. households from which at least one child is legally eligible to enlist in the military. Moore, obviously, never attempted such a comparison; instead, he deceived viewers into believing that Congressional families were extremely different from other families in enlistment rates.

Moore ignores the fact that there are [102 veterans currently serving in Congress](#). Regardless of whether they have children who could join the military, all of the veterans in Congress have personally put themselves at risk to protect their country.

(Deceits: 1. number of Congressional children in Iraq, 2. Mark Kennedy, 3. Michael Castle, 4. False impression

that Congressional families are especially unlikely to serve in Iraq.)

Lila Lipscomb Deceit 55

Moore exploits the grief of Lila Lipscomb, the mother of a soldier who died in Iraq. She denounces Bush and the War. But there are many mothers and relatives of US soldiers, alive and dead, who served there who don't agree with her. Don't look for them in this agit-prop "film."

Schlussel.

Fahrenheit wallows in pity for Mrs. Lipscomb. "I was tired of seeing people like Mrs. Lipscomb suffer," he claims. Yet Moore's website takes a different view:

I'm sorry, but the majority of Americans supported this war once it began and, sadly, that majority must now sacrifice their children until enough blood has been let that maybe -- just maybe -- God and the Iraqi people will forgive us in the end.

Michael [Moore](#), "Heads Up... from Michael Moore," *MichaelMoore.com*, April 14, 2004.

Moore's Pro-Saddam Source Deceit 56

Washington Representative Jim McDermott appears in several segments.

McDermott was one of three Congressmen who went on Saddam's propaganda tour of Iraq in Fall 2002. The trip was funded by Life for Relief and Development (LRD), a "charity" which laundered money to terrorist group Hamas' Jordanian operation. LRD is funded in part by Shakir Al-Khafaji, a man who did about \$70 million in business with Saddam through his Falcon Trading Group company (based in South Africa). LRD's Iraqi offices were raided by US troops last week, and the Detroit-area "charity" is suspected of funding uprisings, such as the one in Fallujah. Its officials bragged of doing so at a recent private US fundraiser.

Mr. Alkhafaji, one of two Americans named in Iraqi newspapers as a participant in Saddam's "Oil for Food" scam, gave Congressman McDermott \$5,000 in October 2002 for McDermott's legal defense fund in a lawsuit against him....

Schlussel.

The McDermott quotes are, obviously, not similar to the deceitful quote of Condoleezza Rice, in which her quote was twisted to mean the opposite of what she really said. McDermott is apparently quite sincere, and there is no indication that anything he said was taken out of context. So you don't have to count this as a deceit if you don't want to. On the other hand, McDermott's quotes about the alleged motivations of the Bush administration are supported by no evidence, and amount to nothing more than the speculative ravings of one of the very few pro-Saddam members of Congress. To rely on Moore to explain the Bush administration's alleged secret intentions is akin to relying on a bitter atheist to describe an alleged secret conspiracy in the Vatican.

Celebrities Deceit 57

He shows Britney Spears saying she supports the President on Iraq. As if there weren't a host of brain-dead bimbo celebs, (Madonna, Sean Penn, Russell Simmons, Lenny Kravitz, Susan Sarandon, The Dixie Chicks, etc.), spouting off on the other side.

Schlussel. As with much of the Iraq material, the Spears quote is not an outright fraud, but is the result of

perspective which is so one-sided as to be misleading.

Moore Supports Terrorists Deceit 58

In *Fahrenheit 911*, Moore claims to support our troops. But in fact, he supports the enemy in Iraq—the coalition of Saddam loyalists, al Qaeda operatives, and terrorists controlled by Iran or Syria—who are united in their desire to murder Iraqis, and to destroy any possibility of democracy in Iraq. Here is what Moore says about the forces who are killing Americans and trying to impose totalitarian rule on Iraq:

The Iraqis who have risen up against the occupation are not “insurgents” or “terrorists” or “The Enemy.” They are the REVOLUTION, the Minutemen, and their numbers will grow -- and they will win.

Michael [Moore](#), “Heads Up... from Michael Moore,” *MichaelMoore.com*, April 14, 2004. Of course if you believe that the people who are perpetrating suicide bombings against Iraqi civilians and American soldiers in order to force a totalitarian boot onto Iraq are the moral equivalent of the American Founders, then Moore's claim about the Iraqi insurgents could be valid. But even if that claim were valid (and I do not believe that any reasonable person can equate people fighting for totalitarianism with people fighting for constitutional democracy), then Moore is still being dishonest in *Fahrenheit* when he pronounces his concern for American troops. To the contrary, he is cheering for the forces which are killing our troops, as he equates the killers with freedom-fighters. And if you think that the people who are slaughtering American soldiers, American civilians, Iraqi soldiers, and Iraqi civilians are terrorists rather than "minutemen," then it is true that Moore supports terrorists.

There are some sincere opponents of the Iraq War who want to "support our troops" by bringing them home, and thereby getting them out danger. But it's deceptive to say that you support the troops if (besides lobbying for troop withdrawal) you are actively recruiting enemy fighters to kill our troops. Moore is doing so, as the next item details.

Moore is Working with Terrorists to Distribute His Film Deceit 59

As reported in the trade journal *Screen Daily*, affiliates of the Iranian and Syrian-backed terrorist group Hezbollah are promoting *Fahrenheit 911*, and Moore's Middle East distributor, Front Row, is accepting the terrorist assistance:

In terms of marketing the film, Front Row is getting a boost from organizations related to Hezbollah which have rung up from Lebanon to ask if there is anything they can do to support the film. And although [Front Row's Managing Director Giancarlo] Chacra says he and his company feel strongly that *Fahrenheit* is not anti-American, but anti-Bush, “we can't go against these organizations as they could strongly boycott the film in Lebanon and Syria.”

Nancy Tartaglione, “*Fahrenheit* to be first doc released theatrically in Middle East,” *Screen Daily.com*, June 9, 2004 (website requires registration). The story is discussed in Samantha [Ellis](#), “Fahrenheit 9/11 gets help offer from Hezbollah,” *The Guardian*, June 17, 2004; and “[Moore film distributor OK with terror support](#): Exec says firm doesn't want to risk boycott of 'Fahrenheit 9/11' in Mideast,” *WorldNetDaily.com*, June 22, 2004.

According to *Screen Daily*, Moore's film will open in mid-July on ten screens in Lebanon and two screens in Syria. [Syria is a terrorist state](#) which invaded Lebanon in the 1970s and controls the nation through a puppet government. The main al Qaeda commander in Iraq, [Abu Musab al-Zarqawi](#), has worked with Hezbollah and has operated out of Syria.

Moore accuses the United States of sacrificing morality because of greed: “The motivation for war is simple. The

U.S. government started the war with Iraq in order to make it easy for U.S. corporations to do business in other countries. They intend to use cheap labor in those countries, which will make Americans rich." David [Brooks](#), "All Hail Moore," *New York Times*, June 28, 2004.

Yet it turns out that the self-righteous Moore is the one who is accepting aid from a terrorist organization which has murdered and kidnapped hundreds of Americans--and also an organization that works with Zarqawi and al Qaeda. Just to avoid a boycott on a dozen screens in a totalitarian terrorist state and its colony?

Moore is, with terrorist assistance, pushing the film in Syria and a Syrian colony, both of which are places which supply some of the fighters who are currently killing Americans and anti-totalitarian Iraqis. *Fahrenheit* presents the fighters as noble resistance, and the American presence as entirely evil. It is reasonable to expect that such a film, when shown in Syria and Lebanon, will aid in the recruiting of additional fighters to kill Americans and Iraqis. In effect, the presentation of *Fahrenheit* in Syria and Lebanon--especially with explicit endorsement from a terrorist organization--amounts to a recruiting film for terrorists (or, in Moore's terms, "minutemen") to go to Iraq and kill Americans.

Because of Syria's oppression of Lebanon and its support for terrorism in Iraq and other nations, Congress passed and President Bush signed the [Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act](#). The Act authorizes the U.S. government to freeze the assets of individuals or organization "who are determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to be or to have been directing or otherwise significantly contributing to" Syrian sponsorship terrorist organizations and destabilization Iraq.

Theoretically, it might be possible that Moore has no personal awareness that his Middle East distributor is working with terrorists. But such ignorance is unlikely for two reasons: First, Moore's "war room" staff monitors controversial articles about the film, and there could hardly be anything more controversial than making common cause with terrorists. Not only has the *Hezbollah* relationship been publicized in a leading film trade on-line newspaper, the Moore-*Hezbollah* connection has been reported in one of the very most significant British newspapers, and in an important American on-line newspaper.

Second, Moore was [personally questioned](#) about the terrorist connection at a Washington, D.C., press conference. He at first denied the terrorist connection, but was then confronted with the direct quote from his distributor. He stonewalled and refused to answer. So the man who spends so much time getting in other people's faces with tough questions is unwilling to explain why he is accepting aid from Hezbollah.

The conclusion of *Fahrenheit* quotes from George Orwell's *1984*, the novel of a totalitarian state perpetually at war. According to Orwell, the true purpose of the war was to perpetuate "a hierarchical society" based on "poverty and ignorance." The real purpose of war as "to keep the very structure of society intact." *Fahrenheit* applies Orwell's words to the United States of today.

Moore's purported positions on some issues in *Fahrenheit* are different from his previous positions: whether people should have made a big deal about September 11, whether Osama bin Laden is guilty of the September 11 attacks, whether American families, including the Lipscombs, deserve to suffer the deaths of their children because they supported the war. But throughout Michael Moore's career, he has remained true to the central theme of *Fahrenheit*: capitalist America is the real terrorist state. Because America is a capitalist society, American use of force is necessarily evil.

Four days after September 11, Moore [announced](#): "We, the United States of America, are culpable in committing so many acts of terror and bloodshed that we better get a clue about the culture of violence in which we have been active participants." (The statement has been deleted from Moore's website, but is available through the web archive service called the Wayback Machine.) This is the view of *Fahrenheit 911*: Iraq under Saddam was fine until America began terrorizing it.

Saddam Hussein agrees; after September 11, his government issued an [official statement](#) declaring, "The

American cowboys are reaping the fruit of their crimes against humanity." Saddam's media showed him [telling his generals](#), "Those who do not want to harvest evil, should not plant evil...Despite the contradictory humanitarian feelings on what happened in America, America is harvesting the thorns that its rulers have planted in the world...Nobody has crossed the Atlantic carrying weapons against America, but it has crossed the Atlantic carrying death and destruction to the whole world." (For more of Moore's anti-American statements, see "[ScaryJohnKerry and Michael Moore](#)." It should be noted, though, the John Kerry has never associated himself with Moore's hateful comments.)

Throughout American history, there have always been patriotic Americans who criticized particular war-time policies, or who believed that a war was a mistake and should be promptly ended. Today, there are many patriotic Americans who oppose some or all aspects of the War on Terror. I am among them, in that I have strongly [opposed the Patriot Act](#) from its first days, have denounced the Bush administration for siding with corporate interests rather than with public safety by sabotaging [the Armed Pilots law](#), and have repeatedly stated that the current Saudi tyranny should be recognized as a major part of the problem in the War on Terror--despite the tyranny's close relationship with America's foreign policy elite.

In contrast to the large number of patriots who have argued against particular wars or wartime policies, a much smaller number of Americans have hated America. They have cheered for the fighters who were killing Americans. They have belittled America's right to protect itself, and they have produced propaganda designed to destroy American morale and to facilitate enemy victory. To advance their anti-American cause, they have sometimes feigned love for the nation they despised.

Do the many falsehoods and misrepresentations of *Fahrenheit 911* suggest a film producer who just makes careless mistakes? Or does a man who [calls Americans](#): "possibly the dumbest people on the planet" believe that his audience will be too dumb to tell when he is tricking them? Viewers will have to decide for themselves whether the extremist and extremely deceptive *Fahrenheit 911* is a conscientious work of patriotic dissent, or the cynical propaganda of a man who gives wartime aid to America's murderous enemies, and who accepts their aid in return.

Dave [Kopel](#) is Research Director of the [Independence Institute](#) and an [NRO](#) columnist. He has [previously written](#) about the deceptions in "Bowling for Columbine." Like Michael Moore, in 2000 Kopel [endorsed](#) and voted for Ralph Nader.

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