



Michael Moore is a bully, says Who guitarist

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Rock guitarist Pete Townshend has labelled Michael Moore a "bully" in a public spat over the use of the classic Who song Won't get Fooled Again in Fahrenheit 9/11. The Who guitarist refused Moore permission to use the song on the end credits of the film. Afterwards, Moore claimed that Townshend did so because he was in favour of the war in Iraq.

On his website, Townshend protests that this is not the case. Instead, he says he refused permission because he was suspicious of Moore's credentials. "When first approached I knew nothing about the content of his film Fahrenheit 9/11. I had not really been convinced by Bowling for Columbine [Moore's previous film] and had been worried about its accuracy. Once I had an idea what the film was about, I was 90% certain my song was not right for them."

He adds: "I greatly resent being bullied and slurred by him in interviews just because he did not get what he wanted from me." Comparing the film-maker's approach with that of George Bush, he says: "It seems to me that this aspect of his nature is not unlike that of the powerful and wilful man at the centre of his new documentary."

Fahrenheit 9/11 ends with excruciating footage of the president struggling to recall a local saying. "There's an old saying in Tennessee," he tells reporters, and then flounders. "I know it's in Texas, probably Tennessee. That says 'Fool me once [pause], shame on shame on you. [Long pause] Fool me. [Pause] You can't get fooled again." Moore had intended that the Who song then be played over the closing credits. In the event, the film ends to the sound of the Neil Young anthem Rockin' in the Free World.

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