

Where Have All The Democrats Gone?

By David Horowitz

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Of all the commentaries on the Michael Moore's propaganda film *Fahrenheit 9/11*, the most acute comes from the *New York Times*' conservative columnist David Brooks. In a column facetiously titled "**All Hail Moore**," Brooks begins with this tongue-in-cheek observation: "In years past, American liberals have had to settle for intellectual and moral leadership from the likes of John Dewey, Reinhold Niebuhr and Martin Luther King Jr. But now, a grander beacon has appeared on the mountain top, and, from sea to shining sea, tens of thousands have joined in the adulation." As I write, Moore's "documentary" is at the top of the box office, out-grossing on its opening day, Friday, "White Chicks," "Dodgeball," Stephen Spielberg's new pic, "Terminal" and "Shrek 2."

Behind this impressive box office success lies its maker's capture of the Democratic Party's imagination, not to mention its heart and soul. This is the really significant dimension of the Michael Moore moment. Others have focused on the fact that the Pied Piper of Flint is a cynical manipulator, an irresponsible *auteur* and a compulsive liar, and beyond that – as Christopher Hitchens has shown in a blistering **review** in the liberal magazine *Slate* – a world class phony (attacking the Bush administration's invasion of Iraq for derailing the War on Terror despite the fact that Moore is on record as opposing the attack on the Taliban as fiercely as he does the war on Saddam).

What is momentous in the Moore phenomenon is that the Democratic Party – or at least its intellectual wing and its activist core – has embraced a piece of Marxist agitprop as its most potent election campaign spot. David Brooks provides readers unfamiliar with the Moore creed with some chillingly precise quotes. According to Moore: "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." In other words, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the beheader of Nicholas Berg, is not America's enemy, he is an Islamic reincarnation of Ethan Allen or Paul Revere, a harbinger of some new global freedom which can only be achieved by the overthrow of the Great American Satan. This obscene formulation is of course just an excessively vulgar version of the same Marxist fantasy that radicals like Moore were peddling in 1960s about Communist totalitarians like Ho Chi Minh.

Not surprisingly, Moore's "analysis" of the rationale for the war is vulgar Leninism. In an interview with a Japanese newspaper, cited by Brooks, Moore explained: "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." In other words, it's "blood for oil," the slogan made popular by the **North Korea-aligned** Workers World Party which through **its political front International ANSWER** was responsible for all the early mass demonstrations against the war in Iraq.

What is disturbingly new in this political season is not that there exists a large radical culture that has learned nothing from the fall Communism and that identifies Americans as agents of evil and George Bush as their Fuehrer-in-Chief. What is new is that they are joined in this electoral campaign by the Democratic Party establishment along with sensible anti-Communist veterans from the Cold War era like Arthur Schlesinger and Kennedy speechwriter Ted Sorensen, who attended Moore's Washington opening along with Senators Tom Harkin and Barbara Boxer and DNC chairman Terry McAuliffe. How far has this group derangement progressed? *Salon.com*, an internet journal which, unlike Moore,

supported the war on the Taliban, now **compares Moore** favorably to Solzhenitsyn, Dickens and (of course) Bruce Springsteen.

This eye-popping development has been proceeding with disturbing velocity from the moment American troops entered Baghdad and House Minority leader Nancy Pelosi complained that the liberation of 25 million Iraqis was already “too costly.” It has proceeded with alarming speed from this high ground to underhanded accusations that the President has betrayed the country, concocted lies to lead Americans into a war for the benefit of Texas corporations, and wasted the lives of our youth in uniform, while killing and abusing innocent Iraqis for no particular reason – a point Moore pounds home with all the subtlety of a cluster bomb. The impact of these irresponsible and reckless attacks not only on the tenor of America’s political discourse, but on the war itself, has been profound.

As a result of the Left’s propaganda war against the war, the American government is now almost as hamstrung as it was in the post-Vietnam era – and until the War on Terror. It realistically cannot raise another 100,000 troops – even if they are necessary to pacify Iraq or deal with other terrorist threats – without threatening to bring the political house down. It cannot threaten, let alone invade, Syria or Iran – even if they were shown to have hidden Saddam’s weapons or were engaged in plotting a terrorist attack on the United States. Who would believe the Commander-in-Chief now? Nor can it rescue black Africans being slaughtered by the Muslim Arab government in the Sudan. Michael Moore and his “liberal” friends and their campaign of reckless distortion and malicious insinuation have seen to that.

In this election year, it is unlikely that this “popular front” between once sensible liberals and mischievous leftists can be broken. The power stakes are too high. But if there’s a way to accomplish this, it is to confront those in the Moore audience who are still able to reason with the absurdity of their fundamental premise. This premise is succinctly summarized in an intelligent but ultimately tortured **review** of Moore’s film by David Edelstein, which also appeared at Slate.com. Edelstein’s review shows that he understands the squalid duplicity of Moore, but nonetheless can’t extricate himself from the seduction of the idea that the ends of this film – sabotaging the current war effort – justify the disreputable means: “It delighted me. It disgusted me. I celebrate it. I lament it.”

The crux of Edelstein’s cave-in to bad sense is contained in this sentence: “*Fahrenheit 911* must be viewed in the context of the Iraq occupation and the torrent of misleading claims that got us there.”

As I, along with many other conservatives, have many times pointed out in the troubled months gone by, the attacks on the rationale for the war are the real bad faith in the debate on Iraq – not anything that George Bush or Dick Cheney are alleged to have claimed. First, because none of the allegedly misleading claims as identified by the Left are claims that actually “got” us into the war. The rationale for the war was not WMDs, or an al-Qaeda connection, or an imminent threat (Bush actually said that confronting Saddam was necessary to *prevent* an imminent threat from developing). The rationale for the war was a unanimous Security Council Resolution (1441), which was drawn up in the form of an ultimatum that passed on November 8, 2002, and that instructed the regime in Iraq that by December 7, it would have to provide proof to the UN that it had destroyed its Weapons of Mass Destruction “or else.” There is not the slightest question that Saddam failed to meet this ultimatum, and indeed that he tried to deceive the Security Council by providing a false report on the WMD situation. Even Hans Blix affirms this in his recent memoir *Disarming Iraq*.

In fact, we know that there were WMDs (and have found some). Moreover, even if there were none,

this was not a deception of the Bush administration, but a contention of the Clinton administration and the current Democratic Party nominee, as well. The war deadline was imposed by a multilateral coalition of nations acting through the UN Security Council. So we also know that this was not unilateral war, but sanctioned by the international community. It is also true that the UN Security Council failed to enforce its own deadline, but we also know that \$10 billion in **Oil-for-Food money stolen** by Saddam with the collusion of UN officials was used to bribe the nations whose votes counted.

We know and have established that there is indeed a link between Saddam and the War on Terror (the entire argument about “operational” links between Saddam and al-Qaeda is election year scholasticism and largely irrelevant to the question of whether Iraq was part of an Axis of Evil behind the War on Terror). In addition to **ten years of provable links** between the Saddam **regime and al-Qaeda** and the testimony of the Clinton administration, which identified both parties in its indictment for the bombing of two U.S. embassies in 1998, there is the presence of Abu Musad al-Zarqawi, as the commander of the terrorist forces in Iraq. If Zarqawi – an international terrorist linked to al-Qaeda – is heading the resistance in Iraq, then Iraq is the central front of the war on terror, just as Bush insists. Is there anyone in the sensible opposition that would like to argue that it is a bad idea for the United States to have a military basis and a very large CIA station in Iraq which is centrally located in the terror heartland rather than the regime of Saddam Hussein? If so, make the case.

Notwithstanding the emptiness of the Left’s arguments against these claims, they are irrelevant to the question of whether to support the war and the administration that launched it. To make this absolutely clear: the rationale for the war (which is the focus of the entire political debate) is irrelevant if the war is just.

Do David Edelstein and all those who are now engaged in this unseemly dance with a Leninist radical like Michael Moore want to argue that the war was unjust? Do they want Saddam back in power? Do they think it’s a bad thing that America has a military base and a very large intelligence post bordering Syria, Afghanistan and Iran? Do they want us to pull our forces from this front? If so, let them say so, and we’ll know who we’re dealing with. Otherwise they need to stop talking about the “justification” for the war as though it was a substantive issue or something that mattered.

Franklin Roosevelt claimed that Pearl Harbor was a “sneak attack.” Yet the United States had broken the Japanese code and therefore should have known the attack was coming. Would it make a difference to anyone if it did? Would that have justified a massive attack on Roosevelt as Commander-in-Chief comparable to the attack Democrats have mounted on George Bush? Suppose Lincoln had clandestinely sent a special force of Union soldiers to attack Fort Sumter and blame it on the Confederacy. Would that change David Edelstein’s view of the Civil War that freed four million slaves? Would he have celebrated (while also lamenting) a scurrilous propaganda effort by a pro-slavery scuzzball like Michael Moore, defaming Lincoln and attempting to turn the free states against the war? But that is exactly what is happening here.