

Re: Fact-checking Moore's political broadside

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"ClassWarz" <Outsourced@AmercanWorker.Com> wrote in message
news:<10d7i0e4b235uef@corp.supernews.com>...

> "Psalm 110" <Melchizedek@USA.com> wrote in message

> news:2275a3c5.0406181853.538066d0@posting.google.com...

> > <http://www.iht.com/articles/525560.html>

> >

> > *Fact-checking Moore's political broadside*

> >

> > *Philip Shenon/NYT The New York Times*

> >

> > *Friday, June 18, 2004*

> > *Viewer finds Moore 'on firm ground'*

> >

> > *LOS ANGELES Michael Moore is not coy about his hopes for "Fahrenheit*

> > *9/11," his blistering documentary attack on President George W. Bush*

> > *and the war in Iraq. He wants it to be remembered as the first*

> > *big-audience, election-year film that helped unseat a president.*

> > .

> > *"And it's not just a hope," the Oscar-winning filmmaker said in a*

> > *phone interview last week, describing focus groups in Michigan in*

> > *April at which, after seeing the movie, previously undecided voters*

> > *expressed eagerness to defeat Bush.*

> > .

> > *"We found that if you entered the theater on the fence, you fell off*

> > *it somewhere during those two hours," he said. "It ignites a fire in*

> > *people who had given up." The movie's indictment of Bush is nothing if*

> > *not sprawling. Moore suggests that Bush and his administration*

> > *jeopardized national security in an effort to placate Bush family*

> > *cronies in Saudi Arabia, that the White House helped members of Osama*

> > *bin Laden's family to flee the United States after the attacks of*

> > *Sept. 11, 2001, and that the administration manipulated terrorism*

> > *alert levels to scare Americans into supporting the invasion of Iraq.*

> > .

> > *Moore's previous films generated a cottage industry of conservative*

> > *commentators eager to prove sloppiness and exaggeration in his films;*

> > *a handful of mainstream critics have also found flaws. But if*

> > *"Fahrenheit 9/11" attracts the audience Moore and his distributors are*

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> > *predicting, Moore may face an onslaught of fact-checking unlike*
> > *anything he – or any other documentary filmmaker – has ever*
> > *experienced. After all, White House officials and the Bush family*
> > *began impugning the film even before any of them had seen it.*
> > .
> > *So how will Moore's movie stand up under close examination? Is the*
> > *film's depiction of Bush as a lazy and duplicitous leader, blinded by*
> > *his family's financial ties to Arab money men and the Saudi Arabian*
> > *royal family, true to fact? Moore and his distributors refused to*
> > *circulate copies of the film and its script before the film's release*
> > *on Friday; his production team said recently there was no final script*
> > *because the film was still undergoing minor editing – for clarity,*
> > *they said, not accuracy.*
> > .
> > *After a year spent covering the U.S. commission investigating the*
> > *Sept. 11 attacks, I was recently allowed to attend a Hollywood*
> > *screening. Based on that single viewing, and after separating out what*
> > *is clearly presented as Moore's opinion from what is stated as fact,*
> > *it seems safe to say that central assertions of fact in "Fahrenheit*
> > *9/11" are supported by the public record.*
> > .
> > *Moore is on firm ground in arguing that the Bushes, like many*
> > *prominent Texas families with oil interests, have profited handsomely*
> > *from their relationships with prominent Saudis, including members of*
> > *the royal family and of the large and fabulously wealthy bin Laden*
> > *clan, which has insisted it long ago disowned Osama.*
> > .
> > *Moore spends several minutes in the film documenting ties between the*
> > *president and James Bath, a financial adviser to a prominent member of*
> > *the bin Laden family who was an original investor in Bush's Arbusto*
> > *energy company and who served with the future president in the Air*
> > *National Guard in the early 1970s. The Bath friendship, which*
> > *indirectly links Bush to the family of the world's most notorious*
> > *terrorist, has been well documented.*
> > .
> > *Moore charges that Bush and his aides paid too little attention to*
> > *warnings in the summer of 2001 that Al Qaeda was about to attack,*
> > *including a detailed Aug. 6, 2001, CIA briefing that warned of*
> > *terrorism within the United States. In its final report next month,*
> > *the Sept. 11 commission can be expected to offer support to this*
> > *assertion. Moore says that instead of focusing on Al Qaeda, the*
> > *president spent 42 percent of his first eight months in office on*
> > *vacation; the figure came not from a conspiracy-hungry Web site but*
> > *from a calculation by The Washington Post. The most valid criticisms*
> > *of the film are likely to involve the artful way that Moore connects*
> > *the facts, and whether he has left out others that might undermine his*
> > *scalding attack. A great many statistics fly by in the movie – like*
> > *assertions that 6 percent to 7 percent of America is owned by Saudi*
> > *Arabians, and that Saudi companies have paid more than \$1.4 billion to*
> > *Bush family interests. Moore and his team say they have news reports*
> > *and other evidence to back up the numbers, and that it will be posted*

> > *on his site, www.michaelmoore.com, after the release of the*
> > *documentary. Moore may also be criticized for the way he portrays the*
> > *evacuation of the extended bin Laden family from the United States*
> > *after Sept. 11. As the Sept. 11 commission has found, the Saudi*
> > *government was able to pull strings at senior levels of the Bush*
> > *administration to help the bin Ladens leave the United States. But*
> > *while the film clearly suggests that the flights occurred at a time*
> > *when all air traffic was grounded immediately after the attacks ("Even*
> > *Ricky Martin couldn't fly," Moore says over video of the singer*
> > *wandering in an airport lobby), the Sept. 11 commission said in a*
> > *report this April that there was "no credible evidence that any*
> > *chartered flights of Saudi Arabian nationals departed the United*
> > *States before the reopening of national airspace," and that the FBI*
> > *had concluded that no one aboard the flights was involved in Sept. 11.*
> > .
> > *Moore defended the scene, saying his goal was to show how the White*
> > *House was eager to bend and break the rules for Saudi friends, in this*
> > *case the extended family of the terrorist who had just brought down*
> > *the twin towers of the World Trade Center and attacked the Pentagon.*
> > *And as reporters have found, the White House still refuses to document*
> > *fully how the flights were arranged. "I don't want to get lost in the*
> > *forest because of a single tree," Moore said. "The main point I want*
> > *people to go away with is that these people got special treatment*
> > *because they were bin Ladens or Saudi royals, and you and I would*
> > *never have been given that treatment."*
> > .
> > *Moore is readying for a conservative counterattack, saying he has*
> > *created a "war room" to offer an instant response to any assault on*
> > *the film's credibility. He has retained Chris Lehane, a Democratic*
> > *Party strategist known as a master of the black art of "oppo," or*
> > *opposition research, used to discredit detractors. He also hired*
> > *outside fact-checkers, led by a former general counsel of The New*
> > *Yorker and a veteran member of that magazine's legendary fact-checking*
> > *team, to vet the film. And he is threatening to go one step further,*
> > *saying he has consulted with lawyers who can bring defamation suits*
> > *against anyone who maligns the film or damages his reputation. "Any*
> > *attempts to libel me will be met by force," Moore said. "The most*
> > *important thing we have is truth on our side. If they persist in*
> > *telling lies, knowingly telling a lie with malice, then I'll take them*
> > *to court."*
> > .
> > *Joanne Doroshov, a public interest lawyer and filmmaker who shared in*
> > *a 1993 Oscar for documentaries and who joined the fact-checking effort*
> > *last month, said, "We have gone through every single word of this film*
> > *– literally every word – and verified its accuracy." That said,*
> > *Moore's fact-checkers said they did not view the film as straight*
> > *reporting. "This is an Op-Ed piece, it's not a news report," said Dev*
> > *Chatillon, the former general counsel for The New Yorker, adding, "The*
> > *facts have to be right, yes, but this is an individual's view of*
> > *current events. And I'm a very firm believer that it is within*
> > *everybody's right to examine the actions of their government."*

> > .
> > *Besides, it may turn out that the most talked-about moments in the*
> > *film are the least impeachable. For the White House, the most*
> > *devastating segment of "Fahrenheit 9/11" may be the video of a*
> > *befuddled-looking Bush staying put for nearly seven minutes at a*
> > *Florida elementary school on the morning of Sept. 11, continuing to*
> > *read a copy of "My Pet Goat" to schoolchildren even after an aide has*
> > *told him that a second plane has struck the twin towers.*
> > .
> > *Bush's slow, hesitant reaction to the disastrous news has never been a*
> > *secret. But seeing the actual footage, with the minutes ticking by,*
> > *may prove more damaging to the White House than all the statistics in*
> > *the world.*
>
> *Moore said on the Letterman Show tonight that he gets a lot of his facts*
> *from the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times.*
>
> *I've seen all the Moore films--Bowling eight times! -- and I find Moore uses*
> *stuff that ought to be common knowledge to most of us.*
>
> *But here comes the Republican Dirty Tricks Machine:*
>
> <http://www.michaelmoore.com/words/message/index.php>
>
> *//begin quote*
>
> *Some People Still Don't Want You To See My Movie... From Michael Moore*
>
> *Friends,*
>
> *We're a week away from the nationwide opening of "Fahrenheit 9/11" and not a*
> *day goes by where we don't have some new battle to fight thanks to those who*
> *are still working overtime to keep people from seeing this film. What's*
> *their problem? Are they worried about something?*
>
> *A Republican PR firm has formed a fake grassroots front group called "Move*
> *America Forward" to harass and intimidate theater owners into not showing*
> *"Fahrenheit 9/11." These are the same people who successfully badgered CBS*
> *into canceling the Reagan mini-series a few months ago. And they are*
> *spending a ton of money this week to threaten movie theaters who even think*
> *about showing our movie.*
>
> *As of this morning, a little over 500 theaters have agreed to show the movie*
> *beginning next Friday, June 25. There are three national/regional theater*
> *chains who, as of today, have not booked the movie in their theaters. One*
> *theater owner in Illinois has reported receiving death threats.*
>
> *The right wing usually wins these battles. Their basic belief system is*
> *built on censorship, repression, and keeping people ignorant. They want to*
> *limit or snuff out any debate or dissension. They also don't like pets and*
> *are mean to small children. Too many of them are named "Fred."*

- >
- > *This new nut group is the Right's last hope in limiting how many people can*
- > *see this movie. All of their other efforts have failed. Let's recap:*
- >
- > *1. Roger Friedman at FOX News reported that the head of the company which*
- > *first agreed to fund our film "got calls from Republican friends" pressuring*
- > *them to back out. And they did. But... Miramax immediately picked up the*
- > *film! Except...*
- >
- > *2. Michael Eisner, the chairman of Disney, then blocked Miramax (a company*
- > *owned by Disney) from releasing the film once it was finished. But... public*
- > *attention and embarrassment forced Disney to let the Weinstein brothers of*
- > *Miramax find another distributor! But...*
- >
- > *3. Instead of a new distributor stepping right in -- as all the media*
- > *predicted would happen -- it took another month to find distributors who*
- > *would take on this movie. A number of other distributors, thanks to various*
- > *pressures, were afraid to get involved. It looked for a while that we would*
- > *be distributing this ourselves. But then Lions Gate and IFC Films rode in to*
- > *the rescue!*
- >
- > *So, we have beaten back all attempts to kill this movie, and the only thing*
- > *in the way of you now seeing "Fahrenheit 9/11" is this Republican big-money*
- > *front group trying to force theaters not to show the movie.*
- >
- > *Please, contact your local theaters and let them know you want to see*
- > *"Fahrenheit 9/11." Tell them that some people don't know that this is*
- > *America and that we believe in freedom of speech and the importance of ALL*
- > *voices being heard. (The members of MoveOn.org--an ACTUAL grassroots*
- > *organization--have done a very cool thing. They are pledging to send a*
- > *message to theater owners and are planning to attend a showing of the film*
- > *on its opening weekend.)*
- >
- > *I appreciate their efforts, but you don't have to be a member of MoveOn to*
- > *help stop this effort to keep "Fahrenheit 9/11" from making it to screens*
- > *across the country. If a theater in your area is planning to show the film,*
- > *just give them a call and thank them for standing up for the freedom of*
- > *speech. If your local theater isn't showing the film, call them and let them*
- > *know that you would like to see it and you'd like them to show it.*
- >
- > *The White House and their minions in our media have presented one distorted*
- > *version of the truth after another for the past four years. All we are*
- > *asking for is the right to show what they HAVEN'T shown us, the real truth.*
- > *The truth that ain't pretty (and is, sadly, damnably hilarious).*
- >
- > *On top of all this, the MPAA gave the film an "R" rating. I want all*
- > *teenagers to see this film. There is nothing in the film in terms of*
- > *violence that we didn't see on TV every night at the dinner hour during the*
- > *Vietnam War. Of course, that's the point, isn't it? The media have given the*
- > *real footage from Iraq a "cleansing" -- made it look nice, easy to digest.*
- > *Mario Cuomo has offered to be our lawyer in appealing this ruling by the*

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> MPAA. Frankly, I would like to think the MPAA is saying that the actions by
> the Bush administration are so abhorrent and revolting, we need to protect
> our children from seeing what they have done. In that case, the film should
> be rated NC-17!
>
> However it turns out, I trust all of you teenagers out there will find your
> way into a theater to see this movie. If the government believes it is OK to
> send slightly older teenagers to their deaths in Iraq, I think at the very
> least you should be allowed to see what they are going to draft you for in a
> couple of years.
>
> Finally, some very sophisticated individuals have been hacking into and
> shutting down our website. It is an hourly fight to keep it up. We are going
> to find out who is doing this and we are going to pursue a criminal
> prosecution. I'm preparing lots of cool stuff for the site so watch for new
> items on it next week (www.fahrenheit911.com and www.michaelmoore.com).
>
> Thanks again for your support and I hope to see you at the movies on opening
> night, June 25.
>
> Yours,
>
> Michael Moore
>
> PS. I am sponsoring a number of benefits around the country next week for
> local and national peace and justice groups, including Military Families
> Speak Out and September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows. Please check
> your local papers and my website next week for further details.
>
> PPS. Also, I am going to be on the "Late Show with David Letterman" on
> Friday night. It's on CBS at 11:35 PM Eastern and Pacific. And on Monday
> morning (June 21) I will be on "The Today Show" on NBC. Next week, Jon
> Stewart and Conan. I'd go on O'Reilly but, like a coward, he walked out on a
> screening we invited him to (with Al Franken just a few rows away!). I
> personally caught him sneaking out. Embarrassed, he tried to change the
> subject. He said, "When are you coming on my show?" and I said, "Turn around
> and watch the rest of the movie and I will come on your show." He walked
> out. Fair and balanced.
>
> //end quote
>
>
>
> CLASSWARZ
>
>
> .

So now Moore believes a company is obligated to show his movie even if they or their customers do not like it? It took Moore over a month to find a distributor, big deal, sounds like distributors were afraid it

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would bomb at the box office as most propaganda movies do. Moore now admits to lying about the Bin Ladens leaving the US after 9/11. Whats Moore going to do now, sue me for being critical of him? Typical leftie lover of "freedom".