

Michael Moore meets the Secret Service

By Danny Schechter
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Before I dropped off into the world of much needed sleep, I wrote [in my News Dissector blog] about seeing Michael Moore at the RNC last night. He seemed to be on his way out while I was just arriving. I wasn't sure what happened until radio wizard Amy Goodman told me he had been publicly dissed by John McCain, whose role last night was to defend the Bush Administration's wars that Moore and so many others oppose.

I have now learned that Moore was there on assignment from USA Today. Their version of what happened was this:

“Without naming him, McCain also delivered an attack on filmmaker Michael Moore, whose ‘Fahrenheit 9/11’ movie is sharply critical of Bush’s leadership and motives for going to war. In his remarks, McCain referred to “a disingenuous filmmaker who would have us believe that Saddam’s Iraq was an oasis of peace when in fact it was a place of indescribable cruelty, torture chambers, mass graves and prisons that destroyed the lives of the small children held inside their walls.” (DUH? Did he see the film?)

“The line was greeted with roars of approval. Moore, who is writing a convention column for USA TODAY and was in Madison Square Garden when McCain spoke, raised his arms as the crowd chanted, ‘Four more years.’ ”

One of the bloggers at the RNC published a transcript of Secret Service harassment of Michael Moore as he was being interviewed by NPR. (I thought they were there to protect the President, not squelch free speech.)

The headline: **Secret Service shuts down Michael Moore interviews**

NPR Reporter Andrea Seabrook: Hello Frank. I'm standing here with Michael Moore, the filmmaker who made Fahrenheit 911. Mr. Moore, why are you here?

Michael Moore: I'm here writing a guest column each day for USA Today.

Seabrook: OK, so you have credentials to...

Secret Service Agent: Come around here

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Seabrook: I'm going to have to join him. They're kicking me out of this exact area but I can go around to... They just asked me to come around to the other side here.

NPR Convention Anchor Fred Stachio (phonetic spelling): Andrea Seabrook on the floor with Michael Moore.

Seabrook: [unintelligible]

Stachio: I know you're still there. I just want to be sure that you can still hear us while you're being moved, Andrea.

Seabrook: Well, well I'm not ... the Secret Service has blocked off that area. They're calling it a ... a hazard because of the number of people who are gathered around him. There aren't that many people, but the Secret Service won't let me around him anymore, so I think the access to him might be cut off for a moment. We'll try to get back with him.

Seabrook: Yes, I am in the middle of a ... you might be able to hear the Secret Service yelling into my mic at the same time. There, there are a bunch of Secret Service that have surrounded Michael Moore's section. There are three or four reporters with him right now, but they are trying to kick all of the reporters and press photographers who are around him out of his area. The convention staff is also here. They're standing here telling us that we have to move from this area ... they're obviously disturbed by the fact that Michael Moore is here and want as little public here as possible.

Stachio: Can we hear? Can we hear what's going on? Can you stick a mic in there? I don't know if we can hear.

Seabrook: Yeah ... ah ... eh ... they've sort of moved me away from that area.

Stachio: I don't understand. Who is it. Is it Secret Service?

Seabrook: It's Secret Service which is interesting because the Secret Service of all agencies is the one that remains ... is the least involved in the sort of political ... political kinds of things, but of course they always cover the candidates and they have to be involved in the convention like this. They claim that what they're doing is for safety reasons, although there is almost nobody around Michael Moore right now. So we'll see if I can ... Yeah, I'm being herded back in four different ways right now.

<http://mightyspork.blogspot.com/2004/08/secret-service-shuts-down-michael.html>