

Nazis for President?

By Rory O'Connor

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I bet you didn't know the President of the United States is a Nazi.
So is his leading opponent.

That's right – George W. Bush and Howard Dean are in league with Adolf Hitler and Joseph Goebbels, respectively.

The latest flap in the silly season leading up to November's election began when the liberal advocacy group MoveOn.org posted two brief television spots comparing President Bush to Hitler on its website.

The ads were among 1500 entries submitted to MoveOn as part of a contest asking members of the public to “tell the truth” about the President and his policies. The group promises to spend seven million dollars to buy airtime for the winning entry.

The reaction to the spots comparing Bush with Hitler was predictably swift and negative. Jewish groups like the Anti-Defamation League were joined by Republican Party operatives, led by National Committee Chairman Ed Gillespie, in denouncing the ads and demanding an apology from MoveOn.

MoveOn moved quickly to limit the damage, noting that claims that it had sponsored the spots were “deliberately and maliciously misleading,” while simultaneously repudiating the ads and pulling them off its site.

Nevertheless, conservative media mavens such as Matt Drudge of the Drudge Report and Bill O'Reilly of Fox News hammered away at the story, quoting Gillespie's characterization of the MoveOn project as “the worst and most vile form of political hate speech.” Mainstream outlets such as the Wall Street Journal and the Associated Press soon followed suit. Few mentioned the statement issued by MoveOn founder Wes Boyd in which he admitted the group had made a mistake and regretted that the two contest entries had slipped through the organization's screening process, which was aimed at filtering out spots in poor taste.

The widespread and negative media outcry over the MoveOn ads stands in sharp contrast to the lack of response to a recent opinion column published in the New York Post. The article by Ralph Peters (“Howard the Coward,” Jan. 5) compares Democrat frontrunner Howard Dean to Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels, and Dean's followers to “Hitler's Brownshirts” and the Gestapo. For good measure, Peters also compares “Herr Howie” to

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such Soviet Communist leaders as Vladimir Lenin, Leonid Brezhnev and even Mikhail Gorbachev.

Here's a sample of Peters' "opinion" of Dean and his supporters:

"Howard Dean and his Deanie-weenies do all they can to restrict the free speech of others. I can predict with certainty that Dean's Internet Gestapo will pounce on this column, twisting the facts and vilifying the writer. These are the techniques employed by Hitler's Brownshirts. Had Goebbels enjoyed access to the Internet, he would have used the same swarm tactics as Dean's Flannelshirts. It's Goebbels again: Just keep repeating the lies until the lies assume the force of truth."

Although Peters' off-the-wall calumny is every bit as reprehensible as the ads comparing President Bush to Chancellor Hitler, the media's response to it – namely, total silence – is deafening. Although hundreds of stories were written about the MoveOn ads, few other than this column have mentioned Ralph Peters' invective in the New York Post.

Can't we all agree that comparing any American candidate – Republican or Democrat – to genocidal Nazi leaders is simply unacceptable? Moreover, is there a double standard at work in the mainstream media? Why have no commentators attacked Ralph Peters and the Post in the same way they went after MoveOn.org? And why does Post Editor Col Allen refuse to answer questions about his decision to commission and publish Peter's hate-filled diatribe? ●

Rory O'Connor is the co-founder and president of GlobalVision.