

What Is Rove Up To?

Karl Rove's strategy is to attack an opponent's strength. Against John Kerry, he went after his heroic military service with a vengeance and swift boating entered our political lexicon. So what is Rove up to now?

His target is Barack Obama's signature slogan "Change We Can Believe In." Rove wants to redefine it as revolutionary change, change driven by an alien ideology, change no patriotic American could stomach. And he intends to do so by channeling Senator Joseph McCarthy.

At the Republican Women's Club in Wheeling, West Virginia in 1950, Joe McCarthy claimed that he had a list of 205 people in the State Department who were members of the Communist Party. Over the next four years, McCarthy branded thousands of Americans as Communist traitors and fellow travelers. Some were; most weren't; but McCarthy did not care. His objective was his own re-election.

Rove is too shrewd to mimic Joe McCarthy exactly. But he is inexorably building a frame for the fall campaign.

On Hannity & Colmes on April 14th, he used the words "almost Marxian" to describe Senator Obama's remarks about bitter Pennsylvanians. It was no slip of the tongue. He had just finished a riff about Bill Ayers.¹

Six days earlier, Rove introduced Bill Ayers to the FOX News audience as a domestic terrorist with links to Senator Obama. Rove asked "are there ways to find out the relationship between Ayers and Obama that are visual, that give it power and force?" He already knew the answer.²

Bill Ayers and his wife Bernadine Dohrn founded the Weather Underground Organization. According to Weatherman communiqués and papers compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation into a 403 page summary, Ayers and Dohrn toed the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist line.³ They were hardcore Communists bent on world revolution

For the moment, Rove ignored their alien political philosophy and concentrated on their terrorist activities. Ayers and Dohrn were responsible for bombings of the US State Department, US Capitol, the Pentagon, the National Guard Headquarters and nineteen other sites. Two other Weathermen, the parents of Ayers and Dohrn's adopted son, Chelsea, were convicted of murdering two policemen and a security guard during a Brinks truck robbery.

And how did Rove link Ayers to Senator Barack Obama? He quoted David Axelrod, Obama's senior strategist, as saying "Bill Ayers lives in his neighborhood. Their kids attend the same school. They're certainly friendly."

Are there more links than the neighborhood school? The Republican attack machine thinks so, and is feeding opposition research to journalists and bloggers.

On April 11th, Andrew C. McCarthy posted a piece in *National Review Online* detailing three links between Bill Ayers and Barack Obama. The first link was a conference held at the University of Chicago in 1997. Organized by Michelle Obama, it featured State Senator Obama and Bill Ayers discussing juveniles as “super predators.” The second link was a University of Illinois-Chicago conference in 2002. There Obama and Ayers spoke on a panel called “Intellectuals in a Time of Crisis.” The third link was their service together on the board of directors of Chicago’s Woods Foundation between 1999 and 2001. Andrew McCarty explained how Obama and Ayers made grants totaling \$75,000 to organizations run by Rashid Khalidi, who directed the Palestine Liberation Organization’s press agency for six years. ⁴

The PLO, according to at least one Israeli historian, was created by Nikita Kruchev’s KGB in 1964 as part of his liberation front strategy. But Andrew McCarthy refused to make the ideological leap. That was left to others.

Earlier in the week, Holly Robichaud who blogs as “the Lone Republican” at the Boston Herald posted an item entitled “Another Obama scandal brewing?” Robichaud alleged that Obama’s mentor in Hawaii and identified only as Frank in *Dreams of My Father* was Frank Marshall Davis. Robichaud asserted that Davis was a member of the Communist Party and was “accused by the [House] Un-American Activities Committee to be involved with several communist-front organizations.” She offered no proof but lamented “we are considering electing a candidate who we are not sure is patriotic.” ⁵

On April 14th, William Kristol writing in the New York Times admitted he had not “read much Karl Marx” since his college teaching days. But he equated Obama’s “cling to religion” remark to Marx’s screed about religion. Kristol, who became part of the Bush/Quayle high command after the Willie Horton ad ran, provided his readers with Marx’s entire passage: “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of a soulless condition. It is the opium of the people.” ⁶

Then on April 15th, Politico’s Ben Smith and Jeffrey Ressler touted a 1965 East Africa Journal article written by Barack H. Obama (Sr.) entitled “Problems Facing Our Socialism.” ⁷ In the article, Senator Obama’s father argues that Kenya’s new African Socialism does not go far enough. “We have to look at priorities in terms of what is good for society,” wrote the elder Obama, “and on this basis we may find it necessary to force people to do things they would not do otherwise.” Academic nonsense unless one happens to think socialism, Communism and nationalization in Kenya forty years ago provides one more data point for Rove’s campaign frame.

The drip, drip, drip of Republican opposition research will continue throughout the summer. At the Republican Convention, speakers will joke about a color spectrum of light pink to deep red. And the GOP attack machine will publicize the visual that Rove believes will give that Ayers-Obama link “power and force.”

Rove's frame for the fall campaign will be filled with revolutionary figures -- Marx, Lenin, Mao, Ho Chi Minh and Che Guevara. His audio tapes of Ayers, Dohrn and other Weathermen will provide the screams of revolution. The bombing of the US Capitol, the Pentagon and the US State Department will serve as b-roll for his television ads that will have one final visual as the announcer gravely intones "Their Change -- Not What *You* Had In Mind?"

Contrast that frame with what John McCain is developing. In his latest ad, the first video shots are of McCain offering only his name and serial number to his captors -- the same North Vietnamese Communists that Bill Ayers and Bernadine Dohrn so adored.

And that's what Karl Rove is up to -- creating a frame to eviscerate his opponent just like he did in 2004. His timing is predictable. Exactly four years ago to the day of Rove's "almost Marxian" remark, Swift Boat Veterans for Truth registered its website.

Rick Sloan
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Sources

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