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September 21st, 2007

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Tom Tomorrow:
Olbermann

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So the President, behaving a little bit more than usual, like we'd all interrupted him while he was watching his favorite cartoons on the DVR, stepped before the press conference microphone and after side-stepping most of the substantive issues like the Israeli raid on Syria in condescending and infuriating fashion, produced a big-wow political finish that indicates, certainly, that if it wasn't already — the annual Republican witch-hunting season is underway.

“I thought the ad was disgusting. I felt like the ad was an attack not only on General Petraeus, but on the U.S. Military.

“And I was disappointed that not more leaders in the Democrat party spoke out strongly against that kind of ad.

“And that leads me to come to this conclusion: that most Democrats are afraid of irritating a left-wing group like Move-On-Dot-Org — or ****more**** afraid of irritating them, than they are of irritating the United States military.”

“That was a sorry deal.”

First off, it's “Democrat-ic” party, sir.

You keep pretending you're not a politician, so stop using words your party made up. Show

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Co-bloggers	a little respect.	Kevin Moore
A Tiny Revolution (Jonathan Schwarz)	Secondly, you could say this seriously after the advertising/mugging of Senator Max Cleland? After the swift-boating of John Kerry?	Lalo Alcaraz
BobHarris.com (Bob Harris)		Matt Wuerker
Majikthise (Lindsay Beyerstein)	But most importantly... making that the last question?	Mikhaela Blake Reid
The Talent Show (Greg Saunders)	So that there was no chance at a follow-up?	Minimum Security
Other blogs	So nobody could point out — as Chris Matthews so incisively did, a week ago tonight — that you were the one who inappropriately interjected General Petraeus into the political dialogue of this nation in the first place!	Norman Dog
alicublog		Peter Kuper
Altercation	Deliberately, premeditatedly, and virtually without precedent, you shanghaied a military man as your personal spokesman — and now you're complaining about the outcome, and then running away from the microphone?	Red Meat
Atrios		Slowpoke
August Pollak		Ted Rall
Baghdad Burning	Eleven months ago the President's own party — the Republican National Committee — introduced this very different kind of advertisement, just nineteen days before the mid-term elections.	Tom the Dancing Bug
Corrente		Too Much Coffee Man
Crooks and Liars	Bin Laden.	Troubletown
Daily Kos	And Zawahiri's rumored quote of six years ago about having bought "suitcase bombs."	Ward Sutton
Down With Tyranny	All set against a ticking clock, and finally a blinding explosion... and the dire announcement:	Zippy the Pinhead
Elayne Riggs	"These are the stakes - vote, November 7th."	Other Friends of TMW
Ezra Klein	That one was ok, Mr. Bush?	Cake
Firedoglake	Terrorizing your own people in hopes of getting them to vote for your own party has never brought as much as a public comment from you?	Michael Moore
Frank Lynch		Steve Earle
Glenn Greenwald		
Huffington Post		
Hullabaloo		
Jesus' General	The Republican Hamstringing of Captain Max Cleland and lying about Lieutenant John Kerry met with your approval?	
Juan Cole		

Left I on the News	But a shot at General Petraeus — about whom you conveniently ignore it is you who reduced him from four-star hero to a political hack — that merits this pissy juvenile blast at the Democrats on national television?
Mad Kane	
Making Light	
MaxSpeak	Your hypocrisy is so vast, sir, that if we could somehow use it to fill the ranks in Iraq you could realize your dream — and keep us fighting there until the year 3000.
Nitpicker	
Oliver Willis	
Orcinus	The line between the military and the civilian government is not to be crossed.
Pacific Views	
Pandagon	When Douglas MacArthur attempted to make policy for the United States in Korea half a century ago, President Truman moved quickly to fire him, even though Truman knew it meant his own political suicide, and the deification of a General who history suggests had begun to lose his mind.
Roger Ailes	
Sadly No	
Scoobie Davis	
Skippy	When George McClellan tried to make policy for the Union in the Civil War, President Lincoln finally fired his chief General, even though he knew McClellan could galvanize political opposition - as he did... when McClellan ran as Lincoln's presidential opponent in 1864 and nearly defeated our greatest president.
Steve Gilliard	
Talking Points Memo	
TAPPED	
TBogg	Even when the conduit flowed the other way and Senator Joseph McCarthy tried to smear the Army because it wouldn't defer the service of one of McCarthy's staff aides, the entire civilian and Defense Department structures — after four years of fearful servitude — rose up against McCarthy and said “enough” and buried him.
Uggabugga	
Wolcott	
News and commentary	
Alternet	The list is not endless — but it is instructive.
Bartcop	Air Force General LeMay — who broke with Kennedy over the Cuban Missile Crisis — and was retired.
Buzzflash	
Center for American Progress	Army General Edwin Anderson Walker — who started passing out John Birch Society leaflets to his soldiers.
Counterpunch	Marine General Smedley Butler — who revealed to Congress the makings of a plot to

Cursor	remove FDR as President — and for merely being approached by the plotters, was phased out of the military hierarchy.
Daily Howler	
Daily War News	These careers were ended because the line between the military and the civilian is... not... to... be... crossed!
FAIR	
Media Matters	Mr. Bush, you had no right to order General Petraeus to become your front man.
PR Watch	
Progressive Review	And he obviously should have refused that order and resigned rather than ruin his military career.
Romenesko	
Salon	The upshot is — and contrary it is, to the MoveOn advertisement — he betrayed himself more than he did us.
Soldiers for the Truth	
Tomdispatch	But there has been in his actions a sort of reflexive courage, some twisted vision of duty at a time of crisis. That the man doesn't understand that serving officers cannot double as serving political ops, is not so much his fault as it is your good, exploitable, fortune.
Tompaine.com	
Working For Change	But Mr. Bush, you have hidden behind the General's skirts, and today you have hidden behind the skirts of 'the planted last question' at a news conference, to indicate once again that your presidency has been about the tilted playing field, about no rules for your party in terms of character assassination and changing the fabric of our nation, and no right for your opponents or critics to as much as respond.
	That, sir, is not only un-American — it is dictatorial.
	And in pimping General David Petraeus, sir, in violation of everything this country has been assiduously and vigilantly against for 220 years, you have tried to blur the gleaming radioactive demarcation between the military and the political, and to portray your party as the one associated with the military, and your opponents as the ones somehow antithetical to it.
	You did it again today, sir, and you need to know how history will judge the line you just crossed.

It is a line — thankfully only the first of a series — that makes the military political, and the political, military.

It is a line which history shows is always the first one crossed when a democratic government in some other country has started down the long, slippery, suicidal slope towards a military junta.

Get back behind that line, Mr. Bush, before some of your supporters mistake your dangerous transgression, for a call to further politicize our military.

Good night, and good luck.

[Video.](#)

posted by Tom Tomorrow at 10:30 AM | [link](#)

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