

Former first lady Michelle Obama declares George W. Bush “my partner in crime”

By Nick Barrickman
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There are certain incidents that, while perhaps minor and accidental in their origins, reveal something fundamental about the character of politics. Such were the comments by former First Lady Michelle Obama on NBC’s “Today” show to promote her forthcoming book *Becoming*, set to be release in a few weeks. Amid the light and banal fare which permeated the discussion, Obama opened up about her warm relationship with former Republican President George W. Bush.

Asked about a friendly interaction caught on camera between the two as they sat together during the recent funeral for Republican Senator John McCain, Obama explained: “President Bush and I are forever seat mates because of protocol; that’s how we sit at all the official functions.” Rather than ending it there, Obama continued, gushing: “He is my partner in crime at every major thing where all the formers gather. I love him to death. He’s a wonderful man. He’s a funny man.”

Any belief that Obama was speaking merely in personal terms about former president Bush was put to rest when she explained: “Party doesn’t separate us. Color, gender—those kinds of things don’t separate us. It’s the messages we send. And if we’re the adults and the leaders in the room, and we’re not showing that level of decency, we cannot expect our children to do the same.”

Obama’s statement is an even more explicit version of what Barack Obama said days after the November 2016 election: “We’re actually all on one team,” referring to the election contest between Trump and Clinton as “an intramural scrimmage.”

Bush is “my partner in crime” and “a wonderful man” ... What can one say? Bush is in fact a criminal of the highest order, responsible for overseeing the invasion of Iraq based on lies, which led to the death of

at least 1 million people. Following the attacks of September 11, his administration launched the “war on terror” as a pretext for ripping up the Constitution, expanding illegal domestic spying, and introducing torture as an instrument of US foreign policy. He deserves to be arrested and prosecuted for war crimes.

Terms such as the “war on terror,” “shock and awe” bombing of civilian populations, the “extraordinary rendition” of accused terror suspects and “water boarding” will forever be associated with Bush’s name. To any list of crimes must be added Bush’s domestic policy, including a massive attack on social programs, tax cuts for the rich and the initial response of the ruling class to the 2008 financial crisis—the bailout of the banks.

That Michelle Obama can speak in such terms about Bush is an expression of the fact that, however bitter their differences, the political representatives of the ruling elite are united. It is not a matter of personal friendship, but shared class interests.

Indeed, the right-wing policies of the Bush administration carry like a red thread through succeeding administrations.

Democratic President Barack Obama only deepened the anti-democratic and militarist policies of his predecessor, refusing to hold any member of Bush’s cabinet responsible for violations of domestic and international law, even retaining and promoting some of them in his own administration. Initially campaigning with mild criticisms of the Bush administration’s occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, Obama continued these wars while beginning wars of his own in Libya, Syria and Yemen, which have led to untold misery and suffering.

Obama, the candidate of “hope” and “change,” carried out the wholesale bailout of the US financial

system to the tune of trillions of dollars while looting social programs to pay for it. Elsewhere, he expanded the Bush administration's program of illegal spying on the population while introducing innovations such as drone strikes and other forms of extrajudicial murder, including of American citizens.

The Obamas themselves have cashed in on their services to the financial elite since their exit from the political stage in 2017. In addition to Barack Obama's highly paid speaking tours and book deals, Michelle has sought to develop her brand as well, making preparations for "a mega-book tour unlike any book tour, well, ever" which "is being managed by Live Nation, which more typically stages events for the likes of Rihanna, U2 and Pink," according to the *Washington Post*.

"Michelle Obama will talk to large crowds in arenas that hold rock concerts and NBA games. She'll appear all over the media and could sell more books than prospective 2020 candidates Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren," states the *Hill*.

Mrs. Obama's comments come as the entire US political establishment is shifting to the right. Following Republican Donald Trump's 2016 election, the Democratic Party and sections of the state and military apparatus have sought to oppose the current White House occupant's perceived "softness" against Russia and other geopolitical foes of the United States while blaming "foreign meddling" on social media for Trump's election victory.

The former first lady's comment about her and Bush being "adults in the room" was a nod to this antidemocratic ruling class "opposition," which openly appeals to former military generals and officials within the Trump administration to intervene in the White House in the name of preempting the irresponsible policies of Trump himself.

By embracing the war criminal Bush, the former first lady, who may well be mulling a presidential campaign herself, has further demonstrated the bankrupt and authoritarian political and social outlook of the ruling class, an outlook which permeates the entire capitalist political system. This extends to the pseudo-left as the Democratic Socialists of America, whose candidate for Congress in New York, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, was recently endorsed by none other than ... Barack Obama himself.

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