



TODD COOPER

Moore on Nader

'Ralph, you're not listening to the people this year.'

Documentary filmmaker and progressive icon Michael Moore, who supported Ralph Nader's bid for the presidency in 2000, is now one of Nader's most vocal antagonists.

During Moore's Oct. 18 visit to Eugene — the 31st stop on his "Slackers Uprising" tour — a group of hecklers interrupted his speech to demand that he debate Nader.

"Let's talk about Ralph for a second. He's

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not on the ballot in Oregon," said Moore, eliciting cheers from the sold-out crowd of 4,000.

"When the primaries were starting, there were nine Democrats running, and I said, 'Look, Ralph, look at the nine who are running. Eight of them — not counting Lieberman — are more to the left of Al Gore in 2000. That's incredible.'"

The Nader supporters heckled louder.

"Nya nya nya nya nya!" mimicked Moore. The crowd hooted with laughter.

"I said to Ralph, 'You know Ralph, one of the traits of a great leader is the ability to listen,'" Moore continued. "Ralph, you're not listening to the people this year! You're not listening to your own party! The people don't want you to run!" The audience cheered in agreement.

"I say this as a friend of Ralph's. I say this as someone who's voted for Nader twice!" shouted Moore. "I know the feeling, my friends! You go to the voting booth, and you pull the little curtain, and there you are, all alone with Ralph."

His voice became a sarcastic sexual croon. "Ralph! Ohhhh, Ralph. Oh, you're so pure. You're so good, you're so pure! Oh, you're so pure!"

Then, more seriously, Moore continued: "Ralph is right! Ralph is right on all the is-

sues! And your point is —?"

He turned from the hecklers to the rest of the crowd. "For those of you who share the political end of the spectrum that I'm on, of course the eight Democrats are not everything we want them to be. But we're not being asked to compromise in the way we were being asked to compromise in 2000," he said.

"You know what? As soon as President Kerry is inaugurated on Jan. 20th, on Jan. 21st, everyone in this room is gonna be on his ass to make sure he's doing what's right for this country! Aren't we? Aren't we?" he asked pointedly.

Moore's comments reflected what he told the press before taking the stage. "We need to have coalition politics with our Democratic brothers and sisters if we're to push this country in a progressive way. We can't be constantly just flipping the bird at them," he said.

"And to Ralph, I just say, 'There's anger management classes for this. You don't need to work it out on the American people. This is not the time or the place to do it.'"

"And on a personal note, it's very sad for me, as a friend of his, to see him take a match to his great legacy. If Bush gets another four years, the name Ralph Nader will just go down in history." **EW**

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