



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on February 23, 2010

My Son John Finally Seen by America Again

Turner Movie Classics on February 27th showed its viewers *My Son John*, a 1952 film that Robert Osborne advised his audience had been deliberately put out of circulation since soon after it was released. In his introduction to the film, Osborne acknowledges that the film's stars and producers were first rate. The cast included Helen Hayes, Van Heflin, and Robert Walker. Osborne also makes it clear that the film is an embarrassment to the film industry, full of childish anti-Communism and the foolish paranoia of America in the 1950s.



My Son John, in fact, is a chilling prediction of the growth of those evils which have dragged America to its present sickness. The main theme of the film was the dangers of communism. In the last twenty years we have learned that Soviet penetration of America in the 1940s was greater than most anti-Communists had believed. Scholars have examined the mass murder or democide of the Soviet Union and Maoist China and determined that these two communist regimes each killed more people than the Nazis or the Japanese in the Second World War. It is just as impossible to be moral without condemning communism than it is to be moral without condemning the Holocaust.

Yet many professors in America hate anti-communism. Michael Moore has made a film championing the health care system of Marxist Cuba, despite its grim awfulness. Communists paid an important role in the life of Obama. Communism, a misology which is, perhaps, the most destructive in human history, is taken as seriously in America now than it was when *My Son John* was made. Even calling communism bad today is considered bad manners.

Dean Jagger, the father of John in the film, plays a school teacher who is threatened with termination for mentioning the word "God" in his classroom. Almost sixty years ago, a few ridiculed voices were warning that the attack on faith in the public square was very real and quite relentless. Today we live in an America in which judicial edicts against the expression of God haunt our schools, our parks, and all aspects of our public lives.

Jagger also speaks in the film about the danger of assuming that our liberties are bestowed by the state instead of given by God. That menacing philosophy, which is greater now than in 1952, of enshrining government as the answer to every question in life was directly addressed in *My Son John*. The film saw the future of America and provided a clear warning of the threat and its cure.

The mockery of fatherhood, which wise social scientists have described as the heart of many problems in black America, is also specifically noted in the film. Destroying the nuclear family, a tragic crime which has wreaked endless misery in modern life, is identified as one of the principal goals of communism in America. The explosion of out of wedlock births in America not only plagues black America, but four out of every ten births in America — regardless of race — are out of wedlock today.

My Son John makes its most telling indictment in tying the threads of liberalism with the amorality and



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mendacity of communism. The great separation which has been ongoing in American society for the last sixty years is portrayed clearly in the gradual disintegration of decency in John, the liberal son who in college was bewitched and later captured by communism. The wedge which keeps pulling John away from a loving family and a good life is the growing web of lies which he must accept without any impulse of conscience. John tells lies about everything and to everyone, even the mother who adores him. It is this patent contempt for truth, even about relatively trivial matters, that finally breaks even the umbilical cord — the bond of maternal love — the last connection John had with an honorable life.

What have we seen in the last sixty years is the separation of well-intentioned and noble “liberals” from creepy moral flotsam like Al Gore. Grand and nasty frauds like man-made Global Warming are not the product of any system of thought which values truth. It has become almost impossible to be a leftist who does not live a life of lies. Gradually, tragically, an ideological persuasion which once was embraced by decent and honest people has been squeezed into an ugly, thuggish gang of pathological liars and intellectually sterile minds. Ersatz liberalism — which is not the liberalism of Jefferson, but Fabian socialism — has become the totalitarianism which communism has always been.

The soulless wretch in *My Son John* reminds this writer of another John of modern leftism, John Edwards. This John lies whenever it is more convenient to lie than to tell the truth. He lies even when his lies are daggers through the hearts of family members. He strives to look pretty, to sound glib, to seem caring, to think seriously — and yet everything about this very real modern John is as much a lie as the fictional character in *My Son John*.

The world of film today is almost all dull emptiness, uninspired repetition, and valueless lives. Yet the denizens of Hollywood applaud themselves for trite accomplishments. Six decades ago, brave souls — for it took courage to denounce real evil even then — described with horrifying clarity the collapse of American life into an ideologically intoxicated decay. Those who cared about the art of filmmaking should rejoice in this triumphant of cinema. Instead, as always, they mock what is true, wise, and noble.

Photo of Dean Jagger: AP Images



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