



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 21, 2011

Film in the Works Glorifies Weather Underground

Entitled *The Company You Keep*, the film is based on the Neil Gordon novel of the same name, about the domestic terrorist group the Weather Underground. The film focuses on a 30-year-long FBI manhunt for a Weather Underground terrorist, played by Robert Redford, who has been forced to go into hiding after his identity was revealed by an overly ambitious reporter, played by Shia LeBeouf.

Publishers Weekly [provides](#) this synopsis of the novel:



The revolutionary politics of the 1960s haunt the complacent domesticity of the 1990s in this engrossing, if sometimes muddled, melodrama of ideas. When limousine-leftist lawyer and single dad Jim Grant is unmasked as Jason Sinai, an ex-Weather Underground militant wanted for a deadly bank robbery, he abandons his daughter and goes on the lam. As he evades a manhunt and seeks out old comrades, the author introduces a sprawling cast of drug dealers, bomb-planting radicals turned leftist academics, Vietnam vets, FBI agents and Republicans who collectively ponder the legacy of the '60s.... Some who lived through the 1960s may take offense at this caricature, but other boomer readers may find the mix of countercultural drama and familial schmaltz a gratifying validation of their life cycle. In either case, it will get them talking.

According to Voltage film producer Nicolas Chartier, who worked with Redford's Wildwood Enterprises production company on the project, "This is an edge-of-your-seat thriller about real Americans who stood for their beliefs, thinking they were patriots and defending their country's ideals against their government."

Chartier's assertions are debatable, however. The *Blaze* observes:



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The WU terrorist movement Redford and the movie will depict tried to "bring the war home" to America, and likely would have killed scores of Americans had it not been for their ineptitude in carrying out terrorist bombings.

Likewise, the *Blaze* bemoans the failure of former Weather Underground members to show any repentance for their actions, or to repudiate the organization to which they belonged:

Some of the WU terrorist group's most prominent members remain belligerent and unrepentant to this day. *Blaze* coverage of WU co-founder Bernadine Dohrn calling conservatives "[Racist, Armed, And Hostile](#)," [can be viewed here](#). Likewise, Dohrn's husband and WU co-founder Bill Ayers has unabashedly said that [he still does not denounce WU violence](#).

The New American's William F. Jasper recounted the completely un-American and unpatriotic goals of the Weather Underground, as described by Ayers in very forthcoming manner in his 1974 book *Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism; Political Statement of the Weather Underground*:

Prairie Fire is a manifesto of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism that did not shrink from declaring violent "revolutionary war" against the United States. It declares:

We are a guerrilla organization. We are communist women and men, underground in the United States for more than four years. We are deeply affected by the historic events of our time in the struggle against U.S. imperialism....

We need a revolutionary communist party in order to lead the struggle, give coherence and direction to the fight, seize power and build the new society....

The only path to the final defeat of imperialism and the building of socialism is revolutionary war....

Revolutionary war will be complicated and protracted. It includes mass struggle and clandestine struggle, peaceful and violent, political and economic, cultural and military, where all forms are developed in harmony with the armed struggle....

Our final goal is the destruction of imperialism, the seizure of power, and the creation of socialism.

Conservative pundit Glenn Beck [devoted](#) a great deal of attention to the Weather Underground on his Fox News television show. He focused in particular on the Weather Underground manifesto — written in 1969 by Bill Ayers, Bernadine Dohrn, and Jeff Jones — which outlined the clear intentions of the terrorist organization: to "kill the capitalist system and install world socialism."

For example, one section of the manifesto reads:

The relative affluence existing in the United States is directly dependent upon the labor and the natural resources of the Vietnamese, the Angolans, and the Bolivians and the rest of the peoples of the third world. All of the United Airlines Astrojets, all of the holiday inns, all of the Hertz's automobiles, your television set, ... your wardrobe already belong, to a large degree, to the people of the rest of the world.

Elsewhere, the manifesto asserts:

It is the oppressed peoples of the world who have created the wealth of this empire and it is to them that it belongs. The goal of the revolutionary struggle must be the control and use of this wealth in the interests of the oppressed peoples of the world.

To achieve those goals, the Weather Underground bombed the U.S. Capitol, the Pentagon, and a



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number of other government buildings. Terrorist Planet [writes](#) of one of the bombings:

On February 16, 1970, in which a pipe bomb filled with shrapnel detonated on the ledge of a window at the Park Station of the San Francisco Police Department. Brian V. McDonnell, a police sergeant, was fatally wounded in the explosion, and Robert Fogarty, another police officer, was severely wounded in his face and legs and was partially blinded.

Members of the Weather Underground illegally traveled to Havana in 1968, where they underwent terrorist training. The training camps in Havana were set up by Soviet KGB Colonel Vadim Kotchergine, where Westerners were educated on Marxist philosophy and urban warfare.

And the hate for America continues, as William F. Jasper observes:

In his memoirs of life on the run from the law, *Fugitive Days*, Ayers says, "I can't imagine entirely dismissing the possibility" of bombing again in the future. In a September 11, 2001 interview with the *New York Times*, Ayers said: "I don't regret setting bombs. I feel we didn't do enough." He also claimed, in the same interview, that the Weathermen had "showed remarkable restraint," in their rampage of bombings.

In addition to the manifesto, Beck was particularly concerned by the poster children for the Weather Underground — Ayers, Dohrn, and Jones — because "they are all in and around the president." He explained:

[Dohrn] has been working on the Gaza flotilla. [Jones] has been working on the stimulus package here in New York and showing they can spend it in government. [Ayers], of course, is working on education.

[Additionally](#), prior to Obama's election, Obama and Ayers were both members of the Woods Fund of Chicago, and Ayers contributed to the fund for Obama's reelection to the Illinois State Senate. They were members of the same residential community and they moved in the same progressive circles.

Still, even as Barack Obama's affiliations with terrorist Bill Ayers were exposed during his 2008 campaign, most media outlets seemed to stifle the story, and the revelation appeared to have very little impact on the election results.

Now, Redford intends to paint a very different picture of the Weather Underground. Analysts say it is reminiscent of the kind of revisionist history George Orwell warned about in *1984*.

Photo of Robert Redford: AP Images



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