

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
Number 13
(NEW SERIES—2007)

THE
PERNICIOUS HYPOCRISY
OF FRANK RICH
OF THE
NEW YORK TIMES

PARTS I AND II



Today the US media serves as propaganda ministry for the government's wars and police state.

—Paul Craig Roberts, [“Conservatism Isn't What It Used To Be”](#) (Sept. 7, 2007)

We have rendered the nation deaf and dumb. We no longer have the capacity for empathy.

—Chris Hedges, [“Iran, the Next Quagmire”](#) (Sept. 4, 2007)

Remedy: In order to turn this trend around, the people of the US must begin to acquire the anti-authoritarian traits of empathy and engagement.

—Phil Rockstrohe, [“Q and A for the People of a Forsaken Republic”](#) (October 2, 2007)

Oh, *New York Times*, oh, *New York Times*, are you infantile, criminal, or delusional?

—Eric Larsen, [“Letter of Lamentation to America.”](#) Part 3 (July 29, 2007)



Just imagine this for a moment. Imagine that you could actually set aside the fear *of* and the burning hatred *for* the fraudulent, treasonous, and criminal leadership of the United States that any normal thinking citizen *should* be feeling right now. Imagine that you could set those feelings aside—maybe thanks to a sudden certainty that *someone*—inside the military, perhaps—really *will* prevent the Bush-Cheney junta from perpetrating, sometime between now and November 2008, another 9/11 followed by a declaration of national emergency and the locking down of us all down in a perfect and

perfectly prepared-for police state. All of that, as if it needs saying, so that they could, happily unhindered by *us*, go about their adolescent games of bombing much of the middle east into oblivion in order to “save” it for oil.

I myself devoutly wish I could do exactly that, that I really could have faith in a good outcome and could therefore set aside my present terror, fear, hatred, and rage.

I can't, though, knowing that it would be irresponsible because I would become immediately less alert. But I can *pretend* to do it, at least for a long enough time to get this piece written, under its title of “The Special and Poisonous Hypocrisy of Frank Rich.”

That is to say, I am now embarking upon the writing not solely of a political but also of a *literary* essay. And I'm doing so even as I continue to fear every new move of Cheney's reptilian brain or every new deep-psychotic-triggered tic in The Boy's behavior that might incline him the more readily to [“Cut the Big One.”](#) as the wonderfully clear-sighted and strong-hearted Sheila Samples put it.

Literary essay, did I hear someone snicker? Did I hear someone say, *Ha!* with scorn? Did I hear someone ask, Don't I remember “Lapis Lazuli,” written in another year of dread and fear, 1938? And have I forgotten the start of the poem, where the argument is relayed that the *arts* are of no conceivable use or importance at a time when the realities of destruction and war loom? To wit:

I have heard that hysterical women say
They are sick of the palette and fiddle-bow.
Of poets that are always gay,
For everybody knows or else should know
That if nothing drastic is done
Aeroplane and Zeppelin will come out.
Pitch like King Billy bomb-balls in
Until the town lie beaten flat.

All true enough. But that's only the *start* of the poem. It continues, and as it does, Yeats produces a great and eloquent *Nay*, explaining that the arts remain just as important (how important? *absolutely* important) in time of threat and dread as at any other, and that even if world were about to end, even “should the last scene be there, / The great stage curtain about to drop,” even *then* those who “perform their tragic” roles,

If worthy their prominent part in the play,
Do not break up their lines to weep.

“If worthy their prominent part. . .” I'm interested, as I've been my entire adult life, in knowing and emulating what it is that makes a person “worthy” in the sense that Yeats means here—and elsewhere. [Reading the whole poem is always useful](#) for anyone with an interest like mine. But the worthiness question aside, it's obvious—*isn't* it?—that if you've got a heart as big as Yeats', then you're going to *see to it* that the arts be made

to stick around no matter what. And, I might add, you're going to do all you can to make them stick around *without* their degenerating into the shallow, the cheap, or the political—as they've so largely done in our poor soulless [Age of Simplification](#)—but instead you're going to see to it that they stick around the way they're *supposed* to and the way they *must*: Big and grand and bold and high and essential to the heart, the self, and the mind.

Ah, yes, grand thoughts. *My* heart be with the old poets,¹ that's *my* view, as it's been since I was a student. And that's the reason why, even though the Bushiscti may be about to spark the blinding world-white-flash any second now (“The great stage curtain [be] about to drop”), even though they may be about to fill “this excellent canopy, the air”² with cancerous malignancy and the dust of death—all for the sake of their snake-skin wallets and their phallo-centric-boys' greed-lust—well, that's the reason why, in spite of my terror at what the boy-bastards might do next, I'm nevertheless going to embark on a big and grand and bold and high *literary essay*. And it's going to take on a *big* subject.

Namely? Well, in general, the subject will be those hundreds of thousands of men and women throughout the media who out-Faustus Faustus³ in their having made a pact with Mephostophilis himself although for what end I have no clear idea, other than to destroy the republic and bring ruinous harm to the globe and perhaps an end to us all. Whatever their reason, these legions and armies of men and women putatively serving the nation's people have agreed—against ethics, against morality, against decency, against *good*—on a full-time basis to lie, deceive, occlude, obfuscate, distort, twist, ignore, to do *anything*, in short, so long as it's *not* tell or speak or reveal to regular American people the *least iota* of simple plain truth about the secret, hidden, rogue, or “overworld” government that's now malevolently *and* maliciously determining life-and-death matters for us all on the local, the regional, the national, and the international level. See Peter

¹ “My ghost be with the old philosophers!” (Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, I,iii, 59.)

² I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so. (*Hamlet*, II, ii, 291-296; Hamlet to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern)

³ Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to / you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, / as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier / spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with / your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very / torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of / passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance / that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the / soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear / a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the / groundlings, who for the most part are capable of / nothing but inexplicable dumbshows and noise: I would / have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; / it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it. (*Hamlet* III, ii, 1-16. Hamlet to the Players)

Dale Scott's [The Road to 9/11](#) for the most recent of the several indisputably important scholarly analyses of this awful truth.

But back to those in the media. Liars on so massive a scale as we see among media people today—such absolutely enormous numbers of hypocrites and liars all busy at one concerted task may be a thing unprecedented in human history—outside, I quickly add, of organized religion. On top of the enormity in pure numbers, those among them who are actually *on air* or *in print* (not to mention *their* writers and producers and packagers) are so practiced and so devoted in *employing* their deceit that these wretched liars very, very often are able to deceive *so* skillfully and *so* subtly that they *actually cause their audiences to experience both gratitude and an increasing fidelity* to those very liars who are lying to them, who are misleading them, and who are blinding them to the truth of 9/11 and thus the truth of the malicious, dangerous, anti-Constitutional government that now has us under its control. *Shhh*. Some quiet and respect, please. We're going to talk about "poverty," perhaps, or "gender issues" or "women's rights" or "electoral reform," etc., etc.—but, however reverently the "progressive" media people bow their heads to these "good" and "humane" and "democratic" and "fairness-centered" topics or "issues," all of it—in light of the *huge* true and present danger—is nothing more than fluff, it's chaff in the wind, it's like those diversionary aluminum strips that used to be tossed into the high atmosphere to confuse radar by functioning as false targets, thus diverting enemy predators from aircraft. It's snake oil. It's hokum. It's all used as diversion from the one huge lie of omission, of towering importance. The truth is that none of those subjects matters a hoot in light of the far more enormous and more pressing truth that, thanks to the domestic policy of our present junta-"leadership," we're about to lose the entire republic itself and *all our freedoms* while our malignant and malicious "government"—a government that can be halted only and solely *by the exposure of 9/11 truth*—embarks upon its further plans not only for implementing the domestic prison-state but for achieving the even greater prison-state of permanent global war.

In a situation such as *that*—such as we're at present *all* in—to about 9/11 truth, commission *or* omission—seems to me treasonous against the republic, against the Constitution, and against the American people.

To speak of such things is to speak of enormities. But it is also to speak the simple, plain truth. We are in a state of emergency such as our republic has never before in, and we are being lied to about it, massively and absolutely, by the entirety of that very element of socio-political society that at one time in history was the *indispensable* freedom-preserving element—namely, the "Fourth Estate," now become ["propaganda ministry for the government's wars and police state."](#)

That the Fourth Estate is now our most vile enemy—more vile, by merit of being *willingly in lying servitude* to it, even than [the traitorous and putrescent government it perversely nourishes](#), a government determined to imprison us all.

To say such things—to say them because they’re true—is, indeed, an enormity. So much so that it seems to me it would be a good idea, like taking a breath of fresh air, to put, at this point, another section-number on the page.

2

The entire phenomenon of a lying media, then, will be my general subject. I’ve written about this before, not only in [A Nation Gone Blind](#) itself, but also in later pieces like my [recent piece on Amy Goodman](#). That subject—of the *overall* media—will remain in the background, however, by merit of its being already so familiar to anyone likely to be a reader of this present essay. If I’m wrong about that in the case of anyone, I’d urge a look at [A Nation Gone Blind](#).

My specific subject, on the other hand, will be a single and very powerful person who is at work within the media. That person is the outstandingly sophisticated master of mendacity who deceives for *The New York Times* op-ed page on Sundays, Frank Rich. I have chosen Rich in part, of course, because of his eminence and extremely high profile, and because these aspects of the writer serve to make him all the more repugnant in his effectiveness as a betrayer and misleader of the people. That he *so willingly* works to help keep in power the malignant and pernicious “leaders” who in turn seem aiming to destroy us—such apparent zeal raises him both in interest and in repugnance. That he does his work with so apparently *a perfect absence* of [the agenbite of inwit](#) makes him simultaneously fascinating and abominable, as does the fact additionally that he does his treasonous work while, with masterly success, leading his benighted readers to believe that he’s actually telling the truth and serving their best interests.

Before we get to specific analyses of Rich’s writing, though, I think I should clarify two points that I consider axiomatic and that will help show why I consider the matter at hand—our lying media—to be a matter so extremely, almost absolutely, important.

After following six years’ worth of study on the part of [many gifted and dedicated scholars and writers](#), and after four years of study on my own part, I take it as a proper, just, and correct view, a view that would be taken by any intelligent, genuinely thinking, and seriously observant person, that the events of 9/11 indeed were, in Carolyn Baker’s words, [“pre-meditated mass murder by the United States government.”](#)

Exactly what *elements* of “government” executed the crimes is still inexactly known. Almost certainly, it was a “shadow” or “rogue” element, as Webster G. Tarpley calls it in his brilliant 2005 [Synthetic Terror: Made in USA](#) or an “overworld” element, as Peter Dale Scott calls it in his new and extremely [important study, The Road to 9/11](#).

But although it may not yet be known precisely *what* domestic United States elements perpetrated the 9/11 crimes, still some elements *did do it*. And now, with *that* said, I come to the second point that I consider axiomatic and that, again, should help

show the importance of the subject of the lying media. This point has two parts or steps to it, and the first has to do with what the *purpose* of the 9/11 murders and building-destructions was. And it's now irrefutable that the purpose to scare and intimidate the American people so badly that they would permit their "leaders" to use any methods they wished in order to "protect" the republic and its people from the enemy that "attacked" them on 9/11. That this "enemy" was fictional and the attack self-created and self-inflicted didn't then matter. Americans were scared enough to *believe* that the enemy was real, and our criminal leaders immediately scared them further by making use of a frightening name, "Terrorism." Thus the "War on Terrorism" was born out of falsehood and lies. The plan went forward to strip Americans of their civil and Constitutional liberties at home, and to wage unjust and illegal war without hindrance abroad.



The first step in the point I take as axiomatic, then, is that 9/11, a fraud through and through, was the visible starting point of—and the faked excuse for—a concerted program of reactionism, theft, treason, crime, and illegal, unchecked global militarism.

The second part of the point I take as axiomatic is very simple and I think indisputable. The Bush junta is responsible now for a six-year-long string of crimes. That it has proven itself unstoppable for that length of time is a grim gift that we owe thanks for to a corrupt, bought-off, and complicit congress that has either *approved* or at the very least failed to hold the junta *accountable* for a *single one of those crimes*—with the exception of one very, very, very important crime, the crime that made *all* the subsequent crimes possible, namely, of course, 9/11.

This is why I said before (and got [most confusedly "criticized" for](#)) and why I say again that only the exposure of the truth about 9/11, followed by appropriate measures holding accountable those responsible for the crimes of 9/11 *or for enabling* those crimes (Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Air Force general Richard Myers, just for three) or *abetting* them (Giuliani, Rice, and Powell, just for three more).

One of the significant things about this point—that 9/11 truth alone can slow the junta, make it accountable for its crimes, *or* end it—is that *six years is long enough to prove that no established branch of government or of law inside the United States is going to expose this truth or begin prosecutions because of it.* Therefore? Therefore, the job *must* be done—and can be done *only*—by the nation's people.

The central facts of the case in the heinous and witheringly cold-blooded 9/11 crimes, in spite of certain remaining unknowns, are evident, transparent, and *eminently* provable. Any thinking, reading, intelligent, and observant person can discover this inexpressibly important fact simply by taking the time and mustering the interest to familiarize him- or herself with even *some* of [the essential scholarly work that has been done on the history, the truth, and the facts of 9/11.](#)

The situation is this: Nothing less than [a third of the population of the U.S.](#) doubts the “official” story about 9/11 and either suspects or is convinced that 9/11 was an “inside job.” Even though a person wishes it were two-thirds instead of one, this number is momentous and significant.

Let’s hypothesize for a moment how we might reasonably classify the American population into the *smallest* number of groups possible without there being overlap among them. This is a good and useful exercise in rhetoric, thought, and logic of the kind once included during fall semesters in English 101 classrooms all over the land but is now as likely to go untouched. I’m going to propose, given our interest here and now, that all Americans can be distinguished as belonging to one of *three* groups, and that these groups will be distinct from one another yet will leave no one out. Hence:

- 1) Thinking and observant Americans.
- 2) Blind Americans, those for whom the media determine most if not all “reality” (cf [A Nation Gone Blind](#))
- 3) Bought, guilty, complicit Americans, those who continue to deny and suppress 9/11 truth while at the same time *knowing* that truth.

Anyone who went through a good English 101 course knows that these groups *need* not be and very likely *will* not be equal or anywhere near equal in the number of their members. And that’s true here. The likelihood is that Group 2 will be the largest, since the polls telling us that [one-third of Americans embrace or lean toward 9/11 truth](#) suggest simultaneously that *two-thirds* don’t. It follows that that two thirds must be the less-informed, the less-observant, the less-inquisitive two thirds. I’m going to call them “blind.”

And so where does this leave us? Two thirds of Americans—*roughly*—are blind. One third of Americans—*roughly*—is thinking, observant, and inquisitive. This means that only the leftovers fill up Group 3, making it clearly, patently, and obviously the smallest group of the three. And yet, though the smallest, it is also—as things stand *now*—the most powerful.

It’s the most powerful, and it’s also the group that could be renamed the group of liars, the group of deceivers, the group of falsifiers and repressors, the group of those who are *complicit* in the crimes of 9/11 by merit of hiding the truth of those crimes, the group of those who are treasonous by merit of *covering up* known crimes of treason, and, finally, they could be renamed the group of *explicit enemies* against the entirety of Group one, while simultaneously being *implicit* enemies of all of Group two (even though those in Group two don’t *know* that, since they don’t understand that those in Group 3 are liars but believe them to be truth-tellers).

And exactly who *is in* the criminal Group 3? Well, Amy Goodman is in it, Frank Rich is in it, Nancy Pelosi is in it, Harry Reid is in it, John Conyers is in it, all the media

people I mentioned before as choosing to be liars are in it, [Adolph Giuliani is in it](#), [Elliot Spitzer is in it](#) and [Larry Silverstein is in it](#)—and so on. See also [here](#).

In short, members of the Bush administration, members of the houses of congress, and the huge numbers of people who work in the mainstream media—these are the members of Group 3. What do you suppose their actual numbers come to? How many of them do you suppose there really *are*? Well, there are one hundred in the Senate and 433 in the House for a total of 533. What shall we say for the number of people constituting the Bush administration, including cabinet members, close advisors, ambassadors, and so on? How about five hundred, for a running total now of 1,033. And how many work in the mainstream media, print, video, and radio—including NPR, Pacifica, and the like? Let's estimate that those working *in or near the editorial* side of the media come to something like 25,000, including everybody from the tiniest little radio stations in the tiniest little towns, every reporter in every paper, every advisor in every station, every announcer, every editor, every columnist. If we're at all close, we've got a total now for the membership of Group 3 that comes to 26,033.

Now we've got to add every corporate owner of the media, the membership of every corporate board that *controls* the media, and every head of and influential staff in pertinent agencies from, say, the FCC on through [the Motion Picture Association of America](#).

Let's say there are a thousand people—a well-dressed yet sleazy reptilian in-group of schmoozers and their like-minded “friends” who make up among themselves the membership of all the most important corporate boards in America. That means we're up to 27,033. Let's triple—no, let's quadruple—the total just to be sure we've got everyone, including high elements of the military and of the numerous intelligence agencies. Quadrupling gives us a grand total of 108,132.

Now. Those hundred-thousand people—they're our enemies. They're the obvious enemies of Group 1 and, as I suggested, the enemies also of Group 2, though Group 2 doesn't know it.

What do you think? Let's say there are [300,000,000 people in the U.S.](#) We know already that 100,000,000 of them are in Group 1 and either know, suspect, or lean toward 9/11 Truth. Even leaving Group 2 out of the argument for the moment, that suggests that *100,000,000 people* are being held hostage by *108,132!*

I, for one, hate being ruled by gangs. I, for one, hate being ruled by thuggery. I, for one, hate being ruled by deceit, deception, cover-up, lies, thievery, criminality, treason, and fraud. I, for one, hate the “left gatekeepers,” [some of whom you can see as listed here by the great Barrie Zwicker](#) in his equally great book, [Towers of Deception](#).

I, for one, agree with Zwicker when he writes (on pp. 238-239, [in Towers of Deception](#)) that

Revealing the fraud of 9/11 in my opinion is the single most important task faced by civilization today. That it was dared is the supreme Achilles heel of the Fourth Reich. If enough people could be awakened to the enormity of the crime, and who its perpetrators are, they become a politically-relevant constituency. Then *the possibility of a cleansing transformation would emerge*. [emphasis added] Every worthwhile initiative you can name, be it environmental, social, political or economic, would benefit from politically-relevant exposure of the Great Deception.

I agree also with Webster Tarpley [when he writes the following](#):

But as long as Bush can keep his base of 30-35% of the US population, he can wage war in Iraq indefinitely, and possibly widen that war to Syria and Iran. Bush's hold on his base is due largely to the power of the 9/11 myth over certain parts of the American people. Whenever Bush is held accountable for anything, his response is to cite 9/11. There is only one way to erode Bush's hard core base, and that is by attacking the 9/11 myth. Destroy the 9/11 myth, and the September criminals may be called to account. Destroy the 9/11 myth, and Bush will be neutralized. Peace-loving governments and institutions around the world must address this task, with a campaign of denunciation, exposure, and political education on the truth about 9/11 and the nature of terrorism. One vehicle for this would be an Independent International Truth Commission on 9/11, modeled on the Russell-Sartre Tribunal for Vietnam. The convocation of such a truth commission for 9/11 is more urgent than ever, and should be top priority for anti-war forces well before the Congressional elections a year from now. [Written in 2005—EL]

And I agree with Paul Craig Roberts when he wrote a month or two ago that

[Unless Congress immediately impeaches Bush and Cheney, a year from now the US could be a dictatorial police state at war with Iran.](#)

I *don't* agree with Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid, the tragically disappointing John Conyer, with Hillary Clinton or Barrack Obama or John Edwards, with [Adolph Giuliani or Elliot Spitzer or Larry Silverstein](#), and I *don't* agree with

[\[i\]ndividuals and media outlets that . . . include](#) David Corn and *The Nation*; Amy Goodman of Democracy Now!; Chip Berlet, senior analyst at Political Research Associates in Somerville, Massachusetts; David Barsamian of Alternative Radio; Michael Albert of *Z Magazine*; Alexander Cockburn; Norman Solomon; *The Progressive*; *Mother Jones*; Altnet.org; Global Exchange; PBS; South End Press; Public Research Associates; FAIR/ Extra!; *Counterspin*; *Columbia Journalism Review*; Deep Dish TV; Working Assets; Molly Ivins [R.I.P.—EL]; *Ms Magazine*; Inter Press Service; MoveOn.org; Greg Palast; David Zupan; Northwest Media Project. . .

And guess who *else* I don't agree with. Hey, you got it on the first try! I [don't agree with Frank Rich](#).

In the spring semester of 1960, when I was in my second freshman semester of college, I began learning about writing, even though half the time I didn't *know* I was learning. And then much later, sometime in the early 1980s, in a seminar at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, the seminar leader happened to ask me—it was a mixed seminar, and I was there as a *literary* member of it—how I would define writing. He knew that I was a writer of both fiction and non-fiction, and *I* knew that any *good* definition of *good* writing would necessarily be equally applicable to both (and, I would say now, also to poetry). And what I found myself telling him, not knowing before that moment that I'd already formulated the definition, possibly over the span of a couple of decades, was this:

Writing is telling the truth in a way that itself is also true.

It's a literary definition, but I *did* tell you that this was going to be a literary essay—and, besides, *all* writing should be literary writing.

Now, as we draw ever closer to the narrow subject of Frank Rich, I would like to ask readers to consider what things I learned when, on Sunday, September 17, 2006—just a bit over a year ago—I opened up the *Times* and found this passage in Rich's op ed piece, [“The Longer the War, the Larger the Lies”](#):

You'd think that after having been caught concocting the scenario that took the nation to war in Iraq, the White House would mind the facts now. But this administration understands our culture all too well. This is a country where a cable news network (MSNBC) offers in-depth journalism about one of its anchors (Tucker Carlson) losing a prime-time dance contest and where conspiracy nuts have created a cottage industry of books and DVD's by arguing that hijacked jets did not cause 9/11 and that the 9/11 commission was a cover-up. (The fictionalized “Path to 9/11,” supposedly based on the commission's report, only advanced the nuts' case.) If you're a White House stuck in a quagmire in an election year, what's the percentage in starting to tell the truth now? It's better to game the system.

Just for information's sake, I mention that the next paragraph of Rich's piece begins with this sentence, providing an excellent early example—there will be many, many more in Part 2 of this essay—of Rich doing the exact thing (lying) that he's simultaneously accusing others of doing: “The untruths,” says he, “are flying so fast that untangling them can be a full-time job.”

I'll say. What I argued a year ago when I wrote about this piece is worth going back to—and I'll do that in Part 2. For now, though, let's just take care of that question—the question of what a person *learns* from reading this one paragraph and a sentence of Frank Rich.

Another question as a way into the first one: Is Rich a *writer*, by our definition?

And it's impossible—isn't it?—for the answer to be anything other than “No.” Is Rich telling the truth in a way that itself is also true?

No, you can't be a writer by *that* standard and at the same time use smear and innuendo; assert half-truths as though they were whole truths; and—at the end—twist things so as to allow yourself acquittal for doing the very thing you're condemning *others* for doing.

Let's pin this down. The smear and innuendo lie in the cheap and slummy phrases “conspiracy nuts,” “cottage industry,” and “the nuts' case.” Now, just consider this fact: By September 2007, I know with absolute certainty (because I myself read them or had read them at or by that time) that, at the very least, *these* books on 9/11 had been published, were in print, and were available for anyone to read; and I know also that *any single one of them* would reveal to a *serious and open-minded* reader that research into 9/11 truth is *hardly* the domain solely of “nut cases” but is *predominantly* the domain of serious, principled, dedicated, broadly experienced researchers, scholars, commentators, and historians:

Ahmed, Nafeez Mosaddeq. [*The War on Freedom: How and Why America was Attacked September 11, 2001.*](#) (2002)

Ahmed, Nafeez Mosaddeq. [*The War on Truth: 9/11, Disinformation, and the Anatomy of Terrorism.*](#) (2005)

Chossudovsky, Michel. [*America's "War On Terrorism."*](#) (2005)

Griffin, David Ray. [*The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions.*](#) (2005)

Griffin, David Ray. [*The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions About the Bush Administration and 9/11.*](#) (2004)

Hicks, Sander. [*The Big Wedding.*](#) (2005)

Morgan, Rowland, and Ian Henshall. [*9/11 Revealed.*](#) (2005) .

Ruppert, Michael C. [*Crossing the Rubicon: The Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil.*](#) (2004)

Tarpley, Webster Griffin. [*9/11 Synthetic Terror: Made in USA.*](#) (2005)

If Rich is writing in *late 2006* and is still making cheap shots at the 9/11 truth movement with smears and half truths—“arguing that hijacked jets did not cause 9/11” is at best a peripheral and minority aspect of 9/11 thinking; by alluding only to it and in a quick and phony dance-step ignoring the *central* concerns of *most* 9/11 scholarship, Rich lies by putting a half truth in place of a whole one—if he's *still doing that sort stuff in late 2006*, what does a person learn about him?

Well, a person learns that he's 1) either a far, far greater liar even than he *seems*, since he's claiming *not* to know things he really *does* know; *or* that 2) he's a dismal mediocrity if not outright failure as a reporter, since he's failed totally to make contact with or any use of the *most visible and essential* of research materials relevant to his subject; *or* you learn that he's 3) neither a *writer* of principle nor a *man* of principle, since he's willing to slur, smear, defame, lie, and present truth as falsehood (after all, [the 9/11 commission really was a coverup](#))—all because his *owners tell him that's what he's got to do if he wants to keep his job*.

What was that definition of writing—something about telling the truth in a way that itself is also true, I believe?

And here what do we have instead of someone *fitting* that definition? The actuality looks pretty grim. We're dealing here with the one subject—9/11 truth—that's more than just arguably the single most important matter that exists in political and cultural affairs today. Whether the free republic will become a police state within the next ten months depends on it; whether the cultural, artistic, and literary life of the nation will continue its decline into the empty and ephemeral rather than strengthening once again depends on it; whether genuine care and husbanding of the planet itself will actually occur depends on it; the lives themselves of millions, and the safety from fear, disease, penury, suffering, and starvation of millions upon millions more in countries abroad depend on it; and the historic grounding, the *dignity*, any *part* of what may still be left of *human and common good* in the United States, depends on it. All of these things and more depend on the exposure of the high crimes of 9/11 and the holding accountable of those responsible for them.

It seems to me one of the most, if not *the* most, important matter in the world today. And what do we have in Frank Rich when he looks at this matter? Well, a year ago we had 1) a dishonest, contemptuous, smearing clown who either *really was* totally ignorant of the truth of his subject, or 2) a person who was *lying monstrously* about something he *did* know, claiming *not to know*, or 3) a person who was the true and *complete* whore, performing *anything whatsoever* that his paying customer, in this case the *New York Times*, asked him to do—oral, anal, animal, other—and doing *nothing whatsoever* that that customer would *not* pay for, however true, serious, honorable, and important that other thing might be.

This is *not* a matter of telling the truth in a way that is also itself true.

Instead, *this* is—well, being struck speechless, let me leave the work to you. I suggest that you choose one, none, some, or all of the following:

- *This is fraud;*
- *This is hypocrisy;*
- *This is treason;*

- *This is the aiding and abetting of monstrous criminality;*
- *This is frivolity, depravity, poisonous non-seriousness;*
- *This is total inconsideration for the welfare of an entire nation and its people;*
- *This is conscious enmity toward an entire nation and its people;*
- *This is a vivid example of the moral penury, the absence of conscience, and the wholesale depravity, fraud, and deceit, of the mainstream media today and of those working within it.*



And so we pause. For a year or so, since September of 2006, I've followed Rich's pieces on the Op Ed page in the *Sunday Times*. In Part Two of this piece—in Part Two of this literary essay—I'll take up some of what I've found there over that time.

—Eric Larsen
—October 11, 2007

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
Number 13, Part 2
(NEW SERIES—2007)

**THE
PERNICIOUS HYPOCRISY
OF FRANK RICH
OF THE
*NEW YORK TIMES***



The corporate media today have become, collectively, less a vehicle of information than of mind control.

—Peter Dale Scott, [*The Road to 9/11: Wealth, Empire, and the Future of America*](#), p. 249 (2007)

Today the US media serves as propaganda ministry for the government's wars and police state.

—Paul Craig Roberts, [“Conservatism Isn't What It Used To Be”](#) (Sept. 7, 2007)

We have rendered the nation deaf and dumb. We no longer have the capacity for empathy.

—Chris Hedges, [“Iran, the Next Quagmire”](#) (Sept. 4, 2007)

Remedy: In order to turn this trend around, the people of the US must begin to acquire the anti-authoritarian traits of empathy and engagement.

—Phil Rockstrohe, [“Q and A for the People of a Forsaken Republic”](#) (October 2, 2007)

Oh, *New York Times*, oh, *New York Times*, are you infantile, criminal, or delusional?

—Eric Larsen, [“Letter of Lamentation to America.”](#) Part 3 (July 29, 2007)



1

After I began writing pieces attacking what Barrie Zwicker calls the “left gatekeepers,” I began seeing a pattern that I couldn’t attribute to anything other than some kind of self-destructive and yet also self-imposed blindness to certain very important aspects of plain reality—the plain reality, specifically, of 9/11 and the events surrounding it.

How and *why* would a person purposely become a part of an enormous conspiracy to deny, hide, and suppress the truth of what actually happened that day, along with the truth of *why* it happened? Why would anyone, especially a left-leaning person, actually *choose* to join a conspiracy that would and could function *only* in the *service of* the neoconservative criminals and traitors, both those visible and those living in deep shadow, who over the past six years have been going about the business of destroying the republic *and* the Constitution and of establishing by force a hegemonic control over not only the Middle East [but the world](#)?

Why would a *liberal* person do such a thing? Why would such a person *choose* to take sides with the neocons? And *how* could they?

Who are some of those covering up for the traitor-guys? Zwicker lists a good sampling—of both people and institutions—in his powerful and indispensably important 2006 book, [Towers of Deception: The Media Cover-up of 9/11](#).

“A surprisingly large number of Left media outlets,” he says (pp. 218-219), “—most of them, in fact—have adopted the same stance on 9/11 as Chomsky’s: refuse to investigate 9/11, and discourage or ridicule those who do.” Zwicker adds that most of the

gatekeepers “wind up using the familiar ‘wacky conspiracy theorists’ putdown to describe others on the Left who want to discuss the evidence of an inside job on 9/11.”

And he gives a list of such “putdown” people, groups, and outlets:

Individuals and media outlets that have exhibited this stay-away-from-9/11 stance, entirely or in large part, for more than four years now include David Corn and *The Nation*; [Amy Goodman](#) of Democracy Now!; Chip Berlet, senior analyst at Political Research Associates in Somerville, Massachusetts; David Barsamian of Alternative Radio; Michael Albert of *Z Magazine*; [Alexander Cockburn](#); Norman Solomon; [The Progressive](#); *Mother Jones*; Alternet.org; Global Exchange; PBS; South End Press; Public Research Associates; FAIR/ Extra!; *Counterspin*; *Columbia Journalism Review*; Deep Dish TV; Working Assets; Molly Ivins; *Ms Magazine*; Inter Press Service; MoveOn.org; Greg-Palast; David Zupan; Northwest Media Project. . .

On the subject of that list, Zwicker writes that “The almost total uniformity within Left media in sync with the White House and Right media [on the subject of 9/11] is more than puzzling”—and the reason it’s “puzzling” is that the left media, on *other* issues, “pursue questions of malfeasance on the part of the power elites” and continue doing the job that’s traditionally—and indispensably—the job of a free liberal press.

And so *why* the closed ranks and the great unity of silence on the *lone and single* subject of 9/11 truth? People can reasonably differ in opinion and view, Zwicker grants, then adds: “But it is a startling anomaly for so many organs and leaders of the conscious Left to be seemingly unconscious regarding 9/11.”

The passage is worth quoting further:

More than a few on the Left share the opinion of progressive film maker Roy Harvey that “the greatest single obstacle to the spread of 9/11 Truth is the Left media.” To my mind, the relationship of Chomsky and the Left Gatekeepers on 9/11 is analogous to the relationship of the White House and the 9/11 Commission. Both relationships are so tight as to invite close scrutiny. Elementary pattern recognition reveals a common agenda among these otherwise well-informed, intelligent, investigative critics of corporate greed, the power elite and US hegemony. The agenda, completely atypical of their approach generally, is to vigorously reject investigation into 9/11. This is *prima facie*. One example, that of perhaps Chomsky’s best known protégé and amplifier, David Barsamian, is typical of 9/11 blindness on the Left.

What does or can a person conclude? What does it *mean*, this 9/11 gate-keeper-blindness “on the Left,” this refusal to open up the one thing that’s now of the greatest importance imaginable?

If and as the nation goes fascist; if and as the Iraq war proves to have no end—no end ever having been *intended*; if and as Iran goes under U.S. attack and the middle east falls into chaos; if and as such things as these take place *only because* impeachment was made impossible, impeachment having been made impossible *only because* of the stonewalling *from the left* that buried 9/11 truth and covered up *the one weapon that the*

people really could have and could use against the junta—then, when all of that has happened, whose fault will it be?

I ask again, Whose fault will it *be*? Whose fault is it *so far* that the junta hasn't been braked? And *why* is it their fault? *Why* has the "left" media behaved in a way *so patently against the nation's best interest*?

2

I began feeling the intensity of this self-imposed blindness on the part of left-leaners only when I began writing about Amy Goodman. Nothing of the sort happened when I wrote about the trunks-full of deceptions in the *New York Times* of April 2, 2007, ("[Poisoned Nation, Poisoned Truth](#)" [April 2007]), and nothing like it happened when I wrote "[Ariana Huffington Tells the Truth \(and Doesn't Even Know It\)](#)" [December 2006] or when I wrote about Matthew Rothschild deserving an "F" and there being *no grade low enough* for Alexander Cockburn of *Counter Punch* ("[U.S.A—Land of Liars](#)" [January 2007]).

It started happening only with "[Amy Goodman: A Mind Prostituted](#)" (April 2007), and it went on with "[Does the CIA Own Amy Goodman?](#)" (April 2007), a title taken from the piercing 2006 essay on Goodman by Carolyn Baker, "[The Empress Has No Clothes: Amy Goodman's Reality Blackout.](#)" And it continued with "[What Would It Be Like To Be Amy Goodman?](#)" (September 2007).

So Rothschild sparked nothing, Cockburn sparked nothing, as neither did Ariana Huffington or the despicable [Nicholas Lemann in *The New Yorker*](#) or Jacob Weisberg when in September 2006 he wrote his genuinely absurd "[Five Years Free: Why Haven't We Been Attacked Again?](#)" in *Slate*, a dim-witted non-think piece trounced by me as hard as I could trounce in "[Our Enemies, the Left Gatekeepers.](#)" "[What Can This Man Be Thinking?](#) That was my response after reading this bit of utter inanity in the *Slate* piece:

As the fifth anniversary of the attacks approaches, perhaps the most surprising result is that American life has not changed very much at all. We worry more about terrorism and have to allow more time to negotiate airport security. But amazingly, al-Qaida hasn't claimed a single additional victim inside the United States. This fact is all the more remarkable when you consider the special challenges America faces in preventing terrorism: thousands of miles of porous border; an open, mobile society; and easy access to firearms.

Since I was perfectly aghast at such nonsense, I wrote, back then in December 2006,

After all, what surprise can there conceivably be in another 9/11 not having taken place in five years? Since the Bushiscti themselves were the *perpetrators* of 9/11, isn't it self-explanatory? The Bushiscti pulled off their inside job, got away with it, and got what they wanted *from* it—namely *carte-blanche* war-making powers from "congress," a *wide* opening of the purse-strings for said war-making, an instantly-

created imaginary enemy to make war *against*, and, hardly least, the best opportunity conceivable to begin their program of the crushing, or, if you wish, the stripping away, of Constitutional liberties, starting with the so-called Patriot Act and now—those famous five years later—having legalized torture, gotten rid of habeas corpus, gutted the [Insurrection Act](#), and gotten “legislators” to ante up \$38 million for [spiffing up concentration camps](#) inside the U.S.—an event reported on this way by the *Honolulu Advertiser*: “Notorious internment camps where Japanese-Americans were kept behind barbed wire during World War II will be preserved as [stark reminders of how the United States turned on some of its citizens in a time of fear.](#)”

I could hardly believe my eyes or ears then and I can hardly believe them now, revisiting the scene. [I asked:](#)

Why is Jacob Weisberg so set upon being a self-blinded non-seer? Why Frank Rich? Why Amy Goodman? Why David Corn? Why Nicholas Lemann? What do they hope to gain? Do *they* think the Bushiscti will be *nice*, or *good*, to them in return for their craven fidelity when the rest of the nation goes to its ruin, falls into penury and need and want, or goes to the camps that [are being prepared](#) or [prepared already](#) for those who were faithless? Do the gatekeepers actually *trust* in the Bushiscti and in the Cheneyiscti; do they actually *believe* that, in payment for their complicity now they’ll be paid back later in the coin of favor? Could the gatekeepers conceivably be *that* depraved; could the gatekeepers conceivably be *that* deceived?

What *else* could explain it? How can *anything* explain it?

3

I wrote and nobody responded, silence ruled supreme, I heard nothing, knew nothing, could tell nothing. Of course, this could all have been due simply to my having had no readers. But the minute I took on Amy *Goodman* as a gatekeeper, letters from highly incensed readers arrived, bearing demands to be dropped from my list.

A typical angry one, from last May, went like this:

While I am [a signer] . . . of the 9/11 truth statement and I routinely publish articles exploring 9/11 truth, your attack of Amy Goodman and the statements you make here in this email about liberals and progressives in general are toxic and destructive, and clearly desperate.

I still believe that the 9/11 commission was a coverup and [I?] even commissioned polling that showed that the majority of Democrats and over 40% of the public believe that the investigation was inadequate. But you are misguided. Please remove me from your mailing list. NOW!! And don’t respond to this email either. I will label as spam any further email I receive from you.

The piece immediately in question was [“The Traitors In Our House,”](#) which I’d turned over to two guest writers—though the piece before that one ([“Does the CIA Own Amy Goodman?”](#)) may have offended the writer equally.

But what’s most interesting to *me* is what exactly it really *was* that has made the writer so angry. She or he referred not just to the articles about Amy Goodman but also to the May 2007 email that I’d sent out to my list along with “The Traitors In Our House.” Here’s that email:

Dear Readers of *A Nation Gone Blind*, Other Recipients, Writers, Thinkers, Patriots, and Friends:

I can do no more than trust and hope that everyone really does understand the reason for this series of pieces about Amy Goodman, or pieces largely about her. The reason isn’t to be unfair to Amy Goodman. The reason is to analyze her work and then, if necessary and appropriate, to condemn certain aspects of her performance as a journalist. I’ve chosen to focus on Goodman (although in truth she’s hardly alone on the little stage of this web site) partly because she’s so clearly associated with the left-leaning and “progressive,” partly because she’s so well known, partly because she’s so well trusted, partly because she’s so well loved (by many), partly because she’s recently turned to *writing* instead of just radio—and partly because she is so quintessentially typical of numerous other erstwhile progressive or left-leaning American journalists and commentators who—known or unbeknownst to themselves—have metamorphosed since 9/11 into the greatest and most dangerous liars in the entire land outside of politicians themselves or figures in the true mass media, like, say, executives for Fox Films or corporate purveyors of pop music.

Harsh to say, perhaps, but it’s the result of close examination, and I believe it’s true. Frank Rich, Nicholas Lemann, Matthew Rothschild, Ariana Huffington, Jacob Weisberg, et al—the list is long, demoralizing, and suggestive of a grave and extreme danger—a danger given sinister but truthful implication by Paul Craig Roberts in his recent words, “Normally, this is called dictatorship.” (See [“The State or the People,”](#) April 2007)

In fact, Amy Goodman, Frank Rich, and all the others like them are aiders and abettors in the bringing about of dictatorship to the United States. This is so because they are all liars by omission—that is, by refusing to acknowledge, credit, stand behind, or publish the truth about 9/11, they effectually both aid and permit the continuation of the guilty and as yet unaccountable Bush administration’s attack not only on the Iraqi and Afghan people but also on the American people, in the last case through gutting of the Constitution and clear and evident preparing for the imposition of martial law and a police state.

[material about my guest authors deleted]

As for the actual situation: You may not agree, but it looks to me absolutely clear that the criminals are on the loose; are in fact holding the reins of government; are as yet beyond the reach of law or accountability; and can be reined in and made accountable only through the just and proper prosecution of those—that is, themselves—who are responsible for the extraordinary crimes of 9/11.

Eric Larsen

Now, I wonder how many readers would agree that what I say here about Amy Goodman and “liberals and progressives in general” is *really* toxic and destructive,” let alone “desperate.” Granting that it was evidently toxic indeed to the angry letter-writer, *why* was it so toxic? Before getting at the answer to *that* question, though, let me give another example.

This is something more recent, just a week or two ago. I’d seen an essay attacking the Bush junta for its illegal war policies and calling for impeachment of Bush and Cheney. Since I admired it well enough and shared its views, I wrote the author:

10/1/2007

Hello, X. X.,

I saw your [unnamed] piece and think it’s inestimably strong and good and thorough and powerful. Thank you for it. I only, only wish that more would come your way and bring about the necessary impeachment you urge. Why is there such mad resistance?

I’m working in similar veins, though usually from a more “literary” approach, but trying to expose hypocrisy in the press and media, doing it in my own small ways. Also have a book out, “A Nation Gone Blind: America in an Age of Simplification and Deceit.” I’m afraid the co-opted media have been instructed or have learned to ignore books of its kind, since notice has been nil.

But may I put you on my list of people to alert when new pieces go up on my site? Here’s the most recent—today—letter I’ve sent out. Just let me know if you want off. And may your work prosper and harvest peace and good. The times are bad.

Yours,
Eric Larsen

To my own small horror, here is what I got back:

10/07/07

Mr. Larsen,

Please forgive me for being so tardy in answering your kind email of Oct. 1—and now here is another.

I appreciate and applaud your stance on these interlocking issues, and urge you to continue daylighting the one about which you are far better informed than I am: the facts of 9/11.

Let me implore you, however, to cease the attacks on those who fail to match your passion: the Amy Goodmans of the world and, as you know, there are a lot of doubters on the left. (Cf. Alexander Cockburn.) Internecine invective serves no one but the True Believers, those who, tragically, have fallen under the spell of the Bush intrigue.

We are all fighting the same war: the hideous presidency we endure. There are many battlefields, and none is demonstrably the only true and correct one. Yes, arguments can be made to rebut that statement, but those who make them seem to me more interested in being RIGHT than in a successful ending of the nightmare.

Please do not send me any more criticisms of people I see as effective antagonists to the Bush regime.

Am I alone in the world in thinking that the arguments in this letter and in the one preceding it are the sheerest—well, let me warble out “malarkey” in order to prevent myself from soiling the reader’s screen with a truly vile or at the very least scatological term—? What *are* these letters and others like them *saying*? I might ask the second writer—I in fact *did* ask, in a follow-up letter, one that resulted in stony silence only—*how* he can conceivably see left-progressives like Goodman or Weisberg—or like “Frank Rich, Nicholas Lemann, Matthew Rothschild, Ariana Huffington, Jacob Weisberg, et al”—as being “effective antagonists to the Bush regime”? In what way is *any* of them being “effective”? In what way is *any* of them being “effective” in altering, ending, or ameliorating the course of the [inhuman and wasteful](#) wars in Iraq or Afghanistan? in helping diminish the threat of even wider wars through attack, perhaps nuclear, on Iran? in—above all—opposing a cowardly, complicit, and petrified congress in order actually to *help bring about* the impeachment of the Bush-Cheney junta, a [Constitutional action without which we’re doomed](#), at the *very* best, to a repetition of Bush-Cheney “policy,” including increasing domestic lockdown, for *at least* another eight years *no matter which* “party” may sit in the White House or hold majority control of congress?

The “left-progressive” media is *talking* about such things, I’ll immediately agree, but so help me god I can find *no way* under the stars or the sun or the heavens that they could rightly be declared as “effective” in opposition to the junta or its ruinous, rapacious, and murderous policies. Well, maybe they *are* “effective *antagonists*,” as the writer said. But “antagonists,” I would add, in the sense of flies on a cow’s hide in summer—an irritation to be brushed away with a sweep of the tail.

Two points:

1)

First, what is it that *really* makes left-leaners or putative left-leaners get *so* mad and *so* incensed and *so* righteous when I attack figures like Goodman? I’ll tell you. It’s that figures like Amy Goodman or even, say, Keith Olbermann, do some good things. Maybe they even do a *lot* of good things. And therefore, [in this our Age of Simplification wherein feeling has so largely replaced thinking](#), it’s *forbidden* to attack them on the grounds that they do—or may be doing—*one* bad thing. Anyone who attacks them for that *one bad thing* is a monster and thereby despicable, treacherous, and unfaithful to the tribe of the left-leaning.

By this logic, it seems to me, a man could do good things for forty years—no, he could do good things for *fifty* years—and then murder his perfectly innocent and nice mother-in-law by garroting her with piano wire. Since he’d done so many *good* things for fifty years, *many* more *good* things than the *one bad thing* he did, he ought to be

exonerated entirely, pardoned for the murder, and go unpunished. After all, he's a good guy.

Yeah, right.

2)

And, second, what *is* the *one bad thing* that Amy Goodman and her left-leaning media colleagues are doing? Answer: They're ignoring, denying, suppressing, minimizing, or covering up the truth of 9/11.

Pardon me for a moment, but I think I hear distant roars and shouts of righteous outrage and incensed disapproval coming from wherever it is that the tribe of putative left-leaning reporters, commentators, broadcasters, columnists, analysts, and writers are gathered. In fact, I believe that they're *outraged*. They're shrieking and yelling at me to the effect that I *can't say what I just said*, and the reason I can't is that *it's up to each person* what they choose or don't choose to cover or investigate or write about or analyze. It's [their right](#) to write about what they want to write about. It's [only a matter of opinion](#) if I think they should cover one subject or another, and one person's opinion is equal to *another* person's opinion, *and that's that*.

Okay, say I. Listen up. It's *all right* to be a news reporter, writer, investigator, or correspondent in 1941, based, perhaps, in London. It's *all right* to investigate and report on what kinds of *art* Hitler did or didn't allow or approve. It's *all right* to investigate, to follow up on rumors about, and to report on Hitler's quite kinky sexual habits and tastes. It's *all right* to look as closely as possible at his uses of and attitudes toward summary execution by rifle fire for whatever *he* may see as cowardice in the field of battle. It's *all right* to report on his obvious military error in wildly over-extending Germany's military forces by sending them into Russia with the idea of seizing the oil fields east of [Stalingrad and beyond the Volga](#).

And it's okay, too, if you don't *feel* like it, or if in your *opinion* it isn't important—it's okay, too, not to follow up on the increasing numbers of rumors and bits of not-yet-validated information that come your way about the existence of death camps in the eastern regions of Germany, in Poland, and in Austria, camps where it's rumored that millions upon millions of people are being held in slavery, worked almost to death, and *then* gassed and incinerated. And it's *okay*, too, because it's your *opinion* whether a lead is worth pursuing or not, and you have a *right* to your opinion, it's *all right* if you decide not to take a reportorial or investigative lick at the awful rumors—let's say it's now the summer of 1944—that hundred and hundreds of thousands of people are being [taken from their homes, put on trains, and taken straight to mass-execution sites](#) where they are shot en masse, then dumped into and incinerated by the thousands at a time in gargantuan and newly-designed furnaces.

It's okay if you just don't feel like investigating or reporting on *that* story. It's *okay*, in fact, if you *sit* on it, *deny* it, *suppress* it.

Ditto 9/11. It's *okay* if you skip *that* one. It's your *opinion*, after all, when you're a professional left-leaning journalist, that matters most, not enormous amounts of *evidence*, say, of something like society-changing, war-causing, international policy-altering *atrocities*.

4

And so we come at last to probably the greatest and most visible 9/11-denying monster of depravity in the whole tribe of putatively progressive and left-leaning media figures—Frank Rich, of the *New York Times*.

I'm becoming nearly consumed by the feeling of regret that I ever wrote *A Nation Gone Blind*. If I'd known *how monstrously true* the arguments in it were, I wonder if I would still have proceed with it, or dared to. And if I'd known that what the book said—*that Americans can't any longer see reality for themselves*—was going to be true *also in regard to 9/11 truth* and thus true also in regard to the ongoing, treasonous, murderous, and rapacious successes one after another of the Bush-Cheney junta: Could I *then* have gone on writing the damn thing?

I don't know. But I *do* know that Frank Rich—who may indeed be fully able to see reality for himself—seems to me the greatest and most successful liar and con-artist out of all of the tainted 9/11 suppressors in all of the tribes of all the putatively progressive and left-leaning journalists in all of the land.

What do people *think* when they think about Frank Rich? How do people *read* when they *read* Frank Rich? How *can* they read Frank Rich without, much too often, being *just disgusted*?

Well, I suppose one reason they can do it is that they have poor memories, or at least memories that aren't incessantly on high alert to 9/11 subjects, references—or smears. You see, one of *my* problems with Frank Rich is that I can't forget the genuinely awful piece he wrote a year or so ago, a piece I referred to in Part One of this essay and said I'd return to again here. The date was September 17, 2006, and the piece was [“The Longer the War the Larger the Lies.”](#) a title that prestidigitator Rich proves and exemplifies, before the very eyes of his easily-tricked readers, to be true not only of his own putative *targets* but every bit as true also of *himself*.

For any who don't remember, or any who may not have read Part One of this essay, let me show again the paragraph and then the single following sentence from “Larger the Lies” that I quoted there.

The paragraph:

You'd think that after having been caught concocting the scenario that took the nation to war in Iraq, the White House would mind the facts now. But this administration understands our culture all too well. This is a country where a

cable news network (MSNBC) offers in-depth journalism about one of its anchors (Tucker Carlson) losing a prime-time dance contest and where conspiracy nuts have created a cottage industry of books and DVD's by arguing that hijacked jets did not cause 9/11 and that the 9/11 commission was a cover-up. (The fictionalized "Path to 9/11," supposedly based on the commission's report, only advanced the nuts' case.) If you're a White House stuck in a quagmire in an election year, what's the percentage in starting to tell the truth now? It's better to game the system.

And the first sentence of the next paragraph:

"The untruths," says Rich, "are flying so fast that untangling them can be a full-time job."

The gratuitous condescension *toward* and infantile smears *of* the 9/11 truth movement here—and the ignoring of the often towering scholarship that drives it—obviously and clearly mark Rich as a leading member of the great tribe of deceivers. The arrogance is akin to the arrogance of the Bill O'Reilly-esque right-wingers in that it's as though Rich is *daring* us to take his slummy, cheap, worn and putrid bait—"conspiracy nuts," "cottage industry," "the nuts' case."

The truth is that Rich, like Amy Goodman, could simply have gone on forever just *covering up* 9/11 truth by *not* talking about. But that wouldn't be good enough for Rich. There wouldn't be any *sport* in *that*. Instead, Rich does a "look-Ma-no-hands" job of powerfully signaling his disdain and contempt *for* it with a dog-that's-just-peed tail-wag of condescension.

And thus we were alerted to the position of Rich and of the *Times*. Every reader of "Larger the Lies" who was also a follower of the [extensive writing and scholarship](#) on 9/11 truth knew now that Frank Rich, having *so* publicly and *so* smugly declared himself such, was an enemy—an enemy of the truth, an enemy of the republic, and an enemy of the people *of* the republic.

And something else he did—"The untruths are flying so fast that untangling them can be a full-time job"—whether intentionally or not I don't know, was simultaneously to wave a flag, visible to many, invisible to more, revealing *himself* to be not a frequent flier but a frequent liar.

Very frequent, may I add. Anyone who follows Rich's ever-snide and ever-entertaining work in the *Times* knows that even when he's just telling the truth about one thing or another, he's superbly cocky and condescending throughout—in a way that seems to say to readers, "here's my arm around your shoulder; come on in as a privileged friend and join me in the salon, this wonderful dinner-party of superiority-and-scorn."

No one *I* know does it better than Frank Rich does it. And *that's* when he's telling the truth. But when he sits down at the keyboard to play "The Hypocrisy Rag," *then* he becomes positively a *weasel*: Deplorable, hateful, conscienceless, destructive.

And, there's no question but that I must add, *successful*. The best in the business.



For an example of Rich as truth-teller, a look at his scorn-filled piece on Clarence Thomas of October 7, "[Nobody Knows the Lynchings He's Seen](#)," will suffice perfectly—as will his most recent piece, of this October 21, on the shameful and endemic corruption in the Iraq war (including the [absolutely wrenching 2005 death](#) of Col. Ted Westhusing), "[Suicide Is Not Painless](#)."

In the much differently-toned Clarence Thomas piece, however, a person could almost think, "Poor Clarence Thomas, exposed to such barbs and slings, such silver-tongued scorn"—but the fact here again is that Thomas is getting the *truth*, whatever the dish it's delivered in, and deservedly so, as I suspect most readers would agree.

But for the *other* Frank Rich, the one I can't help but call the weasel Frank Rich, let's hop back, say, to an example from May 6, 2007, called "[Is Condi Hiding the Smoking Gun?](#)" The subject is the question of who bears responsibility for the Iraq War. Herewith, our first example of the weasel at work:

The only White House figure to take any responsibility for the fiasco is the [former Bush-Cheney pollster Matthew Dowd](#), who in March expressed remorse for furthering a war he now deems a mistake. For his belated act of conscience, he was promptly patronized as an incipient basket case by an administration flack, who attributed Mr. Dowd's defection to "[personal turmoil](#)." If that is what this vicious gang would do to a pollster, imagine what would befall Colin Powell if he spoke out. Nonetheless, Mr. Powell should summon the guts to do so. Until there is accountability for the major architects and perpetrators of the Iraq war, the quagmire will deepen. A tragedy of this scale demands a full accounting, not to mention a catharsis.

Rich once again proves his bona fides as a faithful member of the Amy Goodman-esque "left-leaning progressive" tribe. He does this through phrases like "this vicious gang" for the Bush administration and "the fiasco" for the Iraq war. Meanwhile, "administration flack" offers an allusion to the conventional red herring in the mainstream media that "incompetence" is really what's the trouble with "this vicious gang." If you're troubled by the question of how "incompetence" can be the catalyst that creates a "vicious" gang, it's better not to worry about it. When Rich is in weasel-mode, it doesn't pay to concern yourself with this kind of contradiction, since its real purpose is to keep you distracted from the fact that what you're getting, in weasel-mode, isn't the real truth. Are these guys Abbot and Costello bunglers, or are they vicious criminals? You're not going to find the answer in Rich's weasel-mode, though you could *easily* find it in, say, [this unusual interview](#) with the peerless [Francis A. Boyle](#), or in this powerful [essay by a simple, actual, everyday American](#) who, unlike Rich, speaks plain English instead of "CorpoMedia," the language that's spoken by those in all the mainstream media—that is, in the the corpo-tribes—a language that leaks its way into Frank Rich's

columns when he's in the writing mode—i.e. weasel—that serves him so well by *seeming* to tell the truth while *not* telling the truth..

Example:

Until there is accountability for the major architects and perpetrators of the Iraq war, the quagmire will deepen. A tragedy of this scale demands a full accounting, not to mention a catharsis.

This is grand language, but more is left out of it than put in. If a person asks just *how* “accountability” for a “tragedy of this scale” will be brought about, he or she comes up empty. Who *are* “the major architects and perpetrators” of the war whose accountability alone can keep the “quagmire” from “deepening”? The grandeur continues with “tragedy,” “demands,” “full accounting,” and “catharsis,” a word (Rich *is* the best in the business) neatly echoing “tragedy.”

But back to getting *answers*. When Rich is in weasel-mode, the question isn't only *what* the columnist is thinking, but it's also *where* he is thinking. For example, looking “for the major architects and perpetrators of the Iraq war,” he turns to—*well*, to Condi Rice, whose appearance “on three Sunday shows. . . raised more questions than they answered.” Poor Condi. As *she* takes the heat—sort of—I'm interested in asking the question of where Frank Rich *isn't* looking for the “major architects and perpetrators.” If he's serious, after all, he has to look where he's *not* looking and where he *will not* look—and that's at 9/11.

Or even before 9/11. It's interesting to take a look [at this video](#), where [Ron Suskind](#) and Secretary of the Treasury [Paul O'Neill](#) show clearly that the Iraq project was under way at least *eight months before* 9/11. So why won't Frank Rich look *there*? Why won't he look back in 2000, or even [before 2000](#)?

Who might he turn up as the “major architects and perpetrators” if Rich were to look back *there*? Or if he were to look *at* 9/11, and not just look *at* it but look at the *truth* of it? That, however *will not* happen. One is reminded—yes—of Amy Goodman, who, in [Carolyn Baker's words](#), “will not, absolutely will *not*, [deal with 9/11](#).” It looks to me as those a parallel statement can convincingly be made about Frank Rich.

And so the question becomes this: Is Rich *really* looking for the “major architects and perpetrators”? Does he *really* think that “A tragedy of this scale demands a full accounting”? Does he *really* want, and is he *really* pushing to bring about, a “catharsis”?

Or—making good use of weasel-mode—is he *just saying so*? Is he *just making it look that way for certain reasons of his own*?

Big questions, I agree, and maybe even seemingly nasty ones, and yet, to my own way of thinking, extraordinarily important ones. In any case, let's hypothesize that what we're seeing here is not true and authentic writing, but weasel-writing. That is, let's hypothesize that we're reading a passage where a liar by omission and a master of cover-

up and suppression uses a stern and righteous voice to castigate another liar and suppressor of the very same kind.

Let's do that and see what happens.

Thus Ms. Rice was dispatched to three Sunday shows last weekend to bat away Mr. Tenet's book before ["60 Minutes" broadcast its interview with him](#) that night. But in each appearance her statements raised more questions than they answered. She was persistently at odds with the record, not just the record as spun by Mr. Tenet but also the public record. She must be held to a higher standard—a k a the truth—before she too jumps ship.

The rolling timbre and cadence are astonishing—"higher standard," "the truth"—as the hypocrisy of one liar castigating another for the identical sin rises and rises to a high melodrama, righteous liar number one raising ever higher his voice of the good, the right, and the true as he comes nearer the moment when his spear-tip will pierce the very heart of Condi, liar number two:

Ms. Rice's latest canard wasn't an improvisation; it was a scripted set-up for the president's outrageous statement three days later. "The decision we face in Iraq," [Mr. Bush said Wednesday](#), "is not whether we ought to take sides in a civil war, it's whether we stay in the fight against the same international terrorist network that attacked us on 9/11." Such statements about the present in Iraq are no less deceptive—and no less damaging to our national interest—than the lies about uranium and Qaeda-9/11 connections told in 2002-3. This country needs facts, not fiction, to make its decisions about the endgame of the war, just as it needed (but didn't get) facts when we went to war in the first place. To settle for less is to make the same tragic error twice.

So 9/11, mentioned in passing, remains shrouded and buried under great drifts of corpo-media lies, distortions, smears, omissions—while Adjutant to the Liar in Chief, in the very act of making up his *own* fictions, *dares* to say that "This country needs facts, not fiction," and that "To settle for less is to make the same tragic error twice."

The hypocrisy shines as bright as the gleaming armor of Satan preening in Heaven.

5

And on it goes. To secure himself a place in the hearts of his audience, Rich gives every impression of outrage at the "vicious" Bush-Cheney administration and its dread policies—and at the same time he hides and denies and suppresses and smears the one true and certain thing that could in actuality be brought forth—into impeachment and into court—in order to dismantle, disassemble, and replace the junta he claims so much to despise. The gorge rises again and again for the careful reader of Frank Rich. Take

[“Don’t Laugh at Michael Chertoff”](#) from July 15, 2007, and ask yourself exactly what other person besides Bush these words are *most* perfectly applicable to:

This president is never one to let facts get in the way of a political agenda.

Or let’s look at a *combination* of Richian methods, places where the master puts the great lie of omission *together* with its equally putrid twin, the lie of *commission*. A quick trip back to August 12, 2007, and [“Shuffling Off to Crawford, 2007 Edition”](#) will give us a look.

The subject? This time it’s the junta’s way of shamelessly spinning false or pitiable or shocking things—the Jessica Lynch fraud-circus, the Pat Tillman murder, the Daniel Pearl beheading—in order to exploit them for publicity or propagandizing benefiting the junta itself.

A good subject. In fact, a great subject—a subject with a *very, very great deal* of power and leverage in it with potential for doing real damage to a treasonous and criminal administration that has already killed [more than a million](#) people outright in *this* Iraq war, stands to kill many millions more if only [through the use of depleted uranium](#) in ammunition, and, domestically, has lost one entire American city, has [cut down whole swaths of previously guaranteed Constitutional rights](#), from the [right to habeas corpus](#) to the right to be [free from torture](#) and the right [“of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures.”](#)

And more. And potentially [worse](#).

So what exactly will the master do with the subject? First, as usual, he’ll condemn the junta as shameless and vile, thereby snuggling up good and tight with his presumably left-leaning and progressive readership:

But nothing is out of bounds for a government that puts the darkest arts of politics and public relations above even the exigencies of war.

And then? Well, and then he’ll behave in precisely the same way as the “vicious gang” he claims to be attacking. That is, he’ll lie by commission and he’ll do so for the same purpose that 9/11 itself was created—for the purpose of *frightening* people:

Now that the administration is winding down and the Qaeda threat is at its scariest since 2001, one might hope that such [publicity and propagandizing] stunts would cease. Indeed, two of the White House’s most accomplished artificial-reality Imagineers both left their jobs last month. . .

The lie of *commission* is the part about “the Qaeda threat,” whereby Rich casually drops a piece of the very propagandizing he claims so strenuously to oppose. The lies of *omission* are the leaving out of the actual and simple truth that “the Qaeda,” to use Rich’s two-language coinage, [itself a creation of the United States](#), is *not* “at its scariest since 2001,”

nor was al Qaeda, as the weasel yet again implies, [either the propellant or the executor of 9/11](#).

What does it matter? Propounding these lies, both kinds, is the *purpose* of the column, just as the purpose of it is, as shown before, to *imitate* the enemy's practices while simultaneously *condemning* the enemy's practices. And so, here again, after approving of the departure of one of the junta's propaganda agents, the weasel writes:

But while Mr. Feaver and his doomed effort to substitute propaganda for action may now be gone, the White House's public relations strategies for the war, far from waning, are again gathering steam, to America's peril.

Chalk up another point for the Bushiscti, who also want us scared and want us to *stay* scared. Now, exactly why the *Weasel* should want us to remain in this same condition, terrorized and in "peril," is a question that will lead us to the very darkest recesses of Weaseldom and to a consideration of what the *fuel* is that actually makes Weaseldom continue on its road of double agency, faultless hypocrisy, and impeccably skilled lying—so that, in the end, the weasel-writer writes for and serves not we the *people* but *them* the Bushiscti, however deluded and misled on this point Weasel's poor audience of left-leaving progressives who can't *read* very well may be.

The Bushisctis' war policies do put us in peril, though less certain is that we're equally endangered by the Bushisctis' "public relations strategies for the war." Either way, if anyone can come up with a convincing—repeat, convincing—argument that the Weasel is any less interested in scaring *his* audience than the Bushiscti are in scaring *theirs*, I hope that person will let me know about it. To wit, the closing lines of "[Shuffling Off to Crawford](#)," replete with frightening lie upon frightening lie, as in "remains determined to strike in America" or "The enemy that did attack us six years ago" or "is likely to persist in its nasty habit," all sweetened with one perfect spoonful of hypocrisy-honey in the slam at "White House fictions," as if we ourselves, here, weren't reading virtually a *festival* of fictions:

And so the president, firm in his resolve against "Al Qaeda in Iraq," [heads toward another August break in Crawford](#) while Al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan remains determined to strike in America. No one can doubt Mr. Bush's triumph in the P.R. war: There are more American troops than ever mired in Iraq, sent there by a fresh round of White House fictions. And the real war? The enemy that did attack us six years ago, sad to say, is likely to persist in its nasty habit of operating in the reality-based world that our president disdains.



A steady diet of scare-mongering and deceit, then, all under the perfected disguise of a pious anti-Bushiscti stance presumed to be in keeping with what his left-leaning "base" expects and wants. *Presumed* to be. Hypocrisy *on* this level and hypocrisy sustained *at* this level, however genius-driven, can be the work only of the truly prostituted and/or, in this case, the truly criminal. If the *New York Times* suddenly weren't interested above all other things on earth in keeping the truth of 9/11 a buried

secret so as to permit the Bushiscti to continue its projects, would the Weasel then, too, suddenly be similarly uninterested? Would his professionalism as a prostitute allow him—quick as a click of the fingers—to turn so readily *away* from servicing the Bushistci-*Times* and the *Times*-Bushiscti and *toward serving*, say, the Constitution of the United States?

We may never know. For now, certainly, The Weasel-and-Disguise-Artist par excellence is just what the *Times*-doctor ordered, as, week after week, the shameless pandering to the White House *and* the shameless lying to the “base” goes on while the not-very-good-at-reading base lap it all up as kittens would milk. Take September 16, 2007, for example, and Rich’s riffs on the General Petraeus dust-up ([“Will the Democrats Betray Us?”](#)).

How does it go? Well, again, first come the lies in service of terror—in the service, that is, of *our* terror, produced by *our* terrorists: “On the sixth anniversary of the day that did not change everything, General Petraeus couldn’t say we are safer because he knows we are not.”

The day that “did *not* change everything”? Let it go. More important is the bit about General Petraeus not saying we’re safer “because he knows we are not.” *Does* he know we’re not? Says *who*? The truth is that the general, as the Weasel himself knows full well because he just *quoted* it, said something quite different. What Petraeus actually said was, as quoted by Rich and as cited in the *Washington Post*, [“Sir, I don’t know, actually”](#), hardly the same thing as “no.” But then again, The Weasel’s purpose, like the *Times*’s, is to *scare* us and to *keep* us scared, to *make* us ignorant and to *keep* us ignorant.

And then, after the scare tactic hors d’oeuvre come the varied courses of lies and hypocrisies. Of the varying proposals regarding time-plans for and levels of troop withdrawal, the Weasel pulls a swifty by saying that

Every one of these plans is academic anyway as long as Mr. Bush has a veto pen.

And how might that veto pen be taken away from the Fascistic Boy? Well, a bit of truth-telling about 9/11 and the administration’s deep complicity in it would go quite a distance toward effecting that pen-snatch. But truth-telling isn’t on the Weasel’s agenda any more than it’s on his john’s agenda. And his john’s agenda *is* the Weasel’s agenda, delivered in sanctimonious hypocrisy syruped over more dishes of lies. The next masterpiece of weaselly sentences:

The security of America is more important—dare one say it?—than trying to outpander one another in Iowa and New Hampshire.

And if the security of America really *is* important—at *all* important—what do you say we do something *about* it? But no, no, no—that’s not our purpose. *Our* purpose is to keep the neocon fascist movement *going*, in obedience to the *Times*’s corpo-owners, while at the same time keeping that particular and absolutely shameful—treasonable—

truth hidden from the paper's "base." Let those with delicate stomachs not read this, our last, citation of the sheerest hypocrisy from the Weasel's Petraeus piece:

Our national security can't be held hostage indefinitely to a president's narcissistic need to compound his errors rather than admit them.



The worst is still to come, I'm afraid, and it's deserving of lengthier treatment than it's going to get here. I tire and weaken under the assault of *so much* deceit, hypocrisy, duplicity, *complicity*, criminality, and sheer traitorousness. Rich goes for the jackpot with the recent (October 14, 2007) column that's titled "[The 'Good Germans' Among Us.](#)"

It's about torture, about the war in Iraq, about the lies that made the war in Iraq possible, and about "our" guilt in not having done enough—like the good Germans who failed similarly—to oppose the Bush-Cheney administration in its war-mongering.

The opening sentence:

"Bush lies" doesn't cut it anymore. It's time to confront the darker reality that we are lying to ourselves.

You might *hope* that that's *really* a confession and that it's therefore going to lead to some real, actual truth. But you'll hope in vain. Once again, Rich hides behind every trick in his satanic playbook of deceptions and dodges.

The fear, terror, anxiety are again dished out in big revolting heaps as Rich notes that

Andrew Sullivan, once a Bush cheerleader, [observed last weekend](#) in The Sunday Times of London, America's "enhanced interrogation" techniques have a grotesque provenance: "Verschärfte Vernehmung, enhanced or intensified interrogation, was the exact term innovated by the Gestapo to describe what became known as the 'third degree.' It left no marks. It included hypothermia, stress positions and long-time sleep deprivation."

There's terror for you. We've *become* the Fourth Reich, and old schoolroom words have nothing in them but vile pain and a searingly grotesque sense of loss—"My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing."

Yes, but what *I* want to know—and I [do know](#) in good part—is how our country degenerated into such a disgusting, repellent, criminal state. *And* how it can be raised up again *out of that state*.

Am I going to find out such things from Frank Rich? No. What's going to happen is this: 1) he's going to scare me; 2) he's going to blame me; 3) he's going to ignore the *one truth* that could uninstall the neocons—or that *could have* uninstalled them; 4) he's

going to red herring us by dwelling on a *secondary* subject—the war—in order to hide the *primary* and potentially war-ending subject of 9/11, the root and origin (in logistical terms) of all the cancers that have followed; 5) he’s going to pile one piety onto another, one hypocrisy upon another, until the reader—the reader *who can read*—is sickened unto death; and 6) then, that damage all done, the status quo once again assured, and the utterly fraudulent mask of Rich as an anti-Bush left-leaner and “progressive” once more glued firmly in place, he will 7) take his repulsive and sanctimonious and hypocritical leave.

Do you want to watch some of this little drama of pure ugliness? Here’s a bit of purest comedy:

Call me cynical, but when Laura Bush [spoke up last week](#) about the human rights atrocities in Burma, it seemed less an act of selfless humanitarianism than another administration maneuver to change the subject from its own abuses.

Hilarious!! Who on *earth* would *ever* even *think* of calling Frank Rich cynical? *Ha!!* The very *thought!!* If this really were theater—well, it obviously *is* theater, every bit of it, but it if were performed *in* a theater—the audience at this point would be out of their seats and rolling in the you-know-what.

That’s where *I* am, I know. And as I laugh and roll, I’m also sobbing bitter tears, not to mention gasping in despair, shame, and revulsion.

The shame, the shame, the shame, the shame. Shame at Bush, at Cheney, at Abu Ghraib, shame at *being* an American, shame at *being* a nation of torturers, mass murderers, liars, criminals—and hypocrites.

Shame at being unable to *use the truth* against the enemies and traitors now ruling us. And *anger* at the lying media that, so far, have made *using that truth to restore both freedom and republic an impossibility*. So massive is their lying, so unified and so base and so groveling is their submission to the corpo-fascist ownership and “leader” ship that truth has all but drained out of the nation like blood out of Caesar’s body, so that only lies remain, lies like the maggots inside the corpse, lies that will hatch out into the swarms of more and greater lies, bringing more death, more loss, more despair, more putrescence, more evil.

[“We asked few questions”](#) in the run-up to the war intones the Weasel, and I say to the Weasel, “Speak for *yourself*, Weasel, and don’t speak for *me*.”

[“It was always the White House’s plan to coax us into a blissful ignorance about the war.”](#) intones the Weasel, and I ask of the Weasel, “And *exactly who* ‘always had a plan to coax us into a blissful ignorance’ about 9/11—*eh, Weasel, eh?*”

[“Our humanity has been compromised by those who use Gestapo tactics in our war.”](#) intones the Weasel, and I ask of the Weasel, “Oh, so our humanity has been *compromised*, has it, by our becoming a torture-state, a Gestapo-state? Well my, my, that’s certainly tragic and appalling. But isn’t there something we could *do* about this

dehumanization of our state, Weasel? Isn't there some means toward a *remedy*, Weasel? *Weasel?* Couldn't we all agree *to tell not just the truth but also the whole truth?* What do you say to *that*, Weasel? *Weasel?*?"

Into the silence the Weasel, himself the best German of all, intones, ["It's up to us to wake up our somnambulant Congress to challenge administration policy every day.](#) Let the war's last supporters filibuster all night if they want to. There is nothing left to lose except whatever remains of our country's good name." And I say to the Weasel, oh, it's up to *us*, you say? And who, exactly, is this *us*, Weasel? Are *you* part of this *we*, part of this *us*? And so what exactly are *you* going to do, Weasel? *Do you think you're going to tell the truth?*

"Are *you* going to ['wake up our somnambulant Congress](#) to challenge administration policy every day,' Weasel? I haven't *seen* you doing that. I haven't *heard* you doing that. I haven't *read* you doing that. What *are* you going to do, Weasel? Are you going to continue *lying*?

"And let's go a bit further. Is the truth *really* that the Congress is '*somnambulant*,' Weasel? Is *that* the right word? *Why* has no one in Congress opposed the junta, *why* have they passed one piece of legislation after another *giving away to the junta* powers of tyranny and of oppression and of the most brutal crimes against humanity? *Why* have they done nothing to prevent this? Is it *really* because they're *sleep-walking*, Weasel?

"No, it's not because they're '*somnambulant*,' *is* it. I *know* that you know that that's not it, don't you? It's because they've been craven for so long, they've been *bought* for so long—like *you*, Weasel—that at first they were powerless to oppose their *corpo-owners*, and then, after the great and stupendous fraud of 9/11, they quickly became afraid to speak the truth, say the truth, or to vote for the truth for fear they would seem '*unpatriotic*' and *soft on* the fraudulent, fictional, pretend, false '*enemy*' that the junta had now brought into '*existence*.' They were afraid of losing their constituencies by looking *soft* on the pure fiction of "*terrorism*," and so they voted for Patriot Act I and Patriot Act II, foolish, blind, insane votes all in the grip of a fear that had been created by a *fictional* attack that was blamed on a *fictional* enemy against which *non-whom* a very *real* albeit grotesquely criminal war was then begun. And then—don't you think this is the way it went, Weasel?—the '*somnambulant*' Congress found that it had been caught, trapped, and enclosed, *imprisoned* by the very pieces of legislation that they themselves, in stupidity, fear, and *blindness*, had passed—and so now they're not *sleep-walking*, Weasel, but they're exactly where they've been put by the likes of *you*, who have refused again and again to speak, say, or write the truth about *who* is accountable for *what* and *who* is guilty of *what*, so that now the same laws that [brought about the torture and fake trial and conviction to life imprisonment of an absolutely and incontrovertibly innocent American citizen](#) can be used to bring about the torture and fake trial and conviction to life imprisonment, or worse, of anyone in the entire nation that the junta chooses to so punish, [including members of Congress if they—just perhaps—happen to vote against the junta or stand in the way of the junta, or expose the ugly, withering, absolute truth about the junta](#) so that they keep their mouths shut, hoping against hope that time will pass and

something different will come about and will absolve them of their blood-guilt, a blood-guilt just like *yours*, Weasel, the blood-guilt and betrayal of the republic and of the people, along meanwhile with being complicit in the destruction of the *good* that might once have been in all those who now have joined the corpo-masters and, like you, have agreed to lie, to live *in* lying, and to live *by* lying.

“These crimes are grave crimes, Weasel, these crimes are enormous crimes, and many others are guilty of them just as *you* are guilty of them, your colleagues in conspiracy and cover-up and crime like [Jacob Weisberg](#) and [Amy Goodman](#) and [David Corn](#) and [Nicholas Lemann](#) and [Christopher Hayes](#) and [Alexander Cockburn](#) and [Norman Solomon](#) and [Matthew Rothschild](#) and [Greg Palast](#) and more.

“Do you think all those people have become weasels like you and have *remained* weasels like you—well, because *they’re* also somnambulant? No, even you would never accuse your own colleagues of being *sleep-walkers*. If you *did* call them sleep-walkers, the logic would turn straight back on *you* and prove *you* the same thing, a 9/11 sleep-walker. No, there’s something else, isn’t there. Way back in the beginning, you were *told* to lie about 9/11, told either directly or “told” by obvious hints, told by the *corpo-masters*. And then after some of the rotten fruits of an unexposed 9/11 began sliming down to the ground, *other* reasons for keeping mum began appearing. [Read this, by Sheila Samples](#), especially here:

And Bush grows bolder with each victory. He’s determined to have no restraints placed upon him in any area. Immediately upon ramming through the USA Patriot Act just six weeks after 9-11, the administration went on a spree of sweeping up and detaining thousands of citizens without charges and no access to counsel. This act was, and continues to be, the greatest threat to American liberties in our history. It is buoyed by Bush’s Military Commissions Act of 2006, or “no consequences torture bill,” giving himself the empirical right to torture anyone he views as a “terror suspect.”

Perhaps this act is one reason Democrats remain so subservient. Right up front, in Section 948a(2), Bush has the empirical right to decide who is a “lawful enemy combatant.” If you are a “member of the regular forces of a State party engaged in hostilities against the United States,” or even a “member of a volunteer corps or organized resistance movement and you wear a fixed distinctive sign recognizable at a distance,” Bush has the power to decide you are not only hostile but an enemy combatant.

Or how about when she says this, showing that when she wants to, she can get a perfect ten in the Frank Rich style contest:

Is it any wonder that legislators on both sides of the aisle recoil and beat a fast retreat when they look up and see Bush, caught up in the wild influences of his own idiotic imagination, running at them with a lighted firecracker in each hand? Is anyone surprised that Bush so easily got them to agree to his Protect America Act of 2007, which allows the continued secret collection of Americans’ phone calls and e-mails with no oversight. . . no checks. . . no balances?

And so *there's* what it's come to. Pelosi is *afraid*. *That's* why she took impeachment off the table, do you suppose? *That* was the quid pro quo—do or die, very simple. Scholars will find out someday, but what does even the *suggestion* say about how things have developed because you and your colleagues kept on lying about 9/11, keeping the people's one power punch under covers, protecting the fascisti, making sure the road was kept clear for them so they could mess up the Constitution and pass the vile bills they've passed—tell me, how many of *your* colleagues in crime and secrecy and deceit are *afraid*? I know that *I'm* afraid, thanks to the traitorous work you and the many, many likes of you have done. You and the others in the conspiracy of silence and secrecy and cover-up and distortion and disinformation, *you're* the ones who have enabled and *propelled* the junta so that by now it may be altogether too late to stop them from the still further and ever more mad and heinous crimes they plan.

“Too late because of people like *you*, Weasel. *Are you afraid?* *Are you also afraid*, Weasel? *Weasel? Are you?*”



There's more. There's worse. About the Weasel, about *all* the corpo-weasels, and worst of all about the republic—the blood it's losing, has already lost, and with its blood its strength, bringing it already near the point of death, all thanks to the [traitors in our house](#).

There's more. There's worse. But the night is long, the hour late, and we must rest.

—Eric Larsen
—October 22, 2007