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PART THREE
OF
FRANK RICH, ARIANNA HUFFINGTON,
& DWIGHT GARNER ARE
LIARS, DECEIVERS,
AND TRAITORS

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HOWARD ZINN AND THE TEA COZY

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For just about two years now, I've been posting essays on this web site that describe, castigate, and lament the [patent madness](#), especially since 9/11, of American policy, leadership, *and* popular behavior. These essays, further, have described and cried out against the [deathly and poisonous effects](#) not just on the political nation but on its entire culture that have been produced by Americans' choosing to go on living—or “living”—under [the corrupting miasma](#) of one of the greatest, most grotesque, and most destructive lies ever told in the long and admittedly often grim history of the human race.

I've gotten a certain, though not great, number of attacks for my efforts, one of the goofiest being from an old socialist friend in Canada who seems to have gone over the edge of *something somewhere*. His position, as he explained it via email, is that I'm myself the demented one for keeping up the battle for 9/11-Truth—because in actuality “9/11 was a flyspeck on the dust-jacket of history for nearly everyone except those who live in the US and believe fervently that the US is an impregnable monument to all things good and true.”

My old friend must indeed have lost his marbles—and memory—if he really means to put *me* in the company of those who “believe fervently that the US is an impregnable monument to all things good and true.” After all, he himself declared, just before putting me in that ungodly company, that what I really “think” (or hope) is “that the ripcord of truth on 9/11 might bring down Bush and

corporate-imperialist conspiracy,” hardly the aim of one who sees in the U.S. “all things good and true.”

But there’s something more sinister at work in my friend’s thinking, and something also much more self-paralyzing than just tossing out absurd false accusations about people worshiping the U.S. as being *all* good if not in fact being the world’s *only* good. The kindling that set my friend’s anger aflame was an essay I wrote attacking, [among other things, Howard Zinn](#). The kind of “thinking” I attacked in Zinn’s case is repeated by my friend himself in his attempt to attack *me* for attacking *Zinn*. Here’s a look. My friend’s first sally:

So what is Zinn’s sin, what is at the root of EL’s extended attack on this man? Only that he doesn’t join in with his clarion call to denounce 9/11 as a false-flag inside job.

Even my friend’s first shot is mortally compromised by that little word, the adverb “only.” Other little smear-words, like “clarion call,” we can ignore. But truth is truth, and the question of Zinn’s failure to show any interest in the 9/11 Truth movement was, in point of fact, “only” a *part* of what I really did attack him for. If you’d like, [read the essay and see](#).

On the specific matter of 9/11 truth, my friend begins delicately and ends grotesquely:

Now, I am not for a moment going to suggest that the official explanations [of 9/11] are true, but I will suggest that there may be a number of reasons why one bites one’s tongue on this issue, the foremost of which is that, given the horror that is Amerikan history, it’s not really that big a deal. Just stack it up next to the assassinations of Jack Kennedy, Bobby Kennedy, Martin Luther [King], Malcolm X, John Lennon, and Jimmy Hoffa, all within a period of less than twenty years—most, if not all, of these were also “inside jobs.” And this only scratches the surface of malfesance: Arbenz in Guatemala, Allende in Chile, the Dirty War in Argentina, the Contra war against the Sandinistas, and on and on. And that’s only Latin America.

So if EL thinks that the ripcord of truth on 9/11 might bring down Bush and corporate-imperialist conspiracy, then I might ask, if that were true, then why did not the exposures surrounding the Bay of Pigs or the Iran-Contra scandal have the same potential? I’m sorry, but 9/11 was a flyspeck on the dust-jacket of history for nearly everyone except those who live in the US and believe fervently that the US is an impregnable monument to all things good and true.

What on earth kind of argument, may I ask, is *that*? Actually, it’s in a crucial way parallel to the argument that informed Zinn’s own thinking in [“Empire or Humanity? What the Classroom Didn’t Teach Me About the](#)

[American Empire](#),” the essay that recently, after some time away, drew my attention back to Zinn. In that essay, the historian says, first, that his school years hadn’t let him in on the secret that the U.S. in fact had a long imperial history. And, second, he says, or lets it be implied, that that failure was *really bad*. Well, who couldn’t agree? That failure was intolerable. What it means is that schools in the U.S. didn’t, and doubtless still don’t, provide education, at least not in history, but provide propaganda instead, just like the mass media does, and the [treasonous New York Times](#).

The trouble is, though, that the matter doesn’t end there—or, rather, the trouble is that in Zinn’s hands and mind it *does* end there. That is, there’s so much more remaining to be said after what he *does* say, but Zinn chooses to express—and do—virtually nothing. It’s as though his essay is all body but has no brain, or is all face but has no vocal cords. The essay seems almost to have no *conclusion*; it seems to *take us nowhere*.

Let’s look at what really happens in the essay. Zinn tells us that in school he *didn’t* learn about the “Trail of Tears,” or the “Sand Creek massacre,” or the fraudulent seizing of half of Mexico, or “the invasion of Cuba” (after the phony *Maine* sinking), or the subsequent “invasion of the Philippines, halfway around the world.” Fine. Good. He cites for us these ruinous, rapacious, brutishly opportunistic things and events that he didn’t learn about until *after* school. Fine and good, but *now* what? What is the essay going to *say*? What is Zinn, now, going to tell us *about* what he’s told us so far? And there lies the great trouble. The great trouble is that there’s *not going to be* anything more. We’re given the litany of the acts and deeds of brute imperialism that weren’t taught in school—but *then there’s no further step*.

So what, do I hear someone ask? And my own answer is, so *everything*.

What do I mean? Well, we’ve *looked* at the essay. Now let’s look at it *closely*.

As you can see for yourself by clicking again [here](#), Zinn’s essay is related to a new [comic book he’s bringing out](#) called *A People’s History of American Empire*. I find this association—and this new marketing project—very interesting.

Just suppose something for a moment. Just suppose that you were a very, very successful salesman of—well, let’s just say very, very successful salesman of *snake oil*, although I hasten to add that not for *a millionth of a nano-second* would we think of Howard Zinn as a salesman of *snake oil*. [Perish the thought](#). No, we must all clearly agree that the snake oil metaphor is for illustrative purposes *only*.

Now that *that’s* cleared up, let’s pursue the illustration. If you *were* a successful snake oil salesman, what’s the last thing in the world you’d want to

happen? Well, *that's* an easy question, isn't it! The last thing in the world you'd want to happen is that people would become aware that your snake oil actually had no curative effects whatsoever—in other words, *that it had no power*.

You wouldn't want the whistle blown on your snake oil. You wouldn't want snake oil *reform*. You wouldn't—like all those much-hated liberal reformer-types who are always meddling in things that are none of their business while *claiming* that they're working only and solely for the *welfare of the people*—what you wouldn't want, in other words, *is for the snake oil market to bottom out and disappear*.

Now let's shift gears just a bit. If you had built a career based on—just *say*—your having very successfully sold your claims, for a long, long time, that a certain government, or a certain *aspect* of a government, or even a certain *trait, element, or unit* of a government was vile, inhumane, deceitful, self-interested, and perfidious—well, if you *were* in that situation, and if sales *were* still going well, what's *the last thing in the world that you'd want to happen?*

Okay now, hold onto your hats, and *please* don't rush to an adverse judgment, either of *me* or of this essay I'm writing right here and right now, *until you've finished reading the whole damned thing!* *Nobody*—nobody—gets to attack me or it unless they've read the piece to the end!

There. *That's* settled. Now back to business.

If you *were* a successful salesman such as the *purely hypothetical* one described above, here's what the last thing in the world that you'd want to happen would be: The last thing in the world that you'd want to happen would be *that the government you were concerned with should stop being vile, inhumane, deceitful, self-interested, and perfidious*.

Fair enough? We hear a lot about “fallible human nature,” and isn't it generally thought to be true that *most* people will follow that fallible nature and seek—or create—ways to protect and preserve their own interests?

And, if you agree with that premise, wouldn't a corollary premise follow that in very great likelihood Howard *Zinn* would hope and choose *not* for his own interests to be squandered, dissipated, and transformed into an airy nothingness?

In other words, how could you possibly reject—now, *remember your agreement*: You promised not to jump all over this essay, cursing and trampling it in outrage and anger, until you've *read the whole thing*—how could you possibly reject *out of hand* the working hypothesis that Howard Zinn, [best-selling author](#), might very possibly or even powerfully wish that the United States *not* stop being vilely, inhumanely, deceitfully, self-interestedly, and perfidiously imperial?

The logic is probable and clear, you must agree. On the other hand, in case you don't agree, let's look further.

First, let's take a close look at the closing three paragraphs of Zinn's essay. Thus:

The American Empire has always been a bipartisan project—Democrats and Republicans have taken turns extending it, extolling it, justifying it. President Woodrow Wilson told graduates of the Naval Academy in 1914 (the year he bombarded Mexico) that the U.S. used “her navy and her army. . . as the instruments of civilization, not as the instruments of aggression.” And Bill Clinton, in 1992, told West Point graduates: “The values you learned here. . . will be able to spread throughout the country and throughout the world.”

For the people of the United States, and indeed for people all over the world, those claims sooner or later are revealed to be false. The rhetoric, often persuasive on first hearing, soon becomes overwhelmed by horrors that can no longer be concealed: the bloody corpses of Iraq, the torn limbs of American GIs, the millions of families driven from their homes—in the Middle East and in the Mississippi Delta.

Have not the justifications for empire, embedded in our culture, assaulting our good sense—that war is necessary for security, that expansion is fundamental to civilization—begun to lose their hold on our minds? Have we reached a point in history where we are ready to embrace a new way of living in the world, expanding not our military power, but our humanity?

Three points, and then a pulling of the three together. First point, corresponding to the first paragraph: Here, Zinn compiles a few more imperialist lies—and, indeed, they *are* imperialist lies, no doubt about it. These lies are in keeping with the earlier sections of the essay, which compiled other imperialist lies that were, generally, from *earlier* years of U.S. history. Therefore, the essay would seem to be bringing its subject matter, its interest, and its *purpose* increasingly close to the *present*.

And, indeed, point two (corresponding to paragraph two) reinforces this idea by means of its references to the present carnage in Iraq—made possible by lies—and then to the displacement of populations both in New Orleans during and after Katrina—*now—and* in the Middle East generally.

At this point a sub-question arises: Let's call it Question 2 (b). Here it is: Why stop *there*? If—*if*—the essayist's wish is that imperialism be challenged, brought down, and ended, then why doesn't he keep going and stick his lance into the biggest, most visible, and most *vulnerable* chink in the imperialists' armor?

But no dice. Zinn hits the brakes instead. And *then* he drinks down a huge draught of some kind of intellect-numbing agent, a cliché-inducing liquor, or a draught of Lethe-like make-me-a-plain-vanilla-hollow-man drug. I suspect it may, in fact, be the same stuff that [Dwight Garner drinks each morning](#) to keep *his* glibness-while-lying machinery so well oiled.

And so we come to point three. And point three brings us to this great question: The question of just what Zinn *does* with his subject, exactly what it is he's going to *do* to *help us get rid* of a criminal, pirating, inhumane, earth-destroying, treason-engendering, treason-*requiring*, ugly, vile, despised, genocidal, republic-destroying U.S. imperialism.

And the answer to this question?

Nuthin'.

Take a look. Here's firebrand anti-imperialist Zinn telling us—in subordinate phrases—first, that the lies he's cited are “justifications for empire”; second, that they are “embedded in our culture” (dammit, let's *un-embed* them, then, and while we're at it let's *un-embed* the press, too); and, third—oh, *lordy!* oh, *me!* can we stand up under the power of such rhetoric?—that these lies “assault our good sense”!

“*Assault our good sense*”?! God in heaven, it's as though Henry James himself had stepped in front of Zinn and taken over the keyboard. *Fierly* in prose! *Resolute* in tone! *Masculine* in stance! *Determined* in judgment! *Immediate* in impulse! How much more *direct a call* to summary and significant action could we possibly wish for?

How interesting it is—that *this* is what we get from the great progressive historian and well known public figure—*assault our good sense*—when the actuality is dire, overwhelming, and so extreme as soon to be beyond any reach of correction or repair whatsoever: When the actuality is that the repugnant American imperialists *now in power* are indeed *assaulting* us, but with nothing so subtle or perceivable in such delicate ways as Zinn suggests; no, the repugnant American criminals, imperialists, and pirates now in power confront us *each and every day* with things *impossible* to ignore, with repeated acts of treason, with repeated breaches of international law—much of that law dating from the *American-sponsored Nuremberg Trials after WWII*—with repeated crimes against humanity, against peace, against the republic, against the Constitution, against their sworn oaths of office, against their own countrymen and their own countrywomen and against the *children* and the *poor* of their own nation, against the very elements of decency itself, against [Magna Carta](#), against the individual, against the future and the well-being of Earth, against the subtleties and highest accomplishments of all cultures whether ancient or modern, against truth, and, again and again and again, against the most basic notions of humanity or feeling or decency or generosity or compassion in dealings either between peoples or between nations or between men.

Those are the actualities, and why do you suppose it is that instead of touching upon them, recognizing and confronting them, let *alone* taking or recommending action to repudiate or defeat them, Zinn offers us only the most wan and pale of rhetorical questions: Has the time come, asks he, when all these criminal and imperial lies and crimes and atrocities have “begun to lose their hold on our minds”?

But why *should* they have begun to “lose their hold on our minds”? What has Zinn said or done to help *bring about* any semblance or likelihood of an end so desirable as that? Why, for one, single, glaring example—an exact parallel of Naomi Klein’s extraordinary and traitorous omission in *Shock Doctrine*—did he *stop short* of 9/11, merely skip *over* it?



Well. Now that we know that Zinn isn’t going to tell anywhere *near* the whole truth, and that in fact, historian or not, he shows no *interest* in the whole truth, his vacant, bland language, something like the language of a Lotus-eater, begins to make perfect sense. Labeled “progressive,” frequent contributor to the [pernicious *Progressive* magazine](#), he shows no quality here of anything like the true progressive but, instead, every quality of the keeper of the status quo. Have you ever in your life heard words *less* rooted in the hard stones and packed earth of the *real* events, crimes, and atrocities that constitute the horrors of imperial policy under the Bushiscti? words any *more* suitable to the Sunday pulpit than to the progressive reformer? words *more* calculated to bring on self-referential swoons of complacency rather than calls to fight the bastards than Zinn’s closing sentence?

Have we reached a point in history where we are ready to embrace a new way of living in the world, expanding not our military power, but our humanity?¹

¹ Contrast the closing three paragraphs of Paul Craig Roberts’ “[There May Be Many Mushroom Clouds In Our Future](#)” (08/14/2008):

The Ukraine, where a sick nationalism has taken hold funded by the neocon National Endowment for Democracy, will be the next conflict between American pretensions and Russia. Russia is being taught by the neocons that freeing the constituent parts of its empire has not resulted in their independence but in their absorption into the American Empire.

Unless enough Americans can overcome their brainwashed state and the rigged Diebold voting machines, turn out the imbecilic Republicans and hold the neoconservatives accountable for their crimes against humanity, a crazed neocon US government will provoke nuclear war with Russia.

The neoconservatives represent the greatest danger ever faced by the United States and the world. Humanity has no greater enemy.

I first became aware of this essay, ancillary to Zinn's [new comic book](#), when it appeared on Tom Englehardt's well known [TomDispatch.com](#). On that site, above each new "dispatch," you'll find a sentence designed to explain what the web site's purpose and intended audience are. That sentence is worth a close look. Thus:

Tomdispatch.com is for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of our post-9/11 world and a clear sense of how our imperial globe actually works.

Am I alone among the throngs of humanity in finding this an eminently foolish sentence—and at the same time one perfectly suited to what we've seen of the spirit and stance of Howard Zinn? Two things leap out, one of them a real shocker, the glib and simple phrase "our imperial globe." Good *god*, is it true? Is it a fact that now not only the U.S. but the entire *globe* is imperial? Zounds, *that'll* up the ante for the extent and breadth of Howard Zinn's exhausting non-work: *Now* he'll have to slave away at [scaring everyone in the world](#) instead of only those in the U.S. with the horrifying facts of imperialist behavior while at the same time making sure he does all he can to allow that set and species of great crimes to continue.

A Herculean task, but not, apparently, Sisyphean.

The other phrase is a wretched cliché seen everywhere, a phrase that can be spoken only by those plunged in deep ignorance, victimized by immeasurable indolence, or in the grip of the most egregiously criminal malignancy. I mean the phrase "our post-9/11 world."

It is, of course, with *very* few exceptions, always a lie, intentional or unintentional. Those ignorant enough to believe the "official" line that on 9/11 the U.S. really *was* "attacked" by nineteen Muslim kids with box-cutters are unintentional liars when they use the words "post-9/11 world," since what they mean is "the world after the U.S. was attacked by Al Qaeda and nineteen young members of militant Islam." And in truth, of course, there simply *is no* "*post-9/11 world*" of that kind, of the kind they think, or *may* think, there is, since that kind of "attack" never happened. On the other hand, the *actual* malignant and treasonous perpetrators of 9/11, those from within our own government or associated with our own government, are liars of another kind, deliberate and witting ones, when *they* speak of "our post-9/11 world." The reason is obvious: *They* lie in order to maintain *the wholly false myth* that the U.S. really was attacked by Al Qaeda and members of militant Islam, and they do so in order to keep the way clear for the continuation of the very same international crimes and crimes against humanity and also against the republic and against the Constitution that they all along *planned and intended* 9/11 to be the door that, once opened, would clear the way for them, with neither punishment nor accountability, first to initiate and then to continue perpetrating without end in sight.

Now, the really fascinating question is the question of which kind of liar Tom Englehardt is. He plays his cards very close to his chest, telling his considerable readership that he will give them, as I mentioned, “a deeper understanding of our post-9/11 world,” though without tipping his hand in any way whatsoever *as to what that term might possibly mean*. At the same time, through actual practice, it becomes clear that TomDispatch.com won’t even *entertain* the idea of touching the subject of the truth of 9/11 with a ten-foot—well, with a ten-foot fire hook.

But let it go—TomDispatch.com is, after all, “A Project of [The Nation Institute](#),” and we all know—or if any of us don’t, we [damn well should](#) know—that [The Nation](#) is one of the most visible, egregious, complicit, and thus traitorous of “[left-wing](#)” [gatekeepers](#) that our now-all-but-lost republic is burdened, cursed, and diseased-unto-the-death by. It follows that so is TomDispatch.com.

But let that go, too. Our real subject here, after all, is, first, the thinking of Howard Zinn, and, second, the thinking of my old socialist friend in Canada.

After its appearance on TomDispatch, the Zinn essay appeared widely on various outlets on the internet. And what could possibly be wrong with that? Well, nothing at all—except that, like Zinn’s essay itself, all that exposure led to nothing, and certainly to nothing *good*.

As a way of suggesting *why* it led to nothing good, allow me refer to a recent and worthwhile piece by Kieren McCarthy called “[Why TV News in the US is Utter Rubbish](#).” McCarthy quickly, deftly, and accurately shows how and why U.S. television news is indeed “utter rubbish,” and then he asks a perfectly reasonable question: “So where do you get your news while living in the US?”

The [Daily Show](#) and the Colbert Report, he says, are two places (sort of), but his most interesting observation has to do with National Public Radio. It’s this:

News-starved Americans usually hold up National Public Radio, NPR, as the best option. But with interlude music fresh from the 1920s and a twee, kitchen-table-chat approach, this is news wrapped in a tea cosy.

And there it is: McCarthy has hit precisely on what the relationship is between Howard Zinn and *his* audience—*he’s* wrapped in the tea cozy, and his audience absolutely loves how warm and soft he is. Even my angry socialist friend from Canada criticized my [attack on Zinn](#) for the very reason that Zinn “truly is a warm-hearted and brilliant leftist.” Now, the “brilliant” point aside, if anyone can tell me what in the name of the devil being “warm-hearted” could have to do with any of the intellectual questions at hand, I hope they’ll [write and let me in on it](#). But as far as I can tell, my friend has effectively put his own

imprimatur on the tea-cozy concept of Zinn, just as Kieren McCarthy has put *his* imprimatur on the tea cozy nature of NPR.

It means, quite literally, that for his particular audience, Zinn *is* the tea cozy. He *is* nice and warm and reassuring and soothing—*exactly* the things the tea cozy is. And, oh, disgruntled reader, I hear you asking, “And what’s wrong with *that*?” Well, what’s wrong with it is that tea cozies may be cozy, but they don’t *think*, and neither do they *express thought*. And Zinn, in his function *as* tea cozy (just like NPR in *its* function as tea cozy), has set out to make *absolutely certain* that his audience continue to *think* that it’s thinking while at the same time, at whatever cost, he continues to *keep it from actually doing so*. If this weren’t the case, both Howard Zinn *and* NPR would be out of business. Would it were so, since *then* they might each be able actually to do some *real and whole* truth-telling and therefore some *good*.

Let’s just consider, together, the cases of Howard Zinn and Tom Englehardt. Let’s think of each of them as tea cozies. And let’s do so, specifically, in regard to the question of the truth about 9/11—who did it, why they did it, and how they got away with it.

Of course, *how they got away with it* is almost entirely through the complicity of a corrupt, controlled, and treasonous mass media—with the initial exception of [now-gone Dan Rather, who was far enough out of the criminal loop that he naively and honestly put into words exactly what he saw](#). But not Howard Zinn, and not Tom Englehardt. God *forbid* that Zinn as tea cozy should ever do anything that’s, let’s say, cold or jarring to his audience of loving and devoted followers, or harsh or unexpected or against the grain or counter-intuitive or unfamiliar or—or *true* in some unexpected way—having to do, say, with 9/11 truth—that the tea-cozy-cuddlers hadn’t previously *thought* of, been in the *habit* of thinking of, or been lucky enough to have had reason to be *awake to* at all.

What would happen to Tom Englehardt if *he* told or revealed the truth about 9/11? Well, he’d lose his job with The Nation Institute, naturally.

And so what *should* Tom Englehardt do? He *should*—if he’s an American, a patriot, a citizen of the world, a humanist, an adherent of international law and of the Geneva Conventions and the Nuremberg Principles and a defender of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man—he *should* tell *and* reveal the truth about 9/11 at once, immediately, boldly, bravely, and informedly.

And Howard Zinn? What would happen to Howard Zinn if *he* told or revealed the truth about 9/11? Well, he’d lose his publishing opportunities with TomDispatch.com, and with [Progressive Magazine](#), naturally, and he’d lose half or more, maybe all, of the audience for [his new comic book](#), also naturally.

And so what *should* Howard Zinn do? He *should*—if he’s an American, a patriot, a citizen of the world, a humanist, an adherent of international law and of the Geneva Conventions and the Nuremberg Principles and a defender of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man—he *should* tell *and* reveal the truth about 9/11 at once, immediately, boldly, bravely, and informedly.

That is what they *should* do—and it’s what they *must* do if they hope in any way whatsoever to avoid the absolute certainty of history’s declaring them at some later date—a date that I devoutly wish be soon—to be quislings, traitors, criminals against the republic, criminals against the republic’s Constitution, criminals against peace, criminals against international law, criminals against conscience, criminals against the sovereignty of nations, and criminals against the sanctity of the individual human self.

Exactly the same is true also of the following people, not to mention many, many, many others not listed here: [Alexander Cockburn](#), [Arianna Huffington](#), Bill Keller, Bill Moyers, Bob Herbert, [Christopher Hayes](#), David Corn, [Dwight Garner](#), [Elliot Spitzer](#), [Frank Rich](#), [Jacob Weisberg](#), Katrina vanden Heuvel, [Larry Silverstein](#), [Matthew Rothschild](#), [Nicholas Lemann](#), [Noam Chomsky](#), Paul Krugman, and Ted Rall.

And what about my old socialist friend in Canada? Do you remember what he said?

Well, in case you don’t, here’s what he said:

Now, I am not for a moment going to suggest that the official explanations [of 9/11] are true, but I will suggest that there may be a number of reasons why one bites one’s tongue on this issue, the foremost of which is that, given the horror that is Amerikan history, it’s not really that big a deal. Just stack it up next to the assassinations of Jack Kennedy, Bobby Kennedy, Martin Luther [King], Malcolm X, John Lennon, and Jimmy Hoffa, all within a period of less than twenty years—most, if not all, of these were also “inside jobs.” And this only scratches the surface of malfeasance: Arbenz in Guatemala, Allende in Chile, the Dirty War in Argentina, the Contra war against the Sandinistas, and on and on. And that’s only Latin America.

So if EL thinks that the ripcord of truth on 9/11 might bring down Bush and corporate-imperialist conspiracy, then I might ask, if that were true, then why did not the exposures surrounding the Bay of Pigs or the Iran-Contra scandal have the same potential? I’m sorry, but 9/11 was a flyspeck on the dust-jacket of history for nearly everyone except those who live in the US and believe fervently that the US is an impregnable monument to all things good and true.

Well, old friend, you who value Howard Zinn because he “truly is. . . warm-hearted,” how much of “a flyspeck on the dust-jacket of history” do you

really think 9/11 is to the [million and a quarter Iraqis](#) now dead *because* of it, or the [four million Iraqis](#) now displaced *because* of it, or the unnumbered [dead](#) and [dying](#) from [radioactive depleted uranium](#) *because* of it? And how much of “a flyspeck on the dust-jacket of history” do you think it will mean to Canadians themselves when [the sovereignty of their own nation](#) is stolen from them *because* of it? How much of “a flyspeck on the dust-jacket of history” does it seem to the [South Ossetians who are dying](#) *because* of it? How much of “a flyspeck on the dust-jacket of history” will it seem to the Iranians if they are atom-bombed *because* of it?

And, old friend, your notion that 9/11 is “a flyspeck on the dust-jacket of history” because it’s historically preceded by so many *other* heinous crimes committed by the same “Amerikan” elements that committed 9/11—well, what you’re saying is the equivalent of this: “There have been cases and cases of cancer ever since the earliest dawn of antiquity. Therefore, any new case of cancer is nothing more than ‘a flyspeck on the history of cancer’ and shouldn’t be treated as anything special—in fact, shouldn’t be treated at *all*,” especially since all those much *earlier* cases went untreated.

Good god, old man. You’re not one of *them*, are you? One of the *Zinnians*? One of the *Englehardts*? One of the *Katrina vanden Heuvels*? One of the [Amy Goodmans](#)?

One of the default *complicitors*?

One of the *tea cozies*?

Tell me not, I pray you. Tell me not.

—Eric Larsen
—August 17, 2008