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VINCENT BUGLIOSI AND ME

(*AND THE LAWS*

OF FORBIDDEN THOUGHT)

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1

Who in a thousand years thought *I* would ever have anything in common with [Vincent Bugliosi](#)? But I do, thanks to the dying nation he and I both happen to be living in—along with all of you who are reading this.

What I myself have in common with Bugliosi has to do with books—and therefore with lies. In America today, after all, almost everything having to do with books also has to do with lies—big ones, little ones, lies by omission, commission, the works.

In brief, what I've got in common with Bugliosi is that neither he nor I can get our most recent books reviewed. Why not? For this simple reason: His book and mine each tells the truth, and, under the [laws of forbidden truth](#), that's an activity now against the law in the United States. This law may not be *de jure*—yet—but it's sure as hell *de facto*. Most people don't know that this is the case, or even if they *do* have a sense of it, they refuse to believe it. But it's there, it's true, it's just like in Orwell: It's *all a matter of forbidden thought*.

My example and Bugliosi's are the same in kind though different—I hasten to point out—in degree. When I published [A Nation Gone Blind: America in an Age of Simplification and Deceit](#) in 2006, not a soul in the mainstream media reviewed it (and not a soul *anywhere* reviewed it using ink on paper). Why not? Because it *hinted* at the truth about 9/11. That alone was enough truth to kill it dead for mainstream attention or review.

Now Bugliosi has brought out [*The Prosecution of George W. Bush for Murder*](#), and the same thing is happening. Nobody in the mainstream will touch it with a ten-foot pole. After all, it's a book telling the truth. (For corroboration of the legal position that Bush is in point of fact legally guilty of the crime of murder, read [this interview](#) with the great scholar/lawyer and expert on war Crimes and International Law [Francis A. Boyle](#).)

Still, though we share truth-telling as a meritorious burden, there *are* a couple of differences between Bugliosi's struggle with the laws of forbidden thought and *mine*. For one thing, in spite of big media's blackout of Bugliosi's book, it has nevertheless sold enormously well ("about 130,000 copies"), thanks to the author's own fame *and* to the internet attention that's been given the new book. And then there's another—this time *really* interesting—difference between his case and mine. In Bugliosi's case, the villainous, venomous, murder-condoning and -abetting *New York Times* itself saw fit to run an actual news article dedicated to revealing and explaining Bugliosi's high sales in spite of his absence of reviews.

Just in case you didn't catch it, the difference is that the treasonous *Times* didn't do that for *me*.

This most, most interesting piece appeared on page four of the Business section for July 7, in the "Media" sub-section that runs there on Mondays. As you and I know, the article *ought* to have been on the *first* business page instead of the fourth, or even on the front page of the whole paper, with a jump either into Arts and Culture or Business. Obviously, the material is important enough for that kind of placement. But to *get* that kind of placement, you'd need, instead of the *Trick-You-Times*, to have a real paper with real editors aiming to present and elucidate real news.

Sarcastic, huh. I can hear a readerly grumble that Larsen is *never* satisfied; that even *now*, when there actually *is* something real and significant in the *New York Times*, he's *still* not satisfied, is still nothing more than a curmudgeonly grumbler.

Fair enough—but only at first glance. Let me say three things in response. First, never trust your enemy. Second, kudos to Tim Arango, whose byline the piece runs under, for managing to get this piece *anywhere* into the pages of the nation's most august paper. And, third—or "*But*, third"—let's take a good close look at the article, analyze it with the care it deserves, and see if we can find out see what it's actually doing and actually saying.

If you're not interested in doing that, quit reading right here and pay whatever the price of quitting may be. However, if you *are* interested, allow me to warn you that the *real* content of the piece, as we'll see, is anything but encouraging, being made up of misapprehension at best, and of every variety of dodge, deceit, and lie you can think of at worst.

In the paper itself, the piece runs under the headline “High on the Best-Seller List, And Ignored by the Media,” with a sub-head reading “Ex-Prosecutor’s Book Accuses Bush of Murder.” Curiously enough, however, in the online *Times*, the head has been abandoned, replaced by the less subtle—and less likely to be searched for?—“Ex-Prosecutor’s Book Accuses Bush of Murder.”

Tsk, tsk. *Think* of it, someone actually accusing Bush of *murder*!

As before, I suggest that all skeptics and tongue-cluckers click [here](#).

Now, to [the Times piece](#). Permit me to quote generously. Arango’s lead paragraph points out that Mr. Bugliosi is undefeated as a prosecutor in murder trials, with “21 trials, 21 convictions, including the [Charles Manson](#) case in 1971.” The article continues:

As an author, Mr. Bugliosi has written three No. 1 best sellers and won three [Edgar Allan Poe](#) awards, the top honor for crime writers. More than 30 years ago he co-wrote the best seller “Helter Skelter,” about the Manson case.

So Mr. Bugliosi could be forgiven for perhaps thinking that a new book would generate considerable interest, among reviewers and on the broadcast talk-show circuit.

But if he thought that, he would have been mistaken: his latest, a polemic with the provocative title “The Prosecution of [George W. Bush](#) for Murder,” has risen to best-seller status with nary a peep from the usual outlets that help sell books: cable television and book reviews in major daily newspapers.

Internet advertising has been abundant, but ABC Radio refused to accept an advertisement for the book during the [Don Imus](#) show, said Roger Cooper, the publisher of Vanguard Press, which put out the book.

ABC Radio did not respond to a request for comment.

Is anyone else laughing, or am I to be forced yet again to laugh alone, as I did for decades in class after class full of [poor American students](#) who just didn’t get the jokes in, say, *Waiting for Godot*, another piece of drama where the lies zing around like—well, like fireworks?

ABC Radio! Don Imus! What a laugh riot it is, what a thigh-slapper, watching such bald-faced hypocrisy in action! Truth? *Don’t tell it. News media? Ha.*

The *truth* is told by Glen Ford, editor of *Black Agenda Report*, in his own recent article, “[Corporate Reporters Tell Lies for a Living](#),” which I’d recommend to everyone, just as I’d recommend that everyone keep a close eye on the enormously perceptive and intelligent *Black Agenda Report* itself. (And while you’re at it, check out Ford’s July 9th piece, “[‘Progressives for Obama’ Fool Themselves.](#)”)

But back to the business of hypocrisy, misprision, and lies. Tim Arango points out that Bugliosi did in fact expect some rough sledding, but not *this* rough:

Mr. Bugliosi, in a recent telephone interview from his home in Los Angeles, said he had expected some resistance from the mainstream media because of the subject matter—the book lays a legal case for holding President Bush “criminally responsible” for the deaths of American soldiers in Iraq—but not a virtual blackout.

The irony here is most precious indeed, almost as complex as the ironies in Don Quixote, where Cervantes, as a friend remarked to me forty or so years ago, creates a narrative along the lines of nested [Chinese boxes](#). Maybe the *Times* has learned something from the great inventor of the first novel, though I doubt it, but nevertheless the trickery is sublime as Tim Arango’s editors allow him to report on and write about “a virtual blackout” of greatly important news—*while still practicing that virtual blackout themselves!*

Ironies this delicious don’t usually occur outside of *real* literary writing (writing like, say, *Waiting for Godot*). So far, this particular piece of *Times*-ian fiction-writing has been a delight. But here’s a test: The contrivances and plot-turns are going to continue, and, as they do, if your delight doesn’t turn quickly to nausea and disgust—well, then, *you fail the test*.

So, let’s get going. Here’s the first paragraph in the test, and those students earning a grade of “A” will be those who, by the time they reach the paragraph’s closing sentence, will be 1) still amused, yet 2) amused with a simultaneous admixture of incredulity and scorn at such *blatant* self-service, not to mention 3) being absolutely certain that what they’re reading is a bald-faced lie:

The book was published in late May by Vanguard Press, a division of the Perseus Books Group—which also owns *PublicAffairs*, the publisher of the recent memoir by a former White House spokesman, [Scott McClellan](#)—and has sold about 130,000 copies. On Sunday it was No. 14 on the *New York Times* best-seller list. (The *Times* published a lengthy review of Mr. Bugliosi’s Kennedy book last year by the writer Bryan Burrough of *Vanity Fair*; his latest book is under consideration for review, said Robert R. Harris, the deputy editor of *The New York Times Book Review*.)

Just exactly [how stupid are Americans](#), and exactly how stupid does the *Times* think its readers actually *are*? To get an “A” on this quiz, your amusement and scorn will have to be, first, equally mixed upon your initial reading of that last sentence, but then they must very, very quickly grow sharply imbalanced, until sheer scorn, and maybe even something stronger than that, outweighs the amusement by at least ninety-eight parts to one. The *gall!* The *asininity!* The crude, gross, utterly shameless and complacent *taking of us for granted as idiots of the very first degree!*

The *bastards!* The *bastardettes!*

To lie so *freely*, to lie so *casually*, to lie so *transparently*, to lie in such *open and unconcealed contempt* for those being lied *to*—O, Dante, Dante, what circle in your *Inferno* is horrible enough for the writers and editors of *The New York Times*?

In short, and you can take it from me, Robert R. Harris, deputy editor of *The New York Times Book Review*, is a liar so great, a liar so unrepentant, a liar so self-serving, a liar so opportunistic, and a liar so utterly absent of conscience that—well, that he is perfectly suited for an editorial position at the *New York Times*.

3

If Bugliosi's George-Bush-Is-Guilty-of-Murder book is “under consideration for review” at the NYTBR, I am not only a duck-billed platypus but I'm also the duck-billed platypus that wrote the plays of Shakespeare.

Americans are so stupid, so naïve, so unobservant, so un-self-reliant, and, above all, so perfectly trained *not to judge* but merely to *trust and accept* their nation's main political and cultural institutions as being in equal parts authoritative and honorable—so indoctrinated in such ways as these are Americans that by this late date they don't know when they're being lied to and when they're not, and, even worse, they've been so corrupted, ruined, and anti-educated as a people that they don't even consider lies and betrayal *to matter very much anymore*.

If the entirety of what I've just said weren't true, there would be *no way*, in the name of all that's sacred and holy, that Robert R. Harris could actually be an editor at *The New York Times*. If the entirety of what I've just said weren't true, there would be *no way*, in the name of all that's sacred and holy, that the traitor Nancy Pelosi would still be Speaker of the House rather than herself having been impeached for having failed to honor her oath of office by failing to honor, protect, defend, and preserve the Constitution of the United States. If the entirety of what I've just said weren't true, there would be *no way*, in the name of all that's sacred and holy, that the traitor-murderer-war criminal George W. Bush would ever—by using an entire *structure* of bald-faced lies—have gotten away with committing his [supreme international crime](#) of aggression, his [crime against peace](#), by invading Iraq and destroying that nation and its people. And if the entirety of what I've just said weren't true, there would be *no way*, in the name of all that's sacred and holy, that either Bush, or Pelosi, or Reid, or Cheney, or Harman, or Nadler, or Conyer would still be in office, since all of them—and many more along with them—would have been impeached, tried, convicted, and removed from office for failure *at the very least* to honor, protect, defend, and preserve the Constitution of the United States.

So steeped are we in lies; so accustomed are we to accepting lies as not carrying *significance*; so entirely woven are lies into the very warp and woof of our culture from bottom to top that we are all, as a result, a lost and rudderless people, without compass either literal or moral, *steeped* in ignorance and passivity, unable any longer even to know or tell either *what the truth is*, first, or *what the truth matters*, second.

Now, let's look at some more of the lies in the *New York Times* piece about Bugliosi and me. First, though, everyone *please* take a moment to read over once again

Rand Cunningham’s absolutely extraordinary and also dismally—I’ll go ahead and say it: *tragically*—appropriate piece, “[Faster Than the Speed of Lies](#).”

4

For openers, a paragraph that serves to show two things: First, that the “virtual blackout” is akin to the “bandwagon effect” in the days of plain, old-fashioned propaganda; and, second, that Jon Stewart is—well, what other choice of words?—a big fat hypocrite just like all the other miserable “liberal gatekeepers” that I so unhappily analyzed—[and listed](#)—not so long ago.

The paragraph:

Mr. Bugliosi said bookers for cable television, where he has made regular appearances to promote books, have ignored his latest offering. MSNBC and Comedy Central’s “The Daily Show” were two outlets Mr. Bugliosi had thought would show interest, but neither did.

So much for truth. And so much for “The Daily Show.” As for the latter, if you really want to toss your cookies all over the carpet, take a look at *this* for honorable mention in the lies-are-disgusting sweepstakes: “A spokeswoman for Comedy Central said the staff of ‘The Daily Show’ was on vacation and unavailable for comment.”

On *vacation!* And *I’m* the Queen of Sheba. *Plus* I wrote the plays of Shakespeare.

This next one—being what you might call a “slant-lie”—is more subtle but far, far from any less nauseating:

A representative for MSNBC said: “We get many pitches to interview authors and very few end up on our programs.”

And isn’t *that* a rarity and a gem? “We get many pitches to interview authors,” indeed. And just exactly how many of those authors are of the rank and significance and fame of *Vincent Bugliosi*, if one may inquire of your Excellency?

I can understand why they wouldn’t put *me* on the show. But *this* kind of fraud is more than the gorge can take. The *truth* isn’t that there’s too much *competition*, for god’s sake. The *truth* is that they’re not going to touch Bugliosi with a ten-foot pole, first, because he’s arguing that Bush should be tried for *murder*, and the truth is, *second*, that they won’t touch him with a ten-foot pole because he’s *right*, and Bush *is* guilty of murder. Go ahead, [take another look at the Francis A. Boyle interview](#). And while you’re at it, give yourself this rare pleasure: Give yourself the sheer and wondrous pleasure simply of imagining what it would actually and really and truly be *like* to see and hear “a representative for MSNBC” stand there in front of the mike and in front of the camera and say “We have determined that we will not have Mr. Bugliosi on the show because he advocates the prosecution of President Bush for murder.”

Wonder of wonders!! Mirabile dictu!! What would it be like to see *that*?

And let's go a step farther and imagine something even more extraordinary, amazing, and interesting. Let's imagine that the "representative for MSNBC" is asked whether there is in fact any validity or substance whatsoever to Mr. Bugliosi's assertion that President Bush is in a position making him rightly and justly subject to prosecution for murder.

Imagine this: Imagine the "representative for MSNBC" answering, "Yes."

Irony of ironies! Bugliosi is bringing with him the *truth*. *Therefore* he'll *never* get *on the air* again!!

But nothing so exciting, nothing so bracing, nothing so restorative, nothing so tonic and refreshing and salutary even as *that* exchange of truth will ever happen—never, not in the United States of *America*, not under the [Laws of Forbidden Thought](#).

5

Instead, in this nation of lies and liars,¹ we get only shamelessness and fraud, then more shamelessness and fraud, both of these accompanied by the miserable destructions of human dignity, decency, independence, and *strength* that they bring with them as surely as germs in an open wound bring infection or the loss of blood brings death.

In *this* United States, we don't get truth, but instead, from dawn to dusk, and even in our fraud-imbued dreams, we get deviousness, misinformation, misdirection, rot-think, rot-talk, rot-commentary:

The editor of *Newsweek*, Jon Meacham, said he had not read the manuscript, but he offered a reason why the media might be silent: "I think there's a kind of Bush-bashing fatigue out there."

Sure.

And of course "The editor of *Newsweek*, Jon Meacham," is absolutely right, it's much, much better to change the channel, as he so obviously is wont to have us do, than it is to suffer the "fatigue" of being allowed to see, or learn, or find out that your nation is criminal and a fraud, that its most influential cultural leaders function not to keep you *aware* of truth but to keep truth *from* you, one salient example of such truth being the truth that the leading members of your own government, with your own president at its head, are deserving of prosecution for murder.

¹ "The sixty years that have brought us the new America have brought us also a virtually perfected socio-political culture of lies and lying, a culture built on a foundation of lying, framed by walls of lying, covered by a roof of lying." ([A Nation Gone Blind: America in an Age of Simplification and Deceit](#), p. 10)

But Americans can't think, Americans can't write, and so there's no danger of the truth sneaking past the diabolic and conscienceless tricks and treacheries and lies of men like Jon Meacham or "a representative for MSNBC," or the editors of the *Times*, or the programmers and commentators at NPR, in order that the nation's people ever *could* learn what their nation really *is*—murderous—and what their leaders really *are*—murderers—and what their cultural guardians really function *as*—abettors, aids to murder. No, no recognitions of *that* sort will happen, not if the cultural guardians have anything to say about it. And therefore no healing, no strength, no humanity, no decency, no *good* will find a way back into the nation again, *ever*.

Americans can't think, Americans can't write. America will die. America is dead already.

America's president is a murderer. America's vice-president is a murderer. The speaker of the house is a murderer. All of the members of both houses of congress, excepting possibly six or seven of them, are murderers.

But Americans can't think, Americans can't write, so there's no danger of their discovering this vile, satanic truth in time to do anything about it.

On or near March 6, 2007, an eminent, nationally recognized publisher and editor whose entire career has been dedicated to what he has perceived as the best interests of the nation's culture and its literature, wrote me saying that he wanted to be taken off my mailing list, that he didn't want to get any more of my pieces of writing, which he referred to rather vaguely as "this." This person was the second major editor to leave me, the first having been Robert Silvers, editor of [The New York Review of Books](#), who had made his decision even earlier, on or near January 18, 2007. In a letter to readers around that time, I had mentioned Silvers' departure. And what the second publisher-editor to back out on me said was this: "I'm sorry, but I need to join Robert Silvers and opt out of this."

This?

I know that this editor and publisher's departure was on or near March 6, 2007, because his email was in response to an email of my own to him—and to my readers' list—which contained the link to a short piece that I'd written on March 5 and posted on March 6. It was called "Amazing Developments," and you can see it, if you like, by [clicking here](#) (It followed on the heels of another short piece, "Movement on 9/11 Truth," written and posted on March 3. You can read it [here](#)).

Because this publisher and I had had a very long relationship, because his note had come all of a sudden, because it was unusually terse, *and*, most of all, because I did really wonder what he meant by "*this*," I wrote back saying I was sorry to see him leave and asking why he had decided, so suddenly, to do so.

Here, in part, is what he wrote back:

I do not believe the Bush folks conspired to create 9/11 in order to take further charge of the country. I believe the causes of 9/11 are the appropriate consequences of 40 years of horrific American foreign policies where we thought nothing of lying, cheating, killing and interfering with the governments of sovereign nations and states all over the planet. We received our just desserts and there will be more. I think the rest is a circus of imaginings by conspiracy-enthusiasts. That's the "this" I am opting out of.

"I believe." "I do not believe."

How different these phrases are from "I have learned" or "I have not learned," or how even more greatly different they are from the phrases "I know" or "I do not know."

This publisher and editor, whom I had admired for many, many years as an important literary guide, had let me down *completely*. My work on *9/11 truth* was the "*this*" he couldn't stand. But what *about* 9/11 truth was it that he couldn't stand? I admit that "Amazing Developments" had strong language, as most of my pieces do, but how can *that* be inappropriate when the very *subject* I'm writing about has to do with the life and death of entire nations and peoples, with murder, genocide, crimes against humanity and the [supreme international crime](#)? What I wrote was impassioned, yes. And it was all the more impassioned because of its "second" yet equally important subject—not 9/11 itself, not the fraud and deceit themselves, not even the towering and heinous crimes themselves, but the awful, awful, awful refusal, or inability, or *unwillingness*, whether through fear or not, of Americans to *see* these acts, these crimes, these murders, these atrocities *for what they are*, if only in order that *something* then can be done about them.

Americans are ignorant. Americans can't think. They *want* to be that way.

What else can I conceivably conclude about the publisher and editor I once admired? He doesn't say he'll look *into* it. He doesn't say he'll read any of the *books* I've read [and have recommended](#) again and again and again.

No, he just says "I believe." He just says "I don't believe." He just says that study of 9/11 truth is a "circus of imaginings by conspiracy-enthusiasts."

What a *jerk*. Does he realize that he's making that inane smear about *me*? Does he realize that he's calling *me*, a then-sixty-five-year-old man who'd written five books, won two literary prizes, been a professor for forty years, and for *a year and a half*, almost monthly, been writing carefully reasoned pieces, apparently unread by him, about the transparencies of 9/11 and the myriad hypocrisies and lies surrounding it—does he even realize that he's calling *me* a circus clown?

Smear. Innuendo. The slinging of pejoratives. *It's so much simpler than finding out what's really true*. It's so much simpler than *studying*. It's so much easier than having the knowledge of true, serious, heinous crimes—murder, for just one example—on your

conscience, crimes committed by your own country, your own elected leaders, *your own symbolic flesh and blood*.

Americans don't know. Americans are ignorant. Americans don't *want* to know. Americans *want* to be ignorant.

Ah, Bartleby! Ah, Vincent Bugliosi! Ah, America!

We are a nation of the blind being led by the *self*-blinded. We are a nation of the blind being led therefore by the *criminal*.

To *lead* and not to *know* is purest folly. A leader who does this is blind.

To *lead* and not to know when you *could* know is a crime. A leader who does this is *self*-blinded and is *criminally blinding those whom he or she leads*.

The publisher I'm writing about here, like Robert Silvers, is a *leader* in literary, political, and cultural realms. As for the publisher, the case appears to be that he is not merely blind but criminally self-blinded, that he has *chosen not* to know when he *could* know. He has thus become a *criminal leader*.

I myself offered him the choice. I showed him [evidence of the truth in many of the pieces I wrote](#), and I showed him furthermore many other ways and places where he could find and see other evidence of that truth, both [in books](#) and in other places, like this one, which I [wrote about here](#), which you can [see for yourself here](#), and which I have reason to believe he particularly despised and therefore rejected.

What is the difference between courage and cowardice?

What is the difference between knowledge and ignorance?

Is Robert Silvers only blind, or is he *knowingly* and therefore *criminally* blind, working criminally to keep *others* that way?

Do you think he will ever read this question? Do you think he will ever *answer* it?

“A spokeswoman for Comedy Central said the staff of “The Daily Show” was on vacation and unavailable for comment.”

As a *literary* nation, we are already well past dead. After all, [those who can't see the real can't conceivably write literature that's real](#).

I believe. I do not believe.

I think the rest is a circus of imaginings by conspiracy-enthusiasts.

Press TV: Senator Obama talks about change but of course he has courting Wall Street as well as the Israeli lobby—do you see any prospect of change with him as president?

Gore Vidal: Not really. I don't doubt his good faith, just as I do not doubt the bad faith of Cheney and Bush. They are such dreadful people that we've never had in government before. They would never have risen unless they were buying elections as they did in Florida in 2000, as they did in the State of Ohio in 2004. These are two open thefts of the Presidency. When I discovered that this did not interest the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post* or any of the press of the country I realized our day was done. We are no longer a country we are a framework for crooks to go in and steal money. Knowing that they'll never be caught and they'll be admired for it. Americans always take everybody on his own evaluation. You say I'm a state and they say "oh, yeah yeah yeah, he's a state, isn't that great." And you accuse the other people of your crimes before you commit them. It's an old trick which was known to Machiavelli who wrote about it in his handbook, *The Prince*.²

Who on earth was Machiavelli?

—Eric Larsen
—July 18, 2008

² [“The US is Not a Republic Anymore.” An interview with Gore Vidal by Afshin Rattansi, Press TV, Tehran.](#)