

The Top 250 Chomsky Lies

Compiled by Paul Bogdanor

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“[Noam Chomsky] begins as a preacher to the world and ends as an intellectual crook.”

– Arthur Schlesinger
(*Commentary*, December 1969)

“Noam Chomsky skittles and skithers all over the political landscape to distract the reader’s attention from the plain truth.”

– Sidney Hook
(*The Humanist*, March-April 1971)

“[Noam Chomsky] constantly shifts his arguments and bends references, quotations and facts, while declaring his ‘commitment to find the truth.’”

– Leopold Labedz
(*Encounter*, July 1980)

“Even on the rare occasions when Mr. Chomsky is dealing with facts and not with fantasies, he exaggerates by a factor of, plus or minus, four or five.”

– Walter Laqueur
(*The New Republic*, March 24, 1982)

“After many years, I came to the conclusion that everything [Noam Chomsky] says is false. He will lie just for the fun of it. Every one of his arguments was tinged and coded with falseness and pretense. It was like playing chess with extra pieces. It was all fake.”

– Paul Postal
(*The New Yorker*, March 31, 2003)

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Communist Mass Murderers: General

10.

The Lie: “in comparison to the conditions imposed by US tyranny and violence [in Vietnam], East Europe under Russian rule was practically a paradise.”¹

The Truth: Civilian deaths in peacetime Eastern Europe dwarfed civilian deaths in wartime Vietnam. The Soviets and their collaborators murdered 4 million in Ukraine;² 200,000 in Hungary;³ 185,000 in East Germany;⁴ 150,000 in Poland;⁵ 120,000 in Romania;⁶ etc. Other crimes were the murder of over 500,000 POWs⁷ and the rape of at least 2 million women by the Red Army.⁸ In wartime Vietnam, credible estimates of the civilian death toll in the South range from 195,000 to 430,000 by 1975;⁹ the estimate of the civilian death toll in the North was 52,000 by 1969.¹⁰

9.

The Lie: “Elementary rationality would lead someone interested in alternative social and economic paths to compare societies that were more or less alike before the Cold War began, say Russia or Brazil... Such comparisons, if honestly undertaken, would elicit some self-reflection among decent people...”¹¹

The Truth: In Russia, Lenin’s food confiscations inflicted famine on over 33 million people, including 7 million children, and left 4-5 million dead;¹² Stalin’s assault on the peasants killed another 8.5 million, half of them children.¹³ Brazil experienced nothing of the kind.

¹ Letter reprinted in Alexander Cockburn, *The Golden Age Is In Us* (Verso, 1995), p. 150.

² Some 3.934 million – including 1.31 million young children – were starved to death in Ukraine in the Holodomor: Sergei Maksudov, “Victory Over the Peasantry,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Fall 2001, pp. 228-9. Another 123,421 were shot in the Great Terror: Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (Basic Books, 2010), p. 107.

³ Tamas Stark, “Genocide or Genocidal Massacre? The Case of Hungarian Prisoners in Soviet Custody,” *Human Rights Review*, April-June 2000, pp. 109-18.

⁴ Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (Basic Books, 2010), p. 318.

⁵ Agence France Presse, August 26, 2009, citing Poland’s Institute of National Remembrance.

⁶ *The Scotsman*, July 13, 2013.

⁷ David M. Glantz and Jonathan House, *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler* (University Press of Kansas, 1995), p. 307.

⁸ Anthony Beevor, *The Fall of Berlin 1945* (Penguin, 2003), p. 410.

⁹ For the lower figure, see Thomas C. Thayer, *War Without Fronts: The American Experience in Vietnam* (Naval Institute Press, 2016; original ed., Westview Press, 1985), p. 128. For the higher figure, see *Humanitarian Problems in South Vietnam and Cambodia: Two Years After the Ceasefire*, Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected with Refugees and Escapees, Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, 94th Congress, 1st Session, January 27, 1975, p. 23, Table 5.

¹⁰ National Security Memorandum Number 1, excerpted in *Problems of War Victims in Indochina, Part III: North Vietnam*, Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected with Refugees and Escapees, Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, 92nd Congress, 2nd Session, August 16 and 17, 1972 (US Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 192.

¹¹ *World Orders, Old and New* (Pluto Press, 1994), p. 40.

¹² Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime* (Vintage, 1995), pp. 410-19; Roman Serbyn, “The Famine of 1921-1923” in Roman Serbyn and Bohdan Krawchenko, eds., *Famine in Ukraine 1932-1933* (Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986), p. 169.

¹³ Sergei Maksudov, “Victory Over the Peasantry,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Fall 2001, p. 229.

8.

The Lie: “Internal [Soviet] crimes abated [after 1945]; though remaining very serious they were scarcely at the level of typical American satellites, a commonplace in the Third World, where the norms of Western propriety do not hold.”¹⁴

The Truth: In 1947, the Soviets withheld food from famine victims, causing up to 1.5 million deaths.¹⁵ During 1945-53, there were over 300,000 officially recorded deaths in the Gulag; by 1953, the slave/deportee population exceeded 5.2 million.¹⁶ No US “satellite” in Europe or in Latin America was guilty of anything even remotely comparable.

7.

The Lie: “In the Soviet sphere of influence, torture appears to have been on the decline since the death of Stalin... Since it has declined in the Soviet sphere since the death of Stalin, it would appear that this cancerous growth is largely a Free World phenomenon.”¹⁷

The Truth: Until the late 1980s, the Soviets ran 1,000 concentration camps where inmates endured constant violence.¹⁸ Torture was systematic in Soviet satellites in the Third World.¹⁹

6.

The Lie: “Imagine the reaction if the Soviet police were to deal with refuseniks in any way comparable to the Israeli practices that briefly reached the television screens [during the first *intifada*].”²⁰

The Truth: The Soviet police held 10,000 dissidents, including refuseniks, in psychiatric prisons and concentration camps. An estimated 50,000 were sent to uranium mines to die of radiation poisoning.²¹ Such practices elicited little reaction abroad because the Soviets did not allow them to reach the television screens.

5.

The Lie: “[Regarding] China’s actions in Tibet... it is a bit too simple to say that ‘China did indeed take over a country that did not want to be taken over.’ This is by no means the general view of Western scholarship.”²²

¹⁴ *World Orders, Old and New* (Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 39.

¹⁵ Michael Ellman, “The 1947 Soviet Famine and the Entitlement Approach to Famines,” *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, September 2000, pp. 603-30.

¹⁶ Anne Applebaum, *Gulag: A History* (Doubleday, 2003), pp. 583, 579, 581.

¹⁷ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 8.

¹⁸ *US News & World Report*, May 19, 1986.

¹⁹ See, e.g., Armando Valladares, *Against All Hope* (Coronet, 1987), pp. 400-26; Nghia M. Vo, *The Bamboo Gulag: Political Imprisonment in Communist Vietnam* (McFarland, 2004), pp. 133-6.

²⁰ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 486.

²¹ *US News & World Report*, May 19, 1986; see also *Wall Street Journal*, December 21, 1984, *The Times*, UK, July 11, 1986.

²² Letters, *New York Review of Books*, April 20, 1967.

The Truth: The Tibetan people certainly did not want to be taken over. The Chinese communist invasion provoked popular mass uprisings, which Mao welcomed because they could be crushed by force.²³ State terror and man-made famine had killed up to 500,000 Tibetans by the mid-1960s.²⁴

4.

The Lie: “It’s clear, I believe, that the emphasis on the use of terror and violence in China [under communism] was considerably less than in the Soviet Union and that the success was considerably greater in achieving a just society.”²⁵

The Truth: Terror and violence were even greater under Chinese communism than under Soviet communism. China’s communists officially admitted to executing 800,000 in the first few years of their dictatorship.²⁶ Unofficially, they admitted to the massacre of 2 million in just one year.²⁷ In the first decade of communism, 4 million inmates died in the Chinese Gulag.²⁸ The Chinese communists publicly declared that they had persecuted 20-30 million as class enemies during this period²⁹ and that there were 100 million victims of persecution during the Cultural Revolution.³⁰

3.

The Lie: “There are many things to object to in any society. But take China, modern China; one also finds many things that are really quite admirable... [In China] a good deal of the collectivization and communization was really based on mass participation and took place after a level of understanding had been reached in the peasantry that led to this next step.”³¹

The Truth: The communists reduced 550 million peasants to slavery. They forced at least 90 million to work on furnace-building projects alone. When famine resulted, the communists cut the food ration and used mass terror to stop the peasants eating their own harvest. Victims, including children, were tortured, buried alive, strangled or mutilated.³²

2.

²³ Warren W. Smith, *Tibetan Nation: A History of Tibetan Nationalism and Sino-Tibetan Relations* (Westview Press, 1996), pp. 399-412, 440-50, 548-51, 600; Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (Jonathan Cape, 2005), pp. 473-7.

²⁴ Patrick French, *Tibet, Tibet* (HarperCollins, 2003), p. 292.

²⁵ Alexander Klein, ed., *Dissent, Power, and Confrontation* (McGraw-Hill, 1971), p. 112.

²⁶ *New York Times*, June 13, 1957.

²⁷ Richard Hughes, exchange with Allen S. Whiting, “In Mao’s China,” *New York Times Magazine*, November 15, 1970. Hughes cites Kung Peng, the information adviser to the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

²⁸ Klaus Mühlhahn, *Criminal Justice in China: A History* (Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 270.

²⁹ *The Times*, UK, November 14, 1984.

³⁰ *New York Times*, November 17, 1980.

³¹ Alexander Klein, ed., *Dissent, Power, and Confrontation* (McGraw-Hill, 1971), pp. 117-8.

³² Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (Jonathan Cape, 2005), pp. 450, 452-4.

The Lie: “Also relevant is the history of collectivization in China, which, as compared with the Soviet Union, shows a much higher reliance on persuasion and mutual aid than on force and terror, and appears to have been more successful.”³³

The Truth: Chinese communist policy relied on force and terror, not “persuasion and mutual aid,” and was even more disastrous than the Soviet precedent. Its culmination was the Great Leap Forward, the worst man-made catastrophe in history, in which tens of millions died.³⁴

1.

The Lie: “Of course, no one supposed that Mao literally murdered tens of millions of people [in the famine], or that he ‘intended’ that any die at all.”³⁵

The Truth: Mao spoke of sacrificing 300 million people, half of China’s population. He warned that policies he later adopted would kill 50 million people. Grain exported by the communists was sufficient to feed the numbers who starved to death, which they privately estimated at 30 million.³⁶

³³ *American Power and the New Mandarins* (Pelican, 1969), p. 113n56.

³⁴ Frank Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine* (Bloomsbury, 2010); Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone: The Untold Story of Mao’s Great Famine* (Allen Lane, 2012).

³⁵ “Second Reply to Casey,” ZNet, September 2001: <http://www.webcitation.org/6IJYbusnc>

³⁶ Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (Jonathan Cape, 2005), pp. 457-8. Cf. Carl Riskin, “Seven Questions About the Chinese Famine of 1959-61,” *China Economic Review*, Autumn 1998, p. 119: “enough was known [among the communist leadership] to let us conclude that ignorance is not even an accurate excuse.”

Communist Mass Murderers: Vietnam

10.

The Lie: “the basic sources for the larger estimates of killings in the North Vietnamese land reform were persons affiliated with the CIA or the Saigon Propaganda Ministry.”³⁷

The Truth: Reports from North Vietnamese defectors suggested that 50,000 were massacred; a Hungarian diplomat was told that 60,000 were massacred.³⁸ A French leftist witness wrote that 100,000 had been slaughtered.³⁹ Land reform cadres reported 120,000-160,000 killed.⁴⁰ A former communist official has stated that 172,000 were killed or driven to suicide in a “genocide triggered by class discrimination.”⁴¹

9.

The Lie: “Note the claim that ‘Ho and his comrades had killed thousands of peasants,’ when in fact there is no evidence that the leadership ordered or organized mass executions of peasants [during the North Vietnamese land reform].”⁴²

The Truth: Ho Chi Minh had already admitted the mass executions. In his words, “It is true that between 1953 and 1957 quite a number of people were killed, perhaps 10,000 persons.”⁴³

8.

The Lie: “the North Vietnamese leadership was upset by the abuses in the land reform, publicly acknowledged its errors, punished many officials who had carried out or permitted injustices, and implemented administrative reforms to prevent recurrences.”⁴⁴

The Truth: The North Vietnamese leadership’s show of contrition following the land reform bloodbath was entirely fake.⁴⁵ It was no more sincere than Stalin’s attempt to blame his activists for the supposed excesses of collectivisation (“dizzy with success”) or Mao’s pretended openness to dissent from the intellectuals (“let a hundred flowers bloom”).

7.

³⁷ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 342.

³⁸ Robert F. Turner, *Vietnamese Communism: Its Origins and Development* (Hoover Institution Press, 1975), pp. 141-3, 155-7.

³⁹ Gerard Tongas, *L'enfer communiste au Nord Viêt-Nam* (Nouvelles Editions Debresse, 1960), p. 222.

⁴⁰ Lam Thanh Liem, “Chinh sach cai cach ruong dat cua Ho Chi Minh,” in Jean-Francois Revel *et al.*, *Ho Chi Minh* (Nam A, 1990), p. 203.

⁴¹ Nguyen Minh Can, interviewed by Radio Free Asia, June 8, 2006.

⁴² *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 432n168.

⁴³ Ernst Utrecht, “Interview with Ho Chi Minh,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1973, p. 220.

⁴⁴ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 342.

⁴⁵ Robert F. Turner, *Vietnamese Communism: Its Origins and Development* (Hoover Institution Press, 1975), pp. 161-5.

The Lie: “In brief, the DRV leadership showed a capacity to respond to abuses and keep in touch with rural interests and needs.”⁴⁶

The Truth: When mass protests led to an uprising in Ho Chi Minh’s home province of Nghe An during November 1956, Ho sent in 20,000 soldiers to crush the peasants. In this episode alone, Ho executed or deported an estimated 6,000 people.⁴⁷

6.

The Lie: “Revolutionary success in Vietnam both in theory and practice was based primarily on understanding and trying to meet the needs of the masses... A movement geared to winning support from the rural masses is not likely to resort to bloodbaths among the rural population.”⁴⁸

The Truth: The Viet Cong openly resorted to bloodbaths among the rural population. By late 1971, Viet Cong terror had killed over 36,000 civilians in South Vietnam. In 1968, a further 10,000 civilians died in the Tet Offensive by the Viet Cong, including 3,000 civilians massacred by the Viet Cong at Hue.⁴⁹

5.

The Lie: “given the very confused state of events and evidence plus the total unreliability of US-Saigon ‘proofs,’ at a minimum it can be said that the NLF-DRV ‘bloodbath’ at Hue [in South Vietnam] was constructed on flimsy evidence indeed.”⁵⁰

The Truth: The communists boasted of murdering thousands in Hue. One regiment reported that its units alone killed 1,000 victims. Another report mentioned 2,867 killed. Yet another document boasted of over 3,000 killed. A further document listed 2,748 executions.⁵¹

4.

The Lie: “In a phenomenon that has few parallels in Western experience, there appear to have been close to zero retribution deaths in postwar Vietnam. This miracle of reconciliation and restraint, instead of receiving respectful attention in the West... has been almost totally ignored.”⁵²

The Truth: One defector, whose Congressional testimony was known to Chomsky, had personal knowledge of 700 murdered in his own province; he reported that “tens

⁴⁶ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 342.

⁴⁷ Bernard B. Fall, *The Two Viet-Nams: A Political and Military Analysis* (Praeger, 1964), p. 157; Robert F. Turner, *Vietnamese Communism: Its Origins and Development* (Hoover Institution Press, 1975), pp. 165-7.

⁴⁸ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 340-1.

⁴⁹ *The Human Cost of Communism in Vietnam*, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate (US Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 77.

⁵⁰ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 352.

⁵¹ Stephen T. Hosmer, *Viet Cong Repression and its Implications for the Future* (Rand, 1970), pp. 73-4.

⁵² *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 28.

of thousands” of South Vietnamese had died at communist hands within two years of the North’s victory.⁵³ According to other defectors, 200,000 Viet Cong deserters (*Chieu Hoi*) were targets for execution.⁵⁴ By the mid-1980s, no trace of survivors among these deserters had been found.⁵⁵

3.

The Lie: “[Vietnam is] conducting a program of ‘reeducation’ (which includes rehabilitation of the hundreds of thousands of drug addicts, prostitutes, torturers and other debris left by the US war)...”⁵⁶

The Truth: On the pretext of “reeducation,” the communists sent political prisoners, religious believers, and POWs to concentration camps.⁵⁷ The death rate in the camps was 10% per year during 1975-9.⁵⁸ The high death rates were reported in the foreign media at the time.⁵⁹ An indication of the extent of the persecution is given by later communist claims that 1.5-2.5 million people had been *released* from the camps.⁶⁰

2.

The Lie: “[The communists in Vietnam] actually diverted very scarce resources in an effort to maintain the artificially inflated living standards of the more privileged sectors of Saigonese society...”⁶¹

The Truth: Starting in March 1978, the communists closed 30,000 private businesses and destroyed the value of people’s cash savings by imposing a new currency.⁶² The whole population of conquered South Vietnam was left destitute.

1.

The Lie: “[In Vietnam] many people who were habituated to the affluence of war and a corruption-based totalitarian free enterprise economy have fled, along with many others unhappy with the harsh economic conditions or the authoritarian discipline of the new regime, or fearing retribution for collaboration and war crimes.”⁶³

⁵³ Nguyen Cong Hoan, prepared statement, *Human Rights in Vietnam*, Subcommittee on International Organizations, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, 95th Congress, 1st Session, June 16, 21, and July 26, 1977 (US Government Printing Office, 1977), p. 149.

⁵⁴ Al Santoli, ed., *To Bear Any Burden* (Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 272, 292-3.

⁵⁵ Jacqueline Desbarats and Karl D. Jackson, “Political Violence in Vietnam: The Dark Side of Liberation,” *Indochina Report*, No. 6, April-June 1986, p. 19.

⁵⁶ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 37-8.

⁵⁷ See Nghia M. Vo, *The Bamboo Gulag: Political Imprisonment in Communist Vietnam* (McFarland, 2004).

⁵⁸ *Violations of Human Rights in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, April 1975-December 1988* (Aurora Foundation, 1989), p. 16.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Appendix VII, pp. 149-53.

⁶⁰ Hanoi’s official admissions, quoted in Jacqueline Desbarats and Karl D. Jackson, “Political Violence in Vietnam: The Dark Side of Liberation,” *Indochina Report*, No. 6, April-June 1986, p. 16.

⁶¹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. viii.

⁶² *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 22, 1978.

⁶³ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 28.

The Truth: Most of the boat people from Vietnam were ethnic Chinese *expelled* by the communists and sent to drown in unseaworthy boats. The communists *forced* the Chinese to leave, while extorting vast sums in gold for the departures.⁶⁴ According to the UN High Commission for Refugees, the expulsions caused the deaths of 200,000-400,000 boat people.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ See, e.g., *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 22, 1978 and January 12, 1979; *The Observer*, UK, February 11, 1979; *Baltimore Sun*, June 7, 1979 and June 8, 1979; *New York Times*, June 12, 1979; and countless other reports at the time.

⁶⁵ For the lower figure, *San Diego Union*, July 20, 1986; for the higher figure, Associated Press, June 23, 1979. See in general Nghia M. Vo, *The Vietnamese Boat People, 1954 and 1975-1992* (McFarland, 2006).

Communist Mass Murderers: Cambodia

10.

The Lie: “The harshest critics claim that perhaps 100,000 people have been slaughtered [in Cambodia]... Comparing East Timor with Cambodia, we see that... the numbers allegedly slaughtered are roughly comparable in absolute terms, and five to ten times as high in East Timor relative to population...”⁶⁶

The Truth: A UN Truth Commission found that the Indonesian war in East Timor involved 18,600 violent killings, primarily by Indonesian forces, and 75,000-183,000 deaths from hunger and illness.⁶⁷ Genocide investigators have found that the Khmer Rouge perpetrated 1.1 million violent killings and caused 2.2 million deaths overall.⁶⁸

9.

The Lie: “the ‘benign bloodbath’ conducted by Indonesia after its invasion of East Timor in 1975 and the ‘nefarious bloodbath’ of the Khmer Rouge when they took over Cambodia... were comparable in scale and character.”⁶⁹

The Truth: The bloodbaths were in no way comparable. Indonesia carried out brutal repression of armed resistance to its invasion of a foreign territory. The Khmer Rouge carried out the ideologically motivated slaughter of a peaceful, unarmed, and helpless population in its own country.⁷⁰

8.

The Lie: “As for the numbers, it seems to us quite important to determine whether the number of collaborators massacred in France was on the order of thousands, and whether the French Government ordered and organized the massacre. Exactly such questions arise in the case of Cambodia.”⁷¹

The Truth: The victims of the Khmer Rouge mass murders were not the equivalent of Nazi collaborators in France but innocent people who were killed for their social background, their religious faith, etc. Any sign of being educated was enough to bring death at the hands of the communists.⁷²

7.

⁶⁶ *Radical Priorities* (rev. ed., AK Press, 2003), p. 80.

⁶⁷ *Final Report of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR)*, 2006, part 6, paras. 47, 56-7: <http://www.etan.org/etanpdf/2006/CAVR/06-Profile-of-Violations.pdf>. Of the unlawful violent killings, 70% (about 13,100) were committed by the Indonesian side, 29.6% (about 5,500) by the Fretilin rebels: see *ibid.*, part 7.2, paras. 12, 889: http://www.etan.org/etanpdf/2006/CAVR/07.2_Unlawful_Killings_and_Enforced_Disappearances.pdf

⁶⁸ Craig Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields* (Praeger, 2005), p. 119.

⁶⁹ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 380.

⁷⁰ See Karl D. Jackson, ed., *Cambodia 1975-1978: Rendezvous with Death* (Princeton University Press, 1989) and many other studies.

⁷¹ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 25, 1977.

⁷² John Barron and Anthony Paul, *Murder of a Gentle Land* (Reader’s Digest Press, 1977), pp. 77-8.

The Lie: “[Perhaps] the worst atrocities have taken place at the hands of a peasant army... taking revenge against the urban civilization that they regarded, not without reason, as a collaborator in their destruction and their long history of oppression.”⁷³

The Truth: The worst atrocities took place because of a long-held plan to transform Cambodian society along communist lines. This plan was set out in the doctoral thesis of Pol Pot’s colleague Khieu Samphan in 1959, many years before the Vietnam War spread to Cambodia.⁷⁴

6.

The Lie: “But despite the inherent absurdity of attributing, say, revenge killings by Cambodian peasants who were bombed out of their homes by Western force to ‘Marxism’ or ‘atheism,’ the practice is common...”⁷⁵

The Truth: The Khmer Rouge boasted that “we will be the first nation to create a completely communist society,” hailed Mao as “the most eminent teacher... since Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin,” and drew up a plan to “eliminate the capitalist class” in order to “construct socialism.”⁷⁶

5.

The Lie: “If a serious study on the impact of Western imperialism on Cambodian peasant life is someday undertaken, it may well be discovered that the violence... is the direct and understandable response to the violence of the imperial system, and that its current manifestations are a no less direct and understandable response to the still more concentrated and extreme savagery of a US assault that may in part have been designed to evoke this very response...”⁷⁷

The Truth: The Khmer Rouge extermination campaign was not a “response to the violence of the imperial system,” – let alone an “understandable” one – but an attempt to impose a form of Maoism.⁷⁸ There is no evidence whatsoever that US intervention in Cambodia was “designed” to bring about the mass extermination of the population by the communists.

4.

The Lie: “If indeed the [Khmer Rouge] cooperatives have managed to reduce working hours to a 9 hour day with occasional extra shifts, that would seem to be a considerable accomplishment. Such a work schedule was not at all unusual, for example, in Israeli kibbutzim a few years ago...”⁷⁹

⁷³ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 150.

⁷⁴ Khieu Samphan, “Cambodia’s Economy and Problems of Industrialization,” *Indochina Chronicle*, September-November 1976, pp. 5-25.

⁷⁵ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 297.

⁷⁶ Quotations from Karl D. Jackson, ed., *Cambodia 1975-1978: Rendezvous With Death* (Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 221ff, 274ff.

⁷⁷ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 291.

⁷⁸ Stephen J. Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia* (Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 70-1.

⁷⁹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 205.

The Truth: The Israeli kibbutz system has always been voluntary. No-one has ever been starved or worked to death on a kibbutz. The Khmer Rouge “cooperatives,” by contrast, were nothing but slave labour camps where victims died constantly.⁸⁰

3.

The Lie: “If 2-2½ million people... have been systematically slaughtered by a band of murderous thugs who have taken over the government, then [Senator] McGovern is willing to consider international military intervention. We presume that he would not have made this proposal if the figure of those killed were, say, less by a factor of 100 – that is 25,000 people... [or] if the deaths in Cambodia were not the result of systematic slaughter and starvation organized by the state...”⁸¹

The Truth: No honest observer thought that only 25,000 people had died under the Khmer Rouge. No honest observer doubted that the bloodbath had been the result of systematic slaughter and starvation by the state. A UN investigation at the time found 2-3 million dead, while UNICEF estimated 3 million dead.⁸² Even the Khmer Rouge acknowledged 2 million deaths – which they attributed to the Vietnamese invasion.⁸³

2.

The Lie: “the evacuation of Phnom Penh [by the Khmer Rouge], widely denounced at the time and since for its undoubted brutality, may actually have saved many lives.”⁸⁴

The Truth: At least 30,000 very young children died as a direct result of the Khmer Rouge evacuation of Phnom Penh.⁸⁵ In total, at least 870,000 men, women, and children from Phnom Penh died under the Khmer Rouge dictatorship.⁸⁶

1.

The Lie: “At the end of 1978 Cambodia [under the Khmer Rouge] was the only country in Indochina that had succeeded at all in overcoming the agricultural crisis that was left by the American destruction.”⁸⁷

The Truth: Famine killed over 950,000 people under the Khmer Rouge.⁸⁸ By late 1979, UN and Red Cross officials were warning that another 2.25 million people

⁸⁰ See, e.g., John Barron and Anthony Paul, *Murder of a Gentle Land* (Reader’s Digest Press, 1977), pp. 128-51.

⁸¹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 138-9.

⁸² William Shawcross, *The Quality of Mercy: Cambodia, Holocaust and Modern Conscience* (Touchstone, 1985), pp. 115-16.

⁸³ Khieu Samphan, Interview, *Time*, March 10, 1980.

⁸⁴ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 160.

⁸⁵ Ea Meng-Try, “Kampuchea: A Country Adrift,” *Population and Development Review*, June 1981, p. 214.

⁸⁶ Marek Sliwinski, *Le Génocide Khmer Rouge: Une Analyse Démographique* (L’Harmattan, 1995), p. 57.

⁸⁷ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), pp. 245-6. Cf.: “The victors in Cambodia undertook drastic and often brutal measures... At a heavy cost, these measures appear to have overcome the dire and destructive consequences of the US war by 1978,” *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. viii.

⁸⁸ Marek Sliwinski, *Le Génocide Khmer Rouge: Une Analyse Démographique* (L’Harmattan, 1995), p. 82.

faced starvation as a result of “the near destruction of Cambodian society under the regime of the ousted Prime Minister Pol Pot.” They found starving children wherever they went.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ *New York Times*, August 8, 1979.

Modern History

10.

The Lie: “Let’s just take... the history of the conquest of the Western Hemisphere... Current anthropological work indicates that the number of native people in the Western Hemisphere may have approached something like 100 million...”⁹⁰

The Truth: This figure, invented by anthropologist Henry Dobyns, has been totally discredited.⁹¹

9.

The Lie: “The scale of US achievements in pursuing its ‘good intentions’ [in the Philippines] can only be guessed. General James Bell, who commanded operations in southern Luzon, estimated in May 1901 that one-sixth of the natives of Luzon had been killed or died from dengue fever, considered the result of war-induced famine; thus, over 600,000 dead in this island alone.”⁹²

The Truth: In 1906, it was shown that this estimate came from “an unverified newspaper interview, not with the well-known General James F. Bell, but with General James M. Bell, a different man entirely, whose personal experience was practically confined to the three southernmost provinces of Luzon, where there was comparatively little fighting. If the interview was authentic, the soldier in question had not the data on which to base such a statement.”⁹³ In 1984, historian John M. Gates concluded that the maximum wartime death toll was 234,000, of which up to 200,000 resulted from a cholera epidemic largely unrelated to the war.⁹⁴

8.

The Lie: “you have to ask yourself whether the best way of getting rid of Hitler was to kill tens of millions of Russians. Maybe a better way was not supporting him in the first place, as Britain and the United States did.”⁹⁵

The Truth: Far from killing tens of millions of Russians, the US saved the USSR from the Nazis by providing massive military and economic aid.⁹⁶ Unlike the USSR, the US and Britain were never wartime allies of Nazi Germany.

7.

⁹⁰ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 479.

⁹¹ David Henige, *Numbers From Nowhere: The American Indian Contact Population Debate* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), pp. 66-87.

⁹² *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), p. 88.

⁹³ James A. LeRoy, “The Philippines and the Filipinos,” *Political Science Quarterly*, June 1906, p. 303.

⁹⁴ John M. Gates, “War-Related Deaths in the Philippines, 1898-1902,” *Pacific Historical Review*, August 1984, p. 376.

⁹⁵ Larissa MacFarquhar, “The Devil’s Accountant,” *The New Yorker*, March 31, 2003.

⁹⁶ Albert L. Weeks, *Russia’s Life-Saver: Lend-Lease Aid to the USSR in World War II* (Lexington Books, 2004).

The Lie: “[After Stalingrad,] Britain and the US then began supporting armies established by Hitler to hold back the Russian advance. Tens of thousands of Russian troops were killed. Suppose you’re sitting in Auschwitz. Do you want the Russian troops to be held back?”⁹⁷

The Truth: There is no evidence that the US and Britain used Nazi armies to fight the Soviets and prolong the Holocaust. Chomsky has since denied saying this (see final section below).⁹⁸

6.

The Lie: “In fact the United States is having a lot more trouble in Iraq than Germany ever had in occupied Europe, or than Russia had in Eastern Europe, which is kind of remarkable.”⁹⁹

The Truth: The US was having a lot less trouble in Iraq. Germany lost over 4 million dead in Europe during World War II.¹⁰⁰ The Red Army lost nearly 6.9 million killed in action during the same period; its postwar losses included 20,000 dead in Lithuania alone.¹⁰¹

5.

The Lie: “They tried Von Ribbentrop [at Nuremberg] and they hanged him, for one reason, because he supported the pre-emptive war against Norway.”¹⁰²

The Truth: The Nuremberg Tribunal convicted Ribbentrop on all counts of crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity: “Ribbentrop participated in all of the Nazi aggressions from the occupation of Austria to the invasion of the Soviet Union... Ribbentrop also assisted in carrying out criminal policies, particularly those involving the extermination of the Jews.”¹⁰³

4.

The Lie: “Do we celebrate Pearl Harbor Day every year? It’s well understood that the Japanese attack on the colonial outposts of the United States, England, and Holland was in some respects highly beneficial to the people of Asia. It was a major factor in driving the British out of India, which saved maybe tens of millions of lives. It drove the Dutch out of Indonesia.”¹⁰⁴

⁹⁷ Larissa MacFarquhar, “The Devil’s Accountant,” *The New Yorker*, March 31, 2003.

⁹⁸ See John Williamson, “Chomsky, Language, World War II and Me,” in Peter Collier and David Horowitz, eds., *The Anti-Chomsky Reader* (Encounter Books, 2004), pp. 236-9.

⁹⁹ Interview, *Haaretz*, November 10, 2005.

¹⁰⁰ Gerhard L. Weinberg, *A World at Arms* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 894.

¹⁰¹ Richard Overy, *Russia’s War* (Penguin, 1998), pp. 288, 311.

¹⁰² Interview, *Global Knowledge*, Norway, June 2006: https://chomsky.info/200606__/

¹⁰³ *Judgment of the International Military Tribunal for The Trial of German Major War Criminals* (His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1951), p. 90.

¹⁰⁴ Interview, *International Socialist Review*, September-October 2002.

The Truth: Far from being “highly beneficial to the people of Asia,” Axis Japan killed 10 million Asians between Pearl Harbor and V-J Day.¹⁰⁵

3.

The Lie: “If there had been no resistance to the Japanese attack, they might not have turned to the horrifying atrocities that did ultimately turn many Asians against them. So would we be celebrating Pearl Harbor? I don’t think so. I certainly wouldn’t.”¹⁰⁶

The Truth: Axis Japan’s mass murders of Asians – e.g., the Rape of Nanking and biological warfare in China – began years before the attack on Pearl Harbor.¹⁰⁷ In just one campaign – the “three alls” operation, starting at the end of 1938 – Axis Japan is estimated to have slaughtered more than 2.7 million Chinese civilians.¹⁰⁸

2.

The Lie: “the leading Asian representative on the Tokyo Tribunal, Justice R. Pal of India, stated in his dissenting opinion that the decision to use the atom bomb ‘is the only near approach’ in the Pacific war to the Nazi crimes. And that ‘nothing like this could be traced to the credit of the present accused.’ For what it is worth, I think that he is right, and that the bombing of Nagasaki, in particular, was history’s most abominable experiment.”¹⁰⁹

The Truth: Pal was an apologist for Axis Japan who voted to acquit all of the Tokyo war crimes defendants. Their mass murders dwarfed the death toll from the atomic bombs. Nagasaki was bombed not as an “abominable experiment,” but because Axis Japan’s leaders had not surrendered after the bombing of Hiroshima.¹¹⁰

1.

The Lie: “It turns out, therefore, that if we cut through the propaganda barrage, *Washington has become the torture and political murder capital of the world.*”¹¹¹

The Truth: Chomsky wrote this not long after 750,000-1.5 million were massacred in the Chinese Cultural Revolution;¹¹² 200,000-400,000 boat people were driven to their deaths by communist Vietnam;¹¹³ 100,000 were slaughtered in communist Laos;¹¹⁴ 2

¹⁰⁵ Robert P. Newman, *Truman and the Hiroshima Cult* (Michigan State University Press, 1995), pp. 138-9.

¹⁰⁶ Interview, *International Socialist Review*, September–October 2002.

¹⁰⁷ See, e.g., Timothy Brook, *Documents on the Rape of Nanking* (University of Michigan Press, 1999); Daniel Barenblatt, *A Plague Upon Humanity* (HarperCollins, 2004).

¹⁰⁸ Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (HarperCollins, 2000), p. 367.

¹⁰⁹ “An Exchange on ‘The Responsibility of Intellectuals,’” *New York Review of Books*, April 20, 1967.

¹¹⁰ Robert P. Newman, *Truman and the Hiroshima Cult* (Michigan State University Press, 1995), pp. 149, 139, 105-13.

¹¹¹ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 16, emphasis in original.

¹¹² Andrew G. Walder and Yang Su, “The Cultural Revolution in the Countryside,” *China Quarterly*, March 2003, pp. 74-99.

¹¹³ Associated Press, June 23, 1979, *Washington Post*, August 3, 1979.

¹¹⁴ *Forced Back and Forgotten* (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 1989), p. 8.

million were killed in communist Cambodia;¹¹⁵ and the communists initiated the murder of 1.5 million people in Afghanistan¹¹⁶ and 1.25 million people in Ethiopia.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ William Shawcross, *The Quality of Mercy: Cambodia, Holocaust and Modern Conscience* (Touchstone, 1985), pp. 115-6.

¹¹⁶ Sylvain Boulouque, "Communism in Afghanistan," in Stephane Courtois, ed., *The Black Book of Communism*, (Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 725.

¹¹⁷ *New York Times*, December 14, 1994.

The Cold War

10.

The Lie: “Stalin was supporting Chiang Kai-Shek against the Chinese revolution. The subsequent and rather brief alliance was in part the result of US policies.”¹¹⁸

The Truth: During 1945-9, Stalin directed the transfer of 400,000 Chinese communist troops and 20,000 cadres, provided military equipment for 600,000 men, supplied critical tanks and artillery, helped to build munitions factories essential to the Chinese communist victory, and guided the political and economic decisions of the Chinese communist leadership.¹¹⁹

9.

The Lie: “The orthodox version is sketched in stark and vivid terms in what is widely recognized to be the basic US Cold War document, NSC 68 in April 1950... Five years after the USSR was virtually annihilated by the Axis powers, they must be reconstituted within a US-dominated alliance committed to the final elimination of the Soviet system that they failed to destroy.”¹²⁰

The Truth: NSC 68 did not propose reconstituting the Axis powers in order to destroy the Soviet Union. Advocating policies “consistent with the principles of freedom and democracy,” it sought an increase in military spending to counter global Soviet expansionism.¹²¹

8.

The Lie: “[US] military spending nearly quadrupled... on the pretext that the [North Korean] invasion of South Korea was the first step in the Kremlin conquest of the world – despite the lack of compelling evidence, then or now, for Russian initiative in this phase of the complex struggle over the fate of Korea.”¹²²

The Truth: Stalin “planned, prepared and initiated” the war (David Dallin).¹²³ It was a “Soviet war plan” (David Rees).¹²⁴ It was “preplanned, blessed and directly assisted by Stalin and his generals, and reluctantly backed by Mao at Stalin’s insistence” (Sergei N. Goncharov *et al.*).¹²⁵ “Stalin had approved the North Korean attack”

¹¹⁸ *On Power and Ideology: The Managua Lectures* (South End Press, 1987), p. 52.

¹¹⁹ Douglas J. Macdonald, “Communist Bloc Expansion in the Early Cold War,” *International Security*, Winter 1995-6, pp. 172-3. See also Michael M. Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism: Mao, Stalin and the United States* (Princeton University Press, 1997) and Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2001), pp. 38-48.

¹²⁰ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), pp. 10-1.

¹²¹ “NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security,” April 14, 1950, in *Naval War College Review*, May-June, 1975.

¹²² *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 11.

¹²³ David Dallin, *Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin* (J. B. Lippincott, 1961), p. 60.

¹²⁴ David Rees, *Korea: The Limited War* (Penguin, 1964), p. 19.

¹²⁵ Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean War* (Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 213.

(William Stueck).¹²⁶ “The detailed plans for the invasion were drawn up by the Soviets and then communicated to the [North] Koreans” (Douglas J. Macdonald).¹²⁷ “Kim [Il Sung] got a green light from Stalin” (John Lewis Gaddis).¹²⁸

7.

The Lie: “[After the Bay of Pigs,] the crushing [US] embargo was maintained, ensuring that Cuba would be driven into the hands of the Russians. Throughout, the pretext was the Soviet threat. Its credibility is easily assessed. When the decision to overthrow Castro was taken [by Eisenhower] in March 1960, Washington was fully aware that the Russian role was nil.”¹²⁹

The Truth: Fidel Castro had already appealed for Soviet weapons during his guerrilla war. His regular contacts with the KGB began in 1956. The following year, Che Guevara wrote that “the solution to the problems of this world lies behind what is called the Iron Curtain.” In mid-1959, Cuban intelligence initiated an alliance with the Soviet bloc. By March 1960, Cuba was negotiating arms purchases from Eastern Europe.¹³⁰

6.

The Lie: “There is very little serious criticism of the decisions that were made... during the Cuban missile crisis, when we did bring the world very close to total destruction in order to establish the principle that we have a right to have missiles on the borders of the Soviet Union while they do not have the same right to have missiles on our border.”¹³¹

The Truth: It was Cuba’s communists who wanted a nuclear war. Che Guevara said: “If the [Soviet nuclear] rockets had remained, we would have used them all and directed them against the very heart of the United States, including New York, in our defense against aggression.”¹³² Nikita Khrushchev wrote that according to Fidel Castro, “we needed to immediately deliver a nuclear missile strike against the United States... a proposal that placed the planet on the brink of extinction.” Fidel Castro admitted: “I would have agreed to the use of nuclear weapons... we took it for granted that it would become a nuclear war anyway, and that we were going to disappear.”¹³³

5.

¹²⁶ William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 69.

¹²⁷ Douglas J. Macdonald, “Communist Bloc Expansion in the Early Cold War,” *International Security*, Winter 1995-6, p. 180.

¹²⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, *We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 71.

¹²⁹ *World Orders, Old and New* (Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 68.

¹³⁰ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The KGB and the World: The Mitrokhin Archive II* (Penguin, 2006), pp. 34-6.

¹³¹ “The Student Movement,” *The Humanist*, September-October 1970.

¹³² Jorge G. Castañeda, *Compañero: The Life and Death of Che Guevara* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 1997), p. 231.

¹³³ James G. Blight et al., *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), pp. 29, 252.

The Lie: “[In 1965, the US facilitated] the flow of arms and other military equipment to implement the announced policy ‘to exterminate the PKI’ (the Indonesian Communist Party)... The Indonesian Generals had liquidated the party of the poor, destroyed the threat of democracy, and opened the country to foreign plunder.”¹³⁴

The Truth: Far from seeking democracy, Indonesia’s communists had tried to seize power by force after demanding the mass murder of capitalists and “enemies of the people.”¹³⁵ US policymakers were so unprepared that at first they misidentified the anti-communist military leader, General Suharto.¹³⁶ US aid to Indonesia’s military consisted of communications devices.¹³⁷ It was the Soviet Union, hoping to gain a Cold War ally, that armed Indonesia’s military during the massacre of Indonesia’s communists.¹³⁸

4.

The Lie: “The defense of Angola was one of Cuba’s most significant contributions to the liberation of Africa.”¹³⁹

The Truth: Cuban military intervention in support of the communist dictatorship in Angola led to decades of war that cost hundreds of thousands of lives.¹⁴⁰ Other Cuban “contributions to the liberation of Africa” included sending troops to the communist dictatorship in Ethiopia,¹⁴¹ which killed 1.25 million people by massacre and forced starvation.¹⁴²

3.

The Lie: “The scale of these crimes [in Angola and Mozambique] is indicated by a UN study that estimates over US\$60 billion in damages and 1.5 million dead during the Reagan years alone, by way of South Africa, with US-British support under the guise of ‘constructive engagement.’”¹⁴³

The Truth: The UN study estimated the losses from the wars in these countries and simply blamed them all on South Africa.¹⁴⁴ But South Africa was only one of the parties culpable for the death toll; the main combatants were domestic forces (MPLA versus UNITA in Angola; Frelimo versus Renamo in Mozambique), and there were interventions by Marxist dictatorships (Cuba in Angola; Zimbabwe in Mozambique).

¹³⁴ *Powers and Prospects* (Pluto Press, 1996), pp. 178, 199.

¹³⁵ Arnold C. Brackman, *The Communist Collapse in Indonesia* (W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), pp. 63-5.

¹³⁶ H. W. Brands, “The Limits of Manipulation: How the United States Didn’t Topple Sukarno,” *Journal of American History*, December 1989, p. 801.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 803.

¹³⁸ Ragna Boden, “Silence in the Slaughterhouse: Moscow and the Indonesian Massacres,” in Bernd Schaefer and Baskara T. Wardaya, eds., *1965: Indonesia and the World, Indonesia dan Dunia* (Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2013), pp. 94-5.

¹³⁹ *Hegemony or Survival* (Penguin, 2004), p. 94.

¹⁴⁰ Médecins Sans Frontières, “Angola: An Alarming Nutritional Situation,” August 1999.

¹⁴¹ *Washington Post*, March 18, 1978.

¹⁴² *New York Times*, December 14, 1994.

¹⁴³ *Powers and Prospects* (Pluto Press, 1996), p. 199.

¹⁴⁴ *South African Destabilization: The Economic Cost of Frontline Resistance to Apartheid* (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 1989).

In Mozambique, where most of these deaths occurred, the US and Britain supported the Marxist Frelimo regime and *opposed* the South-African-backed Renamo rebels.

2.

The Lie: “In Angola, US-backed ‘freedom fighter’ Jonas Savimbi [of UNITA] lost a UN-monitored election, at once resorting to violence, exacting a horrendous toll. While finally joining the rest of the world in recognizing the elected government, the United States did nothing... The atrocities, apparently surpassing Bosnia, are scarcely reported...”¹⁴⁵

The Truth: Eight opposition parties rejected the 1992 election as rigged.¹⁴⁶ An official election observer wrote that there was little UN supervision, 500,000 UNITA voters were disenfranchised, and there were 100 clandestine polling stations.¹⁴⁷ UNITA sent peace negotiators to the capital, where the MPLA murdered them, along with 20,000 UNITA members. Savimbi was still ready to continue the elections. The MPLA then massacred tens of thousands of UNITA voters nationwide.¹⁴⁸

1.

The Lie: “[In the Third World] the Soviet Union supported indigenous movements resisting the forceful imposition of US designs...”¹⁴⁹

The Truth: Far from being “indigenous movements resisting the forceful imposition of US designs,” the major Soviet clients in the Third World were tyrannical mass murderers – in China (Mao Zedong before the Sino-Soviet split), North Korea (Kim Il Sung), North Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh and Le Duan), Uganda (Idi Amin), Ethiopia (Mengistu Haile Mariam), Syria (Hafez Assad) and Iraq (Saddam Hussein). Soviet crimes against humanity in the Third World included designing the Chinese Gulag, which killed millions.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ *World Orders, Old and New* (Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 62.

¹⁴⁶ National Society for Human Rights, *Ending the Angolan Conflict*, Windhoek, Namibia, July 3, 2000. This was a Namibia-based NGO monitoring the conflict in Angola.

¹⁴⁷ John Matthew, Letter, *The Times*, UK, November 6, 1992.

¹⁴⁸ National Society for Human Rights, *Ending the Angolan Conflict*, Windhoek, Namibia, July 3, 2000.

¹⁴⁹ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 99.

¹⁵⁰ Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (Jonathan Cape, 2005), p. 338.

The Vietnam War

10.

The Lie: “The US was deeply committed to the French effort to reconquer their former colony, recognizing throughout that the enemy was the nationalist movement of Vietnam.”¹⁵¹

The Truth: The enemy was the communist movement of Vietnam. In 1945-6, the communist-led Viet Minh collaborated with the French to massacre supporters of the Vietnamese nationalist movements. When the Viet Minh went to war against France, they continued their campaign to destroy the nationalists. Only in 1950 did the US decide to back the French – not against the nationalists, but against the communists.¹⁵²

9.

The Lie: “The record is quite clear that the Viet Minh, the forces that had fought and defeated the French, accepted the Geneva Accords [of 1954] in good faith and made a serious effort to initiate discussions that would lead to the [reunification] elections promised in 1956.”¹⁵³

The Truth: The Viet Minh violated the Geneva Accords by building up clandestine armed units in South Vietnam and by strengthening their military forces in North Vietnam.¹⁵⁴ The Viet Minh built a totalitarian dictatorship that made free elections impossible in the North.

8.

The Lie: “The record shows plainly that American use of force against the population of South Vietnam always preceded any exercise of force attributable to the DRV...”¹⁵⁵

The Truth: North Vietnam ordered a campaign of assassinations and terror bombings in South Vietnam at the end of 1956.¹⁵⁶ US combat involvement in South Vietnam did not begin until 1961-2.

7.

¹⁵¹ “Visions of Righteousness,” *Cultural Critique*, Spring 1986, p. 19.

¹⁵² Robert F. Turner, *Vietnamese Communism: Its Origins and Development* (Hoover Institution Press, 1975), pp. 57-9, 67-9, 74 and “Myths of the Vietnam War,” *Southeast Asian Perspectives*, September 1972, pp. 14-18; also Arthur J. Dommen, *The Indochinese Experience of the French and the Americans* (Indiana University Press, 2001), pp. 153-4.

¹⁵³ *At War with Asia* (Vintage, 1970), p. 45.

¹⁵⁴ Robert F. Turner, *Vietnamese Communism: Its Origins and Development* (Hoover Institution Press, 1975), pp. 100-8; Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An* (University of California Press, 1972), pp. 34-6; Mark Moyer, *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 56-9.

¹⁵⁵ “Vietnam: How Government Became Wolves,” *New York Review of Books*, June 15, 1972.

¹⁵⁶ Pierre Asselin, *Hanoi’s Road to the Vietnam War, 1954-1965* (University of California Press, 2013), p. 43.

The Lie: “It took years of massacre, forced population removal, ecocide and general destruction before the [US] aggressor succeeded in shifting the struggle [in South Vietnam] to the arena of sheer violence.”¹⁵⁷

The Truth: In 1957, the communists launched their “extermination of traitors” terror campaign in South Vietnam, explaining that “the honest hamlet chief who has done much for the people” was a “traitor” who had to be “eliminated.” They consciously provoked the US-backed Diem regime to escalate the violence: “we had to make the people suffer, suffer until they could no longer endure it. Only then would they carry out the Party’s armed policy.”¹⁵⁸

6.

The Lie: “By the early 1960s, virtually all parties concerned, apart from the United States and its various local clients, were making serious efforts to avoid an impending war by neutralizing South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia...”¹⁵⁹

The Truth: In 1959, by Hanoi’s own admission, North Vietnam decided on war in South Vietnam. North Vietnam created the NLF and sent 20,000 men to attack the South. In 1961, North Vietnam used 30,000 troops to build invasion routes via Laos and Cambodia. Hanoi also admitted that it “played a decisive role” in bringing to power the Pathet Lao in Laos and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia.¹⁶⁰

5.

The Lie: “[The US] finally bombed the North in 1965... There were no North Vietnamese troops in South Vietnam then as far as anybody knew.”¹⁶¹

The Truth: By its own admission, North Vietnam was sending 10,000 troops a year to attack South Vietnam by 1964, rising to 100,000 a year in 1966.¹⁶²

4.

The Lie: “Surveying such evidence as exists, United States government claims with regard to DRV control of the NLF prior to 1965 are not compelling, though as DRV forces were drawn into the war by American aggression... the degree of influence and control exercised by Hanoi undoubtedly increased, as had been anticipated by American planners.”¹⁶³

The Truth: North Vietnam created the NLF and ran it from the start. Jeffrey Race noted that communist defectors found denials of this fact “very amusing” and “commented humorously that the Party had apparently been more successful than was

¹⁵⁷ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), pp. 107-8.

¹⁵⁸ Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An* (University of California Press, 1972), pp. 83, 112.

¹⁵⁹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 2; cf. *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), p. 181.

¹⁶⁰ *The Economist*, February 26, 1983; *Washington Post*, April 23, 1985.

¹⁶¹ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 315.

¹⁶² *Washington Post*, April 23, 1985.

¹⁶³ *The Backroom Boys* (Fontana, 1973), pp. 133-4.

expected in concealing its role.” The aim was to hide the fact that “there was an invasion from the North.”¹⁶⁴

3.

The Lie: “Administration spokesmen have held to the view that by destroying Vietnam we are somehow standing firm against Chinese or Russian aggression... [This] fear of a Kremlin-directed conspiracy or Chinese aggression [is] so far as we know, a figment of imagination.”¹⁶⁵

The Truth: Chinese and Soviet involvement was vital to North Vietnam’s war effort. China sent 320,000 troops and annual arms shipments of \$180 million. The Soviets trained North Vietnam’s military commanders and sent 15,000 military advisers and annual arms shipments of \$450 million.¹⁶⁶

2.

The Lie: “What [US] planners were afraid of was the ‘domino effect,’ that is, they were very much concerned about the possibility of an independent Vietnam under so-called ‘Communist leadership’ which would carry out successful social and economic development.”¹⁶⁷

The Truth: The feared “domino effect” was communist expansion throughout the region. If South Vietnam fell, “a wave of domination by Communist China could then sweep over Southeast Asia” (President Kennedy). In that case, “they take Thailand, they take Indonesia, they take Burma, they come right on back to the Philippines” (President Johnson). This fear was shared by the intelligence community and by other governments.¹⁶⁸

1.

The Lie: “[Post-1975] Vietnam was driven into an alliance with the Soviet Union, which it really did not want, as the only alternative after the United States had rebuffed their efforts at normalization of relations...”¹⁶⁹

The Truth: According to NLF co-founder Truong Nhu Tang, before the end of the war “the Party had already decided to ally itself with the Soviets. Movement in that direction had begun as far back as 1969” and “by 1974 the bitter infighting had resulted in a clear victory for the pro-Soviet faction” over the pro-Chinese faction.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁴ Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An* (University of California Press, 1972), pp. 107, 122.

¹⁶⁵ “Vietnam: How Government Became Wolves,” *New York Review of Books*, June 15, 1972.

¹⁶⁶ Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000), p. 135; Gen. Oleg Sarin and Col. Lev Dvoretzky, *Alien Wars: The Soviet Union’s Aggressions Against the World, 1919 to 1989* (Presidio Press, 1996), pp. 93-4.

¹⁶⁷ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 308.

¹⁶⁸ Mark Moyer, *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 138ff, 376.

¹⁶⁹ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 245.

¹⁷⁰ Truong Nhu Tang, *A Vietcong Memoir* (Vintage, 1986), p. 248.

The Cambodian Wars

10.

The Lie: “It is, surely, not in doubt that it was US intervention that inflamed a simmering civil struggle and brought the horrors of modern warfare to relatively peaceful Cambodia...”¹⁷¹

The Truth: North Vietnam brought the conflict to Cambodia by using the country as a base for the war in South Vietnam. By 1966-7, communist sanctuaries in Cambodia housed both the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) and the headquarters of the NLF.¹⁷²

9.

The Lie: “On March 18, [1970,] the coup [against Prince Norodom Sihanouk] took place, led by General Lon Nol and Sirik Matak. A tiny Cambodian elite... plunged the country into civil war and set the stage for the American invasion...”¹⁷³

The Truth: What plunged Cambodia into civil war was North Vietnam’s response to the 1970 coup, which was to invade the country at the request of the Khmer Rouge: “Vietnamese forces occupied almost a quarter of the territory of Cambodia, and the zone of communist control grew several times, as power in the so-called liberated regions was given to the CPK [i.e., the Khmer Rouge].”¹⁷⁴

8.

The Lie: “there’s pretty good evidence that the Khmer Rouge forces took power primarily because they were the only ones who were tough enough bastards to survive the US attacks.”¹⁷⁵

The Truth: The Khmer Rouge took power primarily because North Vietnam overran much of Cambodia and handed it over to them.¹⁷⁶ By 1972, North Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge had seized two-thirds of the country.¹⁷⁷ Hanoi subsequently boasted of playing “a decisive role” in aiding the Khmer Rouge during Cambodia’s civil war.¹⁷⁸

7.

¹⁷¹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 137.

¹⁷² Arthur J. Dommen, *The Indochinese Experience of the French and the Americans* (Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 619.

¹⁷³ *At War with Asia* (Vintage, 1970), p. 138.

¹⁷⁴ Dmitry Mosyakov, “The Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists: A History of Their Relations as Told in the Soviet Archives,” in Susan E. Cook, ed., *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda* (Yale Genocide Studies Program Monograph Series No. 1, 2004), pp. 54-5.

¹⁷⁵ *Understanding Power* (The New Press, 2002), p. 93.

¹⁷⁶ Chomsky himself, writing in 1970, described the “Viet Cong strategy of establishing freed zones in which the Red Khmers can build up their own armies, based on the peasantry,” *At War with Asia* (Vintage Books, 1970), p. 147.

¹⁷⁷ *Washington Post*, July 2, 1972.

¹⁷⁸ *Washington Post*, April 23, 1985.

The Lie: “The horrendous situation in Phnom Penh (as elsewhere in Cambodia) as the war drew to an end [in 1975] was a direct and immediate consequence of the US assault... The United States bears primary responsibility for these consequences of its intervention. All of this is forgotten when sole responsibility is assigned to the Khmer Rouge for deaths from malnutrition and disease.”¹⁷⁹

The Truth: Congress ended the US bombing in 1973; it was the Khmer Rouge that besieged and shelled Phnom Penh from 1974. Reports stated that communist shelling “tortured the capital almost continuously,” inflicting “random death and mutilation” on millions of trapped civilians.¹⁸⁰

6.

The Lie: “According to the book [by Francois Ponchaud], which might or might not have been right, 800,000 people were killed during the American war [in Cambodia]. The US was responsible for killing 800,000 people.”¹⁸¹

The Truth: Ponchaud merely reported a Khmer Rouge propaganda claim about war deaths, without endorsing it. According to demographic analyses, between 275,000 and 310,000 died in the war, including combatants and civilians killed by all sides.¹⁸²

5.

The Lie: “it seems fair to describe the responsibility of the United States and Pol Pot for atrocities during ‘the decade of the genocide’ as being roughly in the same range.”¹⁸³

The Truth: According to demographic evidence, the US killed about 40,000 Khmer Rouge guerrillas and Cambodian civilians during 1970-5, and the Khmer Rouge murdered at least 1.8 million civilians during 1975-9.¹⁸⁴

4.

The Lie: “In fact, it is difficult to see how a Westerner could have supported the cause of the Khmer Rouge [during the Cambodian civil war], since virtually nothing was known about it.”¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 162.

¹⁸⁰ John Barron and Anthony Paul, *Murder of a Gentle Land* (Reader’s Digest Press, 1977), pp. 1-2; cf. *Washington Post*, January 28, 1974 and *Chicago Tribune*, March 4, 8, 12, 1975.

¹⁸¹ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 634.

¹⁸² For the lower figure, see Judith Banister and Paige Johnson, “After the Nightmare: The Population of Cambodia,” in Ben Kiernan, ed., *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia* (Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1993), pp. 87-90. For the higher figure, see Marek Sliwinski, *Le Génocide Khmer Rouge: Une Analyse Démographique* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1995), p. 48.

¹⁸³ *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), pp. 264-5. Cf.: “it’s not clear that Pol Pot killed very many more people – or even *more* people – than the *United States* killed in Cambodia in the first half of the 1970s,” *Understanding Power* (The New Press, 2002), p. 92.

¹⁸⁴ Marek Sliwinski, *Le Génocide Khmer Rouge: Une Analyse Démographique* (L’Harmattan, 1995), pp. 41-8, 57.

¹⁸⁵ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 256.

The Truth: The nature of the Khmer Rouge was known during the civil war. There were reports of Khmer Rouge brutality in the “liberated” areas of Cambodia.¹⁸⁶ There were predictions of a bloodbath in the event of a Khmer Rouge victory.¹⁸⁷ These predictions were openly attacked by Khmer Rouge supporters in the West.¹⁸⁸

3.

The Lie: “With regard to Vietnamese ‘genocide’ in Cambodia [in 1979-80], there is a major effort in the US to demonstrate that Vietnam is ‘organizing famine’ in Cambodia... This propaganda campaign is being impeded, however, by the fairly consistent reports from relief workers in Cambodia that contradict the charges.”¹⁸⁹

The Truth: Relief agencies predicted in late 1979 that “as many as 2.25 million Cambodians could die of starvation in the next few months.” Hanoi’s client regime said “that at least 2.25 million Cambodians faced extreme ‘hunger’ and that 165,000 tons of rice were needed in the next six months,” but rejected a US proposal for a transport route for famine relief by the International Red Cross, UNICEF and other agencies.¹⁹⁰ Demographic analysis shows that 300,000 people starved to death.¹⁹¹

2.

The Lie: “And when Vietnam invaded [Cambodia] and brought the slaughter to an end, that aroused new horror about ‘the Prussians of Asia’ who overthrew Pol Pot and must be punished for the crime.”¹⁹²

The Truth: Vietnam did not bring the slaughter in Cambodia to an end but merely imposed a more obedient dictatorship led by Pol Pot’s ex-officers. The Hanoi quisling regime committed major atrocities of its own, enslaving 380,000 peasants at the cost of 30,000 lives.¹⁹³

1.

The Lie: “In 1979, the US and Britain essentially picked up support for the Khmer Rouge...”¹⁹⁴

The Truth: As Cambodia expert Nate Thayer wrote, there is “no credible evidence” that the US gave “any material aid whatsoever to the Khmer Rouge.”¹⁹⁵ The same is true of Britain.

¹⁸⁶ E.g., *Christian Science Monitor*, March 15, 1974, *Chicago Tribune*, July 14, 1974 and March 17, 1975.

¹⁸⁷ E.g., *New York Times*, March 13 and April 5, 1975; *The Guardian*, UK, March 18, 1975.

¹⁸⁸ For one example (the congressional testimony of George Kahin and Gareth Porter), see Stephen J. Morris, “Ho Chi Minh, Pol Pot and Cornell,” *The National Interest*, Summer 1989, p. 57.

¹⁸⁹ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), pp. 261-2.

¹⁹⁰ “Deathwatch: Cambodia,” *Time*, November 12, 1979.

¹⁹¹ Patrick Heuveline, “The Demographic Analysis of Mortality Crises: The Case of Cambodia, 1970-1979,” in Holly E. Reed and Charles B. Keely, eds., *Forced Migration and Mortality* (National Academy Press, 2001), p. 124.

¹⁹² *Necessary Illusions* (South End Press, 1989), p. 243.

¹⁹³ Craig Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields* (Praeger, 2005), pp. 24, 27.

¹⁹⁴ *Propaganda and the Public Mind* (Pluto Press, 2015), p. 91.

¹⁹⁵ Nate Thayer, “Cambodia: Misperceptions and Peace,” *Washington Quarterly*, Spring 1991, p. 187.

Latin America

10.

The Lie: “The modern history of Guatemala was decisively shaped by the US-organized invasion and overthrow of the democratically elected regime of Jacobo Arbenz... Arbenz’s modest and effective land reform was the last straw... The US establishment found the pluralism and democracy of the years 1945-54 intolerable...”¹⁹⁶

The Truth: As even sympathetic histories mention, Arbenz was elected without a secret ballot. He considered himself a communist and joined the Communist Party in 1957. His land reform, designed by the communists, was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, which he then purged. His regime openly praised Stalin, relied on communists for key decisions, and received arms from the Soviet bloc.¹⁹⁷ Hundreds of opponents were killed under his rule.¹⁹⁸ The CIA acted out of fears that a communist dictatorship would become a Soviet beachhead in the Western hemisphere.¹⁹⁹

9.

The Lie: “The other 9/11 is September 11, 1973, when operations supported and backed by Henry Kissinger among others, led to the bombing of the presidential palace in Chile, the overthrow of the parliamentary government and the killing, by conservative estimates, of about 3,000 people.”²⁰⁰

The Truth: Marxist leader Salvador Allende, not Henry Kissinger, was formally condemned by Chile’s parliament for destroying democracy in Chile.²⁰¹ Claims that Kissinger instigated the 1973 military coup have been repeatedly debunked.²⁰²

8.

The Lie: “[The US has] opposed with tremendous ferocity any improvements in human rights, raise [sic] of living standards and democratization in Latin America.

¹⁹⁶ *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), pp. 71-2.

¹⁹⁷ Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 84, 147, 145, 155, 181-2. This book is heavily pro-Arbenz.

¹⁹⁸ *Guatemala: Memoria Del Silencio* (Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico, Guatemala, 1999), Vol. 1, p. 108: “Las cifras de opositores asesinados durante este período son variables y no existe registro fidedigno. Con fecha posterior a la caída de Arbenz, la prensa nacional habló de 250 personas. Algunos textos publicados por organizaciones afines al Movimiento de Liberación Nacional indican una cifra de 500, pero solamente proporcionan un listado de 108 nombres.”

¹⁹⁹ Nicholas Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA’s Classified Account of its Operation in Guatemala, 1952-1954* (Stanford University Press, 1999) pp. 24-7, based on the CIA archives.

²⁰⁰ Interview, *Hot Type With Evan Solomon*, CBC Newsworld, Canada, December 9, 2003.

²⁰¹ “Declaration of the Breakdown of Chile’s Democracy,” Resolution of the Chamber of Deputies, Chile, August 22, 1973.

²⁰² Mark Falcoff, *Modern Chile, 1970-1989* (Transaction, 1989), pp. 199-251 and “Kissinger and Chile: The Myth That Will Not Die,” *Commentary*, November 2003; Joaquin Fernando, “The Persistence of a Myth: Chile in the Eye of the Cold War Hurricane,” *World Affairs*, Winter 2005, pp. 101-12.

The very essence of American policy has been to increase massacre and repression.”²⁰³

The Truth: Kennedy’s Alliance for Progress promoted democracy and land reform, inspired by democratic movements in Chile, Peru and Venezuela. Carter reduced or stopped aid to military regimes in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Uruguay.²⁰⁴ Reagan and Bush I supported democratic transitions in Bolivia, Honduras, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Guatemala, Suriname, El Salvador, Panama, Chile and Nicaragua.

7.

The Lie: “While throughout the whole region that the United States supports and backs, you have torture, murder, starvation, slave labor, and so on and so forth, there is one little corner of Latin America that has actually come to match the standard of living of the United States... Cuba is one of the poorest countries in the world and it has approximately the same quality of life index, in terms of health and so on, that the United States has.”²⁰⁵

The Truth: Many countries in the region (Belize, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Venezuela before Chavez, Guyana, Suriname) have been free of state terror. Others had regimes that killed hundreds (Brazil,²⁰⁶ Paraguay,²⁰⁷ Mexico,²⁰⁸ Uruguay,²⁰⁹ Bolivia,²¹⁰ Honduras²¹¹) or thousands (Argentina,²¹² Chile²¹³). Cuba’s communists killed thousands of dissidents and boat people²¹⁴ while holding tens of thousands of political prisoners.²¹⁵ Cuba was among the area’s healthiest nations before communist rule; other Latin American states have surpassed its subsequent health care results.²¹⁶

6.

The Lie: “in the 1980s the US fought a major war in Central America, leaving some 200,000 tortured and mutilated corpses, millions of orphans and refugees, and four countries devastated. A prime target of the US attack was the Catholic Church, which had committed the grievous sin of adopting the ‘preferential option for the poor.’”²¹⁷

²⁰³ *The Harvard Crimson*, March 20, 1985.

²⁰⁴ Tony Smith, *America’s Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle For Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 217, 220, 245.

²⁰⁵ *Latin America: From Colonization to Globalization* (Ocean Press, 1999), p. 42.

²⁰⁶ Associated Press, September 9, 1990.

²⁰⁷ *Rule by Fear* (Americas Watch, 1985), p. 99.

²⁰⁸ *Los Angeles Times*, December 9, 2001.

²⁰⁹ *New York Times*, April 17, 1989.

²¹⁰ *New York Times*, March 14, 1999.

²¹¹ *New York Times*, December 21, 1995.

²¹² *New York Times*, March 25, 1995.

²¹³ *New York Times*, December 2, 2000.

²¹⁴ *Wall Street Journal*, December 30, 2005, Cox News Service, September 5, 2006.

²¹⁵ Frank Calzon, *Castro’s Gulag* (Council for Inter-American Security, 1979), pp. 9-10, 43-4.

²¹⁶ Nick Eberstadt, *The Poverty of Communism* (Transaction Publishers, 1990), pp. 188, 196-206, 240-6. Eberstadt points out that Latin America’s most impressive reduction in infant mortality occurred under the right-wing military regime in Chile.

²¹⁷ *9-11* (Seven Stories Press, 2001), p. 79.

The Truth: The US imposed democracy in Grenada and Panama, with minimal loss of life, but did not fight elsewhere in the region, let alone wage war on the Catholic Church. The civil wars in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, in which 200,000 died, were the result of Soviet and Cuban support for communist violence.²¹⁸

5.

The Lie: “According to the US government, the [FMLN] guerrillas [in El Salvador] are able to sustain their operations only because of support from Nicaragua... they have never been able to provide any credible evidence for this crucial support...”²¹⁹

The Truth: In 1980, Cuba and Nicaragua unified the Salvadoran communist groups and gave them a base in Nicaraguan territory for waging war on El Salvador. The Soviet bloc supplied enough weapons to arm several battalions.²²⁰ In 1983, the FMLN boasted of Cuban and Nicaraguan backing;²²¹ one FMLN commander stated that the war was directed by Cuba and that nearly all of his weapons came from Nicaragua.²²² In 1985, the Sandinistas offered to stop military aid to forces in El Salvador in return for an end to the Contra insurgency.²²³

4.

The Lie: “[El Salvador’s] death squads [are institutions] that we helped to establish and have since maintained, that grew inevitably out of the intelligence and paramilitary apparatus we constructed in our interest and the social conditions breeding dissidence and revolt that are in significant measure our legacy.”²²⁴

The Truth: In El Salvador, the US supported the centrist Christian Democrats, who were targets of death squads.²²⁵ The Carter Administration repeatedly intervened to prevent right-wing coups.²²⁶ The Reagan Administration repeatedly threatened aid suspensions to halt right-wing atrocities.²²⁷

3.

The Lie: “[President] Duarte’s role [in El Salvador] has been to facilitate the slaughters and repression by exploiting his image as a democratic reformer, ensuring

²¹⁸ Alberto R. Coll, “Soviet Arms and Central American Turmoil,” *World Affairs*, Summer 1985, pp. 7-17; Roger Miranda and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua* (Transaction, 1993), pp. 97-125, 135-50; Robert P. Hager, “Soviet Bloc Involvement in the Salvadoran Civil War,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, December 1995, pp. 437-70.

²¹⁹ *The Culture of Terrorism* (South End Press, 1988), p. 231.

²²⁰ Roger Miranda and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua* (Transaction, 1993), pp. 138-48; Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The KGB and the World: The Mitrokhin Archive II* (Penguin, 2006), pp. 123-4.

²²¹ *Los Angeles Times*, March 14, 1983.

²²² *New York Times*, July 28, 1983, July 12, 1984.

²²³ *New York Times*, April 28, 1985. See in general Robert P. Hager, “Soviet Bloc Involvement in the Salvadoran Civil War,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, December 1995, pp. 437-70.

²²⁴ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), p. 168.

²²⁵ *Los Angeles Times*, June 1, 1982.

²²⁶ *Washington Post*, February 24, July 13, 1980.

²²⁷ *New York Times*, November 20, 26, December 12, 1983.

that Congress provides the support to allow them to proceed effectively... Duarte refuses negotiation and cease-fire offers despite the pleas of his own supporters..."²²⁸

The Truth: The death squads denounced President Duarte as a traitor and threatened his life because he had publicly met the FMLN leaders for peace talks.²²⁹

2.

The Lie: "El Salvador became the leading recipient of US military aid and training (Israel-Egypt aside) by the mid-1980s, as atrocities were peaking."²³⁰

The Truth: Atrocities fell as US military aid increased. All death counts show that the civilian toll peaked in the early 1980s and declined massively by the mid-1980s. For example, the UN Truth Commission received direct complaints of 2,597 victims of serious violence occurring in 1980. It received direct complaints of 141 victims of serious violence occurring in 1985.²³¹

1.

The Lie: "[In the film *Power and Terror*,] Chomsky argues that while we mourn the 3,000 who died in the twin towers [on 9/11], we pay no attention to the roughly equivalent number of civilians who perished when – he says – the US bombed the Panamanian neighborhood of Chorillo during the American invasion of 1989."²³²

The Truth: Journalist Marc Cooper comments: "I was in that neighborhood mere days after it was razed, and Chomsky is just plain wrong: It wasn't bombed. It burned down after a firefight between US and Panamanian troops. And as reprehensible as the US invasion was, Panama's own human-rights commission claims that a total of maybe 400 people – soldiers and civilians – died during the entire conflict."²³³

²²⁸ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), pp. 116-17.

²²⁹ *Wall Street Journal*, October 17, 1984.

²³⁰ *Hegemony or Survival* (Penguin, 2004), p. 107.

²³¹ *Report of the UN Truth Commission on El Salvador*, UN Security Council S/25500, April 1, 1993, pp. 29, 36.

²³² *LA Weekly*, January 24-30, 2003.

²³³ *Ibid.*

The Nicaraguan Civil War

10.

The Lie: “The Carter Administration supported Somoza until the very end. Then the American-supported military intervention against the Sandinistas began immediately in 1979. But the Carter Administration did attempt to find a way to support the more conservative and pro-American elements in the Sandinista coalition and bring them to power. The Reagan Administration gave up that attempt and simply turned to war against Nicaragua.”²³⁴

The Truth: Somoza openly blamed Carter for his downfall.²³⁵ The Sandinistas spoke of Carter’s support.²³⁶ The Carter Administration was the single largest donor to Sandinista Nicaragua, sending \$108 million in direct aid and arranging \$262 million in loans. The aid stopped when Nicaragua continued to arm communist insurgents in El Salvador. The Reagan Administration twice offered to resume aid if the Sandinistas ended their military build-up and their attack on El Salvador.²³⁷

9.

The Lie: “The US is intent on winning its war against Nicaragua in the same way. Nicaragua must first be driven into dependence on the USSR, to justify the attack that must be launched against it...”²³⁸

The Truth: The Sandinistas’ founder, Carlos Fonseca Amador, was a KGB agent.²³⁹ On seizing power in 1979, Sandinista leaders drew up a plan for military expansion in alliance with Cuba and the Soviet bloc.²⁴⁰ The KGB reported that they had decided to form a Marxist-Leninist party and that Daniel Ortega saw the Soviet regime as an ally and model for Nicaragua.²⁴¹ From 1980, the Sandinista Interior Ministry collaborated with the KGB and other Warsaw Pact agencies, especially the Stasi, which created Nicaragua’s secret police, the DGSE.²⁴²

8.

The Lie: “To ensure that Nicaragua will become part of ‘the Communist-dominated bloc of slave states,’ the US has been waging a proxy war of mounting intensity against Nicaragua while blocking any source of arms from other than the preferred

²³⁴ *Latin America: From Colonization to Globalization* (Ocean Press, 1999), p. 20.

²³⁵ *Washington Post*, August 23, 1979.

²³⁶ *New York Times*, July 16, 1979.

²³⁷ Dissenting Opinion of Judge Schwebel, *Nicaragua v. United States of America – Merits*, ICJ, June 27, 1986, Factual Appendix, paras. 15-18, 22-5. See also Sandinista admissions in *Miami Herald*, July 18, 1999.

²³⁸ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), p. 71.

²³⁹ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The KGB and the World: The Mitrokhin Archive II* (Penguin, 2006), p. 41.

²⁴⁰ Roger Miranda and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua* (Transaction, 1993), pp. 4-5, 14-15.

²⁴¹ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The KGB and the World: The Mitrokhin Archive II* (Penguin, 2006), pp. 120-1.

²⁴² John O. Koehler, *Stasi: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police* (Westview Press, 1999), pp. 297-310.

source: the USSR and its clients... only the Soviet bloc is permitted to provide Nicaragua with arms for self-defense against our attack.”²⁴³

The Truth: The Sandinistas began receiving Soviet arms in 1979, adding tanks and artillery in mid-1980. They signed a treaty with the Soviets to expand Nicaragua’s army to 120,000 troops – the largest in Central America – in 1981.²⁴⁴

7.

The Lie: “the Sandinistas, among these Central American countries, are unique in that the government doesn’t slaughter its population.”²⁴⁵

The Truth: Nicaragua’s Permanent Commission on Human Rights reported 2,000 murders in the first six months²⁴⁶ and 3,000 disappearances in the first few years.²⁴⁷ It has since documented 14,000 cases of Sandinista torture, rape, kidnapping, mutilation and murder.²⁴⁸

6.

The Lie: “Another major charge against the Sandinistas has to do with their treatment of the Miskitos... That they were treated very badly by the Sandinistas is beyond question; they are also among the better treated Indians in the hemisphere.”²⁴⁹

The Truth: The Sandinistas sent Soviet helicopter gunships and elite army units to attack the Indians; carried out mass arrests, jailings and torture; burned down 65 Indian communities; inflicted ethnic cleansing on thousands of Indians; and tried to starve the Indians by cutting off food supplies. The Sandinistas boasted that they were “ready to eliminate the last Miskito Indian to take Sandinism to the Atlantic Coast.”²⁵⁰

5.

The Lie: “[Sandinista Nicaragua] is one of the nicest places I have ever visited... one of the few places where a decent person can live with a certain sense of integrity and hope... I was extremely impressed by the openness of Nicaraguan society... The

²⁴³ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), p. 54. Cf.: “the United States is devoting itself with desperate intensity to drive Nicaragua into the hands of the Soviet Union,” *On Power and Ideology: The Managua Lectures* (South End Press, 1987), p. 89.

²⁴⁴ Roger Miranda and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua* (Transaction, 1993), pp. 116-18.

²⁴⁵ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 555. Cf.: “the Sandinista record compares favorably with that of US clients in the region today, and in the past, and elsewhere, to put it rather mildly,” *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), p. 72; “the Sandinista leadership is positively saintly in comparison with the gangsters that the US has supported throughout Central America and beyond, not to speak of Washington,” *On Power and Ideology: The Managua Lectures* (South End Press, 1987), p. 38; “the opposition in Nicaragua... can at least function without fear of being slaughtered,” *The Culture of Terrorism* (South End Press, 1988), p. 137.

²⁴⁶ John Norton Moore, *The Secret War in Central America* (University Publications of America, 1987), p. 143n94.

²⁴⁷ Roger Miranda and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua* (Transaction, 1993), p. 193.

²⁴⁸ *Insight on the News*, July 26, 1999.

²⁴⁹ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), p. 74.

²⁵⁰ Roger Miranda and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua* (Transaction Publishers, 1993), pp. 253-4.

place is completely open. You can go anywhere you want and talk about anything you want.”²⁵¹

The Truth: In Managua alone, investigators from the OAS Inter-American Commission on Human Rights met 400 torture victims. The UN International Commission of Jurists found that the Sandinista People’s Courts aimed to suppress all political opposition. The Permanent Commission on Human Rights identified 6,000 political prisoners. The Sandinistas admitted to forcing 180,000 peasants into resettlement camps.²⁵² Another 400,000 people fled to the US, and several hundred thousand more to Costa Rica and Honduras.²⁵³

4.

The Lie: “The crime of the Sandinistas was to carry out successful development... they immediately began to divert resources to the poor part of the population.”²⁵⁴

The Truth: For decades, Nicaragua had experienced some of the fastest economic growth in the hemisphere. Within a few years of Sandinista rule, wages had been fixed below poverty level and there was mass unemployment. There were shortages of nearly all basic goods, with inflation at 30,000%. Government studies found that three-quarters of schoolchildren suffered from malnutrition, while living standards were lower than Haiti. The World Bank found that Nicaragua was on the economic level of Somalia. Even the Soviet bloc blamed the regime for wrecking the country.²⁵⁵

3.

The Lie: “Since there is no popular force within Nicaragua that is carrying out any substantial opposition to the [Sandinista] regime, they have to attack the country from outside.”²⁵⁶

The Truth: Leading Sandinistas saw the revolt as a popular uprising. The Contras became “a *campesino* movement with its own leadership” (Luis Carrion); they had “a large social base in the countryside” (Orlando Nunez); “the integration of thousands of peasants into the counter-revolutionary army” was provoked by “the policies, limitations and errors of *Sandinismo*” (Alejandro Bendana); “many landless peasants went to war” to avoid the state collectives, and Contra commanders “were small farmers, many of them without any ties to *Somocismo*, who had supplanted the former [Somoza] National Guard officers” (Sergio Ramirez).²⁵⁷

2.

²⁵¹ *Latin America: From Colonization to Globalization* (Ocean Press, 1999), pp. 52-3.

²⁵² Humberto Belli, *Breaking Faith* (Puebla Institute, 1985), pp. 124, 126-8.

²⁵³ *Miami Herald*, July 18, 1999.

²⁵⁴ *Latin America: From Colonization to Globalization* (Ocean Press, 1999), p. 57.

²⁵⁵ Roger Miranda and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua* (Transaction, 1993), pp. 183-4.

²⁵⁶ *Latin America: From Colonization to Globalization* (Ocean Press, 1999), p. 20.

²⁵⁷ Robert S. Leiken, *Why Nicaragua Vanished* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), pp. 148-9, 159. See also Robert P. Hager, “The Origins of the Contra War in Nicaragua,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Spring 1998, pp. 133-64.

The Lie: “Even the fact that Nicaragua had a popular elected government is inexpressible in the US propaganda system, with its standards of discipline that few respectable intellectuals would dare to flout.”²⁵⁸

The Truth: The 1984 election was for posts subordinate to the Sandinista Directorate, a body “no more subject to approval by vote than the Central Committee of the Communist Party is in countries of the East Bloc,” according to a detailed study. By evading the secret ballot, “the authorities had had the opportunity to check on how individuals had voted.” Also, “the finally announced results of the election were determined through administrative manipulation – that is, they were rigged.”²⁵⁹

1.

The Lie: “anyone who called the 1990 Nicaraguan elections [which the Sandinistas lost] ‘free and fair,’ a welcome step towards democracy, was not merely a totalitarian, but one of a rather special variety.”²⁶⁰

The Truth: Nicaraguan voters thought otherwise: “The longer they were in power, the worse things became. It was all lies, what they promised us” (unemployed person); “I thought it was going to be just like 1984, when the vote was not secret and there was not all these observers around” (market vendor); “Don’t you believe those lies [about fraud], I voted my conscience and my principles, and so did everyone else I know” (young mother); “the Sandinistas have mocked and abused the people, and now we have given our vote to [the opposition] UNO” (ex-Sandinista officer).²⁶¹ The Sandinistas admitted: “It was the peasants, not the oligarchs, that voted us out of office,” and “in the end, most of the peasants were against us” (Vice-President Sergio Ramirez).²⁶²

²⁵⁸ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 306.

²⁵⁹ Martin Kriele, “Power and Human Rights in Nicaragua,” *German Comments*, April 1986, pp. 56-7, 63-7, a chapter excerpted from his *Nicaragua: Das blutende Herz Amerikas* (Piper, 1986). See also Robert S. Leiken, “The Nicaraguan Tangle,” *New York Review of Books*, December 5, 1985 and “The Nicaraguan Tangle: Another Exchange,” *New York Review of Books*, June 26, 1986; Alfred G. Cuzan, Letter, *Commentary*, December 1985 and “The Latin American Studies Association vs. the United States: The Verdict of History,” *Academic Questions*, Summer 1994, pp. 40-55.

²⁶⁰ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 318.

²⁶¹ *New York Times*, March 5, 1990.

²⁶² *Washington Post*, September 4, 1993, *Miami Herald*, July 18, 1999.

Terrorist Atrocities

10.

The Lie: “we might consider one of the early exploits of our most favored client state [Israel], the massacre on Oct. 28, 1948 at Doueimah [sic]... leaving 580 civilians killed according to the accounting by its Mukhtar – 100 to 350, according to Israeli sources, 1,000 according to testimonies preserved in US State Department records...”²⁶³

The Truth: Arab officials investigated these stories at the time, concluding that 27 had been murdered and that “the information on the slaughter in Duwayma was exaggerated.” The IDF also investigated and requested a field trial for the guilty officer.²⁶⁴ The crime was committed in revenge for Arab terrorist attacks.²⁶⁵ Those attacks killed 2,000 Jewish civilians during the war.²⁶⁶

9.

The Lie: “None [of the attacks on Israel] is remembered with more horror than the atrocity at Ma’alot in 1974, where 22 members of a paramilitary youth group were killed in an exchange of fire...”²⁶⁷

The Truth: The PLO attack commenced with the murder of a father, a pregnant mother and their four-year-old child, with their five-year-old daughter shot in the stomach. The terrorists took more than 100 schoolchildren hostage and threatened to massacre them unless their demands were met. They murdered 22 teenagers, and wounded 56, during an Israeli rescue attempt.²⁶⁸

8.

The Lie: “We might tarry a moment over the Israeli attack on the island off Tripoli north of Beirut [in 1984], in which Lebanese fishermen and boy scouts at a camp were killed... One might ask why the murder of Lebanese boy scouts is a lesser atrocity [than the death of Israeli children at Ma’alot].”²⁶⁹

The Truth: Israel bombed an ammunition dump on the island, known as a training facility for a jihadist faction allied to the PLO. Sources in the jihadist faction reported that there were 150 terrorists on the island and that 25 of them were hit.²⁷⁰

7.

²⁶³ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), pp. 76-7.

²⁶⁴ Yoav Gelber, *Palestine 1948* (Sussex Academic Press, 2001), p. 209.

²⁶⁵ Associated Press, August 24, 1984.

²⁶⁶ Netanel Lorch, *The Edge of the Sword: Israel’s War of Independence, 1947-1949* (Putnam, 1961), p. 450.

²⁶⁷ *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 2002), p. 65.

²⁶⁸ Jillian Becker, *The PLO: The Rise and Fall of the Palestine Liberation Organization* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1984), pp. 186-7.

²⁶⁹ *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 2002), p. 65.

²⁷⁰ *Washington Post*, June 28, 1984.

The Lie: “What were the worst terrorist acts in the Middle East in the peak year, 1985? ... The second candidate would be the Israeli bombing of Tunis... Tunis was attacked with smart bombs. People were torn to pieces, and so on, and the attack killed about seventy-five people, Tunisians and Palestinians. They were civilians... This was, again, international terrorism.”²⁷¹

The Truth: Israel bombed the PLO’s headquarters in a suburb of Tunis. A report stated that the raid “heavily damaged or destroyed buildings used by Force 17, the PLO’s elite security wing... while leaving others in the complex untouched.”²⁷²

6.

The Lie: “the heroine of the popular struggle that overthrew the vicious Somoza regime in Nicaragua, Dora María Téllez, was denied a visa to teach at the Harvard Divinity School, as a terrorist. Her crime was to have helped overthrow a US-backed tyrant and mass murderer.”²⁷³

The Truth: In 1978, Dora Maria Téllez led a Sandinista attack on Nicaragua’s parliament building. The terrorists took 1,500 civilian hostages, including children, and threatened to murder them unless their demands were met. The demands included a prisoner release and a \$10 million ransom.²⁷⁴

5.

The Lie: “[In November 1983,] UNITA in Angola took credit for shooting down an Angolan civilian airline with over a hundred people killed... South Africa and the United States support them... so that whenever they shoot down a civilian airliner, that’s fine.”²⁷⁵

The Truth: UNITA claimed to have shot down a plane carrying government soldiers. The authorities said that it was a passenger airliner that crashed because of technical faults.²⁷⁶

4.

The Lie: “Only a few months before he spoke [in June 1984], [George] Shultz’s UNITA friends in Angola were boasting of having shot down civilian airliners with 266 people killed...”²⁷⁷

The Truth: UNITA claimed to have shot down government planes carrying hundreds of military personnel. The authorities said that the first plane made an emergency landing because of technical problems, with no-one killed.²⁷⁸

²⁷¹ *Power and Terror* (Seven Stories Press, 2003), p. 54.

²⁷² *Washington Post*, October 2, 1985.

²⁷³ “War on Terror,” Amnesty International Annual Lecture Hosted by Trinity College, Dublin, January 18, 2006: <https://chomsky.info/wp-content/uploads/20060118.pdf>

²⁷⁴ Shirley Christian, *Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family* (Vintage, 1986), pp. 72-7.

²⁷⁵ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 402.

²⁷⁶ Associated Press, November 10, 1983.

²⁷⁷ *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (Pluto Press, 2002), p. 69.

²⁷⁸ Associated Press, February 13, 1984; United Press International, February 20, 1984.

3.

The Lie: “[UNITA] had also announced ‘a new campaign of urban terror,’ Associated Press reported [in April 1984], noting a bombing in Luanda in which 30 people were killed and more than 70 injured when a jeep loaded with dynamite exploded in the city.”²⁷⁹

The Truth: UNITA claimed responsibility for bombing an army building in Huambo, not Luanda, adding “that the attack marked the beginning of UNITA’s urban *guerrilla* campaign” [emphasis added].²⁸⁰ AP reported UNITA’s claim to have bombed an army building and cited an official communist report from Luanda “that about 30 people were killed and more than 70 injured when a jeep loaded with dynamite exploded in the town [of Huambo].”²⁸¹

2.

The Lie: “[In Bosnia] there was one famous incident which has completely reshaped the Western opinion and that was the photograph of the thin man behind the barb-wire [at the Trnopolje camp]... the place was ugly, but it was a refugee camp, I mean, people could leave if they wanted...”²⁸²

The Truth: Trnopolje was a concentration camp where victims were imprisoned during the process of ethnic cleansing and subjected to systematic starvation and rape, as well as random violence and murder.²⁸³

1.

The Lie: “The [9/11] terrorist attacks were major atrocities. In scale they may not reach the level of many others, for example, Clinton’s bombing of the Sudan with no credible pretext, destroying half its pharmaceutical supplies and killing unknown numbers of people (no one knows, because the US blocked an inquiry at the UN and no one cares to pursue it).”²⁸⁴

The Truth: After al-Qaeda destroyed US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing hundreds, the US bombed a factory in Sudan. The bombing was conducted at night so that civilians would not be hurt.²⁸⁵ One security guard died. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Oxfam, and Doctors Without Borders were all free to investigate and none alleged that the bombing caused mass deaths surpassing 9/11.

²⁷⁹ *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (Pluto Press, 2002), p. 69.

²⁸⁰ BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, April 23, 1984.

²⁸¹ Associated Press, April 22, 1984.

²⁸² Interview, *Radio Television of Serbia*, April 25, 2006: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AapFe-C6tB4>

²⁸³ International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), *Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-1-T, Opinion and Judgment, May 7, 1997, paras. 172-8; David Campbell, “Atrocity, Memory, Photography: Imaging the Concentration Camps of Bosnia,” *Journal of Human Rights*, March 2002, pp. 1-33, and June 2002, pp. 143-72.

²⁸⁴ “On the Bombings,” *ZNet*, September 11, 2001: <http://www.webcitation.org/6IJZ3wKdg>

²⁸⁵ *Washington Post*, August 21, 1998.

After 9/11

10.

The Lie: “[In previous centuries, European powers] were not under attack by their foreign victims... It is not surprising, therefore, that Europe should be utterly shocked by the terrorist crimes of September 11.”²⁸⁶

The Truth: In previous centuries, there was considerable conflict between European and Islamic societies. At some points, European societies were on the offensive; at others, Islamic societies were on the offensive. Islamic invasions of Europe conquered Spain, Sardinia, Sicily, Crete, and parts of France and Italy; the Ottoman Empire expanded as far as Hungary and southern Poland, as well as occupying parts of Greece, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Bulgaria.²⁸⁷

9.

The Lie: “On 9/11, the world reacted with shock and horror, and sympathy for the victims. But it is important to bear in mind that for much of the world, there was a further reaction: ‘Welcome to the club.’ For the first time in history, a Western power was subjected to an atrocity of the kind that is all too familiar elsewhere.”²⁸⁸

The Truth: It was *not* the first time in history that a Western country had fallen victim to atrocities from abroad. In previous centuries, Islamic invaders murdered tens of thousands in Spain and elsewhere, as well as enslaving at least 1 million people from Italy, Spain, France, England, and other countries, with many killed.²⁸⁹

8.

The Lie: “The bin Laden network, I doubt if anybody knows it better than the CIA, since they were instrumental in helping construct it.”²⁹⁰

The Truth: This is “not true,” since CIA money “went exclusively to the Afghan mujahideen groups, not the Arab volunteers” (Jason Burke).²⁹¹ Bin Laden was “outside of CIA eyesight” and there is “no record of any direct contact” (Steve Coll).²⁹² There is “no evidence” of funding, “nor is there any evidence of CIA personnel meeting with bin Laden or anyone in his circle” (Peter Bergen).²⁹³ There is “no support” in any “reliable source” for “the claim that the CIA funded bin Laden or

²⁸⁶ *9-11* (Seven Stories Press, 2001), p. 12.

²⁸⁷ Paul Fregosi, *Jihad in the West: Muslim Conquests from the 7th to the 21st Centuries* (Prometheus Books, 1998); Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism: A History* (Yale University Press, 2006).

²⁸⁸ “There’s Good Reason to Fear US,” *Toronto Star*, September 7, 2003.

²⁸⁹ Robert C. Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 4, 23, 16-18. See also Andrew Bostom, ed., *The Legacy of Jihad* (Prometheus Books, 2005).

²⁹⁰ Interview, *Monthly Review*, November 2001.

²⁹¹ Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda* (Penguin, 2003), p. 59.

²⁹² Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and Bin Laden* (Penguin, 2004), p. 87.

²⁹³ Peter Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know* (Free Press, 2006), pp. 60-1.

any of the other Arab volunteers who came to support the mujahideen” (Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin).²⁹⁴

7.

The Lie: “The planning [of the 1993 World Trade Center attack] was traced to followers of Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, who had been helped to enter the US and was protected within the country by the CIA.”²⁹⁵

The Truth: As the 9/11 Commission showed, Rahman was admitted to the US thanks to the bureaucratic incompetence of officials who did not know that his name was on government terrorism watch lists. He was able to gain permanent residency thanks to their repeated bureaucratic blunders and his own manipulation of the asylum and benefits systems.²⁹⁶

6.

The Lie: “This [i.e., 9/11] is certainly a turning point: for the first time in history the victims are returning the blow to the motherland.”²⁹⁷

The Truth: The terrorists were not “victims” of America: they had already tried to kill tens of thousands of Americans in the World Trade Center in 1993 and they had massacred hundreds in their attacks on American targets in Kenya, Tanzania and elsewhere.²⁹⁸

5.

The Lie: “They [i.e., the terrorists] are carrying out enormous atrocities in response to the real atrocities for which we’re responsible and which continue to this day... It may matter little to us here, and virtually no one in the West cares. But that doesn’t imply that it doesn’t matter to the victims.”²⁹⁹

The Truth: They commit enormous atrocities because they are jihadist fanatics.³⁰⁰ Islamic extremists have committed mass murder in Muslim countries such as Algeria, Iran, Iraq, and Sudan, and in non-Western countries such as India and the Philippines.

4.

The Lie: “Many who know the conditions well are also dubious about bin Laden’s capacity to plan that incredibly sophisticated operation from a cave somewhere in

²⁹⁴ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive II: The KGB and the World* (Penguin, 2006), p. 579n48.

²⁹⁵ *Hegemony or Survival* (Penguin, 2004), p. 111.

²⁹⁶ *9/11 and Terrorist Travel: Staff Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*, August 21, 2004, ch. 3, Box: The Case of the Blind Sheikh, pp. 49-52; available at http://www.9-11commission.gov/staff_statements/index.htm

²⁹⁷ *La Jornada*, Mexico, September 15, 2001.

²⁹⁸ Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and Bin Laden* (Penguin, 2004), pp. 249-50, 404.

²⁹⁹ *La Jornada*, Mexico, September 15, 2001.

³⁰⁰ See, e.g., David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (University of California Press, 2005).

Afghanistan... It's entirely possible that bin Laden's telling the truth when he says that he didn't know about the operation."³⁰¹

The Truth: Soon after 9/11, bin Laden said that he had known of the plan and had used his engineering skills to calculate how much damage the planes would inflict on the World Trade Center.³⁰² Khaled Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi Binalshibh, the 9/11 planners, said that they acted "with the approval of bin Laden."³⁰³

3.

The Lie: "The [Afghanistan] war aim announced on October 12, five days after the bombing began, was that the Taliban leadership should hand over to the United States people who [sic] the US suspected of participating in terrorist actions."³⁰⁴

The Truth: The war aim, announced by President Bush on the first day of bombing, was "to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations, and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime."³⁰⁵

2.

The Lie: "Western civilization is anticipating the slaughter of, well do the arithmetic, 3-4 million people or something like that [in Afghanistan]... Looks like what's happening is some sort of silent genocide... we are in the midst of apparently trying to murder 3 or 4 million people..."³⁰⁶

The Truth: The US did not try to murder millions of people in Afghanistan. UNICEF figures indicated that the deaths of 112,000 children and 7,500 pregnant women would be prevented every year thanks to the overthrow of the Taliban.³⁰⁷

1.

The Lie: "It is acceptable to report the 'collateral damage' by bombing error, the inadvertent and inevitable cost of war, but not the conscious and deliberate destruction of Afghans who will die in silence, invisibly... People do not die of starvation instantly. They can survive on roots and grass, and if malnourished children die of disease, who will seek to determine what factors lie in the background?"³⁰⁸

The Truth: The US had been the largest supplier of food to Afghanistan for a decade and provided two-thirds of food aid after 9/11, saving the country from famine.³⁰⁹ The UN Global Ambassador on Hunger wrote that there was "no starvation this winter in Afghanistan," thanks to "a humanitarian assistance budget wisely provided by the

³⁰¹ *9-11* (Seven Stories Press, 2001), pp. 59-60.

³⁰² Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda* (Penguin, 2003), p. 248.

³⁰³ *Sunday Times*, UK, September 8, 2002.

³⁰⁴ Interview, *International Socialist Review*, September-October 2002.

³⁰⁵ *New York Times*, October 8, 2001.

³⁰⁶ "The New War Against Terror," Lecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, October 18, 2001.

³⁰⁷ *New York Times*, February 1, 2002.

³⁰⁸ *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (Pluto Press, 2002), p. 150.

³⁰⁹ *Los Angeles Times*, January 4, 2002.

Bush administration.”³¹⁰ The head of the World Food Program in Kabul said that “it was clear that a possible famine had been averted.”³¹¹

³¹⁰ Letters, *Wall Street Journal*, February 5, 2002.

³¹¹ *The Spectator*, UK, November 30, 2002.

Middle East Politics

10.

The Lie: “Iran remained ‘moderate’ until the fall of the Shah in 1979 while compiling one of the worst human rights records in the world, as Amnesty International and other human rights groups regularly documented, not affecting the classification of the Shah as a ‘moderate’ or the applause for him among US elites.”³¹²

The Truth: Amnesty International accused the Shah of carrying out 300 political executions. He was not even remotely comparable to the world’s worst human rights violators. During the same period, Macias Nguema murdered 50,000 in Equatorial Guinea, Idi Amin massacred 300,000 in Uganda and Pol Pot slaughtered 2 million in Cambodia.³¹³

9.

The Lie: “Libya is indeed a terrorist state, but in the world of international terrorism, it is a bit player... [Its terrorist attacks] have [been] reduced from near zero to near zero [by the US air raid].”³¹⁴

The Truth: Libya’s terrorist record included military intervention in support of mass murders in Uganda and Ethiopia; sponsorship of terrorists responsible for thousands killed in the Philippines; provision of training camps for thousands of international terrorists; massacres, bombings and hijackings of Western civilians; and involvement in subversion and civil wars throughout Africa and the Middle East.³¹⁵

8.

The Lie: “There was a time when Saddam Hussein was dangerous, had committed major crimes, and was capable of committing much worse ones, and those who are now saying he is too dangerous to exist were supporting him and helping him become more of a danger.”³¹⁶

The Truth: Most of Saddam Hussein’s arms came from countries that later opposed the Iraq war. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 57% came from Russia, 13% from France and 12% from China. Just 1% came from the US or Britain.³¹⁷ The main opponents of the Iraq war had supplied over 80 times as many weapons to Saddam Hussein as the main proponents of the war.

7.

³¹² *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 2002), p. 112.

³¹³ *Washington Post*, March 23, 1980.

³¹⁴ *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 2002), pp. 84, 99.

³¹⁵ *Washington Post*, July 27, 1980.

³¹⁶ Interview, *International Socialist Review*, September-October 2002.

³¹⁷ *The Times*, UK, April 8, 2003.

The Lie: “I have already mentioned the devastation of Iraqi civilian society [by US-backed sanctions], with about 1 million deaths, over half of them young children, according to reports that cannot simply be ignored.”³¹⁸

The Truth: Genocide scholar Milton Leitenberg pointed out: “All alleged post-1990 figures on infant and child mortality in Iraq are supplied by the Iraqi government agencies.”³¹⁹ Iraq denied UN requests to admit independent experts to assess living conditions.³²⁰ The claim that sanctions doubled Iraq’s child mortality rate has been exposed as a “remarkable fiction” created by Saddam Hussein’s regime.³²¹

6.

The Lie: “Presidents commonly have ‘doctrines,’ but Bush II is the first to have ‘visions’ as well... The most exalted of these, conjured up after all pretexts for invasion of Iraq had to be abandoned, was the vision of bringing democracy to Iraq and the Middle East.”³²²

The Truth: Congress formally endorsed the vision of bringing democracy to Iraq during the Clinton Administration.³²³ And the bipartisan war resolution cited the need “to support efforts to remove from power the current Iraqi regime and promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime.”³²⁴

5.

The Lie: “In 2002 the US and United Kingdom proclaimed the right to invade Iraq because it was developing weapons of mass destruction... It was also the sole basis on which Bush received congressional authorisation to resort to force.”³²⁵

The Truth: The war resolution also cited Iraq’s role in “supporting and harboring terrorist organizations,” “brutal repression of its civilian population,” “refusing to release, repatriate, or account for non-Iraqi citizens wrongfully detained by Iraq,” etc. It permitted the use of force to “defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq” and to “enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions” on Iraq.³²⁶

4.

³¹⁸ *9-11* (Seven Stories Press, 2001), p. 88.

³¹⁹ Milton Leitenberg, “Saddam is the Cause of Iraqis’ Suffering,” *Institute For the Study of Genocide Newsletter*, No. 28, n.d.

³²⁰ *New York Times*, September 12, 2000.

³²¹ Tim Dyson and Valeria Cetorelli, “Changing Views on Child Mortality and Economic Sanctions in Iraq: A History of Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics,” *BMJ Global Health*, 2017: <https://gh.bmj.com/content/2/2/e000311>

³²² “Understanding the Bush Doctrine,” *Information Clearing House*, October 2, 2004.

³²³ H. R. 4655, Iraq Liberation Act, 1998.

³²⁴ H. J. R. 114, Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq, 107th Congress, 2nd Session, October 10, 2002.

³²⁵ “It’s Imperialism, Stupid,” *Khaleej Times*, July 4, 2005.

³²⁶ H. J. R. 114: Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq, 107th Congress, 2nd Session, October 10, 2002.

The Lie: “They knew perfectly well that Iraq was defenseless. They probably knew where every pocketknife was in every square inch of Iraq by that time.”³²⁷

The Truth: They knew nothing of the kind. In Chomsky’s words, later in the same interview, “US analysis, including the CIA and intelligence agencies... all assumed that he must have some weapons of mass destruction capacity, as I did and everyone did...”³²⁸

3.

The Lie: “the Bush administration’s original reason for going to war in Iraq was to save the world from a tyrant developing weapons of mass destruction and cultivating links to terror. Nobody believes that now, not even Bush’s speech writers.”³²⁹

The Truth: The regime “trained Iraqis, Palestinians, Syrians, Yemeni, Lebanese, Egyptian, and Sudanese operatives,” including a group “primarily comprised of suicide bombers” (Iraq Survey Group).³³⁰ It “planned for attacks in major Western cities,” made “preparations for a regime-directed wave of terror, codenamed ‘Blessed July,’ against targets outside of Iraq,” and ran “paramilitary training camps” for thousands of Iraqis and “Arab volunteers from Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, the Gulf and Syria” (Iraqi Perspectives Project).³³¹

2.

The Lie: “US forces surround Iran, and it’s surrounded by other nuclear-armed states. So, yes, it is a real threat, and you refuse to discuss it, you increase the threats, you impose harsh economic strangulation, you intimidate the Europeans, which is pretty easy, so that they pull out. That’s just asking them to develop nuclear weapons.”³³²

The Truth: Iran’s nuclear weapons drive has nothing to do with security; the regime has even spoken of provoking a nuclear war. According to a sermon by former President Rafsanjani, “the use of even one nuclear bomb inside Israel will destroy everything. However, it will only harm the Islamic world. It is not irrational to contemplate such an eventuality.”³³³

1.

The Lie: “The US media tend to ignore [Ayatollah] Khamenei’s statements, especially if they are conciliatory. It’s widely reported when Ahmadinejad says Israel shouldn’t exist – but there is silence when Khamenei says that Iran supports the Arab

³²⁷ Interview, *International Socialist Review*, November–December, 2003.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ “Selective Memory and a Dishonest Doctrine,” *Toronto Star*, December 21, 2003.

³³⁰ *Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq’s WMD*, Vol. 1: Regime Strategic Intent, Annexe B: pp. 78-9: available online at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GPO-DUELFERREPORT/>

³³¹ Kevin M. Woods et al., *The Iraqi Perspectives Report* (Naval Institute Press, 2006), pp. 53-4.

³³² Interview, *Global Knowledge*, Norway, June 2006.

³³³ Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, December 14, 2001, translated by BBC Worldwide Monitoring.

League position on Israel-Palestine, calling for normalisation of relations with Israel if it accepts the international consensus of a two-state settlement.”³³⁴

The Truth: Khamenei was demanding “the annihilation and destruction of the Zionist state.”³³⁵ He added that “this cancerous tumor of a state should be removed from the region.”³³⁶ His media were boasting that “just as in one 33-day war more than 50% of Israel was destroyed... it is likely that in the next battle, the second half will also collapse.”³³⁷ Other Iranian officials declared that Israel faced “final and total defeat” and is “on the threshold of annihilation.”³³⁸

³³⁴ “A Predator Becomes More Dangerous When Wounded,” *The Guardian*, March 9, 2007.

³³⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, UK, January 1, 2000.

³³⁶ Reuters, December 15, 2000.

³³⁷ *Kayhan*, Iran, October 19, 2006.

³³⁸ *New York Sun*, October 25, 2006.

The Arab-Israeli Wars

10.

The Lie: “Israel and Jordan were acting in accord with a secret agreement to partition Palestine in 1947-8, both of them regarding the Palestinian leadership as a primary enemy.”³³⁹

The Truth: The Zionists told Jordan’s King Abdallah that “we could not promise to help his incursion into the country, since we would be obliged to observe the UN Resolution” for “the establishment of two states in Palestine” (Golda Meir). Israel’s leaders took “the unanimous view that an Arab Palestine is here to stay” (Moshe Sharett) and that “we will not be able to agree lightly to the annexation of parts of Palestine to Transjordan” (David Ben-Gurion).³⁴⁰

9.

The Lie: “It might be noted that the ‘boundaries of Zionist aspirations’ in Ben-Gurion’s ‘vision’ were quite broad, including southern Lebanon, southern Syria, today’s Jordan, all of cis-Jordan, and the Sinai.”³⁴¹

The Truth: The archives show that Ben-Gurion rejected expansionism: “When we agreed to the Partition Plan, we accepted it in all honesty. We did this not because the plan was good or just, but because a small area received through peaceful means was preferable to us than a large area won by fighting.”³⁴²

8.

The Lie: “[An Israeli expert] observes that ‘the Arabs’ objective of destroying the state of Israel... drives them to [seek] genocide...’ This is a possible, but not an absolutely necessary, interpretation of such proposals.”³⁴³

The Truth: In 1947, the Arab League announced “a war of extermination and momentous massacre.”³⁴⁴ In 1967, Syria wanted “to explode Zionist existence” and Iraq planned “to get rid of the Zionist cancer in Palestine.”³⁴⁵ The PLO vowed that “no-one will remain alive.”³⁴⁶ The 1968 PLO covenant pledged to “destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence” in Palestine.³⁴⁷ In 1979, the PLO warned that “there

³³⁹ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 97.

³⁴⁰ Efraim Karsh, “The Collusion That Never Was: King Abdallah, the Jewish Agency and the Partition of Palestine,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, October 1999, pp. 573, 580-1.

³⁴¹ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 161.

³⁴² Zaki Shalom, *David Ben-Gurion, the State of Israel and the Arab World, 1949-1956* (Sussex Academic Press, 2002), p. 151. See also Daniel Pipes, “Imperial Israel: The Nile-to-Euphrates Calumny,” *Middle East Quarterly*, March 1994.

³⁴³ *Peace in the Middle East?* (Fontana, 1975), p. 71.

³⁴⁴ *Akhbar al-Yom*, Egypt, October 11, 1947, quoted in David Barnett and Efraim Karsh, “Azzam’s Genocidal Threat,” *Middle East Quarterly*, Fall 2011.

³⁴⁵ *New York Times*, May 21, 1967.

³⁴⁶ Moshe Shemesh, “Did Shuqayri Call For ‘Throwing the Jews into the Sea?’” *Israel Studies*, Summer 2003, p. 72.

³⁴⁷ Palestine National Covenant, 1968, art. 22.

will be only Arabs in this part of the world” and promised to shed “rivers of blood” when destroying Israel.³⁴⁸

7.

The Lie: “It is not even controversial that in 1967 Israel attacked Egypt. Jordan and Syria entered the conflict much as England and France went to war when Germany attacked their ally Poland in 1939 [i.e., to defend an ally].”³⁴⁹

The Truth: Israel was defending itself against forcible blockade by Egypt. Nasser had stated: “We knew that by closing the Gulf of Aqaba it might mean war with Israel... the objective [of a war] will be to destroy Israel.”³⁵⁰ Egypt had warned Israel that “either it will die by strangulation in the wake of the Arab military and economic blockade, or it will die by shooting from the Arab forces surrounding it in the south, north and east.”³⁵¹ Syria and the other Arab regimes also declared that their goal was to destroy Israel.³⁵²

6.

The Lie: “The 1973 war was a clear case of an Arab attack, but on territory occupied by Israel, after diplomatic attempts at [a] settlement had been rebuffed... Hence it is hardly ‘an undisputed historical fact’ that in this case the war had to do with ‘the existence of the Jewish state.’”³⁵³

The Truth: Syria pledged to “regain our positions in our occupied land and continue then until we liberate the whole land.”³⁵⁴ Egypt announced: “The issue is not just the liberation of the Arab territories occupied since June 5, 1967... [for] if the Arabs are able to liberate their territories occupied since June 5, 1967 by force, what can prevent them in the next stage from liberating Palestine itself by force?”³⁵⁵

5.

The Lie: “Whether the PLO will be able to maintain the image of heroism with which it left Beirut [in 1982] is another question... as Israel and its partisans desperately hope, the PLO, under conditions of dispersal and disarray, may return to random terrorism and abandon its dangerous posture of political accommodation.”³⁵⁶

³⁴⁸ Associated Press, March 12, 1979.

³⁴⁹ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 189.

³⁵⁰ *Washington Post*, May 27, 1967.

³⁵¹ Radio Cairo, May 27, 1967.

³⁵² Michael B. Oren, *Six Days of War* (Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 78, 132, 136-7, 163-4.

³⁵³ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), pp. 99-100.

³⁵⁴ Radio Damascus, October 15, 1973, reprinted in Walter Laqueur, ed., *The Israel-Arab Reader* (rev. ed., Bantam Books, 1976), p. 459.

³⁵⁵ *Al-Ahram*, Egypt, October 19, 1973, quoted in Theodore Draper, “The Road to Geneva,” *Commentary*, February 1974.

³⁵⁶ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 314.

The Truth: Before the 1982 war, the PLO sponsored terrorists all over the world, including neo-Nazis;³⁵⁷ made preparations to bombard Israeli cities;³⁵⁸ and committed extensive atrocities in Lebanon.³⁵⁹ During the war, PLO “heroism” included using child soldiers and placing military targets next to schools, hospitals, churches, and apartment buildings.³⁶⁰

4.

The Lie: “[Israel was] holding the city [of Beirut] hostage in an effort to compel the PLO to withdraw completely, as it did, to save the city from total destruction.”³⁶¹

The Truth: Far from trying to save the population, the PLO was threatening its annihilation. Yasser Arafat warned that “if the Israelis attempted to break into West Beirut, the PLO would simultaneously blow up 300 ammunition dumps and bring holocaust down on the city.”³⁶²

3.

The Lie: “[In 1982] the US-backed Israeli attack on Lebanon... brought the superpowers close to nuclear confrontation as Israel attacked the forces of a Soviet ally, Syria, which had not attempted to impede the Israeli onslaught...”³⁶³

The Truth: The superpowers did not come close to nuclear confrontation; the Soviets did not threaten war in support of Syria and barely reacted to the first Syrian-Israeli clashes.³⁶⁴

2.

The Lie: “as soon as the current fighting began last September 30 [2000], Israel immediately, the next day, began using US helicopters... to attack civilian targets. In the next couple of days they killed several dozen people in apartment complexes and elsewhere. The fighting was all in the occupied territories, and there was no Palestinian fire. The Palestinians were using stones.”³⁶⁵

The Truth: Palestinian forces *were* using gunfire. Reports spoke of “Palestinians sniping... from rooftops and inside abandoned buildings”; referred to “gunmen shooting at the Israelis,” causing the army to send “helicopter gunships to provide

³⁵⁷ Raphael Israeli, ed., *PLO in Lebanon: Selected Documents* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1983), p. 191ff; Jillian Becker, *The PLO: The Rise and Fall of the Palestine Liberation Organization* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1984), pp. 189-93.

³⁵⁸ Raphael Israeli, ed., *PLO in Lebanon: Selected Documents* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1983), pp. 26ff, 206ff.

³⁵⁹ Raphael Israeli, ed., *PLO in Lebanon: Selected Documents* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1983), pp. 240, 244-6, 234-53; Jillian Becker, *The PLO: The Rise and Fall of the Palestine Liberation Organization* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1984), pp. 123-6, 143, 153-4, 159, 268n13.

³⁶⁰ *New York Times*, July 25, 1982.

³⁶¹ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 309.

³⁶² Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, *Israel's Lebanon War* (Simon and Schuster, 1984), p. 220.

³⁶³ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), p. 176.

³⁶⁴ *Christian Science Monitor*, June 23, 1982.

³⁶⁵ Interview, *Monthly Review*, November 2001.

cover fire” for rescuers; and stated that “Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen shot at each other.”³⁶⁶

1.

The Lie: “The only issue now is suicide bombers. And when did the suicide bombings begin? Last year [2001], on a major scale... One year of Palestinian crimes against Israel after thirty-four years of quiet. Israel had been nearly immune. I mean, there were terrorist attacks on Israel but not from within the occupied territories.”³⁶⁷

The Truth: Suicide bombings in Israel began in 1994, less than a year after the Oslo Accords that created the Palestinian Authority. Hundreds of Israelis died in suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks from the West Bank and Gaza before the collapse of the peace process in late 2000.

³⁶⁶ *New York Times*, October 1, Associated Press, October 2, 2000.

³⁶⁷ Interview, May 21, 2002, in *Power and Terror* (Seven Stories Press, 2003), p. 32.

The Arab-Israeli Peace Process

10.

The Lie: “Much is made in US propaganda about Israel’s eagerness to make peace after the 1967 war... in August 1967, Yigal Allon had advanced his ‘Allon plan,’ which became official policy a year later... No other Israeli initiatives are known... The terms ‘territorial compromise’ and ‘land for peace’ are used to refer to one or another version of the Allon plan, always rejecting entirely the Palestinian right to self-determination.”³⁶⁸

The Truth: In July 1967, Prime Minister Levi Eshkol publicly confirmed Israel’s readiness to establish a Palestinian state. Similar ideas were voiced by Yigal Allon, Yitzhak Rabin and Moshe Dayan.³⁶⁹ In January 1976, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin considered another plan for a Palestinian state. This was supported by Golda Meir, Yigal Allon and Ariel Sharon.³⁷⁰

9.

The Lie: “Keeping to the diplomatic record... both sides, of course, rejected [UN Security Council Resolution] 242.”³⁷¹

The Truth: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt accepted the resolution – while differing over interpretation – and began talks with the UN Special Representative appointed to implement it.³⁷²

8.

The Lie: “In February 1971, [Sadat] offered Israel a full peace treaty on the pre-June 1967 borders, with security guarantees, recognized borders and so on... Sadat’s offer was in line with the international consensus of the period...”³⁷³

The Truth: Egypt explained its policy as follows: “There are only two specific Arab goals at present: elimination of the consequences of the 1967 aggression through Israel’s withdrawal from all the lands it occupied that year, and elimination of the consequences of the 1948 aggression through the eradication of Israel.”³⁷⁴

7.

³⁶⁸ “Middle East Diplomacy: Continuities and Changes,” *Z Magazine*, December 1991.

³⁶⁹ Reuven Pedatzur, “Coming Back Full Circle: The Palestinian Option in 1967,” *Middle East Journal*, Spring 1995, pp. 273-6, 278; see also *Washington Post*, July 6, 1967.

³⁷⁰ Avraham Wachman, “A Peace Plan,” *The New Republic*, September 5, 1988; *Jerusalem Post*, July 27, 1990. At this time “Sharon agreed to the transfer of the entire West Bank to Palestinian sovereignty on condition that all security arrangements be left in the hands of Israel”: Uzi Benziman, *Sharon: An Israeli Caesar* (Robson Books, 1985), p. 194.

³⁷¹ Debate with Alan Dershowitz, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard, November 29, 2005.

³⁷² *Report by the Secretary-General on the Activities of the Special Representative to the Middle East*, Security Council S/10070, January 4, 1971, para. 2: <http://www.webcitation.org/5PG5TdN2o>

³⁷³ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 64.

³⁷⁴ *Al-Ahram*, Egypt, February 25, 1971, quoted in Theodore Draper, “The Road to Geneva,” *Commentary*, February 1974.

The Lie: “In January 1976, the US was compelled to veto a UN Security Council Resolution calling for a settlement in terms of the international consensus, which now included a Palestinian state alongside Israel... [Israel alleged] that the PLO not only backed this peace plan but in fact ‘prepared’ it; the PLO then condemned ‘the tyranny of the veto’ (in the words of the PLO representative) by which the US blocked this important effort to bring about a peaceful two-state settlement.”³⁷⁵

The Truth: Far from aiming at a two-state solution, the draft UN resolution endorsed the “right” of millions of Palestinians to “return” to pre-1967 Israel, a euphemism for the country’s destruction.³⁷⁶ The PLO warned that “this Zionist ghetto of Israel must be destroyed”³⁷⁷ and stressed that “we will not recognize Israel.”³⁷⁸

6.

The Lie: “The PLO [by 1982] was getting extremely annoying [to Israel] with its insistence on negotiated settlement of the conflict.”³⁷⁹

The Truth: The PLO stated: “Peace for us means the destruction of Israel... We shall not rest until the day when we return to our home and until we destroy Israel.”³⁸⁰ The PLO announced: “We wish at any price to liquidate the state of Israel.”³⁸¹ The PLO declared: “We shall never allow Israel to live in peace... We shall never recognize Israel...”³⁸²

5.

The Lie: “These facts are automatically cut out of history, along with others unacceptable to US power, including repeated PLO initiatives through the 1980s calling for negotiations with Israel leading to mutual recognition.”³⁸³

The Truth: At the end of the 1980s, PLO deputy leader Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) declared: “There was no PLO recognition of Israel.”³⁸⁴ PLO leader Yasser Arafat issued a joint statement with Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi avowing that “the so-called ‘State of Israel’ was one of the consequences of World War II and should disappear, like the Berlin Wall.”³⁸⁵

4.

³⁷⁵ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 67.

³⁷⁶ Draft UN Security Council Resolution S/11940, January 23, 1976, para. 1(b): <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-189673/>

³⁷⁷ *Newsweek*, January 5, 1976.

³⁷⁸ *New York Times*, February 17, 1976.

³⁷⁹ *Power and Terror* (Seven Stories Press, 2003), p. 52.

³⁸⁰ *El Mundo*, Venezuela, February 11, 1980; *The Times*, UK, August 5, 1980.

³⁸¹ *The Times*, UK, August 5, 1980.

³⁸² *Der Stern*, West Germany, July 30, 1981.

³⁸³ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 425.

³⁸⁴ *Al-Watan*, Kuwait, February 11, 1989.

³⁸⁵ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, January 8, 1990.

The Lie: “Clinton-Barak advanced a few steps towards a Bantustan-style settlement... three cantons [in the West Bank], under Israeli control, virtually separated from one another and from the fourth enclave, a small area of East Jerusalem... In the fifth canton, Gaza, the outcome was left unclear except that the population were also to remain virtually imprisoned. It is understandable that maps are not to be found in the US mainstream, or any of the details of the proposals.”³⁸⁶

The Truth: The PLO leadership boasted that “Barak agreed to a withdrawal from 95% of the occupied Palestinian lands” and pledged that “our eyes will continue to aspire to the strategic goal, namely, to Palestine from the river to the sea.”³⁸⁷

3.

The Lie: “There has been *one* elected leader in the Middle East, *one*, who was elected in a reasonably fair, supervised election... namely Yassir Arafat. So how do the great ‘democrats’ like Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld treat him? Lock him up in a compound so that he can be battered by US-provided arms to their local client under military occupation.”³⁸⁸

The Truth: Israel and Turkey both had freely elected leaders at the time. The Palestinian elections were rigged,³⁸⁹ and Arafat’s PLO colleagues compared him to Idi Amin and Saddam Hussein.³⁹⁰ Arafat was trapped in his compound after he sabotaged the peace process and started a campaign of violence.³⁹¹

2.

The Lie: “[Hezbollah’s] Nasrallah has a reasoned argument and persuasive argument that they [i.e., arms] should be in the hands of Hezbollah as a deterrent to potential aggression...”³⁹²

The Truth: Hezbollah’s goal is not to deter aggression but to wage war “until the elimination of Israel and until the death of the last Jew on earth.”³⁹³ Nasrallah has pledged to “finish off the entire cancerous Zionist project.”³⁹⁴ He has stated: “If they [i.e., Jews] all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide.”³⁹⁵

1.

³⁸⁶ “Back in the USA,” *Red Pepper*, UK, May 2002.

³⁸⁷ Faisal Hussein, *Al-Safir*, Lebanon, March 21, 2001. For maps of the Clinton-Barak proposals, see Dennis Ross, *The Missing Peace* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004), pp. xxiv-xxv.

³⁸⁸ “On Historical Amnesia, Foreign Policy, and Iraq,” Interview, *American Amnesia*, February 17, 2004; <https://chomsky.info/20040217/>

³⁸⁹ Daniel Polisar, “Yasser Arafat and the Myth of Legitimacy,” *Azure*, Summer 2002, pp. 29-87.

³⁹⁰ *US News and World Report*, December 27, 1993.

³⁹¹ Efraim Karsh, *Arafat’s War* (Grove Press, 2003), pp. 171-99.

³⁹² Interview, Al Manar TV, May 13, 2006.

³⁹³ United Press International, March 24, 1992.

³⁹⁴ *Financial Times*, April 25, 2001.

³⁹⁵ *Daily Star*, Lebanon, October 23, 2002.

The Lie: “the policies of Hamas are more forthcoming and more conducive to a peaceful settlement than those of the United States or Israel... There is a long-standing international consensus that goes back over thirty years that there should be a two-state political settlement on the international border... Hamas is willing to accept that as a long-term truce.”³⁹⁶

The Truth: Hamas is committed to the destruction of Israel and the extermination of Jews: “Before Israel dies, it must be humiliated and degraded... Allah willing, we will make them lose their eyesight, we will make them lose their brains” (Hamas leader Khaled Mashal);³⁹⁷ “Oh Allah, vanquish the Jews and their supporters... count their numbers and kill them all, down to the very last one” (Hamas parliamentary speaker Ahmad Bahr).³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ Interview, LBC TV, Lebanon, May 23, 2006.

³⁹⁷ Al-Jazeera TV, February 3, 2006.

³⁹⁸ *New York Post*, May 5, 2007.

Collaboration with Holocaust Deniers

10.

The Lie: “In the fall of 1979, I was asked by Serge Thion... to sign a petition calling on authorities to insure Robert Faurisson’s ‘safety and the free exercise of his legal rights.’”³⁹⁹

The Truth: According to Serge Thion’s collaborator Pierre Guillaume, Chomsky signed and promoted the petition months after their meeting, without being asked by them.⁴⁰⁰ According to Robert Faurisson, the petition was written and circulated by the Holocaust denier Mark Weber.⁴⁰¹

9.

The Lie: “I was asked to sign a petition calling on authorities to protect Faurisson’s civil rights, and I did so. I sign innumerable petitions of this nature, and do not recall ever having refused to sign one.”⁴⁰²

The Truth: Chomsky had already boasted of his refusal to sign a petition for human rights in communist Vietnam. On that occasion, he had explained that “public protest is a political act, to be judged in terms of its likely human consequences,” including the likelihood that the media “would distort and exploit it for their propagandistic purposes.”⁴⁰³

8.

The Lie: “I was asked to sign a petition in defense of Robert Faurisson’s ‘freedom of speech and expression.’ The petition said absolutely nothing about the character, quality or validity of his research, but restricted itself quite explicitly to a defense of elementary rights that are taken for granted in democratic societies...”⁴⁰⁴

The Truth: The petition that Chomsky signed dignified Faurisson’s writings by (a) affirming his scholarly credentials (“a respected professor” of “document criticism”); (b) describing his lies as “extensive historical research”; (c) placing the term “Holocaust” in derisory quotation marks; and (d) portraying his lies as “findings.”⁴⁰⁵

7.

³⁹⁹ “His Right to Say It,” *The Nation*, February 28, 1981.

⁴⁰⁰ Pierre Guillaume, “Une mise au point,” in *Droit et Histoire* (Paris: La Vieille Taupe, 1986), p. 152.

⁴⁰¹ Werner Cohn, *Partners in Hate: Noam Chomsky and the Holocaust Deniers* (Avukah Press, 1995), pp. 55-6.

⁴⁰² *Réponses inédites à mes détracteurs parisiens* (Paris: Cahiers Spartacus, 1984), *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 290.

⁴⁰³ Unpublished interview, March 28, 1977, *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 176.

⁴⁰⁴ “Some Elementary Comments on the Rights of Freedom of Expression,” October 11, 1980, published as the preface to Robert Faurisson, *Mémoire en défense contre ceux qui m’accusent de falsifier l’histoire* (Paris: La Vieille Taupe, 1980): <https://chomsky.info/19801011/>

⁴⁰⁵ The text of the petition is reproduced in Werner Cohn, *Partners in Hate: Noam Chomsky and the Holocaust Deniers* (Avukah Press, 1995), pp. 53-4.

The Lie: “is it true that Faurisson is an anti-Semite or a neo-Nazi? ... I find no evidence to support either conclusion... As far as I can determine, he is a relatively apolitical liberal of some sort.”⁴⁰⁶

The Truth: Chomsky was well aware of Faurisson’s Nazi-style bigotry, including his claim that “with good war logic, Hitler would have been led to intern all the Jews who had fallen into his hands... It was necessary to avoid all contact between the Jew and the German soldier.” Faurisson even defended the imposition of the yellow star on Jewish children. He had written for neo-Nazi publications and he had spoken at neo-Nazi meetings.⁴⁰⁷

6.

The Lie: “Serge Thion [is] a libertarian socialist scholar with a record of opposition to all forms of totalitarianism...”⁴⁰⁸

The Truth: Serge Thion was a longstanding denier of the Khmer Rouge bloodbath in Cambodia as well as the Nazi Holocaust. He had published a book reprinting and defending Faurisson’s denials of the Holocaust.⁴⁰⁹

5.

The Lie: “Faurisson’s conclusions are diametrically opposed to views I hold and have frequently expressed in print (for example, in my book *Peace in the Middle East?*, where I describe the holocaust as ‘the most fantastic outburst of collective insanity in human history’).”⁴¹⁰

The Truth: The phrase in *Peace in the Middle East?* occurred in a passage setting out “the Zionist case” for Jewish statehood, which Chomsky opposed.⁴¹¹

4.

The Lie: [Denying that he allowed Holocaust deniers to publish a French translation of his *Political Economy of Human Rights*:] “I make no attempt to keep track of the innumerable translations of books of mine in foreign languages... I contacted the publisher, who checked their files and located the contract for the French translation – with Albin-Michel, a mainstream commercial publisher, to my knowledge.”⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁶ “Some Elementary Comments on the Rights of Freedom of Expression,” October 11, 1980, published as the preface to Robert Faurisson, *Mémoire en défense contre ceux qui m’accusent de falsifier l’histoire* (Paris: La Vieille Taupe, 1980).

⁴⁰⁷ Interview with Robert Faurisson, *Storia illustrata*, Italy, August 1979, reprinted in the neo-Nazi *Journal of Historical Review*, Winter 1981; see Nadine Fresco, “The Denial of the Dead: On the Faurisson Affair,” *Dissent*, Fall 1981.

⁴⁰⁸ “His Right to Say It,” *The Nation*, February 28, 1981.

⁴⁰⁹ Serge Thion, *Vérité historique ou Vérité politique? Le dossier de l’affaire Faurisson. La question des chambres à gaz* (Paris: La Vieille Taupe, 1980).

⁴¹⁰ “His Right to Say It,” *The Nation*, February 28, 1981.

⁴¹¹ *Peace in the Middle East?* (Fontana, 1975), p. 53.

⁴¹² Letter, *Outlook* (a Canadian communist magazine), June 1, 1989.

The Truth: According to Holocaust denier Pierre Guillaume, “Chomsky accepted without demurring that his book should be published in a series that I controlled, and proposed Serge Thion and Michele Noel for the translation. That is, he accepted that his personal work would suffer harshly from the backlash of the vile reputation given to us [Holocaust deniers]... His book appeared with Hallier-Albin Michel Publishing, in my series.”⁴¹³

3.

The Lie: “I never wrote a ‘joint article’ with [Holocaust denier Pierre] Guillaume... [there is] no hint of any collaboration with me [in preparing Guillaume’s article].”⁴¹⁴

The Truth: Near the end of his article, Guillaume wrote: “The first version of the preceding text included numerous errors of detail and an error of evaluation that Chomsky indicated to us while reaffirming that his position was fixed and unchanged. We corrected in the text errors that did not affect the reasoning and we give, below, Chomsky’s comments.”⁴¹⁵

2.

The Lie: “I see no antisemitic implications in denial of the existence of gas chambers, or even denial of the holocaust.”⁴¹⁶

The Truth: The idea of denying the existence of gas chambers and the Holocaust was the brainchild of antisemites and neo-Nazis. Denial of the existence of gas chambers and the Holocaust is a propaganda tactic of antisemites and neo-Nazis all over the world.⁴¹⁷

1.

The Lie: “Returning to my involvement in the Faurisson affair, it consists of signature to a petition, and, after that, response to lies and slander. Period.”⁴¹⁸

The Truth: Chomsky lied about the views of Holocaust deniers (Faurisson, Thion), published one of his books (*Political Economy*) in a series directed by a Holocaust denier (Guillaume), allowed his writings on the subject (*Réponses inédites*) to be published in book format by a Holocaust denier (Guillaume), assisted with an essay (“Une mise au point”) by a Holocaust denier (Guillaume), and argued that there is nothing antisemitic about Holocaust denial. He has praised Holocaust deniers, endorsed their political and academic credentials, collaborated in their propaganda campaigns, and whitewashed their antisemitic and neo-Nazi agenda.

⁴¹³ Pierre Guillaume, “Une mise au point,” in *Droit et Histoire* (Paris: La Vieille Taupe, 1986), p. 154. Translated from French.

⁴¹⁴ Letter, *Outlook* (a Canadian communist magazine), June 1, 1989.

⁴¹⁵ Pierre Guillaume, “Une mise au point,” in *Droit et Histoire* (Paris: La Vieille Taupe, 1986), p. 170. Translated from French.

⁴¹⁶ Quoted in W.D. Rubinstein, “Chomsky and the Neo-Nazis,” *Quadrant*, October 1981.

⁴¹⁷ As observers had already noted: see Lucy Dawidowicz, “Lies About the Holocaust,” *Commentary*, December 1980.

⁴¹⁸ *Réponses inédites à mes détracteurs parisiens* (Paris: Cahiers Spartacus, 1984); *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 291.

Falsifications of Sources: Vietnam

10.

The Lie: “The leading US government specialist on Vietnamese Communism, Douglas Pike... conceded that the NLF ‘maintained that its contest with the GVN and the United States should be fought out at the political level and that the use of massed military might was in itself illegitimate,’ until forced by the United States and its clients ‘to use counterforce to survive.’”⁴¹⁹

The Truth: The insinuation that the communists were peaceful, unlike the GVN (South Vietnamese government), is false. Immediately before the first quotation, Pike wrote: “The NLF initially approached the entire Revolution not as a small-scale war but as a political struggle *with guns*, a difference real and not semantic.”⁴²⁰ In other words, the NLF initially relied on terrorism rather than armed combat. In the second quotation, Pike wrote: “*armed combat* was a GVN-imposed requirement; the NLF was obliged to use counterforce to survive.”⁴²¹ On the next page, he showed that the communists used large-scale terror before being forced into armed combat by the GVN: 1,700 assassinations in 1957-60 and 1,300 in 1961, despite not carrying out military attacks.⁴²²

9.

The Lie: “the United States was unwilling to accept... a Vietnamese-negotiated deal leading to a reunified Vietnam, Communist-led and hostile to China, its ambitions limited to Laos and Cambodia. Therefore the planners quickly moved to heightened aggression.”⁴²³

The Truth: The cited passage showed that the planners *were* willing to accept such a default outcome, which they listed under the heading, “advantages.”⁴²⁴

8.

The Lie: “[Opposition to Ho Chi Minh] ‘seemed the wiser choice’ [to Americans], given the likelihood that all of South-east Asia might have fallen under Ho’s leadership (obviously not by military conquest, say, in Indonesia).”⁴²⁵

The Truth: The cited passage *did* express US fears of the Vietnamese communists attacking other countries in “a dangerous period of Vietnamese expansionism. Laos and Cambodia would have been easy pickings for such a Vietnam... Thailand, Malaya, Singapore, and even Indonesia, could have been next.”⁴²⁶

⁴¹⁹ *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), p. 180. This falsification appears throughout Chomsky’s writings on the Vietnam War.

⁴²⁰ Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong: The Organization and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam* (The MIT Press, 1966), p. 91, emphasis added.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 101, emphasis added.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁴²³ *The Backroom Boys* (Fontana, 1973), p. 51.

⁴²⁴ *The Pentagon Papers* (Beacon Press, 1971), vol. 3, p. 661.

⁴²⁵ *The Backroom Boys* (Fontana, 1973), p. 54.

⁴²⁶ *The Pentagon Papers* (Beacon Press, 1971), vol. 1, p. 52.

7.

The Lie: “The Thai elite, for example, might ‘conclude that we simply could not be counted on’ to help them in suppressing local insurgencies... [If Vietnam fell] ‘the rot [might] spread to Thailand’ and perhaps beyond. The ‘rot’ can only be the Communist ‘ideological threat’; that is, the possibility of social and economic progress outside the framework of American control and imperial interests...”⁴²⁷

The Truth: The cited passage said nothing about suppressing local insurgencies or stopping social and economic progress. It said that even if a reunified Vietnam only absorbed Laos and Cambodia, “the Thai would conclude we simply could not be counted on” and would then accommodate China “even without any marked military move.”⁴²⁸

6.

The Lie: “[US] intelligence concluded that ‘the basic elements of Communist strength in South Vietnam remain indigenous’ ... though the ‘high VC morale’ is sustained in part by ‘receipt of outside guidance and support.’”⁴²⁹

The Truth: The report continued: “The DRV contribution is substantial. The DRV manages the VC insurrection... It provides the VC senior officers, key cadre, military specialists and certain key military and communications equipment... There appears to be a rising rate of infiltration, providing additional DRV stiffening to VC units.”⁴³⁰

5.

The Lie: “The Pentagon Papers now demonstrate conclusively that when the United States undertook the February [1965] escalation, it knew of no regular North Vietnamese units in South Vietnam.”⁴³¹

The Truth: The Pentagon study said the exact opposite: “The presence of this regular North Vietnamese unit [of the 325th Division], which had first been reported as early as February, was a sobering harbinger of things to come.”⁴³²

4.

The Lie: “Such questions occur only to ‘wild men in the wings,’ to borrow McGeorge Bundy’s useful description in 1967 of those who failed to perceive the nobility of the US crusade in Vietnam.”⁴³³

⁴²⁷ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 304-5.

⁴²⁸ *The Pentagon Papers* (Beacon Press, 1971), vol. 3, p. 661.

⁴²⁹ *The Backroom Boys* (Fontana, 1973), p. 137.

⁴³⁰ *The Pentagon Papers* (Beacon Press, 1971), vol. 3, p. 653.

⁴³¹ *The Backroom Boys* (Fontana, 1973), p. 130.

⁴³² *The Pentagon Papers* (Beacon Press, 1971), vol. 3, p. 438.

⁴³³ “Memories,” *Z Magazine*, July-August, 1995.

The Truth: Bundy was referring not to the anti-war left but to the hardline right: “There are wild men in the wings, but on the main stage even the argument on Viet Nam turns on tactics, not fundamentals. This was the meaning of the overwhelming defeat of Senator Goldwater. He may not have been as wild as he sounded, but the country would not take the chance.”⁴³⁴

3.

The Lie: “Samuel Huntington... explains that the Viet Cong is ‘a powerful force which cannot be dislodged from its constituency so long as the constituency continues to exist.’ The conclusion is obvious, and he does not shrink from it. We can ensure that the constituency ceases to exist... to crush the people’s war, we must eliminate the people.”⁴³⁵

The Truth: Huntington’s next sentence rejected this conclusion: “the Viet Cong will remain a powerful force which cannot be dislodged from its constituency so long as the constituency continues to exist. Peace in the immediate future must hence be based on accommodation.”⁴³⁶

2.

The Lie: “Reporters have long been aware of the nature of these tactics, aware that ‘by now the sheer weight of years of firepower, massive sweeps, and grand forced population shifts have reduced the population base of the NLF,’ so that conceivably, by brute force, we may still hope to ‘win.’”⁴³⁷

The Truth: The reporter wrote that the people “dislike the Viet Cong more than they do the government... [the] less oppressive side is the government. By now the sheer weight of years of firepower, massive sweeps, and grand forced population shifts have reduced the population base of the NLF and made the Viet Cong squeeze their remaining peasants ever harder and less discriminatingly for recruits, porters, and rice taxes. By contrast, government control tends to be much less disciplined...”⁴³⁸

1.

The Lie: “in the official version to which the [*New York Times*] is committed... one may either support the policies of the United States [in Vietnam] or back its enemies, ‘look[ing] to the Communists as saviors of that unhappy land.’”⁴³⁹

The Truth: The editorial stated that most anti-war activists did *not* back the enemy: “In the swell of opposition to the war in Vietnam during the decade before America’s withdrawal, there was always a minority, small but vehement, that looked to the Communists as saviors of that unhappy land.”⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁴ McGeorge Bundy, “The End of Either/Or,” *Foreign Affairs*, January 1967, p. 191.

⁴³⁵ *At War with Asia* (Vintage, 1970), pp. 87-8.

⁴³⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Bases of Accommodation,” *Foreign Affairs*, July 1968, p. 653.

⁴³⁷ *At War with Asia* (Vintage, 1970), pp. 87-8.

⁴³⁸ Elizabeth Pond, “Peasants Side With Saigon Regime – For the Moment,” *Christian Science Monitor*, November 8, 1969.

⁴³⁹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 111.

⁴⁴⁰ Editorial, *New York Times*, March 21, 1977.

Falsifications of Sources: Cambodia

10.

The Lie: “In fact, there has been little attention to what took place within Cambodia during the first phase of the ‘decade of the genocide.’ ... The Finnish study is unusual in extending the term ‘genocide’ to this period [i.e., 1970-5], to which it devotes three pages.”⁴⁴¹

The Truth: Nowhere in those pages did the Finnish study use the term “genocide” for the 1970-5 war in Cambodia.⁴⁴²

9.

The Lie: “Nixon at one point informs Kissinger, his right-hand Eichmann, that he wanted bombing of Cambodia. And Kissinger loyally transmits the order to the Pentagon to carry out ‘a massive bombing campaign in Cambodia. Anything that flies on anything that moves.’ That is the most explicit call for what we call genocide when other people do it that I’ve ever seen in the historical record.”⁴⁴³

The Truth: Kissinger was not transmitting actual orders but making a morbid joke at Nixon’s expense: “when Nixon proposed an escalation in the bombing of Cambodia, Kissinger and Haig felt obliged to humor the president while laughing at him behind his back.”⁴⁴⁴

8.

The Lie: [Francois Ponchaud] reports the enormous destruction and murder resulting directly from the American attack on Cambodia, the starvation and epidemics as the population was driven from their countryside by American military terror and the US-incited civil war, leaving Cambodia with ‘an economy completely devastated by the war.’”⁴⁴⁵

The Truth: Ponchaud’s book blamed the devastation of Cambodia’s economy on *all* parties to the civil war, including the Khmer Rouge, which “razed everything in their path that could in any way be connected with the West.” Ponchaud explained: “The rage to destroy, on both sides, left an exhausted, bloodless country.”⁴⁴⁶

7.

The Lie: “Ponchaud reports the explanation [for the evacuation of Phnom Penh] given by the revolutionary government: that the evacuation was motivated in part by impending famine. He rejects this argument on the grounds that rice stocks in Phnom

⁴⁴¹ *The Chomsky Reader* (Serpent’s Tail, 1988), p. 292.

⁴⁴² Kimmo Kiljunen, ed., *Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide* (Zed Books, 1984), pp. 5-8.

⁴⁴³ Interview, *International Socialist Review*, September-October 2004. Cf. *What We Say Goes* (Allen & Unwin, 2007), p. 104.

⁴⁴⁴ *Washington Post*, May 27, 2004.

⁴⁴⁵ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 25, 1977.

⁴⁴⁶ Francois Ponchaud, *Cambodia Year Zero* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), p. 85.

Penh would have sufficed for two months for a large part of the population with careful rationing.”⁴⁴⁷

The Truth: On the page cited, Ponchaud gave several further reasons for rejecting the official pretext: (i) “several tons of rice lay rotting in the port of Kompong Som (Sihanoukville) during the first months after the revolution”; (ii) “the provincial towns, villages, and even isolated farms in the countryside had also been emptied of their inhabitants”; (iii) “ever since 1972 the guerrilla fighters had been sending all the inhabitants of the villages and towns they occupied into the forest to live”; and (iv) Khmer Rouge officials told him at the time that the real reason for the evacuation was ideological.⁴⁴⁸

6.

The Lie: [On Ponchaud’s claim that the atrocities were centrally planned:] “As for the ‘exact instructions issued by the highest authorities,’ this is presumably his reconstruction from the alleged similarity of refugee accounts – he offers no direct evidence – and is as trustworthy as these accounts...”⁴⁴⁹

The Truth: On the very page cited, Ponchaud offered direct evidence, not taken from refugee accounts, of central planning of the atrocities by the Khmer Rouge. He quoted official revolutionary slogans broadcast over Radio Phnom Penh: “the enemy must be utterly crushed,” “what is infected must be cut out,” and so on.⁴⁵⁰

5.

The Lie: [On Ponchaud’s claim that the atrocities were centrally planned:] “In his *Le Monde* articles, Ponchaud was less certain about the alleged ‘central direction.’ ... What did Ponchaud learn in the interim that caused him to change his mind on this crucial point?”⁴⁵¹

The Truth: Ponchaud’s articles left little doubt on this point. He recounted “massive executions or secret disappearings” of former officers and civil servants; maltreatment of Chinese residents “leading to extermination”; and executions of “a great number of intellectuals.” All resulted from ideological hostility to “the former holders of power, the rich, and the educated.”⁴⁵²

4.

The Lie: “[Barron and Paul] claim that Ponchaud attributes to a Khmer Rouge official the statement that people expelled from the cities ‘are no longer needed, and local chiefs are free to dispose of them as they please,’ implying that local chiefs are free to kill them. But Ponchaud’s first report on this... quotes a military chief as stating that

⁴⁴⁷ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 272-3.

⁴⁴⁸ Francois Ponchaud, *Cambodia Year Zero* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), p. 21.

⁴⁴⁹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 274.

⁴⁵⁰ Francois Ponchaud, *Cambodia Year Zero* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), p. 50.

⁴⁵¹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 275.

⁴⁵² *Le Monde*, February 17, 1976, translated in *Congressional Record – Senate*, April 7, 1976, p. 9753.

they ‘are left to the absolute discretion of the local authorities,’ which implies nothing of the sort.”⁴⁵³

The Truth: Ponchaud’s report quoted the Khmer Rouge as follows: “Everything that reminds [us] of colonial and imperial culture must be eradicated not only on the land but also in each individual. One million inhabitants is enough for rebuilding the New Kampuchea. We don’t need any more prisoners of war (population deported in 1975) which should be left at the complete mercy of the local chiefs.”⁴⁵⁴

3.

The Lie: “W. J. Sampson, who worked as an economist and statistician for the Cambodian Government until March 1975, in close contact with the central statistics office... concludes ‘that executions could be numbered in hundreds or thousands rather than in hundreds of thousands’ ...”⁴⁵⁵

The Truth: Sampson actually wrote: “I *feel* that such executions could be numbered in hundreds or thousands rather than in hundreds of thousands.”⁴⁵⁶ This “feeling” had nothing to do with his statistical expertise, and he had no serious basis for speculating that executions numbered in the “hundreds or thousands.”

2.

The Lie: “[According to a] report by Lewis Simons... most Cambodia watchers doubt that the ‘summary justice’ is centrally organized, believing rather that it is the responsibility of local commanders. Again we are left with some doubts, to put it conservatively, as regards the standard media picture: a centrally-controlled genocidal policy of mass execution.”⁴⁵⁷

The Truth: The report, which quoted an estimate of 200,000 executions, added that “summary justice” *was* ordered by the leaders. It stated: “according to one specialist, there does appear to be some flow of information along a chain of command.” The specialist said: “Once the word goes out... then the people on the ground do as they see fit... And if this means that all shopkeepers or teachers, or what-have-you are eliminated, then no one back in Phnom Penh is going to complain.”⁴⁵⁸

1.

The Lie: “The leading State Department specialist [on Cambodia] estimated killings [under the Khmer Rouge] in the ‘thousands or hundreds of thousands,’ and attributed a still larger number of deaths to disease and malnutrition – in significant and perhaps overwhelming measure, a consequence of US terror.”⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵³ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 25, 1977.

⁴⁵⁴ *Le Monde*, February 18, 1976, translated in *Congressional Record – Senate*, April 7, 1976, p. 9754.

⁴⁵⁵ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 25, 1977.

⁴⁵⁶ Letters, *The Economist*, March 26, 1977, emphasis added.

⁴⁵⁷ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 159.

⁴⁵⁸ *Washington Post*, July 22, 1977.

⁴⁵⁹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 162.

The Truth: Speaking in 1977, State Department specialist Charles Twining expressly declined to give an estimate. When pressed, he merely offered a range of “thousands or hundreds of thousands” of executions. He attributed the deaths from disease and malnutrition not to the US but to the Khmer Rouge, who were “guilty of killing” their people by refusing medicines from abroad.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁶⁰ *Human Rights in Cambodia*, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, 95th Congress, 1st Session, July 26, 1977 (US Government Printing Office, 1977), p. 8.

Falsifications of Sources: Israel

10.

The Lie: “In internal discussion in 1938, [David Ben-Gurion] stated that ‘after we become a strong force, as the result of the creation of a state, we shall abolish partition and expand to the whole of Palestine... The state will only be a stage in the realization of Zionism and its task is to prepare the ground for our expansion into the whole of Palestine by a Jewish-Arab agreement... The state will have to preserve order not only by preaching morality but by machine guns, if necessary.’”⁴⁶¹

The Truth: Ben-Gurion’s next sentence was: “But the Arab policy of the Jewish state must be aimed not only at full equality for the Arabs but at their cultural, social and economic equalization, namely, at raising their standard of living to that of the Jews.”⁴⁶²

9.

The Lie: “The motive for Israel’s attacks against civilian populations to the north and east was... explained by Labor Party dove Abba Eban: ‘there was a rational prospect, ultimately fulfilled, that affected populations would exert pressure for the cessation of hostilities.’”⁴⁶³

The Truth: Eban’s article dismissed charges that Israel attacked civilian populations as “a demonological version of Israel’s history.” Rejecting “the monster-image of Israel,” he added: “I do not think it necessary to ‘prove’ that Israel’s political and military leaders in our first decades were no senseless hooligans when they ordered artillery response to *terrorist concentrations*.”⁴⁶⁴

8.

The Lie: “After the Six-Day War, Israel reportedly blocked a Red Cross rescue operation for five days, while thousands of Egyptian soldiers died in the Sinai desert.”⁴⁶⁵

The Truth: Chomsky’s source said the opposite: “Hundreds of Israeli lorries, in a vast rescue operation, were today collecting the remnants of the Egyptian Army in Sinai and carrying the rescued soldiers to the Suez Canal... The Israel Air Force is to launch an operation tomorrow to recover soldiers still roaming about in the Sinai desert. Colonel Mosche Perlmann, the spokesman for General Dayan, the Defence Minister, said that Red Cross representatives would take part.”⁴⁶⁶

7.

⁴⁶¹ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 161.

⁴⁶² Jewish Agency Executive, June 7, 1938; reproduced in Efraim Karsh, *Fabricating Israeli History* (Frank Cass, 1997), pp. 44-5.

⁴⁶³ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 182.

⁴⁶⁴ Abba Eban, “Morality and Warfare,” *Jerusalem Post*, August 16, 1981, emphasis added.

⁴⁶⁵ *Peace in the Middle East?* (Fontana, 1975), p. 182n20.

⁴⁶⁶ *The Times*, UK, June 15, 1967.

The Lie: “The Palestinian National Council, the governing body of the PLO, issued a declaration on March 20, 1977 calling for the establishment of ‘an independent national state’ in Palestine – rather than a secular democratic state *of* Palestine – and authorizing Palestinian attendance at an Arab-Israeli peace conference.”⁴⁶⁷

The Truth: The PNC affirmed the PLO’s “determination to continue the armed struggle” and to fight “without any peace or recognition of Israel.”⁴⁶⁸

6.

The Lie: “Prime Minister Rabin of Israel responded [to the PNC declaration above] ‘that the only place the Israelis could meet the Palestinian guerrillas was on the field of battle.’”⁴⁶⁹

The Truth: Rabin commented “that even when so-called moderates dominated it, the organization still called for the elimination of Israel. He said that the only place the Israelis could meet the Palestinian guerrillas was on the field of battle.”⁴⁷⁰

5.

The Lie: “the US and Israel voted alone against an 1987 UN resolution condemning terrorism in the strongest terms and calling on all nations to combat the plague... it recognized ‘the right to self-determination, freedom, and independence, as derived from the Charter of the United Nations, of people forcibly deprived of that right... particularly peoples under colonial and racist regimes and foreign occupation’ – understood to refer to South Africa and the Israeli-occupied territories, therefore unacceptable.”⁴⁷¹

The Truth: The resolution also endorsed “the right of these peoples to struggle to this end and to seek and receive support” – apparently ratifying violence by the PLO and others.⁴⁷²

4.

The Lie: “[Then-opposition politician Ariel] Sharon does not appear too dissatisfied with the outcome [of Prime Minister Rabin’s peace plan]. Correspondents report that after Oslo II, he was ‘smiling broadly as he talked about the bright future for’ a new West Bank settlement... and showing the press his own proposed map from 1977, now implemented by Rabin, with whom Sharon said he ‘felt close,’ thanks to the congruence of their programs.”⁴⁷³

⁴⁶⁷ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 68.

⁴⁶⁸ Political Resolutions of the 13th Palestine National Council, arts. 1,2,9, in Yehoshafat Harkabi, *The Palestinian Covenant and its Meaning* (Vallentine Mitchell, 1979), pp. 149-59.

⁴⁶⁹ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 68.

⁴⁷⁰ *New York Times*, March 21, 1977.

⁴⁷¹ “Wars of Terror,” *New Political Science*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2003, p. 117.

⁴⁷² United Nations General Assembly Resolution 42/159, December 7, 1987.

⁴⁷³ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 543.

The Truth: As the report explained, Sharon's plan was *not* congruent with Rabin's: "Sharon's plan would differ from the current one in two key ways. No further land or authority would be handed over to the Palestinians and Israel would maintain the right of pre-emptive action and hot pursuit in Palestinian-controlled cities."⁴⁷⁴

3.

The Lie: "Yisrael Harel, the founder of the Yesha Council of West Bank settlers and editor of its extremist newspaper *Nekudah*, agrees with Sharon and the governing Labor Party: 'If they keep to the current plan, I can live with it,' he says."⁴⁷⁵

The Truth: Harel was opposed to Rabin's peace plan. The report continued: "But like many settlers, Mr Harel believed the Rabin Government was really moving toward abandoning the settlements and the greater dream of the Land of Israel... 'I did not come to this country for this... to be under Arafat's sovereignty.'"⁴⁷⁶

2.

The Lie: "The democratic socialist Michael Walzer observes with reference to Israel that 'nation building in new states is sure to be rough on groups marginal to the nation,' and sometimes 'the roughness can only be smoothed... by helping people to leave who have to leave,' even if these groups 'marginal to the nation' have been deeply rooted in the country for hundreds of years... Walzer's point... [is that] non-Jews must be expelled..."⁴⁷⁷

The Truth: Walzer was proposing not expulsion but *help for the victims of expulsion*: "nation building in new states is sure to be rough on groups marginal to the nation... For them, very often, the roughness can only be smoothed a little... by helping people to leave who have to leave, like the Indians of Kenya and Tanzania, the colons of North Africa, the Jews of the Arab world... There must be a place to go; there must be havens for refugees."⁴⁷⁸

1.

The Lie: "Others fulminate over the Arab 'crazed in the distinctive ways of his culture' and committed to 'pointless' though 'momentarily gratifying' acts of 'bloodlust' (*New Republic* editor Martin Peretz)."⁴⁷⁹

The Truth: Peretz was describing not his perception of actual Arabs but the portrayal of a fictional Arab character in a play that he had seen at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁴ *Boston Globe*, November 17, 1995.

⁴⁷⁵ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 543.

⁴⁷⁶ *New York Times*, November 17, 1995.

⁴⁷⁷ *Towards a New Cold War* (Pantheon Books, 1982), p. 236.

⁴⁷⁸ Michael Walzer, "Nationalism, Internationalism and the Jews," in Irving Howe and Carl Gershman, eds., *Israel, the Arabs and the Middle East* (Bantam Books, 1972), p. 195.

⁴⁷⁹ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 482.

⁴⁸⁰ "Washington Diarist," *The New Republic*, May 7, 1984.

Falsifications of Sources: Other

10.

The Lie: “Winston Churchill was enthusiastic about the prospects of ‘using poisoned gas against uncivilised tribes’... deploring the ‘squeamishness about the use of gas’: ... chemical weapons are merely ‘the application of Western science to modern warfare.’”⁴⁸¹

The Truth: Churchill wanted to use tear gas, and his aim was to minimise casualties: “It is sheer affectation to lacerate a man with the poisonous fragment of a bursting shell and to boggle at *making his eyes water by means of lachrymatory gas*. I am strongly in favour of using poisoned gas against uncivilised tribes. The moral effect should be so good that *the loss of life should be reduced to a minimum*. It is not necessary to use only the most deadly gasses: gasses can be used which cause great inconvenience and would spread a lively terror and yet would *leave no serious permanent effects on most of those affected*.”⁴⁸²

9.

The Lie: “[On the lack of Tibetan popular opposition to China’s invasion:] Ginsburgs and Mathos comment that ‘the March 1959 uprising did not, by and large, involve any considerable number of lower-class Tibetans, but involved essentially the propertied groups and the traditionally rebellious and foraging Khamba tribes opposed to any outside public authority (including sometimes that of the Dalai Lama)’ (*Pacific Affairs*, September, 1959).”⁴⁸³

The Truth: Ginsburgs and Mathos also referred to “the growing resistance of the Tibetan population to all Chinese moves.” They added that “in June 1956, widespread uprisings were reported,” that “repeated uprisings of Tibetans were reported throughout 1958,” and that in 1959 “the conflagration spread from the capital to numerous outlying areas.”⁴⁸⁴

8.

The Lie: “In early 1964, the State Department Policy Planning Council expanded on these concerns: ‘The primary danger we face in Castro is... in the impact the very existence of his regime has upon the leftist movement in many Latin American countries... The simple fact is that Castro represents a successful defiance of the US, a negation of our whole hemispheric policy of almost a century and a half.’”⁴⁸⁵

The Truth: The passage continued: “Until Castro did it, no Latin American could be sure of getting away with *a communist-type revolution and a tie-in with the Soviet*

⁴⁸¹ “Rogue States,” *Z Magazine*, April 1998.

⁴⁸² Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill, Companion Volume 4, Part 1* (Houghton Mifflin, 1988), p. 649. Emphases added.

⁴⁸³ Letters, *New York Review of Books*, April 20, 1967.

⁴⁸⁴ George Ginsburgs and Michael Mathos, “Tibet’s Administration During the Interregnum, 1954-1959,” *Pacific Affairs*, September 1959, pp. 255, 258, 260, 261.

⁴⁸⁵ *Hegemony or Survival* (Penguin, 2004), p. 90.

Union. As long as Castro endures, Communists in other Latin American countries can, to use Stalin's words, 'struggle with good heart.'"⁴⁸⁶

7.

The Lie: "The US responded eagerly to the [Indonesian] army's request for weapons 'to arm Moslem and nationalist youth in Central Java for use against the PKI' in the context of the proclaimed policy 'to eliminate the PKI.'"⁴⁸⁷

The Truth: The US stonewalled the request. Embassy staff reported Indonesia's request for "communications equipment and small arms to arm Moslem and nationalist youths in Central Java for use against the PKI" and sought "more explicit guidance as to how this matter is to be handled here." The State Department replied: "There was to be no implication of providing anything more than medical supplies already authorized, but the US officials could ask questions to clarify any Indonesia requests for additional aid."⁴⁸⁸

6.

The Lie: "Indonesia has been an honoured ally ever since General Suharto came to power in 1965 with a 'boiling bloodbath' that was 'the West's best news for years in Asia' (*Time*), a 'staggering mass slaughter of Communists and pro-Communists,' mostly landless peasants, that provided a 'gleam of light in Asia' (*New York Times*)."⁴⁸⁹

The Truth: *Time* mentioned the "boiling bloodbath" at the start of its report, concluding that the prospects of regional peace and of Indonesian neutrality in the Cold War – *not* the bloodbath – were "the West's best news for years in Asia."⁴⁹⁰ A *New York Times* op-ed listed strategic changes in Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Japan, the Philippines and China under the headline: "Washington: A Gleam of Light in Asia."⁴⁹¹ The "staggering mass slaughter" phrase is from an editorial written a month later.⁴⁹²

5.

The Lie: "[Andre Gelinas] writes that the North Vietnamese troops who conquered the South 'discovered a country with freedoms, and a rich one, a real Ali Baba's cave.' It takes either supreme cynicism or the kind of classical colonialist ignorance that comes from hobnobbing solely with the rich to depict South Vietnam simply as a land of freedom and wealth."⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁶ Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002), p. 26. Emphasis added.

⁴⁸⁷ "Memories," *Z Magazine*, July-August, 1995.

⁴⁸⁸ Telegram From Embassy in Thailand to Department of State, November 5, 1965; reply, November 6, 1965; available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d171>

⁴⁸⁹ "An Island Lies Bleeding," *The Guardian*, UK, July 5, 1994.

⁴⁹⁰ *Time*, July 15, 1966.

⁴⁹¹ James Reston, "Washington: A Gleam of Light in Asia," *New York Times*, June 19, 1966.

⁴⁹² Editorial, *New York Times*, August 25, 1966.

⁴⁹³ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 114.

The Truth: Gelinas was describing the thoughts of the North Vietnamese troops, not his own: “They had been told that they had come to liberate their brothers who were miserable, enslaved by the Americans, etc. They had discovered a country with freedoms, and a rich one, a real Ali Baba’s cave. They discovered above all that they were not welcomed as ‘liberators’ but that they were more often hated.”⁴⁹⁴

4.

The Lie: “FDN [a Contra faction] commander Adolfo Calero stated (in Miami) that ‘There is no line at all, not even a fine line, between a civilian farm owned by the Government and a Sandinista military outpost,’ so that arbitrary killing of civilians is legitimate.”⁴⁹⁵

The Truth: Calero’s very next words denied that killing of civilians was legitimate: “What they call a cooperative is also a troop concentration full of armed people. We are not killing civilians. We are fighting armed people and returning fire when fire is directed at us.”⁴⁹⁶

3.

The Lie: “the CIA... recruited radical Islamists from many countries and organized them into a military and terrorist force that Reagan anointed ‘the moral equivalent of the founding fathers’ ...”⁴⁹⁷

The Truth: Reagan was referring to the Nicaraguan Contra rebels, not to “radical Islamists.”⁴⁹⁸

2.

The Lie: “[An editorial in *The New Republic*] advised Reagan & Co. that we must send military aid to ‘Latin-style fascists... regardless of how many are murdered,’ because ‘there are higher American priorities than Salvadoran human rights.’ ... [The editors are] passionate advocates of state terror... these values, familiar from the Nazi era, in no way diminish the reputation of the journal...”⁴⁹⁹

The Truth: The editorial was outlining and rejecting the argument that Reagan’s spokesmen would have to make if they understood the facts about El Salvador. It concluded: “if you are serious about preventing a guerrilla victory, you must be serious about human rights,” including “the abolition of mass murder,” and so “the only moral choice may be military intervention – not in alliance with the death squads but in opposition to them.”⁵⁰⁰

1.

⁴⁹⁴ Andre Gelinas, “Life in the New Vietnam,” *New York Review of Books*, March 17, 1977.

⁴⁹⁵ “Law and Imperialism in the Central American Conflict,” *Journal of Contemporary Studies*, Spring-Summer 1985, p. 40.

⁴⁹⁶ *New York Times*, November 23, 1984.

⁴⁹⁷ “Wars of Terror,” *New Political Science*, March 2003.

⁴⁹⁸ *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 1985.

⁴⁹⁹ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 308.

⁵⁰⁰ Editorial, *The New Republic*, April 2, 1984.

The Lie: “In fact, if you look at the British parliamentary inquiry, they actually reached the astonishing conclusion that, until January 1999, most of the crimes committed in Kosovo were attributed to the KLA guerrillas.”⁵⁰¹

The Truth: The inquiry stated the opposite: “the Kosovo Albanian population... were suffering greater atrocities than the Serb population (and KLA attacks were mostly focussed on Serb policemen, while Serb action often focussed on unarmed civilians)...”⁵⁰²

⁵⁰¹ Interview, *New Statesman*, June 19, 2006.

⁵⁰² House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Fourth Report*, para. 55: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmfaaff/28/2809.htm>. Chomsky may have had in mind British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook’s statement that “the Kosovo Liberation Army has committed more breaches of the ceasefire, and until this weekend was responsible for more deaths than the [Yugoslav] security forces.” But this referred only to a three-month period: from October 1998 to January 1999. See House of Commons Select Committee on Defence, *Fourteenth Report*, para. 35: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmdfence/347/34708.htm>.

Worthless Sources: Vietnam

10.

Citation: “According to a Vietnamese Catholic now living in France, Colonel Nguyen Van Chau, head of the Central Psychological War Service for the Saigon Army from 1956 to 1962, the ‘bloodbath’ figures for the [North Vietnamese] land reform were ‘100% fabricated’ by the intelligence services of Saigon.”⁵⁰³

Source: Chau had been one of dozens of officers dismissed from their positions while under investigation in South Vietnam.⁵⁰⁴ In his interview, he showed his true loyalties by justifying the murder of several hundred fellow Catholics by the communists in North Vietnam.⁵⁰⁵

9.

Citation: “D. Gareth Porter undertook the first close analysis of [Hoang Van Chi’s] work [on North Vietnam’s land reform] and demonstrated that Chi’s conclusions were based on a series of falsehoods, nonexistent documents, and slanted and deceptive translations of real documents.”⁵⁰⁶

Source: Porter’s claims were refuted by Chi and others in a congressional hearing. A communist defector questioned by Porter asked him to use an interpreter because his Vietnamese language skills were totally inadequate.⁵⁰⁷

8.

Citation: “On the basis of an analysis of official figures and credible documents, plus an estimate made by the Diem government in 1959, Porter concluded that a realistic range of executions taking place during the land reform [in North Vietnam] would be between 800 and 2,500.”⁵⁰⁸

Source: Porter’s “analysis” relied entirely on North Vietnamese state publications such as official Communist Party histories, which he took at face value. He concluded with a paean to the Vietnamese communist revolution.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰³ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 342.

⁵⁰⁴ *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, November 23, 1963.

⁵⁰⁵ *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 24, 1972. It seems that soon afterwards he removed all doubt at a public appearance alongside North Vietnamese, Viet Cong and French Communist Party representatives: Vietnam News Agency, Paris, December 21, 1972.

⁵⁰⁶ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 343.

⁵⁰⁷ *The Human Cost of Communism in Vietnam II: The Myth of No Bloodbath*, Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, 93rd Congress, 1st Session, January 5, 1973 (US Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 39. Cf. Porter’s selective rebuttal in the same forum, *Testimony of D. Gareth Porter*, July 27, 1973 (US Government Printing Office, 1973).

⁵⁰⁸ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 344.

⁵⁰⁹ D. Gareth Porter, *The Myth of the Bloodbath: North Vietnam’s Land Reform Reconsidered* (Cornell International Relations of East Asia Project, 1972); an abridged version appeared under the same title in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, September 1973. On Porter’s record as a propagandist, see Stephen J. Morris, “Ho Chi Minh, Pol Pot and Cornell,” *The National Interest*, Summer 1989, pp. 56-60.

7.

Citation: “The North Vietnamese land reform has been subjected to a more recent and exhaustive study by Edwin E. Moise... [who says that] Hoang Van Chi, in 1955 interviews, did not make any accusations about atrocities; ‘It was only in later years that his memories began to alter,’ that is, after the United States and Saigon regimes learned about the land reform problems from the discussion in the Hanoi press...”⁵¹⁰

Source: In his 1955 interviews, Chi called North Vietnam a terrorist state where “the village guards would dig tombs” before each trial; where “ghastly” and “barbarous” torture was used; where the communists “starve the people in order to enslave them more surely”; where dissidents were either dead or in concentration camps; and where non-communists were classified as landowners and either “sentenced to hard labour” or “shot on the spot.”⁵¹¹

6.

Citation: “After a detailed discussion of sources, Moise concludes that ‘... the total number of people executed during the land reform was probably in the vicinity of 5,000... and that the slaughter of tens of thousands of innocent victims, often described in anti-Communist propaganda, never took place.’”⁵¹²

Source: Moise relied on official sources such as the Communist Party newspaper. These sources, he wrote, were “extremely informative” and showed “a fairly high level of honesty.” His approach – akin to writing a study of Soviet atrocities based on *Pravda* – resulted in blunders such as denying the Chinese role in the land reform.⁵¹³

5.

Citation: “The most intensive attacks are therefore unreported in the West. We do, however, have Vietnamese reports... To select one such report virtually at random: [long quotation follows]...”⁵¹⁴

Source: Chomsky cites an official communist press release. Such sources were, of course, worthless. For example, the communists accused South Vietnam of holding 200,000-300,000 political prisoners when there were actually 35,000 prisoners of all kinds in the whole country.⁵¹⁵

4.

⁵¹⁰ *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 344.

⁵¹¹ Interviews, August 17 and July 30, 1955, reprinted in Hoang Van Chi, *The Fate of the Last Viets* (Saigon: Hoa Mai Publishing, 1956), pp. 30-40.

⁵¹² *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 344.

⁵¹³ Edwin E. Moise, “Land Reform and Land Reform Errors in North Vietnam,” *Pacific Affairs*, Spring 1976, pp. 70-92; also *Land Reform in China and North Vietnam* (University of North Carolina Press, 1983). On the Chinese role, see Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000), pp. 39ff, 75ff.

⁵¹⁴ *At War with Asia* (Vintage, 1970), pp. 293-4.

⁵¹⁵ Stephen J. Morris, “Human Rights in Vietnam Under Two Regimes,” in Raymond D. Gastil, ed., *Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 1982* (Freedom House, 1982), pp. 228-9, 233.

Citation: “In the case of Vietnam, we literally do not know within *millions* the real number of civilian casualties. The official estimates are around two million, but the real number is probably around four million.”⁵¹⁶

Source: The “official estimates” came from Vietnam’s communist news agency.⁵¹⁷ The most detailed demographic study counted just under a million Vietnamese war dead, military and civilian.⁵¹⁸ Credible estimates of South Vietnam’s civilian death toll by 1975 range from 195,000 to 430,000.⁵¹⁹ The estimate of North Vietnam’s civilian death toll was 52,000 by 1969.⁵²⁰

3.

Citation: “For example, there is the book by Jean and Simonne Lacouture, already cited, which appeared in 1976... Their conclusions [about postwar Vietnam] are relatively optimistic... it is unclear why their direct testimony lies beyond the pale, given Jean Lacouture’s long experience and distinguished record as a historian and journalist in Vietnam – or rather, it is quite clear.”⁵²¹

Source: By 1979, Jean Lacouture had renounced his positive view of Vietnam under the communists, confessing to having been among the “vehicles and intermediaries for a lying and criminal propaganda, ingenuous spokesmen for tyranny in the name of liberty.”⁵²²

2.

Citation: “Carol Bragg [reported] on a visit to Vietnam earlier this year by a six-person AFSC delegation... They report impressive social and economic progress in the face of the enormous destruction left by the war, a ‘pioneering life’ that is ‘difficult and at times discouraging,’ but everywhere ‘signs of a nation rebuilding’ with commitment and dedication.”⁵²³

Source: The AFSC delegation was a tool of the communists. The head of the AFSC delegation “said its members did not go to Vietnam on an inquisitorial mission to check on allegations of repression... his group had been assured that more than 90

⁵¹⁶ *Imperial Ambitions* (Penguin, 2005), p. 125.

⁵¹⁷ Associated Press, April 3, 1995.

⁵¹⁸ Charles Hirschman *et al.*, “Vietnamese Casualties During the American War: A New Estimate,” *Population and Development Review*, December 1995, pp. 783-812.

⁵¹⁹ For the lower figure, see Thomas C. Thayer, *War Without Fronts: The American Experience in Vietnam* (Naval Institute Press, 2016; original ed., Westview Press, 1985), p. 128. For the higher figure, see *Humanitarian Problems in South Vietnam and Cambodia: Two Years After the Ceasefire*, Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected with Refugees and Escapees, Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, 94th Congress, 1st Session, January 27, 1975, p. 23, Table 5.

⁵²⁰ National Security Memorandum Number 1, excerpted in *Problems of War Victims in Indochina, Part III: North Vietnam*, Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected with Refugees and Escapees, Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, 92nd Congress, 2nd Session, August 16 and 17, 1972 (US Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 192.

⁵²¹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 82.

⁵²² Michael Ledeen, “Europe – The Good News and the Bad,” *Commentary*, April 1979.

⁵²³ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 6, 1977.

percent of those initially held had been released.” The delegation took the communist assurances about political prisoners at face value.⁵²⁴

1.

Citation: “Max Ediger of the Mennonite Central Committee, who worked in Vietnam for many years and stayed for thirteen months after the war, testified before Congress in March 1977 on a two-week return visit in January, also conveying a very favorable impression of the great progress he observed...”⁵²⁵

Source: The visit had been “arranged by the semiofficial Vietnamese Committee for Solidarity with the American People,” in other words, it was stage-managed by the communist dictatorship. “Neither Mr. Ediger nor the Quaker team... asked to see the re-education centers [i.e., concentration camps] where, it has been alleged, the authorities have interned tens of thousands...”⁵²⁶

⁵²⁴ *New York Times*, March 13, 1977.

⁵²⁵ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 6, 1977.

⁵²⁶ *New York Times*, March 13, 1977.

Worthless Sources: Cambodia

10.

Citation: “In a *New York Times* Op-Ed, William Goodfellow, who left Cambodia with the final US evacuation in April, 1975... correctly assigns the responsibility for the impending famine: it was caused primarily by the US bombing campaign which ‘shattered’ the agrarian economy...”⁵²⁷

Source: Goodfellow’s column was a defence of Khmer Rouge policies. He dismissed charges of deaths from starvation as “self-serving exaggerations planted to discredit the new Government,” discounted “sensational ‘bloodbath’ stories” as “rumors,” and hailed “the new Government’s all-out effort to increase food production,” which “will transform Cambodia into a land self-sufficient in food...”⁵²⁸

9.

Citation: “[George] Hildebrand and [Gareth] Porter present a carefully documented study [*Cambodia: Starvation and Revolution*] of the destructive American impact on Cambodia and the success of the Cambodian revolutionaries in overcoming it, giving a very favorable picture of their programs and policies, based on a wide range of sources.”⁵²⁹

Source: Their conclusions about the Khmer Rouge were based on official Khmer Rouge sources and French communist publications.⁵³⁰

8.

Citation: “Hildebrand and Porter’s book... was highly praised by Indochina scholar George Kahin but ignored in the media, or vilified.”⁵³¹

Source: In early 1975, Kahin – who had been Porter’s teacher at Cornell University – had testified alongside him in support of the Khmer Rouge before a congressional subcommittee.⁵³²

7.

Citation: “the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, the *London Economist*, the *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, and others elsewhere, have provided analyses by highly qualified specialists who have studied the full range of evidence available, and who concluded

⁵²⁷ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 160-1.

⁵²⁸ William Goodfellow, “Starvation in Cambodia,” *New York Times*, July 14, 1975.

⁵²⁹ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 25, 1977.

⁵³⁰ Stephen J. Morris, “Ho Chi Minh, Pol Pot and Cornell,” *The National Interest*, Summer 1989, p. 58. For detailed discussion of their book, see Sophal Ear, *The Khmer Rouge Canon 1975-1979*, ch. 2: <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=dc9876f874dc9bddd203e0e2325f207e2a45633>

⁵³¹ *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), p. 384n33.

⁵³² Stephen J. Morris, “Ho Chi Minh, Pol Pot and Cornell,” *The National Interest*, Summer 1989, p. 57.

that executions have numbered at most in the thousands [and] that these were localized in areas of limited Khmer Rouge influence ...”⁵³³

Source: The “analyses” were a report relying on a statement by Pol Pot (*Far Eastern Economic Review*);⁵³⁴ a reader’s letter to the editor (*Economist*);⁵³⁵ and an essay in an undergraduate magazine (*Melbourne Journal of Politics*).⁵³⁶

6.

Citation: “In several studies, [Ben] Kiernan suggested a picture of early postwar events in Cambodia that is rather different from what has been featured by the press... He questions the assumption that there was central direction for atrocities as well as the assumption that the stories from specific areas where, in fact, the Khmer Rouge had little control, can be freely extrapolated to the country as a whole.”⁵³⁷

Source: At the time of these “studies,” Ben Kiernan was a supporter of the Pol Pot regime and a contributor to the pro-Khmer Rouge propaganda newsletter *News from Kampuchea*. Later he renounced these views, accused the Pol Pot regime of genocide, and switched his allegiance to the dictatorship imposed on Cambodia by Vietnam.⁵³⁸

5.

Citation: “Another example that would appear to merit attention is a lengthy and detailed account of the evacuation of Phnom Penh by Chou Meng and Shane Tarr... The detailed participant account by the Tarrs of the actual evacuation from Phnom Penh as they perceived it, which is quite unique, is not so much as mentioned in the mass media...”⁵³⁹

Source: As Stephen J. Morris pointed out, their “principal claim to fame is the pro-Pol Pot newsletter they co-edit [*News from Kampuchea*].”⁵⁴⁰

4.

Citation: “Richard Boyle of Pacific News Service is a correspondent with considerable experience in Vietnam... Boyle states that ‘stories of a bloodbath [in Cambodia], as reported by other news agencies, cannot be verified and there is every indication that the accounts are lies.’ ... [This was] in the left-wing New York *Guardian*, also with a tiny reading public.”⁵⁴¹

⁵³³ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 25, 1977.

⁵³⁴ Nayan Chanda, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 29, 1976.

⁵³⁵ W.J. Sampson, Letters, *The Economist*, March 26, 1977.

⁵³⁶ Ben Kiernan, “Cambodia in the News; 1975/76,” *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, December 1975-January 1976.

⁵³⁷ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 226-7.

⁵³⁸ For background, see Stephen J. Morris, “The Wrong Man to Investigate Cambodia,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 17, 1995; Peter W. Rodman, “Grantsmanship and the Killing Fields,” *Commentary*, March 1996.

⁵³⁹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 235, 239.

⁵⁴⁰ Stephen J. Morris, “Chomsky on US Foreign Policy,” *Harvard International Review*, December-January 1981, p. 30.

⁵⁴¹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), pp. 238-9.

Source: The New York *Guardian* was a communist tabloid advocating “the principles of scientific socialism as developed principally by Marx, Engels and Lenin, further developed in the modern era by Mao Tse-tung, amplified by the contributions of Stalin, Ho Chi Minh, Kim Il Sung, Enver Hoxha,” etc.⁵⁴²

3.

Citation: “The picture created by this chorus of denunciation [of the Pol Pot regime], from the first days of Democratic Kampuchea (DK) in 1975, is described sardonically by Michael Vickery as ‘the standard total view’ (STV)... In his detailed, region-by-region study, Vickery shows that the STV was a picture with little merit...”⁵⁴³

Source: It is not surprising that Vickery would disdain early condemnations of the Pol Pot regime, since he was one of its early admirers. “There is nothing in the actions of the new regime which argues against ultimate success,” Vickery wrote in late 1976. He concluded: “Although one may legitimately ask whether the new egalitarian society could not have been established with less deliberate destruction of the old, there are ample reasons for the new leadership to answer in the negative.”⁵⁴⁴

2.

Citation: “US aid to the Khmer Rouge in the 1980s appears to have run to many millions... According to congressional sources that cite unpublished studies of the Congressional Research Service, which are alleged to give the figure \$84.5 million, in fiscal-year 1987 dollars, from FY 1980 through FY 1986.”⁵⁴⁵

Source: The Congressional Research Service disclaimed these figures at the time.⁵⁴⁶ A recently declassified internal US government cable stated: “The purported figures for USG support provided to the KR are pure fabrication.”⁵⁴⁷

1.

Citation: “The journalist John Pilger in particular has dug up a lot of information, especially on direct British support for the Khmer Rouge.”⁵⁴⁸

Source: Pilger’s charges were totally discredited at the time.⁵⁴⁹ As a result, he and his employer had to pay “very substantial” damages in a libel case.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴² Special Supplement, “On Building the New Communist Party,” *The Guardian*, New York, June 1, 1977. See Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air* (Verso, 2002), pp. 107-9, 238-40. Pacific News Service is a far-left media outfit.

⁵⁴³ *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), pp. 282, 284.

⁵⁴⁴ Michael Vickery, “Looking Back at Cambodia,” *Westerly*, December 1976, p. 28.

⁵⁴⁵ *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), pp. 184, 372n45.

⁵⁴⁶ Eva Mysliwiec, *Punishing the Poor: The International Isolation of Kampuchea* (Oxfam, 1988), p. 146n27.

⁵⁴⁷ Declassified internal US government cable, “Cambodia – Congressional Letter on Alleged USG Support for Khmer Rouge,” February 13, 1988: <https://tinyurl.com/hee96zz7>

⁵⁴⁸ *Propaganda and the Public Mind* (Pluto Press, 2015), p. 92.

⁵⁴⁹ E.g., by Derek Tonkin, “The Apotheosis of Pilgerism,” *The Spectator*, UK, March 23, 1991, and the correspondence in subsequent issues: April 6, April 20, May 4, May 11, May 18, and May 25, 1991.

⁵⁵⁰ *The Guardian*, UK, July 6, 1991.

Worthless Sources: Other

10.

Citation: “William Hinton’s magnificent study *Fanshen*... is unparalleled, to my knowledge, as an analysis of a moment of profound revolutionary change. What seems to me particularly striking in his account of the early stages of [communist] revolution in one Chinese village is not only the extent to which party cadres submitted themselves to popular control, but also... the consciousness and insight of those who took part in the revolution...”⁵⁵¹

Source: Hinton was a lifelong Maoist identified with communist splinter groups.⁵⁵²

9.

Citation: “Among the many dedicated and honorable Americans who went to see for themselves, one of the most impressive is Charles Clements... A committed pacifist, he went to El Salvador in March 1982 and spent a year as the only trained physician in the rebel-controlled Guazapa region... There he witnessed the terror of the US-run war against rural El Salvador at first hand...”⁵⁵³

Source: Clements went to El Salvador as a medical volunteer for the communist FMLN insurgents. On his return he became an FMLN lobbyist.⁵⁵⁴

8.

Citation: “The Legal Aid Office of the San Salvador Archdiocese... provides a regular and detailed accounting of killings... It would be a useful exercise to compare these regular reports of the Archdiocese Legal Aid Office with reports at the same time in the US press...”⁵⁵⁵

Source: The first Legal Aid Office, Socorro Juridico, was repudiated by the Church because of its FMLN loyalties.⁵⁵⁶ The second, Tutela Legal, was caught inventing an army massacre of 250 people.⁵⁵⁷ A communist defector stated that Tutela Legal was an FMLN front.⁵⁵⁸ An independent researcher found that its *modus operandi* was to falsify army press releases by counting dead insurgents as murdered civilians.⁵⁵⁹

7.

⁵⁵¹ *American Power and the New Mandarins* (Pelican, 1969), p. 113n56.

⁵⁵² Harvey Klehr, *Far Left of Center: The American Radical Left Today* (Transaction Publishers, 1991), p. 93; Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao and Che* (Verso, 2002), pp. 101, 220.

⁵⁵³ *Turning the Tide* (South End Press, 1985), pp. 5-7.

⁵⁵⁴ J. Michael Waller, *The Third Current of Revolution: Inside the North American Front of El Salvador’s Civil War* (University Press of America, 1991), pp. 132, 161n45.

⁵⁵⁵ *Towards a New Cold War* (Pantheon Books, 1982), pp. 39, 390n142.

⁵⁵⁶ *Human Events*, March 6, 1982; *Washington Post*, May 15, 1982.

⁵⁵⁷ *Washington Post*, August 19, 1984.

⁵⁵⁸ *Washington Post*, August 6, 1986.

⁵⁵⁹ *Human Events*, September 15, 1990.

Citation: “[In 1986] most of the members of the nongovernmental human rights commission of El Salvador (CDHES) were arrested and tortured, including its director Herbert Anaya... [In prison] they compiled a 160-page report of sworn testimony of 430 political prisoners, who gave precise and extensive details of their torture by the US-backed security forces... Anaya was not the subject of tributes on Human Rights Day. Rather, he was released in a prisoner exchange, then assassinated, probably by the US-backed security forces...”⁵⁶⁰

Source: The former publicity director of CDHES admitted that the group was a front for the communist FMLN insurgents. CDHES would report released prisoners as disappearances and dead insurgents as murdered civilians.⁵⁶¹ Herbert Anaya Sanabria belonged to the ERP, one of the FMLN factions. A fellow ERP member was convicted of his murder. The UN Truth Commission was unable to resolve the killing.⁵⁶²

6.

Citation: “According to Edward Said, the Ma’alot attack [by the PLO] was ‘preceded by weeks of sustained Israeli napalm bombing of Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon,’ with over 200 killed.”⁵⁶³

Source: Edward Said was a former speechwriter for Yasser Arafat and a member of the Palestine National Council, the ruling assembly of the PLO. He gave no source whatsoever on the bombing and did not mention 200 dead.⁵⁶⁴

5.

Citation: “The Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila (later to become famous as the site of the September [1982] massacres) were bombed for four hours [by Israel]. The local (Gaza) hospital was hit. Over 200 people were killed, according to the eyewitness account of an American observer.”⁵⁶⁵

Source: The “observer” was a longstanding anti-Israel activist writing in the PLO’s major English-language propaganda journal.⁵⁶⁶

4.

⁵⁶⁰ *Necessary Illusions* (South End Press, 1989), p. 138.

⁵⁶¹ J. Michael Waller, *The Third Current of Revolution: Inside the North American Front of El Salvador’s Civil War* (University Press of America, 1991), pp. 115, 266. Hence the “close correlation of figures on human rights abuses” from CDHES, Socorro Juridico and Tutela Legal, whose claims were repeated “without question” by Amnesty International, Americas Watch and the media.

⁵⁶² *Report of the UN Truth Commission on El Salvador: From Madness to Hope: The 12-Year War in El Salvador*, UN Security Council S/25500, April 1, 1993, pp. 157-61.

⁵⁶³ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 189; *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 2002), p. 65.

⁵⁶⁴ Edward W. Said, *The Question of Palestine* (Vintage, 1992), p. 172.

⁵⁶⁵ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 197.

⁵⁶⁶ Cheryl Rubenberg, “Eyewitness: Beirut Under Fire,” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Summer-Autumn 1982, p. 62. For PLO control of this journal, see, e.g., interview with Sabri Jiryis, *Haaretz*, November 17, 2004.

Citation: “Canadian surgeon Chris Giannou’s testimony before Congress that he had seen prisoners beaten to death by Israeli soldiers and other atrocities [in 1982]... [was balanced by] Israeli government denials and allegations that Giannou was a liar suspected of working for the PLO...”⁵⁶⁷

Source: Giannou himself admitted to being an employee of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, an official PLO institution.⁵⁶⁸ His sponsors later conceded that he had been in contact with Arafat “on a daily basis.”⁵⁶⁹

3.

Citation: “The Norwegian doctor and social worker [arrested in Lebanon in 1982] told the story of their captivity in a report issued by the Norwegian Department of Foreign Affairs. Under Israeli captivity, they were forced to sit, hands tied, for 36 hours without permission to move, while they heard ‘screams of pain’ from nearby.”⁵⁷⁰

Source: Their report, which was reprinted by the PLO, stated that they were working in Lebanon “in accordance with an agreement between the Norwegian Palestine Front and the Palestine Red Crescent Society.”⁵⁷¹

2.

Citation: “A great deal of information about [Israeli] human rights violations, particularly in the occupied territories, has been made available by the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights. Its Chairman from 1970, Dr. Israel Shahak, has compiled a personal record of courage and commitment to human rights that few people anywhere can equal...”⁵⁷²

Source: Shahak was an antisemitic crank known for propaganda hoaxes.⁵⁷³ He wrote: “If we believe the rabbis, they will restore the old Jewish barbarism.”⁵⁷⁴ In a lecture with Chomsky, he said: “Jews can become Nazis.”⁵⁷⁵ In a book endorsed by Chomsky, he accused pious Jews of “worshipping Satan,” alleged that Jews have “no respect towards non-Jewish corpses and cemeteries,” and argued that Judaism is “motivated by the spirit of profit.”⁵⁷⁶

1.

⁵⁶⁷ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 229.

⁵⁶⁸ *New York Times*, July 14, 1982.

⁵⁶⁹ “Notebook,” *New Republic*, March 5, 1984.

⁵⁷⁰ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 230.

⁵⁷¹ “Eyewitness: Israeli Captivity – A Report by Dr. Steinar Berge and Oyvind Moller From Norway,” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Summer-Autumn 1982, p. 85.

⁵⁷² *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 142.

⁵⁷³ For many examples, see Paul Bogdanor, “Chomsky’s Ayatollahs,” in Edward Alexander and Paul Bogdanor, eds., *The Jewish Divide Over Israel* (Transaction Publishers, 2006), pp. 115-24.

⁵⁷⁴ Letter, *Jerusalem Post*, February 16, 1989.

⁵⁷⁵ *The Tech*, MIT, November 8, 1994.

⁵⁷⁶ Israel Shahak, *Jewish History, Jewish Religion* (Pluto Press, 1997), pp. 34, 36-7, 48-9.

Citation: “That one [US] bombing [of a factory in Sudan], according to the estimates made by the German Embassy in Sudan and Human Rights Watch, probably led to tens of thousands of deaths.”⁵⁷⁷

Source: The German Embassy’s “estimate” was an ex-Ambassador’s self-described “guess” based on no evidence.⁵⁷⁸ Human Rights Watch publicly denied giving any estimate.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁷ Interview, *Salon.com*, January 16, 2002.

⁵⁷⁸ Werner Daum, “Universalism and the West,” *Harvard International Review*, Summer 2001, pp. 19-23.

⁵⁷⁹ Carroll Bogert, Communications Director of Human Rights Watch, “Noam Needs a Fact-Checker,” *Salon.com*, January 22, 2002: https://www.salon.com/2002/01/22/chomsky_4/

Numbers Games

10.

The Lie: “In South Korea, about 100,000 people were killed in the late 1940s by security forces installed and directed by the United States. This was before the Korean War...”⁵⁸⁰

The Truth: According to Korea historian John Merrill, “the war was preceded by a major insurgency in the South and serious clashes along the thirty-eighth parallel,” and 100,000 died in “political disturbances, guerrilla warfare, and border clashes.”⁵⁸¹

9.

The Lie: “Recall Bernard Fall’s estimate that by April 1965... more than 160,000 ‘Viet Cong’ had fallen ‘under the crushing weight of American armor, napalm, jet bombers, and, finally, vomiting gases.’”⁵⁸²

The Truth: Fall was reporting a Viet Cong propaganda estimate: “the NLF’s own claim [is] that over 160,000 South Vietnamese (on its side, presumably) have thus far been killed in this war.”⁵⁸³

8.

The Lie: “[Francois] Ponchaud cites a Cambodian report that 200,000 people were killed in American bombings from March 7 to August 15, 1973. No source is offered... Ponchaud cites ‘Cambodian authorities’ who give the figures 800,000 killed and 240,000 wounded before liberation. The figures are implausible.”⁵⁸⁴

The Truth: Ponchaud was reporting Khmer Rouge propaganda claims: the bombing killed 200,000 “according to the revolutionaries’ calculations,” and “the authorities of Kampuchea declared 800,000 dead and 240,000 disabled as a result of the war.”⁵⁸⁵ By falsely attributing these figures to Ponchaud, Chomsky implies that he habitually exaggerates and so cannot be trusted as a source on Khmer Rouge mass murder.

7.

The Lie: “the [US] bombing [of Cambodia], which the CIA estimates killed around 600,000 people, mobilised the Khmer Rouge...”⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸⁰ *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 335.

⁵⁸¹ John Merrill, *Korea: The Peninsular Origins of the War* (University of Delaware Press, 1989), p. 181.

⁵⁸² *Towards a New Cold War* (Pantheon Books, 1982), p. 145.

⁵⁸³ Bernard B. Fall, “Viet-Cong – The Unseen Enemy in Viet-Nam,” *New Society*, UK, April 22, 1965; reprinted in Marcus G. Raskin and Bernard B. Fall, *The Vietnam Reader* (Random House, 1965), p. 261; Bernard B. Fall, *Viet-Nam Witness, 1953-66* (Praeger, 1966), p. 242.

⁵⁸⁴ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 25, 1977.

⁵⁸⁵ Francois Ponchaud, *Cambodia Year Zero* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), pp. 170, 71.

⁵⁸⁶ “A Rational Reaction,” *The Liberal*, UK, December 2004-January 2005. Cf.: “from the time of the first sustained US bombings [of Cambodia] in March 1969 through April 1975... 600,000 people were killed, according to CIA estimates,” *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 72.

The Truth: The CIA estimate referred to “war-related deaths” caused by all sides, not to the death toll from the bombing, which was not discussed. The CIA noted that the figures were “debatable” and concluded: “None of these estimates is well founded.”⁵⁸⁷ The 600,000 figure may have been invented by Pol Pot himself; it is more than twice the actual number of war-related deaths.⁵⁸⁸

6.

The Lie: “As the war ended, deaths from starvation in Phnom Penh alone were running at about 100,000 a year...”⁵⁸⁹

The Truth: This is an extrapolation from an estimate made by two Pol Pot defenders. Hildebrand and Porter gave a “conservative estimate” of starvation deaths in Phnom Penh during March 1975 as 250 per day, nearly 8,000 for the month. Chomsky and Herman extrapolate this to 100,000 per year. Hildebrand and Porter, however, made no such claim. All they wrote was that the starvation death toll in Phnom Penh for the last five months of the war “must have been at least 15,000 and possibly far more.”⁵⁹⁰

5.

The Lie: “suppose that their [i.e., US] postwar estimates [of deaths in Cambodia] are correct. Since the situation at the war’s end is squarely the responsibility of the United States, so are the million or so deaths that were predicted as a direct result of that situation.”⁵⁹¹

The Truth: The US prediction referred not to the effects of war, but to mass deaths expected from the Khmer Rouge takeover, especially the death march from Phnom Penh.⁵⁹²

4.

The Lie: “Ponchaud... estimated the numbers killed [by the Khmer Rouge] at 100,000 or more...”⁵⁹³

The Truth: Ponchaud estimated initial *executions* at no less than 100,000, and the full death toll from Khmer Rouge atrocities (mass executions, death marches, slavery, forced starvation) at 800,000–1.4 million in the first year,⁵⁹⁴ and 2 million by the end of the regime.⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁸⁷ *Kampuchea: A Demographic Catastrophe* (Central Intelligence Agency, 1980); available online at <https://www.mekong.net/cambodia/demcat.htm>

⁵⁸⁸ Marek Sliwinski, *Le Génocide Khmer Rouge: Une Analyse Démographique* (L’Harmattan, 1995), p. 48.

⁵⁸⁹ *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), p. 263.

⁵⁹⁰ George Hildebrand and Gareth Porter, *Cambodia: Starvation and Revolution* (Monthly Review Press, 1976), p. 29.

⁵⁹¹ *After the Cataclysm* (South End Press, 1979), p. 162.

⁵⁹² *Washington Post*, June 4 & 23, 1975.

⁵⁹³ Letter, *Encounter*, July 1980.

⁵⁹⁴ Francois Ponchaud, *Cambodia Year Zero* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), p. 71.

⁵⁹⁵ William Shawcross, “The Third Indochina War,” *New York Review of Books*, April 6, 1978.

3.

The Lie: “the CIA demographic report [on Cambodia] gives the figure of 50,000 to 100,000 for people who ‘may have been executed,’ and an estimate of deaths from all causes that is meaningless...”⁵⁹⁶

The Truth: The CIA study estimated that 250,000 were targets for execution and that 50,000-100,000 were actually executed in just one purge, from April 1975 to January 1977. The study put the total population decline under the Khmer Rouge at 1.2-1.8 million.⁵⁹⁷

2.

The Lie: “Many Israeli attacks are not retaliatory at all, including the 1982 invasion that devastated much of Lebanon and left 20,000 civilians dead...”⁵⁹⁸

The Truth: In the first week of the 1982 war, the PLO estimated 10,000 dead. Despite these “extreme exaggerations,” the PLO news agency became the “primary source of information” for the Lebanese authorities.⁵⁹⁹ So in late 1982 the Lebanese government estimated 19,000 dead, mostly combatants.⁶⁰⁰ In 1984, however, the Lebanese government stated that “about 1,000 Lebanese were killed as a result of the Israeli invasion.”⁶⁰¹

1.

The Lie: “The 1982 [Israeli] invasion [of Lebanon] and its immediate aftermath left some 20,000 dead; according to Lebanese sources, the toll in the following years was about 25,000 [i.e., Israel has killed 45,000 Lebanese].”⁶⁰²

The Truth: Chomsky is double-counting propaganda inventions. The first estimate has been contradicted by the Lebanese government. The second comes from a single sentence in a press report offering an unsupported estimate that plainly *includes* the 1982 war.⁶⁰³

⁵⁹⁶ *Manufacturing Consent* (Vintage, 1994), pp. 383-4n32.

⁵⁹⁷ *Kampuchea: A Demographic Catastrophe* (Central Intelligence Agency, 1980); available online at <https://www.mekong.net/cambodia/demcat.htm>

⁵⁹⁸ *Rogue States: The Rule of Force in World Affairs* (Pluto Press, 2000), p. 36. Cf.: “the Israeli invasion, with perhaps 20,000 or more civilian casualties,” *Necessary Illusions* (South End Press, 1989), p. 277; “Israel’s invasion of Lebanon in 1982... left over 20,000 dead, overwhelmingly civilians,” *Deterring Democracy* (Vintage, 1992), p. 187; “Israel’s US-backed 1982 invasion that devastated much of Lebanon and left 20,000 civilians dead,” *The New Military Humanism: Lessons From Kosovo* (Pluto Press, 1999), p. 32.

⁵⁹⁹ *New York Times*, July 14 & 26, 1982.

⁶⁰⁰ Associated Press, December 1, 1982; *Christian Science Monitor*, December 21, 1982.

⁶⁰¹ *Washington Post*, November 16, 1984.

⁶⁰² *Hegemony or Survival* (Penguin, 2004), p. 167.

⁶⁰³ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), pp. xx, xxii n20, citing Aliza Marcus, *Boston Globe*, March 1, 1999.

Political Ideas

10.

The Lie: “Aristotle’s *Politics*, the sort of founding book of political theory... is a very careful and thoughtful analysis of the notion of democracy. Aristotle recognizes that, for him, that democracy had to be a welfare state; it had to use public revenues to insure lasting prosperity for all and to insure equality. That goes right through the Enlightenment...”⁶⁰⁴

The Truth: Aristotle’s teacher Plato founded political theory in his works *Republic*, *Statesman*, and *Laws*. Aristotle’s *Politics* attacked democracy as inherently corrupt; rejected any form of equality of human dignity; and defended slavery, the inferiority of women, and the exclusion of workers from citizenship.⁶⁰⁵

9.

The Lie: “the classic work of [Wilhelm von] Humboldt, *The Limits of State Action*... is in its essence profoundly, though prematurely, anticapitalist... Humboldt’s vision of a society in which social fetters are replaced by social bonds and labor is freely undertaken suggests the early Marx...”⁶⁰⁶

The Truth: Humboldt’s book included an entire chapter – “On the Solitude of the State for the Positive Welfare of the Citizen” – arguing that no restrictions should be placed on markets for the sake of advancing the population’s material welfare.⁶⁰⁷

8.

The Lie: “The founders of classical liberalism, people like Adam Smith and Wilhelm von Humboldt... were what we would call libertarian socialists...”⁶⁰⁸

The Truth: They were not socialists at all. Smith was a champion of the free market who wrote that anyone should be allowed “to bring both his industry and capital into competition with those of any other man.”⁶⁰⁹ Humboldt advocated a minimal state whose only function would be to protect the “rights of person and property.”⁶¹⁰

7.

The Lie: “the [Zionist] Revisionists, the precursors of [Menachem] Begin’s Herut, were in fact an offshoot of European fascism, with an ideology of submission of the mass to a single leader, strike-breaking, chauvinist fanaticism, and the rest of the familiar paraphernalia of the 1930s.”⁶¹¹

⁶⁰⁴ Interview, *Capital Times*, March 3, 1997.

⁶⁰⁵ See., e.g., Richard Kraut, *Aristotle: Political Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁶⁰⁶ “Notes on Anarchism” in *For Reasons of State* (Fontana, 1973), pp. 156-7.

⁶⁰⁷ Wilhelm von Humboldt, *The Limits of State Action* (Liberty Fund, 1993), ch. 3.

⁶⁰⁸ *Class Warfare* (Common Courage Press, 1996), pp. 21-2.

⁶⁰⁹ Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (Liberty Fund, 1981) IV:IX:51.

⁶¹⁰ Wilhelm von Humboldt, *The Limits of State Action* (Liberty Fund, 1993), p. 84.

⁶¹¹ *Fateful Triangle* (rev. ed., Pluto Press, 1999), p. 160.

The Truth: Revisionist Zionism was the ideology of Vladimir Jabotinsky, who wrote: “Man was created to be free... where there are no guarantees for freedom of the individual, there can be no democracy... The aim of democracy is to guarantee that the minority too has influence on matters of state policy. After all, the minority comprises individuals who were also created ‘in the image of God.’”⁶¹²

6.

The Lie: “Orwell did occasionally say something about the much more significant and more important topic, namely, doctrinal controls in free societies... Orwell did have one essay in particular on ‘Literary Censorship in England’ [sic] which was written as an introduction to *Animal Farm*... that’s the one case that I know of in which Orwell dealt with the challenging and morally significant problem for us of what we’re like. It’s always easy to denounce some other guy.”⁶¹³

The Truth: Orwell’s essay was an attack on the Chomsky counterparts of his day for combining criticism of their own country with suppression of criticism of another country, i.e., the Soviet regime: “though you are not allowed to criticise the Soviet government, at least you are reasonably free to criticise our own. Hardly anyone will print an attack on Stalin, but it is quite safe to attack Churchill...”⁶¹⁴

5.

The Lie: “Suppose... the United States will stop short of using its awesome resources of violence and devastation to impose its passionately held ideology and its approved form of social organization on large areas of the world... the principles that were crudely outlined by President Truman... when he suggested in a famous and important speech that the basic freedom is freedom of enterprise and that the whole world should adopt the American system, which could survive in America only if it became a world system...”⁶¹⁵

The Truth: Truman was urging business to abandon protectionism and support membership of a UN free trade body. His speech endorsed the freedoms of worship, speech, and enterprise; nowhere did it suggest that his country’s ideology and social system should be imposed on the world through violence and devastation.⁶¹⁶

4.

The Lie: “right-wing anarchism... [is] an extreme form of authoritarianism... under the formulations of someone like, say, Murray Rothbard, you will get such

⁶¹² Vladimir Jabotinsky, “The Social Question,” *Hayarden*, October 21, 1938, reprinted in Mordechai Sarig, ed., *The Political and Social Philosophy of Ze'ev Jabotinsky: Selected Writings* (Vallentine Mitchell, 1999), p. 50.

⁶¹³ Interview, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, March 21, 1995.

⁶¹⁴ George Orwell, “The Freedom of the Press,” *Times Literary Supplement*, September 15, 1972.

⁶¹⁵ *American Power and the New Mandarins* (Pelican, 1969), p. 253. Infamously, in the first edition, Chomsky pretended that this paraphrase was a direct quotation from Truman: Letters, *Commentary*, December 1969, February 1970, March 1970.

⁶¹⁶ Harry S. Truman, Address on Foreign Economic Policy, Baylor University, March 6, 1947; available at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-foreign-economic-policy-delivered-baylor-university>

inequalities of power that it would be like living under Genghis Khan or something like that. Even though everyone would be technically free, they'll be free to make contracts with the person who has all the power, who owns the police, and so on, or they'll be free not to."⁶¹⁷

The Truth: Rothbard's anarcho-capitalism proposed the exact opposite – that *anyone* should be able to start a new police force, court system, etc.: “if every man has the right to defend his person and property against attack, then he must also have the right to hire or accept the aid of other people to do such defending: he may employ or accept defenders just as he may employ or accept the volunteer services of gardeners on his lawn.”⁶¹⁸

3.

The Lie: “a very different conception of human nature has been crafted, one better suited to rule of the economy and social life by the absolutist, unaccountable, totalitarian institutions of the corporate world. For example, the conception expressed by Nobel laureate in economics James Buchanan, who instructs us that in ‘any person’s ideal situation,’ ‘each person seeks mastery over a world of slaves.’”⁶¹⁹

The Truth: Here is what Buchanan actually said: “Man’s universal thirst for freedom is a fact of history... In a strictly personalized sense... each person seeks mastery over a world of slaves. In a generalized social setting, however... the anarchistic regime of free men, each of whom respects the rights of others, becomes the utopian dream.”⁶²⁰

2.

The Lie: “The US is officially committed to what is called ‘low-intensity warfare.’ ... If you read the definition of low-intensity conflict in army manuals and compare it with official definitions of ‘terrorism’ in army manuals, or the US Code, you find they’re almost the same. Terrorism is the use of coercive means aimed at civilian populations in an effort to achieve political, religious, or other aims.”⁶²¹

The Truth: The US army defines low-intensity conflict as “political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states.” Far from justifying attacks on civilians, the definition says that US security assistance should enable allied armed forces to “provide security for their citizens and government.”⁶²²

1.

The Lie: “[Israel’s] Orthodox rabbinate imposes its interpretation of religious law... [Jewish identity requires] either conversion or a proper genealogy going back four

⁶¹⁷ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 153.

⁶¹⁸ Murray Rothbard, *The Ethics of Liberty* (New York University Press, 1998), p. 77.

⁶¹⁹ “Industry vs. Labor,” *Lies of Our Times*, June 14, 1994.

⁶²⁰ James Buchanan, *The Limits of Liberty* (University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 92.

⁶²¹ Interview, *Monthly Review*, November 2001.

⁶²² *Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict: Field Manual No. 100-20/Air Force Pamphlet No. 3-20* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Departments of the Army and the Air Force, December 5, 1990), pp. 1.1ff; available online at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB63/doc4.pdf>

generations. Were similar principles to apply to Jews elsewhere, we would not hesitate to condemn this revival of the Nuremberg laws.”⁶²³

The Truth: Orthodox rabbis use a religious definition that accepts converts to Judaism and draws no distinction between different races. The same definition applies to all Jews everywhere. The Nazis defined Jews as an inferior race whose identity was fixed by descent and evident from their physical appearance.

⁶²³ Foreword, Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel* (Monthly Review Press, 1976), p. viii.

Lies About Himself

10.

The Lie: “I have never considered myself a ‘Marxist,’ and in fact regard such notions as ‘Marxist’ (or ‘Freudian,’ etc.) as belonging more to the domain of organized religion than of rational analysis.”⁶²⁴

The Truth: Previously, Chomsky had said: “in my opinion, a Marxist-anarchist perspective [on politics] is justified quite apart from anything that may happen in linguistics.” He had also declared: “I wouldn’t abandon Marxism.”⁶²⁵

9.

The Lie: “It’s true that Stalin made [Leninism] a lot worse, a lot more vicious. But the basic structure [of Stalinism] was established by Lenin and Trotsky, in my view, and I’ve always thought this.”⁶²⁶

The Truth: Chomsky has not always thought this. He once suggested: “It would be a grotesque error to say that Stalin was simply the realization of Leninist principles or anything like that.”⁶²⁷ Chomsky began his political life as a disciple of Trotsky: “I had passed through the various stages of Trotskyism and gone on to Marxist-Anarchist ideas,” he explained.⁶²⁸

8.

The Lie: “If you look at all the stuff I wrote about the Vietnam war, there’s not one word supporting the Vietcong. The left was all backing Ho Chi Minh: I was saying that North Vietnam is a brutal Stalinist dictatorship.”⁶²⁹

The Truth: Chomsky told the North Vietnamese: “Your heroism reveals the capabilities of the human spirit and human will. Decent people throughout the world see in your struggle a model for themselves.”⁶³⁰ He also praised North Vietnam for “creating a modern, egalitarian, democratic industrial society” that “offers the peasant hope for the future.” He added: “Its achievements are, indeed, quite remarkable.”⁶³¹ He hailed postwar Vietnam as a “miracle of reconciliation and restraint.”⁶³² He argued that support for totalitarian Vietnam “is justified” in order to “reinforce democratic tendencies” and “reduce human misery.”⁶³³

⁶²⁴ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 259.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 113, 153.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 727.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁶²⁸ Ved Mehta, *John Is Easy to Please* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1971), p. 186.

⁶²⁹ Interview, *New Statesman*, UK, June 3, 1994.

⁶³⁰ Radio Hanoi, April 14, 1970; *Asia-Pacific Daily Report*, FBIS, April 16, 1970, pp. K2-K3. Chomsky admitted that the speech was genuine in his exchange with Sidney Hook in *The Humanist*, March-April 1971.

⁶³¹ *At War with Asia* (Vintage, 1970), pp. 279, 281-2.

⁶³² *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (South End Press, 1979), p. 28.

⁶³³ *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p. 280.

7.

The Lie: “[A critic] claims that I argued ‘that the refugees from Cambodia were not to be given credence,’ basing himself on a review-article... in which we wrote that ‘their reports must be considered seriously.’ How does he turn our conclusion into its opposite? Simple. By suppressing our conclusion and noting only our qualification that ‘care and caution are necessary’ for reasons we mentioned, which, as we added, are commonplace.”⁶³⁴

The Truth: Chomsky was clear that the refugees were not to be given credence. Referring to “the extreme unreliability of refugee reports,” he explained: “Refugees are frightened and defenseless, at the mercy of alien forces. They naturally tend to report what they believe their interlocuters [sic] wish to hear. While these reports must be considered seriously, care and caution are necessary. Specifically, refugees questioned by Westerners or Thais have a vested interest in reporting atrocities on the part of Cambodian revolutionaries...”⁶³⁵

6.

The Lie: “As it is difficult to believe that the editors take their readers for complete fools, I presume that it must be a matter of a printing error, and that the editors really meant to write that I have never prefaced any ‘publication of the PLO.’ The latter would at least have the merit of being true...”⁶³⁶

The Truth: In 1976, Chomsky wrote the preface to a book by Sabri Jiryis of the PLO Research Center in Beirut.⁶³⁷ Describing himself as “a hard-headed old terrorist,” Jiryis admitted responsibility for “supervising clandestine Fatah actions [i.e., terrorist attacks]” in northern Israel.⁶³⁸

5.

The Lie: [Disowning his claim that the West used Nazi armies against the Soviets:] “too ridiculous to merit comment... childish diatribes in journals attempting to discredit political enemies... I had nothing to do with it... a ridiculous gossip column in the *New Yorker*.”⁶³⁹

The Truth: Chomsky’s assertion, quoted in the *New Yorker*, was recorded on tape.⁶⁴⁰

4.

The Lie: “I’ve probably been the leading opponent for years of the campaign for divestment from Israel.”⁶⁴¹

⁶³⁴ Letter, *Encounter*, July 1980.

⁶³⁵ “Distortions at Fourth Hand,” *The Nation*, June 25, 1977.

⁶³⁶ Letter, *Nouvelles littéraires*, France, December 2-8, 1982; reprinted in Noam Chomsky, *Réponses inédites à mes détracteurs parisiens* (Paris: Cahiers Spartacus, 1984). Translated from French.

⁶³⁷ Foreword, Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel* (Monthly Review Press, 1976).

⁶³⁸ David K. Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (rev. ed., Penguin, 2002), p. 56.

⁶³⁹ Quoted in John Williamson, “Chomsky, Language, World War II and Me,” in Peter Collier and David Horowitz, eds., *The Anti-Chomsky Reader* (Encounter Books, 2004), p. 238.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 238-9.

The Truth: Earlier that year, Chomsky signed a petition calling on universities to divest from Israel. “Divestment will be a long and slow process,” he warned,⁶⁴² a week before appearing as keynote speaker at a university teach-in to support the divestment campaign.⁶⁴³

3.

The Lie: “I predicted nothing [about a ‘silent genocide’ in Afghanistan]... The warnings remain accurate as well, a truism that should be unnecessary to explain.”⁶⁴⁴

The Truth: Chomsky warned that “unknown numbers of starving Afghans will die... maybe millions of starving Afghans.” He wrote that “Washington acted at once to ensure the death and suffering of enormous numbers of Afghans, millions of them already on the brink of starvation” and that the “sensible administration plan would be to pursue the ongoing program of silent genocide.”⁶⁴⁵ No such genocide occurred.

2.

The Lie: “I’ve always explicitly and forcefully opposed ‘conspiracy theories,’ and even am well known for that.”⁶⁴⁶

The Truth: Chomsky views sports, quiz shows, and sex as tools of a mass media conspiracy: “As far as the general population is concerned, where the real mass media are directed, the main thing is just to get them off our backs. Get them interested in something else. Professional sports... *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*, who’s going to win the World Series, sex, anything that doesn’t matter. And if you look at the mass media, that’s what they do.”⁶⁴⁷

1.

The Lie: “There is so much that prevents you from looking at the structures you are embedded in, and anyone who drifts out of line is taking a serious risk... there are definitely penalties – in terms of your career, your status, your income.”⁶⁴⁸

The Truth: Far from imposing penalties for his views, the Pentagon gave Chomsky his career, status, and income. In his own words, “MIT pays only thirty or forty per

⁶⁴¹ *The Harvard Crimson*, December 12, 2002.

⁶⁴² *The Tech*, MIT, May 1, 2002.

⁶⁴³ *The Harvard Crimson*, May 8, 2002; also *The Daily Pennsylvanian*, October 4, 2002.

⁶⁴⁴ *The Independent*, UK, December 4, 2003.

⁶⁴⁵ *9-11* (Seven Stories Press, 2001), pp. 55, 95, 105.

⁶⁴⁶ Quoted in Jeffery Klaehn, “A Critical Review and Assessment of Herman and Chomsky’s ‘Propaganda Model,’” *European Journal of Communication*, June 2002, p. 149.

⁶⁴⁷ “Interview: An Hour With Noam Chomsky,” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, April 2002, p. 119.

⁶⁴⁸ Interview, *NRC Handelsblad*, Netherlands, December 6, 2003.

cent of my salary. The rest comes from other sources – most of it from the Defense Department.”⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁹ Quoted in Konrad Koerner, “The Anatomy of a Revolution in the Social Sciences: Chomsky in 1962,” *Dhumbadji!* Winter 1994. In his early academic work, Chomsky acknowledged funding from all three branches of the military: see the preface to his *Syntactic Structures* (Mouton, 1957).