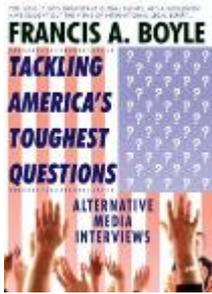


Francis A. Boyle, *Tackling America's Toughest Questions*, Clarity Press, Atlanta 2009, p. 182, \$ 14,95.



The war against Afghanistan is illegal, affirms Francis A. Boyle, law professor at the University of Illinois in Champaign. The author belongs to the peace camp in the United States and is one of most outspoken and prolific critics of George W. Bush's presidency. He is one of the few defenders of the rule of law against the numerous apologists of the "law of the jungle" in the so-called war on terror.

In his newest book, Boyle provides a compilation of interviews he had accorded to alternative media, where he tackled America's thorniest questions. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the Bush administration initiated many policies that impinged on the rule of law. The author criticizes not only „the global war on terrorism“ but also US-President Bush's massive assaults on international law, human and civil rights, civil liberties, and the United States Constitution, as well as the detention center in Guantanamo Bay and its kangaroo courts, torture scandals, „extraordinary renditions“, the attack on Iraq, spying on the American people, and the threatened war against Iran. Together with Ramsey Clark, Francis Boyle tried to rally support to impeach President Bush because the „Bushists“ have turned the sacred rule of law topsy-turvy. This attempt finally failed due to lack of support of the Democartic party in Congress.

Beside interviews the book also contains articles in which Boyle clarifies his position concerning the war against Afghanistan and the concept of humanitarian intervention. In the first article the author demonstrates the illegality of the war against Afghanistan. He points out that Bush did not get a clear legal mandate for this war. He failed to get a formal declaration of war from the US Congress. The U. N. Security Council did not authorize the use of force against Afghanistan. NATO's invocation of article 5 of the Nato Treaty was totally bogus because Afghanistan did not attack the US. According to Boyle, the war against that country is „an armed aggression“ according to international law, and thus there is no „basis in law“ for the war against Afghanistan.

In his second article on the question of "humanitarian intervention" the author deconstructs this allegedly charitable endeavor by the international community as a „pretext for aggression“. One of the hallmarks of the Clinton administration, so Boyle, was "its manipulation of the doctrine of 'humanitarian intervention' and of 'humanitarianism' in order to justify its illegal, aggressive, and imperialist interventions around the world." This doctrine, says Boyle, „is a fraud and a joke“ because it is used to intervene in and occupy poor states of the South in order „to steal their natural resources“. For the author, the US and the Nato alliance „have been behind the most of the major atrocities and catastrophes in the modern world“. They constitute an „Axis of Genocide“, so Boyle. Thus „humanity bears a 'responsibility to protect' the very future existence of the world from the United States and Nato.“

The many interviews and the articles give the readers an insight into the unlawful undertakings of the United States under George W. Bush. Almost all of these illegal policies have been continued by the Obama administration. Readers should not be surprised that Obama's policy appears as a Bush-light version. The book offers a devastating but substantiated critique of American domestic and foreign policy which affects all the countries of the world. For the European peace camp a must read.

Ludwig Watzal