

## V. In Memoriam

# Dr. Francis Anthony Boyle, Jr.: A Man of ‘Costly Grace’

by Patricia Salisbury

Feb. 14—Dr. Francis A. Boyle, long-time legal warrior for human rights on the national and international stage, passed on January 30, 2025 in Illinois, still fiercely fighting for justice at the age of 74. Once explaining his lifelong affinity for the rights of the underdog, the Chicago-born Boyle stated that he “was born Irish,” and did not consider himself to be a “White North American.”

His prestigious Harvard Degrees served his causes, not his personal comfort or benefit, and his prodigious lifetime publication output dealt with unpopular and sometimes taboo topics, such as nuclear disarmament, biochemical warfare, and social justice for groups across the globe.

### Challenging Genocide

Most recently Dr. Boyle supported the Government of South Africa in its recent groundbreaking genocide case against Israel, brought before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the main judiciary body of the United Nations. He brought to this fight his unmatched, decades-long legal expertise in support of the rights of the victimized, including on behalf of the Palestinian people. From 1991 to 1992, Dr. Boyle served as Legal Advisor to the Palestinian Delegation to the Middle East Peace Negotiations.

He hailed the recent findings of the ICJ on Gaza genocide in 2024 as a great victory, and utilized it to the hilt. He was uncompromising in this cause, pointing out that the ICJ decision not only affected Israel but obliged all 159 signers to the Genocide



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*Francis Boyle*

Convention to positively act to stop the ongoing genocide. He stressed to his audiences that the Biden Administration was complicit and unrepentant in its violation of the very Convention of which it was a signer.

### Victory against Undefeatable Powers

Seemingly devoted to “lost causes,” Dr. Boyle settled for nothing short of victory in the pursuit of justice. In many public presentations he stressed that he had won the case brought by Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1993, which he prosecuted, and which was the first judicial victory before

the ICJ on the basis of the Genocide Convention. This case established not only an important international legal precedent, but also reinforced the principle that it is possible and necessary to win victory against great odds and seemingly undefeatable powers.

Consequently, no political figure was too powerful to take on. Over the years, Dr. Boyle initiated, or offered to initiate, impeachment proceedings against seated U.S. presidents, including George Bush, Sr., Barack Obama, and Joe Biden. He was hampered only by his inability to find a member of Congress with the guts to enter an impeachment resolution. One cherished exception was his collaboration with Congressman Henry B. Gonzales (D-Texas). Dr. Boyle told an interviewer that he knew that Bush, Sr. in his memoirs had written that the reason he had stopped the Iraq invasion during the 1990-1991 Gulf War, just on the other side of the border of Kuwait, and did not

proceed to Baghdad, was that he feared impeachment. The reason he feared impeachment, Boyle continued, was that Rep. Gonzalez, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, and he had set up a national campaign to impeach him, and that Rep. Gonzalez had already introduced the Bill of Impeachment—which Dr. Boyle had initiated—into the U.S. House of Representatives.

### **International Peace Coalition**

Over the decades, despite some significant political differences, Dr. Boyle was a frequent collaborator with the Schiller Institute, granting Schiller-associated publications a number of interviews on crucial topics, and most recently sharing his knowledge of international law. He drew out the meaning and implications of the 2024 International Court of Justice finding on Israeli genocide, in talks with the International Peace Coalition initiated by Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

Several times interviewed by Harley Schlanger, raconteur for The LaRouche Organization, Dr. Boyle stood out for two qualities, in addition to being well-spoken on the topic under discussion: His preparation was always excellent; his passion for justice was unflagging. This stood in stark contrast to many in his profession, who could present a credible argument in court, and then walk away to a comfortable life.

“Francis could not walk away while an injustice remained unresolved,” Schlanger has noted.

For Dr. Boyle, there was no separation between his “public” and “private” life. When repeated attempts to pass a resolution against Gaza genocide with the Washington, D.C. congregation that he attended, failed, he not only resigned, but he denounced their cowardice publicly, saying he wanted no part of “cheap grace.”

Dr. Boyle’s integrity and persistence were admirable and inspirational. As one of his students described it, Dr. Boyle’s commitment to fair treatment for the powerless made a lasting impression on him and his classmates. He had such an effect on all who met him.

His efforts were unstinting. No email went unanswered, whether the query merited a sentence or a list of references to a half-dozen of his books and articles. These responses could be brusque at times, as befitted a man with a full teaching load and several political battles under way. Still, he had time to email his thoughts on the merits of the baseball “greats” with Pee Wee Reese of the then Brooklyn Dodgers, being a particular (shared) favorite.

Dr. Boyle was, by choice, a man of “costly grace.”

May his dedication and determination inspire those who come after him.