

Real World Graduation: Question 79: Crime in High Places

Edward D. Duvall
20 Apr 2019

Question 79

Which of the following are crooks?

- a) A U. S. President who covered up a burglary of the opposing political Party's headquarters that was engineered by a group of his subordinates.
- b) A U. S. President who committed perjury for the purpose of obstructing justice in order to deprive a citizen of their legal rights in a civil case in which the President was a defendant.
- c) A U. S. President who authorized and enforced a mandatory confiscation of all gold possessed by Americans.
- d) A U. S. president who knowingly used questionable evidence to entice Congress into authorizing a foreign war.
- e) All of the above

Answer to Question 79

This is a trick question. None of them are crooks.

In answer a), considerable evidence came to light that Richard M. Nixon had, at minimum, covered up the illegal activities of his subordinates, which constituted obstruction of justice (a felony). But he was never required to answer for it in court; in fact he resigned the office of the Presidency and was subsequently pardoned by President Gerald R. Ford before he was impeached by Congress.

In answer b), William J. Clinton was tried in a political venue (the House of Representatives), but was never charged in a legal venue for his on-video perjury (a felony) in a civil suit while conducting a policy of obstructing justice (a felony) in a sexual harassment case (a felony) filed against him.

In answer c), Franklin D. Roosevelt simply decided that common Americans could not be trusted to possess gold, so he had it confiscated and replaced with paper money. Soon after, he conspired with the Federal Reserve to devalue the paper money, thus robbing the people of about 40% of their wealth that was held in gold. But he was never charged with grand larceny (a felony); in defiance of all logic, he is widely regarded as America's savior, although it was his moronic policies that caused the Great Depression to last a full decade.

In answer d), Harry S. Truman, Lyndon B. Johnson, Ronald W. Reagan, George H. W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush did not commit any crimes per se in the course of pursuing foreign wars (Truman in Korea, Johnson in Vietnam, Reagan in Grenada, G. H. W. Bush in Iraq and Panama, Clinton in Yugoslavia and Haiti, and G. W. Bush in Iraq and Afghanistan). (I have omitted the other minor foreign conflicts and interventions). History has shown that at minimum, the wars in Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Yugoslavia, Haiti, and the second Iraq war were unnecessary. The decision to go to war is inherently a political one, and is not covered by statute.

Incidentally, George W. Bush did not lie about the presence of "weapons of mass destruction" (WMD) in Iraq. We do not know if Saddam Hussein had WMDs at the time but: a) removed them to Syria; or b) had disposed of them after the First Gulf War of 1991. We do know that most intelligence services believed Hussein had WMDs, Hussein pretended to have them as a way of manipulating and deceiving his enemies, and all the members of Congress of both parties who voted for the Iraq War authorization based on the intelligence assessment believed Hussein had WMDs. Bush, also relying on the intelligence assessment, also believed Hussein had them; therefore Bush was not lying about the evidence as it then stood (lying means to make a statement that you know to be false). However, Bush did lie about the need to invade Iraq: the lie was that somehow the U. S. was responsible for enforcing U. N. resolutions.

Therefore, none of them are crooks, showing that every crime is legal and every lie is respected if you get elected to a high enough office. Don't forget to vote.