Two years ago the Department of Justice’s Office of Professional Responsibility found Berkeley Law professor John Yoo to be an incompetent lawyer engaged in “professional misconduct,” but failed to hold him accountable for his key role in the Bush administration’s torture program.

His legal memos provided not just the “legal cover” for torture, but also indefinite incarceration without trial, rendition, massive spying, and aggressive war. Legal scholar David Cole writes:

“Yoo had a hand in virtually every major legal decision involving the U.S. response to the attacks of September 11, and at every point, so far as we know, his advice was virtually always the same—the president can do whatever the president wants.”

The ultimate war crime

“To initiate war of aggression... is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime, differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole.”

Justice Robert H. Jackson, chief prosecutor for the United States at the Nuremberg Trials

Yoo is unrepentant for his part in justifying immoral and illegitimate war on Iraq and boldly advocates for expansion of American imperialism in the Middle East, urging Republican presidential candidates to “begin preparing the case for a military strike to destroy Iran’s nuclear program.” National sovereignty be damned!

“Hands off the heavens”

Not content with the extent of U.S. global empire, Yoo has raised his sights, opining in the New York Times:

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“Outer space has become the next frontier for American national security and business. From space, we follow terrorists and intercept their communications, detect foreign military deployments, and monitor a proliferation of unconventional weapons. Our Global Positioning System gives us targeting and tactical advantages, spacecraft create image-rich maps, and satellites beam data around the world.”

In a Time magazine piece rebutting the Berkeley professor’s opposition to a draft European Union “code of conduct” to regulate outer space, Jeffrey Kluger identifies the true nature of Yoo’s vision: militarization of space. Hardly the stuff of commonwealth or weal.

**So why promote the views of a war criminal?**

It would be a huge mistake to think John Yoo is alone in his arguments. As the introduction to his *Powers of War and Peace* makes clear, Yoo is only one in a constellation of professors, colleagues, students and active court justices who think as he does. He is not some lone wolf with wacky ideas but is influenced by and representative of a school of thinking that has come from the so-called “best law schools” of this country: Harvard, Yale, Berkeley.

We are just beginning to feel the ramifications of Yoo’s theory of the “unitary executive” – again, the idea that “If the President does it, it’s legal” – in the form of massive surveillance, incarceration and repression of anyone who dares to resist the crimes of their government.

**End the U.S. War OF Terror**

Torture is a war crime and a crime against humanity. International and U.S. law both prohibit torture, under any and all circumstances, without exception. Yet while the Bush-Cheney torture state was being built, people in this country were told that torture is necessary to keep Americans safe, and acceptance of this “excuse” has spread widely in society.

We stand here today to repudiate the crimes of the past ten years. If we fail to hold our government accountable for the creation of a national security state that utilizes torture and destruction of civil liberties to silence resistance, we are condoning these crimes.

Together we say NO! to torture in our name.

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