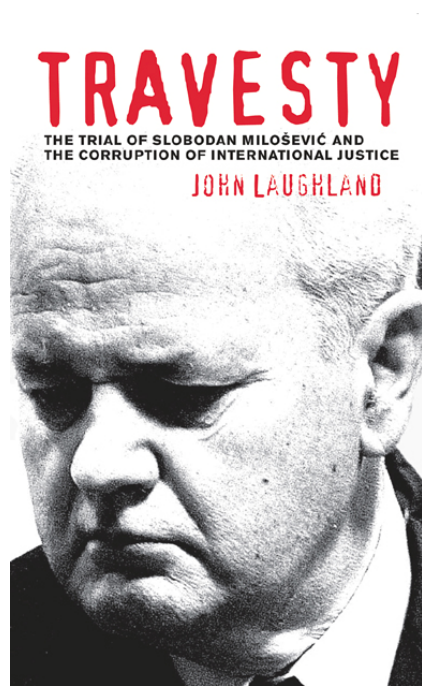


John Laughland, *Travesty. The Trial of Slobodan Milosevic and the Corruption of International Justice*. Foreword by Ramsey Clark, Pluto, London 2007, 214 pages, £14.99.



The former US Attorney-General Ramsey Clark sets the tone in his foreword which fits exactly with the book's title: to a Western-trained democrat, the Milosevic trial was a travesty of justice. The establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) by the UN-Security Council was itself a violation of international law and the UN Charter. Such a court can only be established by a multinational treaty. It was according to this procedure that the International Criminal Court was established on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002: signed by 120 states, its creation was undermined by the United States. The US not only refused to ratify the treaty but also obstructed justice by coercing or buying off over eighty nations to sign bilateral treaties which prohibit the extradition of US citizens or soldiers for trial before that court. Is there any coincidence between not signing the treaty and the crimes against humanity committed in Iraq and Afghanistan by the United States military and its

"willing" allies? Had the "Bushies" already planned the raid against Iraq and therefore not signed the treaty, knowing that they would commit massive crimes?

Clark also mentions that the ICTY was not only born in sin but also violated the first principle of the UN Charter, namely the sovereign equality of all nations. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US, Germany and other states broke up Yugoslavia and balkanised the Balkans. "The ICTY was empowered only to indict the victims of US and NATO assaults, not the aggressors. The Court was 'the continuation of war by other means,' the corruption of international law and justice to pursue enemies." Clark belongs to the few Americans whose minds are not blurred by the anti-Islamic and anti-terrorist rhetoric of the Bush administration. His judgement is clear: "Against the vast resources of a determined United States, which coerced the Security Council to create the ICTY through its UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright, Slobodan Milosovic stood alone before a hostile court created to convict him." Ms. Albright showed also her cynicism when she commented on the death of over half a million Iraqi children as a result of the sanctions and bombing of Iraq by the US and its British cronies and said, "We think the price is worth it."

In "Travesty," John Laughland, the Editor of the quarterly journal *Geopolitical Affairs* and a contributor to various foreign and English newspapers like *The Spectator*, *the Guardian* and *the Mail on Sunday*, has the guts to challenge head-on the established system of international justice exemplified by the trial against Slobodan Milosevic. The author says that the Milosevic trial was primarily political, and that the political nature of the indictment made a fair trial impossible. The mere fact that the trial lasted for four years is in itself an indication of an unfair trial, in view of the fact that guidelines laid down by the Lord Chief Justice for England and Wales say that a criminal trial should last between three and six months. The trial would have still be going on today if Milosevic had not died in 2006. Laughland says that NATO and the Western states needed this trial to legitimise their

destruction of the existing rules of the international system and their replacement with a new globalist regime which replaced the rights and duties of states with "human rights". With the advent of the "New World Order" - heralded by George W. Bush the elder in 1991, executed by military force against Yugoslavia by Bill Clinton, and completed by George W. Bush the younger through the attack on Iraq - it was clear that international law was no longer based on the principle of state sovereignty and sovereign equality. The concept of the "war on terror" serves as a pretext to destroy the international system, international law and the civil liberties Western democracies have cherished for decades. The developments in the US, Great Britain, France and Germany give great cause for concern.

In ten revealing chapters Laughland unfolds, in the brave new world of the "New World Order," the rule of law is replaced by the law of the jungle. The magic word for achieving this was "humanitarian intervention". In fact, the opposite is happening internationally: Draconian sanctions regimes and arbitrary international courts were established which are themselves a travesty of justice. The strong is forcing its will upon the weak. The bombing of Afghanistan, and even more so the attack on Iraq, has opened a Pandora's box with terrible repercussions for the Western world.

This new supranationalism had a universal and a regional dimension, writes the author. European politicians at the time were misled and clueless: the British Prime Minister, John Major, told the House of Commons on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1993 that the fighting in Yugoslavia and Bosnia had been caused by "the collapse of the Soviet Union and of the discipline which that exerted over the ancient hatreds in the old Yugoslavia". Laughland comments, "Perhaps Major never knew that any "discipline" exerted by the Soviet Union had already disappeared in 1948 when Tito broke with Moscow."

At first glance, one could get the impression that John Laughland is a fan of Milosevic which he of course is not. What he is criticising is the obstruction of fundamental judicial principles and the loss of state sovereignty through "humanitarian interventionism" in the name of "human rights". For him, "international justice" is an example of "Potemkin justice". This "false tribunal" was merely a means by which to cover up the crimes committed by the West in Yugoslavia. The book gives insights not only into a person who was called "Hitler" by Western politicians, but also into the unsuccessful attempt to bring justice through an international tribunal. The book shows that the United Nations and the signatory states of the Statute of the International Criminal Court should put pressure on the US and all other states which have been refused to sign this document in order to get away with their crimes against humanity. The author writes against the public mainstream which condemns Milosevic and praises the international justice system: he deserves praise for his courage.

Ludwig Watzal