

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



SCSL trains staff at Mpanga Prison in Rwanda

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Tuesday, 11 October 2011

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Ariogbo

Tuesday, 11 October 2011

Bo & Kono fracas....!

SLPP MP, 20 others arrested & sent to prison

***By Femi Coker &
Abdul Fonti***

Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) Member of Parliament (MP), Hon. Rado Yoki and twenty others are presently cooling off at the Pademba Road maximum prison, after they were arrested, dragged to court and refused bail in the afternoon hours of Monday 10th October 2011.

Hon. Rado Yoki and thirteen of the remanded suspects are believed to have actively participated in the riot that took place in Bo on the 9th September 2011, while the other seven were remanded in connection with the Kono violence.

The Bo riot, it could be recalled, left the Flagbearer of the SLPP seriously damaged in the head, houses burnt, one person dead, a finger

chopped off and several people mercilessly manhandled and hospitalized.

The arrest of the SLPP MP and others came following the conclusion of an inquiry set up by the President to look into the circumstances surrounding the political fracas between the opposition and the ruling party. Throngs of SLPP supporters stormed the Freetown Magistrate Court No.2

yesterday evening in solidarity with their MP and other members who were all arraigned on four counts charge of Riotous Conduct, Arson, Malicious Damage and Wounding.

The suspects were being defended by the National Secretary General of the SLPP, Sulaiman Banja Tejan-Sui, Ngakui, and Lawyer Musa, while the State was represented by the Director of

Public Prosecution.

After carefully assessing the charge sheet, Presiding Magistrate J.O Wellington insisted that all the suspects must be remanded in prison. The matter was adjourned to Friday 14th October 2011, which means that Rado Yoki and the others would be sleeping in their new home at Pademba Road until the matter comes up again.

What stunned the court yesterday the most was the conspicuous absence of the embattled Leader of the People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC) Charles Francis Margai, who had vowed earlier to fight to the last man for the SLPP.

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Charles Francis Margai, who had vowed earlier to fight to the last man for the SLPP.

The audience, especially from the side of the SLPP, had expected to see, Charles Margai in court, but to their surprise and utter amazement, he was nowhere to be found. The other thirteen suspects in the Bo fracas are: Kenneth Coker, Amadu Mansaray, a businessman of No. 30

Blama Section Bo, Mohamed Kamara alias Chopper of No. 104 Tikonko Road, Bo, Maada Amara Conteh alias Jackie Polo, Dauda Yankema, a motor mechanic of No. 37 Tangabey Street, Mustapha Massaquoi of No. 5 Fatu Street, Bo, Patrick Zombo of No. 50 Dambala Road Bo, Josie Ibrahim Scott, Bo and Ibrahim Foray Jakema.

For the Kono disturbance, eight people were arrested and charged to court. In court, Alie Abu Kalil was acquitted and discharged for lack of evidence, whilst the notorious Kono thug Adamu Eze, Tamba Kai Gbanya, Sahr B Ansumana, Kai Lawrence Mbayo, Muctarr Rogers, Mohamed Fofoh and Esther Fasuluku, were all refused bail and sent to Pademba Road prison.

Ansumana Street, Bo, Alhaji Abdulai Sesay of Bo, Abdulai Bangura, a businessman at No. 8 Sesay Street, Bo, Shaka Kamara of No. 31 Yariku Street, Osman Jalloh of 37

[Note: This story was also reported by a number of other local newspapers.]

Exclusive

Tuesday, 11 October 2011

The Era Of Impunity Is Over

President Ernest Bai Koroma has promised to enforce the laws of Sierra Leone to the letter. The Head of State has therefore called on the Judiciary to take punitive measures against those identified as flouting electoral laws and its related intrigues of violence ahead the 2012 Parliamentary and Presidential elections.

Dr. Koroma registered his government's determination to conduct free, peaceful and transparent 2012 election. He states: "My government is determined to ensure free, fair and transparent elections during the nation's fourth democratic elections in 2012." Meanwhile, the president's statement was irrevocable as he pointed out: "We will not allow the perpetrators of violence to derail our continuous and unhindered transformation of a democratic respectability to the envy of all."

At the opening of Parliamentary session, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma reiterated the importance of having the International Criminal Court (ICC) to monitor activities of the electoral process. "The onus lies on the ICC to arrest anyone or a group of people violating electoral laws and the rights of people during the 2012 elec-

tion," the President told Parliamentarians and the mammoth crowd at the Well of Parliament.

The President however, called on all political parties to throw their lot with the state as partners in transformation by exhibiting friendly relationship among politicians and all supporters irrespective of party, colors or ideologies.

The Presidential speech covered a wide range of issues in key government sectors and updates on progress and challenges as entailed in the government's Agenda for Change.

President Koroma describes the progress so far, made by the country as major achievements in the country's 50 years of independence history. The President's achievements underscore the development made in the health sector, energy and power, agriculture, marine and fisheries, mining industry, and other key sectors. "These are profound hallmarks in the ruling government's determination to change the economy of the country around," the President said and urged Sierra Leoneans both young and old to love one another in a move to give the country a spanking development.

The View From Above (Blog)

Monday, 10 October 2011

http://djlpl.org/1313/criminal-sentencing-the-tale-of-two-taylors/?fb_ref=AL2FB&fb_source=home_online

Criminal sentencing – The tale of two Taylors

David Akerson



Chuckie Taylor

As previously blogged, former Liberian president Charles Taylor is sitting in jail awaiting judgment for his involvement in the egregious crimes committed by rebel forces in Sierra Leone. His son, Chuckie Taylor, has already been convicted by a Miami Federal Court for acts of torture committed while running a squad of henchmen for his dad in Liberia. His was the first case under the torture statute that extends jurisdiction to US citizens committing torture abroad. The two cases will highlight the vast differences between domestic and international criminal sentencing.

The Miami Federal Court judge sentenced Chuckie to 97 years. Charles, on the other hand, if convicted, will be sentenced by an international tribunal, the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL). The longest sentence issued to date at the SCSL is 52 years to Issa Sesay. I predict that Charles will get something less than Sesay, or in other words, something less than half of what Chuckie received. Charles is accused of a range of crime far more extensive and brutal than Chuckie. He is allegedly responsible for a country-wide campaign of terror and brutality over a vast portion of Sierra Leone over a five year period. At least 50,000 were murdered, suffered amputations, subjected to years of slavery, sexual violence and various child soldier offenses. Chuckie was charged with a comparatively narrow range of crimes that focuses on the torture of seven victims.

The situation raises many questions for me. Is it fair for Charles to get a more lenient sentence than his son in this circumstance? Or is Chuckie's sentence too severe? Does the international community owe an explanation to Sierra Leone? Will the expected disparity say more about US criminal sentencing or more about international criminal sentencing?

The Independent

Tuesday, 11 October 2011

Liberia election challenger backs return of former warlord

Opposition leader says Charles Taylor would be welcomed home if acquitted of war crimes

By Daniel Howden in Monrovia



Mr Taylor, 63, is the first African ex-ruler to stand trial for war crimes for his role in the war in neighbouring Sierra Leone

AP

The man hoping to defeat Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in today's Liberian elections has said he would welcome former warlord Charles Taylor back into the country and that he could return to politics if acquitted of war crimes by the International Criminal Court.

Winston Tubman, the leader of Liberia's main opposition Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), also warned that he may have trouble controlling his own supporters if the poll goes against them. The presidency will be decided at a runoff next month unless one of the candidates secures more than half of votes cast today.

Mr Tubman, whose coalition includes Mr Taylor's ex-wife, Jewel Howard Taylor, said the former president – identified by the international community as most responsible for the 14 years of war and chaos that ravaged parts of West Africa – remains "innocent until proven guilty" and would have the same rights as other Liberians.

Liberia's second election since the end of the war has been conducted in the shadow of Mr Taylor's war crimes trial at the ICC where he faces charges including instigating murder, rape and enslavement during the war in neighbouring Sierra Leone that left thousands of people dead. He denies the charges and the court is widely seen to have delayed issuing a verdict in the case until the elections are safely out of the way.

Mr Taylor is still popular with some Liberians and Taylor loyalists have publicly backed the opposition. "He (Charles Taylor) is a Liberian citizen, if he's found not guilty he could come back home," Mr Tubman told The Independent. "Even if we think that some leaders were bad that doesn't mean their supporters are bad."

Speaking before the vote, with tens of thousands of CDC supporters dancing and chanting in a rainstorm outside, the former ambassador to the UN said that Mr Taylor would be free to become a farmer or "re-enter politics".

He refused to rule out a government position for the man accused of war crimes and suggested that his ex-wife would be part of a new administration if he won today's vote: "People like Jewel Taylor are helping us, and our government would stronger if she had a post in it," he said.

The opposition has told its supporters to expect cheating by the ruling party and said it would issue its own count after polls close. Mr Tubman warned that it would be "difficult to calm down" his supporters if they feel aggrieved by the results.

The Harvard-educated diplomat has recruited the country's football hero George Weah as his vice presidential running mate. The former AC Milan forward is mobbed wherever he goes and campaigns with a rowdy entourage dressed in "Weah All Stars" t-shirts, while his would-be boss (a nephew of the country's longest serving president William Tubman) favours a suit and tie and passes almost unnoticed.

"Every Liberian politician wanted to recruit Weah and I did it," he said.

Charles Taylor

Mr Taylor, 63, is the first African ex-ruler to stand trial for war crimes for his role in the war in neighbouring Sierra Leone, where he backed rebels responsible for atrocities. Mr Taylor used to work for the Liberian President Samuel Doe until he was accused in 1983 of embezzlement and fled to the US. He was jailed there but escaped and returned to Africa to launch a rebellion to topple Mr Doe, which left 250,000 dead. Mr Taylor was president for six years from 1997 when he went into exile in Nigeria.

Associated Press
Monday, 10 October 2011

Long pursued, arms suspect faces trial in NY court

WASHINGTON — For nearly two decades, Viktor Bout ruled an empire of the air. He dispatched a private fleet of long-haul cargo planes that spanned the globe, shipping heavy machinery, frozen chickens and more. The Russian businessman is grounded now, facing trial this week in a New York federal courtroom for what Western governments insist was his real specialty — arranging delivery of tons of weapons that inflamed violence across the world's war zones.

A former Soviet military officer with command of four languages, Bout is known as the "Merchant of Death," the nickname long used by American and international officials to describe his suspected prominence in the illicit arms trade. He has been banned from international travel for violating United Nations arms embargos, targeted by a U.S. asset freeze and he inspired the role of the fictitious arms trafficker played by Nicholas Cage in the 2005 action film, "Lord of War."

He is believed to have amassed a fortune estimated as high as \$6 billion. His clients, according to official investigations, included African dictators Moammar Gadhafi, Charles Taylor and the Taliban mullahs who once ran Afghanistan. Planes linked to his network even flew supplies to Iraq for the U.S. armed forces.

Bout, 44, eluded arrest until U.S. narcotics agents lured him to Thailand in a 2008 sting operation, charging him with conspiring to sell anti-aircraft missiles and other weapons to undercover informants posing as South American terrorists. Protesting his innocence, Bout was extradited to New York in November after enduring a grueling, two-year limbo in a Bangkok prison while the U.S. and Russia squared off in a diplomatic tug-of-war.

His arrest was a high point in efforts to stem the flow of black market arms, but the case has set off Cold War echoes. For Russia, Bout's prosecution is seen as American overreach, stoking fears he will be pressed to open up about his ties to Russia's military and intelligence circles.

U.S. prosecutors will face defense questions about the sting's validity and his treatment by federal agents. His attorneys had also claimed Bout was targeted because the U.S. was embarrassed by its use of his air companies in Iraq — but they agreed last week to avoid that argument unless prosecutors allude to it during questioning. Jury selection starts Tuesday.

"There are powerful people in Russia who are quite frankly worried that he might spill his guts," said Michael Braun, a former Drug Enforcement Administration chief of operations who led the Bout investigation.

Sergei Markov, a Russian lawmaker and member of Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's ruling United Russia party, agreed: "They want to extract information from him."

Bout's attorney, Albert Y. Dayan, said his client "never had any intention of transferring arms to anyone" in the sting. He added last week that "we believe that most of the reputation he has developed is imposed rather than actual."

Trying to mute the prejudicial effects of Bout's notoriety, U.S. District Judge Shira Scheindlin said last week she will try a tactic new to federal trials, requiring jurors to sign a pledge not to research Bout on the Internet or other media.

It will not be easy. The Web is flooded with photographs of a haggard Bout in his Thai jail cell, as well as news stories, websites and Facebook pages. There have been documentaries, books and a suspense novel based on the Russian businessman. Bout dismissed the "Lord of War" film as "a bad movie." A rock group, DePotorland, recently released a new video for a song about Bout, "We Deliver."

Bout's transport network got its start in the early 1990s, soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Leasing and then buying old Russian-made cargo planes known for their durability and lumbering size, Bout amassed an air armada that grew to more than 60 aircraft by the late 1990s, according to U.S. officials. The planes were constantly on the move, flying from Africa to Afghanistan and hopscotching to bases in Belgium, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Arab Emirates and across Eastern Europe.

The planes brimmed with loads ranging from diamonds to gladiolas. But by the late 1990s, U.S. and UN officials and anti-arms-trade activists had pinpointed the flights as a key source of assault rifles and more sophisticated weapons systems turning up in the violence-plagued African nations of Liberia, Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. U.S. officials later said Bout's air operations also earned \$50 million aiding the Taliban in Afghanistan.

"It was his air fleet, his easy access to arms and his ability to reach the most violent parts of the world that made Viktor Bout so much more than the run of the mill arms dealer," said Juan Zarate, a top counterterrorism official for the Bush administration and now a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Describing Bout as a transnational threat capable of aiding terrorists and other violent groups, the U.S. targeted him with financial sanctions for alleged arms work in Liberia and the Congo. Belgium indicted him on money laundering charges in 2002 and Interpol issued an international warrant, but Bout retreated to Moscow, where Russian officials spurned the inquiries.

When Bout was arrested in Bangkok in March 2008 by the DEA and Thai police, Russian diplomats were quick to defend him. The case has become a Russian cause celebre in the months since his extradition. Bout's wife, Alla, and his mother and daughter have come to pre-trial hearings and are expected to attend the trial in New York.

If Bout were convicted, Markov said, "Russia will protest. Bout is a Russian citizen, and it's the Russian authorities' duty to protect his rights." Sergei Prikhodko, the senior foreign policy aide to President Dmitry Medvedev, said in November that there are no secrets, military or otherwise, that Bout could pass to the Americans. Still, some Russian parliament members have raised the possibility of a swap similar to last year's trade of Russian sleeper agents arrested in the U.S. for prisoners held in Russia.

U.S. authorities have not speculated publicly on any deal, but such a move would be opposed by the DEA and prosecutors. "I don't see that in the cards," said Braun, the former DEA official who now is managing partner of the Virginia-based Spectre Group International security firm.

Bout faces a possible life sentence if convicted. He is charged with conspiring to sell millions of dollars in weapons to DEA informants acting as officials of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, or FARC, a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization operating in Colombia. He is also accused of conspiring to kill Americans. Prosecutors said he offered to sell 700 to 800 surface-to-air missiles, 5,000 AK-47 firearms, millions of rounds of ammunition, land mines, night-vision equipment and ultra-light airplanes that could carry missiles to the undercover informants.

Bout has won some legal challenges. The judge ruled that the government could not use statements that Bout made to federal agents after his 2008 arrest. Scheindlin also suggested DEA agents had testified falsely in claiming they had not pressed Bout to cooperate with them, but she later withdrew that accusation after prosecutors protested.

Even without the ability to use Bout's statements, prosecutors have Bout's wiretapped conversations and documents and emails lifted from his seized laptop. The undercover informants are expected to testify along with Andrew Smulian, a veteran pilot arrested with Bout who had worked with the Russian dating back to 1996.

Bout has not talked publicly in the courtroom, but defense lawyer Kenneth Kaplan said Bout has been helping his attorneys prepare for trial while he studies a new language, Hindi.

"He's been anxiously awaiting his day in court," Kaplan said.

The Atlantic

Friday, 7 October 2011

Did Nobel Committee Award Liberia's Sirleaf to Help Her Win Reelection?



Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is one of three Peace Prize recipients, including a fellow Liberian peace activist

For all the good in this year's Nobel Peace Prize trio of recipients -- its affirmation of the growing global leadership of woman, its acknowledgment that neither peace nor democracy comes without their full support and participation, its deeply convincing suggestion that the efforts of peace in 2010 may have been due more to women than men -- the name Ellen Johnson Sirleaf seemed to draw mostly sighs from the academics and journalists who cover West Africa. "Most common complaint of Johnson Sirleaf in Liberia is she spends all her time pleasing the West and not enough building things at home," reported journalist Elizabeth Dickinson. Yale professor Chris Blattman wrote on his blog, "I can't shake the feeling that she spent more time getting feted internationally, and running a U.S. book tour, than [on] the big issues at home."

Sirleaf, the president of Liberia since 2006, is not exactly a controversial figure, but she's not the Dalai Lama either, and her inclusion among today's three Nobel Peace Prize winners might have as much to do with Liberia's domestic and international politics as about the transforming role of female leadership in the developing world. "Shocked response in Monrovia to Johnson Sirleaf's Nobel prize, there are serious misgivings about Ma Ellen in Liberia," UK Independent report Daniel Howden tweeted from the Liberian capital, noting Sirleaf's "murky" record during that country's bloody civil war and reporting "thousands of opposition supporters" rallying against the prize. A local told him, "[The International] Community put fine flowers atop the grave but there are dead bones underneath."

The prize, of course, has gone to less-than-saintly characters before: Mikhail Gorbachev, Yasser Arafat, Nelson Mandela, and Henry Kissinger, to name just a few of the leaders who achieved acts of great peace as well as great violence. But does Sirleaf really fit on this list? She did help bring Liberia out of war, her 2005 election saw the highest rate of female participation ever recorded in Africa, and she's made slow but real work at rebuilding her country, one of West Africa's great hopes before war tore it apart. Still, there have been a number of peace-builders in Liberia. Blattman, considering whether Sirleaf has been "a force for peace," answered with a tepid, "Yes and no, but mostly yes." University of Massachusetts professor Michael Keating wrote, "It was actually Leymah Gbowee, a co-recipient of this year's Peace Prize, who did all the heavy lifting of peacebuilding while Charles Taylor was still in power." So why not limit the

prize to Gbowee, a prominent activist whose efforts to end Liberia's civil war were chronicled in the film *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*? Why add Sirleaf?

Well, Sirleaf is up for re-election. In four days. And her prospects are looking awfully shaky. In Liberia and in the West, there seems to be a growing consensus that the Nobel committee was not unaware of this timing. "I want her to win the election so I'm glad but the timing is strange," a Liberian government official told Howden. "Happy for Sirleaf, but the Nobel comes *4 days* before the election??" asked Todd Moss of the Center for Global Development. Monrovia-based American venture capitalist Matt Jones tweeted, "Sirleaf's Nobel feeds hugely in2 the conspiracy that her 2005 election & 2011 re-election r determined by foreign gov'ts."

Conspiracy theories aside, it's natural to wonder if the Nobel committee was hoping to play some role in the election. Not to fix the results, exactly, but to throw their weight behind their preferred candidate in an effort to remind Liberians why they elected Sirleaf in 2005. It would be a bit reminiscent of their 2009 recipient, Barack Obama, a decision that was widely viewed as more about nudging him toward certain policies than about rewarding past behavior.

Even if Liberia had national polling, it would be unreliable and incomplete. But election-watchers tend to describe Sirleaf's reelection as uncertain. And her loss could have serious ramifications for the country and the region. Her leading opponent is Harvard-educated lawyer William Tubman, whose real electoral support comes from his running mate, George Weah. A football star who came close to winning in 2005, Weah answered then-criticism about his fitness for the job by, in the years since, enrolling at Florida's DeVry University.

But the real concern is not for the lackluster Tubman or running mate Weah, the Sarah Palin of Liberia. It's for a less prominent candidate named Prince Johnson, a former warlord who has left a long and bloody trail across Liberia. Johnson has close ties to fellow warlord Charles Taylor, who is responsible for much of West Africa's worst violence. Taylor is currently on trial at The Hague for war crimes, but that hasn't sapped his alarming popularity back home in Liberia. Alpha Sesay, who monitored the trial for the Open Society Justice Initiative, told TheAtlantic.com's Robbie Corey-Boulet that Taylor's verdict "could go either way."

Next week's vote could lead to a runoff in November. If that happens, and if Taylor wins his trial and comes home to throw his considerable popularity behind Johnson, Liberia could see a return to the days of child soldiers and chaos. That's probably not an especially likely outcome, but neither is it unforeseeable. Even if Sirleaf lost to Tubman, the instability and resentments that comes with so many African political transitions could provide an opening for Johnson, Taylor, or another Taylor-backed warlord to seize power. Probably the best way to ensure continued peace in Liberia, even if not exactly prosperity, would be for Sirleaf to win a second term.

This thinking informs much of the Western world's involvement in the politics of Sub-Saharan Africa. Rwandan President Paul Kagame has an abysmal human rights record that seems to get worse all the time, for example, but the U.S. and other Western powers continue to back him because, as diplomatic officials say privately, urging a political transition would too dangerously risk another division along sectarian lines that could lead to renewed war. Isn't that the lesser of two evils? Maybe, maybe not -- that's one of the questions that makes great power diplomacy in the developing world, and in Africa in particular, so difficult. But it would be an odd game for the Nobel committee to be playing.

Radio Netherlands

Tuesday, 11 October 2011

A perfect book about imperfect justice

Thierry Cruvellier has produced a brilliant book! It is available in French but one only can hope that it will soon be translated into Khmer, English and other languages, with all due respect to the writer's sharp pen and underlying albeit biting irony. His work reads like a novel. However, this is no fiction – unfortunately: the some 12,000 people who died in the infamous S-21 prison, managed by Duch, are real.

By Christian Chartier

Reporting on national criminal trials requires obvious skills: knowledge of the law, insight into the social background of the case, its possible resonance, connections with the actors and open-mindedness to the human components of the courtroom drama. But reporting on international trials is even more demanding for they are an extraordinary process.

Compared to national criminal cases, international trials are indeed what 3D movies are to traditional productions: involving, in turn or simultaneously, history, politics, mass psychology, international and domestic laws, sociology, etc. They are multi-dimensional. To cover a trial before an international court thus is a multi-faceted exercise for which nuanced writing, narrative punch and observation talent are mere basic aptitudes.

That “international legal reporting” is a specific endeavor is eloquently illustrated by Thierry Cruvellier's latest book, *Le maître des aveux*. After a 15 year-long experience in Arusha at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda; in Freetown at the Special Court for Sierra-Leone and in Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the author decided to change continent again and to report on the trial of Kaing Guek Eav, better known as Duch before the ECCC, the so-called Cambodia Tribunal, in Phnom Penh.

The author settled down in Cambodia before the trial started, studied the country's history and the Khmer Rouges' system, immersed himself into the society, visited sites, talked to people of all ages and classes including former and present supporters of the Democratic Kampuchea, as well as the Tribunal's staff. He then went to court. He sat for months in the public gallery; he listened carefully and watched with both fascination and distance the unfolding “human tragedy”.

Implicitly referring to the many proceedings he attended, Cruvellier notes that “a trial is like a dead-end street: when the accused denies his responsibility, victims suffer; when he admits, they suffer too. In either case, there is no way out.” On his own admission, he came out of the Duch trial “asphyxié” (suffocated). This may explain why his account of the ECCC's Case N°1 takes the reader's breath away!

Cruvellier has authored a perfect book which I believe, goes to the core of international justice: it surely does vindicate its meaningfulness for the victims but it also questions its finality in the bigger scheme of the condition humaine: how should we look at perpetrators of mass crimes? Can we punish them? How?

“The Duch case is the first international trial about communist crimes,” notes Cruvellier. Beyond the accused, what is in the dock is the ideology that Duch zealously served, meticulously documenting everything since 1975 and strangely destroying nothing when the time had come to flee in 1979. The author's finding that many of the S-21 victims (if not most of them) were themselves Khmer Rouges who had to be purged only epitomizes the monstrous perversion of the Democratic Kampuchea system, systematically devouring its own flesh. It also raises a dramatic question: can any ideology based on the

others' hatred or differences lead scores of individuals to erase their own specificity, to lose their own humanity and to engage in literally senseless mass crimes?

Transcending the Duch case, Cruvellier also makes the accused's trial a symbol of the functioning of the ECCC and one can hardly resist the temptation to apply his comments to all other international courts. He peppers his work with salted examples of the equivocal role played by NGOs, the blatant inexperience of some judges, the fatuity (to say the least) of some Prosecution and defence lawyers, the false hopes given to the so-called civil parties and the actual deception by the prosecutors of many victims - for reasons which are both "pragmatic and unacceptable, their prison, their cooperative, their dyke, their canal have not been selected as crime scenes," and the author expertly concludes that "the selection among victims and the competition between them are the bitter fruits of these tribunals with a symbolic value".

However, Thierry Cruvellier's book thrives on the best these "tribunals with a symbolic value" have to offer: the actual confrontation between an accused and the "witnesses" of his/her crimes, be they survivors (a handful at S-21!) or victims' relatives. The clash is often explosive and its outcome is always unpredictable. *Le maître des aveux* offers many examples of these tense and uncontrollable encounters. The brother of a young man who died under Duch's supervision tells the accused that "a part of me" would like "you" to experience the same deadly ordeal but that "another part" tells him better: "Today, in this courtroom, I pass on to you my anger, my pain and my grief. I put this burden on your shoulders and you'll carry it alone. As of today, I feel nothing more for you. To me, what you have done excludes you from the human community."

One of the only three living survivors of S-21 publicly confesses that he "had never imagined that [he] would sit one day in this courtroom. It is my privilege and my honour. There is nothing better I could wish. I ask no reparation. I want something intangible: justice for those who died. This is what I expect from the court."

The only witness called by the Trial Chamber explains his philosophical dilemma to the judges: "I feel that Duch's crimes were committed by a man; in order to properly gauge their abomination, one should not make of Duch a one-of-its-kind monster but one should instead identify his 'humanity' (...) I am afraid, unfortunately, that it is impossible to grasp the horror without recognising the butcher's human dimension."

The sibling of yet another Duch's victim has come from France to confront the accused with a 1974 photograph of her sister because she "wanted to show the accused what he has destroyed," she explains, before going on to say that she does not buy into the accused's confessed remorse and that she will never forgive him: "never, never, never!"

Later, another victim's relative will crack the accused: he, who had always been guarded and 'in control' throughout the court sessions, finally cries. Even going one step further than admitting to his crimes, he says that he will "accept any sentence, regardless of its harshness." He maintained this position until the day of the final submission, when his Cambodian lawyer stunned everybody, including the prosecution and his own camp, by asking for... an acquittal!

Meanwhile, Me François Roux, the French lawyer assisting Duch (who would shortly after drop him), had presented the ECCC judges with a question going to the very *raison d'être* of international justice: "Shall we be able to give the victims their humanity back? Shall we also be able to allow the one [Duch] who has stepped out of humanity to return to it?"

Thierry Cruvellier's book reproduces this essential if not existential question...but offers no answer. Fairly so: is there any, in spite of the work carried out by all international criminal courts over the past fifteen years?

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