

Circle: Milosevic & American Independence: Which one is worse?

- ◆ Milosevic is the first head of state to face trial in The Hague, this has led some to believe that International Law and the International Court is just and serves humanity.
- ◆ What people fail to realise is that the trial of one man cannot absolve the entire Serbian military, America, Britain and other world powers for their crimes. Isn't it a contradiction that one man is put on trial for war crimes whereas America and its leaders like Bush are not put on trial for crimes against the people of Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan, etc. America and other world powers have an open relationship with the Butcher Putin of Russia who is still killing the Muslims in Chechnya, India is still oppressing the Muslims of Kashmir yet it is America's new found buddy in the sub-continent.
- ◆ 4th of July is American independence day when America will celebrate the anniversary of removing the shackles of British rule over America. This celebration should be seen as a humiliation for the Muslims, in reality America is celebrating her dominance over our lands.
- ◆ The British and French celebrated when the Khilafah was destroyed. The difference is that the Khilafah was not a colonialist nation but was an obstacle to their colonialism.
- ◆ Since the destruction of Khilafah the Muslims have not had a single day of joy or happiness. Like the Muslims in Makkah prior to the establishment of Dar ul Islam in Madinah.
- ◆ The first public celebration in Islamic history was the establishment of the Islamic state, the people of Madina were singing on the streets as the Prophet (saw) rode into Madina.
- ◆ Inshallah we will have a similar celebration when the Khilafah is re-established. This will end the celebrations of the Kuffar of their kufr and return to them their true status of humiliation. The Khilafah will expose the true reality of the colonialist nations as criminals against humanity.

"O you who believe: Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor. For Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you swerve, and if you distort (justice), verily Allah is well-acquainted with what you do." [TMQ 4: 135]

Reference

Lawyer says Milosevic to accept help

July 4, 2001 Posted: 4:37 AM EDT (0837 GMT)

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (CNN) -- One of Slobodan Milosevic's lawyers said Tuesday the former Yugoslav president probably will accept legal counsel in his trial at the U.N. war crimes tribunal.

A defiant Milosevic -- the first head of state to face trial in The Hague -- appeared without legal representation on Tuesday to be formally charged with crimes against humanity, having said he did not recognise the authority of the tribunal.

Not guilty pleas were entered on Milosevic's behalf by the court after he refused to enter one himself.

The comments from lawyer Dragoljub Ognjanovic later on Tuesday flew in the face of Milosevic's statement to the tribunal that it is "an illegal organ" and thus, "I have no need to appoint counsel."

In an interview with CNN, Ognjanovic said, "It is going to be a very long trial and I suppose he is going to take a few lawyers. At this point, we do not know who it is going to be. Domestic lawyers, foreign lawyers -- I don't know."

He said Milosevic insists "this is a political trial" and "his whole defence will be based on that fact."

Graham Blewitt, the deputy chief prosecutor of the tribunal, said prosecutors would prefer to see Milosevic represented by the "most competent legal defence team" because it would ensure that Milosevic was "adequately represented."

That way, said Blewitt, the "verdict -- whatever it is, when it comes -- can be one that the world can have confidence in."

The trial will go forward with or without legal representation for Milosevic. Blewitt said the next step is for prosecutors to hand over to Milosevic or his possible lawyers the "material that went in to support the indictment."

Milosevic is accused of crimes against humanity for actions carried out by the Yugoslav Army in Kosovo before NATO's 1999 air campaign, including murder, deportation and persecution of people on political, racial and ethnic grounds.

Early on Tuesday, at the brief, historic session, a combative Milosevic strode in without legal counsel, declined to enter a plea and waived his right to have the charges formally read in court.

CNN's Christiane Amanpour reported that Milosevic appeared in court with "his jaw jutted forward, he looked defiant, and he kept looking at the public gallery."

The court entered a plea of not guilty on his behalf. The entire session lasted 10 minutes and the tribunal then adjourned until August 27 but the trial was not expected to begin hearing evidence until next year.

Richard May, a presiding judge for the war crimes tribunal, asked Milosevic if he wanted to reconsider his decision not to have attorneys with him. He said the former Yugoslav leader would have the opportunity in "due course" to challenge the court's jurisdiction.

"I consider this tribunal a false tribunal and the indictments false indictments," Milosevic responded. "It is illegal, being not appointed by the U.N. General Assembly. So, I have no need to appoint counsel to the illegal organ."

May then told Milosevic he had the right to have the indictment read in court before making a plea to it, or he could waive his right.

"Now do you want to have the indictment read out, or not?" May asked.

In a terse reply, Milosevic said: "That's your problem."

Unruffled, May told Milosevic, "You will be accorded the full rights of the accused according to international law and the full protections of international law and the statute."

May then asked the former Yugoslav leader if he would like to enter a plea.

"This trial's aim is to produce false justification for the war crimes of NATO committed in Yugoslavia," Milosevic said.

Not getting the response he wanted, May said, "Mr. Milosevic, I asked you a question. Do you wish to enter a plea today or are you asking for adjournment to consider the matter further?"

Milosevic replied, "I have given you my answer."

May then entered a not guilty plea on behalf of Milosevic for each count.

Undeterred, Milosevic said: "The aim of this tribunal is to justify the crimes committed in Yugoslavia. That is why this is a false tribunal, an illegitimate one."

Interrupting, May said, "Mr. Milosevic, this is not the time for speeches. As I have said, you will have a full opportunity in due course."

Tribunal spokesman Jim Landale said Milosevic's confrontational demeanour before the tribunal was dealt with "firmly and fairly" by the three presiding judges. He acknowledged it is rare for a suspect to appear at the court without representation.

"This was unusual, although not totally unexpected," Landale said. "I think we knew that there could be the possibility of this sort of occurrence in court."

U.S. marks 225th anniversary of independence

July 4, 2001 Posted: 11:51 AM EDT (1551 GMT)

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania (CNN) -- Americans marked the United States' 225th birthday Wednesday with cookouts, fireworks displays and a speech by President Bush at the hall where it all began.

Bush planned to give an afternoon speech at Independence Hall, where representatives of the 13 American colonies hammered out their Declaration of Independence from Britain in the summer of 1776.

In a statement issued Tuesday, Bush said the declaration "set into motion the development of a land of freedom and opportunity unequalled in the world."

"Today, we recognize that people around the globe have also drawn inspiration from the Declaration of Independence," Bush said. "Our prosperity and strength stand as a testament to the ideals it embodies."

The president was also scheduled to attend a neighborhood block party in Philadelphia before returning to Washington for the annual fireworks display on the Mall. Similar displays were planned in U.S. cities from Boston, Massachusetts, to Los Angeles, California, as part of the holiday.

Also in Philadelphia on Wednesday, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan received the city's Liberty Medal and its \$100,000 honorarium. Mayor John Street presented the award during a ceremony in front of the historic Liberty Bell.

The Liberty Medal honors an individual or organization for demonstrated leadership and vision in pursuit of liberty of conscience or freedom from oppression, ignorance or deprivation.

Other events accompanying the Fourth of July ranged from the annual Coney Island hot-dog eating contest in New York to numerous parades and concerts to Atlanta, Georgia's 10 kilometer Peachtree Road Race.

Among the race's male runners, John Korir from Kenya crossed the finish line first with a time of 28 minutes, 18 seconds. Among the women contestants, the winner was Lornah Kiplagat -- also of Kenya -- with 30 minutes, 57 seconds.

Back in Philadelphia, a group of actors and actresses read from the Declaration on the steps of the city's Museum of Art. The document, issued July 4, 1776, asserted that "All men are created equal" and set the political goal of independence for Britain's American colonies, which had been in armed revolt for more than a year.

Another five years would go by before the American Revolution ended with the battle of Yorktown in 1781.

The document is now carefully preserved at the National Archives in Washington. The archives placed both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution on display Wednesday morning for the last time before a renovation of the building gets under way.

Tuesday, television producer and political activist Norman Lear announced that one of the original copies of the document would be sent on a 3 1/2-year tour of the country. Lear and Internet entrepreneur David Hayden bought the copy, printed in Philadelphia the day the declaration was issued, for more than \$8 million.

Lear said he hopes the traveling exhibit will appeal to young people at a time of disillusionment with government.