

# NATO War Crimes Exposed at The Hague "War Crimes Tribunal"

Milosevic takes the offensive

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In-depth Report: THE BALKANS

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## Milosevic takes the offensive

Slobodan Milosevic has taken the offensive against his Hague prosecutors who have accused him of masterminding atrocities in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s. He denounced his trial as political and condemned the 78-day bombing of Yugoslavia by NATO in 1999.

"It was obviously the goal and objective [of NATO] to terrorise and break down the whole Yugoslav nation. The goal in practical terms was the nation as a whole", said Milosevic.

He showed a German documentary critical of NATO's bombing campaign against Yugoslavia and many photographs of severed heads, charred bodies and blasted buildings, which were the consequences of NATO's bombing.

"The bombing of civilian targets was merciless. That was the big characteristic. The more suffering, the more civilians (killed) the better", he said.

Milosevic charged that the targeting of civilians was a deliberate move to create refugees from Kosovo.

"The movement of Albanians from Kosovo was strategically important for the Clinton administration." Their flight provided "confirmation and justification for what they were doing."

NATO bombs hit a column of ethnic Albanian refugees in April 1999 because they sought to return to their village. "A more horrific message could not have been sent to Albanians that were returning to their villages", he said.

"We intercepted communication between the pilot and his command centre. The pilot says that it's not a military column and that he can see peasants and tractors. And the response was 'Carry out your orders.'"

Milosevic described the destruction of villages, named the victims and outlined their ages and the circumstances of their deaths.

#### Killed by NATO

"This is the corpse of a child, Kaitomi Kostrate from the village of ... born in 19... While he was tending to a field he was killed by NATO bombs", he said.

"They were targeting peasants plowing their fields outside their village", said Milosevic.

"This entire war was pointless and it constitutes a crime. Those who come to kill children who are asleep can hardly sleep peacefully."

Slobodan Milosevic accused the West of spreading an "ocean of lies".

"All the laws of international law and the statutes of NATO were infringed", he told the court.

Facing the judges, Milosevic accused them of "encouraging terrorism" in the Balkans. He said that the NATO-led force in Kosovo (the so-called peacekeeping force (KFOR) helped ethnic Albanians of the fascist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) carry out so-called revenge attacks against Serbs and other minorities when they entered the province in June 1999.

# **Committing crimes**

"There is evidence of direct cooperation in committing these crimes between the occupying troops ... and, on the other hand, the KLA that continued to loot, plunder and killed everybody and everything that was not Albanian", he said.

"Under their protection, 3000 Serbs – mostly Serbs -were killed." Milosevic compared the destruction of Serb Orthodox churches in Kosovo to the demolition of giant Buddha statues in Afghanistan by the Taliban regime.

Such "vandalism" also occurred when churches were destroyed in Kosovo "under the protection of the United Nations [and] in the presence of their troops. The gravest kind of crimes committed by Albanian terrorists occurred with the benevolent attitude of KFOR", he said.

In further confirmation of the illegality of the Hague court, John Laughland, journalist of the British "Guardian Weekly", under the headline, "This is not justice", wrote:

"Because its legal basis is so dubious, the international criminal tribunal's [attempt] to present itself as the successor to the international military tribunal which tried the Nazi leaders at Nuremberg in 1946 ... has as little right to set up a court as it does to raise taxes. Its defenders probably think that a quick reference to Hitler can settle the matter. However, The Hague does not embody the legal principles established and consolidated at Nuremberg. It embodies instead their complete destruction."

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