

Karadzic Trial at The Hague ICTY Tribunal: Testimony of Colonel Doyle

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Former ECMM chief Col. Colm Doyle concluded his testimony at the Radovan Karadzic trial on Friday, May 28, 2010.

Croatian Military Presence in Bosnia

Doyle testified that regular Croatian Army troops were present in Bosnia. He said, "I was aware that certain elements of Croats wearing Croatian Army uniforms were periodically in the territory of Western Herzegovina. I have no knowledge as to how many Croatia soldiers were in the territory of Bosnia. I know that some were. I don't know how many."

Karadzic asked the witness, "Was Croatia threatened with sanctions or was it threatened with bombing or anything that would have been done had the Army of Serbia been present in Bosnia?"

Doyle said, "I have certainly no comment on that suffice to say, Mr. Karadzic, you were seeing a document that you have in your possession of a report I made out on the situation of the Croatian soldiers in Bosnia. Beyond that, I have nothing to say."

No Knowledge of, or Interest in, Alija Izetbegovic's History or Political Philosophy

As ECMM chief, Col. Doyle was not interested in anything that happened in Bosnia during the Second World War. He said, "I found that it wasn't helpful to use up a lot of valuable time in referring back constantly to what happened in the Second World War. So it became my practice to request the parties not to give me a history lecture any time I entered into negotiations or discussions."

Karadzic asked, "Do you agree that we had reason for concern because Mr. Izetbegovic wore a Nazi uniform during World War II and was a friend of Hitler's friend, the great Mufti of Jerusalem, al-Husseini, and he hosted him in Sarajevo?"

Doyle said, "No. I have no knowledge of that" adding "I don't have a view as to what Mr. Izetbegovic might have been thinking or what was the basis of his philosophy."

Karadzic continued to press the issue asking, "Is that a remote distant past which should not have been mentioned once a person came to power who had worn a Nazi uniform during the war and socialized with Hitler's closest associates in the Middle East? Was that something that should not have been taken into account?"

Doyle conceded that “History always has a tendency of becoming part of the present, Mr. Karadzic, but I wasn’t aware of these allegations against Mr. Izetbegovic. I was aware of his general background of being a Muslim and having different philosophies to you, and if that was some concern for you in the current situation, then I can understand that, but I have no basis for thinking that this was a strong influence on his current thinking. I simply don’t know, and I don’t have a view on it beyond that.”

Karadzic asked, “Are you familiar with [Izetbegovic’s] programme called the Islamic Declaration?” And Doyle said, “I’ve heard reference to it, but I have no knowledge of it in any detail.”

Alija Izetbegovic was convicted of many crimes by the Tito government. Karadzic asked the witness, “Do you know that Mr. Izetbegovic, in 1947, was brought to trial because he continued the activities of the Young Muslims illegally, and in 1983 he was brought to trial because of the Islamic Declaration as a programme for the forceful change of the regime in Bosnia and in Yugoslavia?”

Doyle responded to the question saying, “I was aware that he was brought to trial in 1983, but nothing about 1947.”

No Knowledge of Bosnian-Serb Relations with Other Muslim Leaders

Karadzic asked Col. Doyle whether he had ever heard of Adil Zulfikarpasic or Muhamed Filipovic from the Muslim-Bosniak Organization (MBO). Doyle responded saying, “No, Mr. Karadzic. I don’t know these people.”

Karadzic asked, “Do you know that we agreed with Fikret Abdic and that we signed a truce sometime in 1993 with him?”

Doyle answered saying, “No, I don’t. I wasn’t in Bosnia in 1993.”

Karadzic asked the witness, “And do you know that Mr. Abdic won the most votes from the Muslim people and that he wasn’t considered a fundamentalist, labelled a fundamentalist, and that is to be respected, that the Muslim people voted for a man who wasn’t a fundamentalist.”

The answer again was, “No. I’m not aware of that.”

Karadzic put his case to the witness saying, “Do you accept now, Colonel, since I have informed you about this, so you do know now, that we had a historical Serbian-Muslim agreement [with the MBO]. And with Abdic who was from the SDA, that we concluded a truce and adhered to that? So do you accept that the difference between myself and Mr. Izetbegovic is not merely from our affiliation to the Serbian or Muslim corpus but that it is something deeper?”

Doyle answered saying, “If you say so, Mr. Karadzic. I don’t have a problem with that. What I’m saying to you is that I’m not aware of these points that you are raising and therefore don’t wish to comment on them.”

Karadzic responded, “But you’re behaving as if you do know. And you say that the differences stem from the fact that he’s a Muslim and I’m a Serb, whereas I am telling you that there were Muslim parties with which we agreed with and got on well with. And I’m

saying that it's because Mr. Izetbegovic was a fundamentalist, whereas these other Muslims were not. Do you accept that?"

Doyle's answer was interesting. He said, "I accept what you're saying. The dilemma I had was that most of the political parties in Bosnia were established along ethnic and religious lines, and that made the dilemma of getting them to a common agreement far more difficult to achieve. The various elements of whatever type of Muslims was not something that was of a major concern to me. I was dealing with members of the Presidency. As far as I was concerned, there were two members who were Serbs, there were two who were Muslims, and there were two who were Croats, and I think there was one other. So to me I wasn't concentrating in any way in the degrees of whether one was a fundamentalist Muslim or whether one was a different type of Muslim. No, I wasn't."

Karadzic told the witness, "Unfortunately, we did have to deal with that kind of thing." Obviously it does matter if the leader of the Bosnian-Muslims was an Islamic fundamentalist and a former Nazi collaborator.

It's shocking that the chief of the ECMM would openly admit that he not only didn't care, but that he went out of his way to avoid being informed about these things. He testified that "it became my practice to request the parties not to give me a history lecture any time I entered into negotiations or discussions."

JNA Attacked by Muslim Paramilitaries in Sarajevo

Karadzic showed the witness a JNA intelligence document (exhibit P925) from April 1992 that had been entered into evidence by the prosecution.

The document said that Muslim paramilitaries and Muslim policemen were attacking the JNA and forcibly taking over parts of Sarajevo. After showing the witness the document Karadzic asked, "So here this intelligence officer is informing that the Muslim part of the MUP, the Green Berets, and the armed civilians took over control of the city of Sarajevo. Is that what you knew too?"

Doyle answered, "My information at that time was that certain areas of the city were under control by the various parties and that there was continuous harassment and attacks. The exact detail of what occurred, I simply don't know. Movement in the city was very difficult, so I wasn't in a position at that stage to be able to get detailed information as to who was doing what." He said, "At that time in Sarajevo, I was quite satisfied that the JNA were not getting actively involved in the various attacks that were taking place in the city of Sarajevo. I have no evidence or information as to what they might have been doing in other areas of Bosnia."

No Reliable Information about Ethnic Cleansing in Zvornik and Foca

Doyle testified for the prosecution that he had information that the Bosnian-Serbs had carried out ethnic cleansing campaigns in Foca and Zvornik. The foundation for that evidence, however, wasn't very strong.

He readily admitted, "I had no detailed knowledge of what was going on in Zvornik except on the basis of what I was informed by Mr. Bell of the BBC."

As for Foca he said, "The reference I made to Foca was simply that the monitor mission was attempting to go to Foca because of certain information it received. I don't know what that information was, and I was aware that when they came back, after failing to get to Foca, and I asked them, Why is it you didn't get to Foca? They told me that they were stopped by the JNA who told them that they could not guarantee their safety and security." He said, "Exactly what happened and who did what, I simply don't know."

Karadzic asked Doyle if he knew that "Halid Cengic, the father of Hasan Cengic, formed the first Muslim paramilitary formation during the days of the Communists, before the elections in 1990 in Foca?"

The witness responded, "No, I did not."

Karadzic then showed the witness a document about the situation in Foca compiled by the chief of the BH military security administration, General Fikret Muslimovic (a Bosnian Muslim).

The document said: "After the democratic elections, Taib Lojo, an electrical engineer, respectable citizen of the vice-president of the Foca SDA, was appointed president of the Foca SO. However, from the very beginning, Senad Sahinbasic, also known as Saja, and Halid Cengic, who are related, have had the greatest political influence in the SDA, thanks to the powerful support of influential relatives and friends from Sarajevo, especially Muhamed Cengic, the then deputy prime minister.

"Sahinbasic is a private trader from Foca and a deputy in the citizens' Assembly of BiH. And Cengic is an accountant at the Mljin [phoen], a work organisation in Uskopljina, and councillor in the Foca SO.

"From the time they came into power, having gathered around them their family and friends, they started with all kinds of fraud and smuggling which brought them huge amounts of money. The increasingly complex political situation and deteriorating interethnic relations during 1991 played into their hands since arms smuggling was flourishing. And they did nothing to appease the situation, but on the contrary, incite it with their actions and political activity.

"They included Aziz Sljivo and a wide circle of men loyal to them in the armed smuggling so that the Muslim people in this area from fear of the ever-increasing Chetnik threat are giving their last penny to those whom they have elected to protect their interest to supply them with weapons. So they pay, the rifles that Sahinbasic and Cengic sell them, for from 1,200 to 1,500 German marks. According to some intelligence, 5.200 rifles came to Foca via the SDA, which Sahinbasic and Cengic sold."

After reading the document Karadzic asked, "Now, did you know that the SDA of Foca was armed in this way before the outbreak of the conflict?"

Doyle said, "No, I have no knowledge of that. As I said, attempts to get to Foca failed, so I have no information from it."

Karadzic finished off the point by asking, "So you don't have reliable information to the effect that there was any ethnic cleansing in Foca; right?"

And Doyle admitted, "I never said it was any reliable information, Mr. Karadzic. I simply said

what the monitor mission told me.”

Witness Unable To Corroborate Prosecution Document

During Doyle’s examination-in-chief the Prosecutor read out a document written by a former UN diplomat named Marrack Goulding which said:

“All international observers agree that what is happening is a concerted effort by the Serbs of Bosnia-Herzegovina with the acquiescence and at least some support from the JNA to create ethnically pure regions in the context of negotiations on the cantonisation of the republic in the EC conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina and chaired by Ambassador Cutileiro. And the techniques used of the seizure of territory by military force.”

Karadzic asked Doyle, who was the leader of the EC monitoring mission, “Who informed Mr. Goulding in this way?”

Doyle didn’t know. He said, “I have no idea. I would assume it was the United Nations force that was operationally deployed in Bosnia, and maybe a certain amount of the United Nations observers who were deployed in different parts of Bosnia.”

Karadzic asked, “Colonel, can you say which territories did the Serbs take or occupy that was not already theirs?” and Doyle responded, “Well, I’m not able to say that.”

Karadzic showed Doyle an ethnic map of Bosnia (exhibit D225) based on the 1991 census and asked, “Do you accept that what was referred to in the war as Republika Srpska was mostly limited to these [Serb majority] areas that are represented here in blue? Was that Republika Srpska?”

Doyle accepted Karadzic’s assertion and said, “In general terms, yes.”

Karadzic’s case is that the Bosnian-Serbs were always ready and willing to negotiate an end to the war. He asked the witness, “Do you remember a single conference that we left early or did not attend?” and Doyle responded, “No, I don’t.”

Karadzic’s Control of Armed Forces before May 12, 1992

Karadzic asked the witness, “Do you consider that I could have controlled any Territorial Defence until the 12th of May in the municipalities, that I had a system of communications and the necessary authority, official authority, to be able to be in charge of those people?”

Doyle replied, “What I am saying is that as the leader of the Bosnian Serbs it would be my assumption that you as the leader would have had or should have had control over all armed and unarmed elements of Bosnian Serbs, whether they were armed or not.”

Karadzic asked, “Do you agree that I, until the 12th of May, 1992, was only a political leader without any state functions, state posts, public office, and that it was only on the 12th of May that I was elected to the Presidency and that I became the president of the Presidency elected at the Assembly on the 12th of May in Banja Luka?”

Doyle replied, “From a state organ [standpoint] that may have been the case, but I have no doubt you had a huge influence over the actions of armed Bosnian Serbs in the city

of Sarajevo. The point I'm trying to get across here is that you were the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, you had a huge amount of influence in the city, and therefore it is my belief that you had influence over armed elements of Serbs in that city. That's what I'm saying. We're talking about armed Bosnian Serbs that, in my view, were under your control and under your influence. That's what I'm talking about."

Karadzic asked, "Do you have proof of that, Colonel?"

And the answer he got was, "No, but I have service in the Republic of Bosnia, and I'm rather anxious here about giving my opinion about anything, because you've always looked for facts, but when you're given a position of responsibility, you carry out certain acts and then you're asked to make a summary and your views and your recommendations and your conclusions, and I've always attempted to do that. If you don't accept those as my conclusions that is your privilege."

Karadzic pressed the issue and said, "Now, a conclusion is one thing; a belief is another. Now, what strings could I pull for organizing the self-organized people of the local community and Territorial Defense? How could I command them and who could I command them? How could I put this into practice, sitting in the Holiday Inn negotiating with you, with Zetbegovic, with Kukanjac, how would I have been able to do that then?"

Doyle answered, "I don't know, and I have no evidence of it, but I assume you would have a people who would have done that on your behalf."

The cross-examination ended on a note of agreement. Karadzic asked, "Do you accept the fact that the Yugoslav People's Army was the mother of all the republican armies that came into being after the disintegration of Yugoslavia?" and Doyle replied, "Yes, I do. I agree that the JNA was the federal army which represented all of the republics."

After a brief re-examination by Ms. Uertz-Retzlaff, which mainly consisted of her reading incriminating statements that Karadzic allegedly made during a January 1995 'interview' (exhibit P953) to the Bosnian State-owned newspaper Oslobodjenje, Doyle's testimony was concluded and the court adjourned.

A complete transcript of this hearing is available at:

<http://www.icty.org/x/cases/karadzic/trans/en/100528IT.htm>

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