

The Hague ICTY Tribunal killed Yugoslavia's President Slobodan Milosevic

President Slobodan Milosevic. In memoriam - On 11 March 2006 the Hague Tribunal killed Yugoslavia's President Slobodan Milosevic

On 11 March 2006 the UN's International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) reported that Slobodan Milosevic had been "found dead in his cell". On 14 March the court stopped all trial procedures on the case. While reporting on the causes of Milosevic's death, the Tribunal's Vice-President Kevin Parker said "Milosevic died a natural death as a result of a heart attack". But there is evidence that Slobodan Milosevic was killed, and that the ICTY was responsible for the murder.

This is how it all happened. First, Milosevic was placed in prison, where his health deteriorated. Then he was refused to be treated in a heart surgery center and when his heart condition worsened, he did not receive urgent medical help. The Tribunal did so deliberately as they knew about his health problems.

One should just read the following medical reports to understand that Milosevic had not received necessary medical treatment. Dr. Aarts: "Atherosclerosis is typical for people of his age". Dr. De Laat: "Over the past 6 months Milosevic suffered strong head noise and tension and a partial hearing and sight loss. Probably, poor hearing was caused by cardiovascular problems". Dr. Spoelstra knew that Milosevic had been wearing earphones for five years but still suggested "just to regulate volume level for the earphones". The ICTY prison doctor Paulus Falke: "I discussed the issue with an otolaryngologist from the Bronovo hospital. He told me Milosevic's poor hearing was normal for people of his age". Could all these reports be just a medical mistake? No.

Milosevic was diagnosed correctly, and all the rest doctors were aware of it. On 4 November 2005 Slobodan Milosevic said he wanted to be examined by doctors. There were three of them: Doctor of Medicine, Professor Shumilina M. (Russia), Professor Leclerc (France) and Professor Andric (Serbia). Doctor Shumilina said Milosevic had not received proper medical treatment and insisted on urgent thorough medical examination and treatment. She also warned there was a risk of serious brain problems. Cardiologist Leclerc was not given an opportunity to familiarize himself with the results of Milosevic's previous medical examinations. He said an ECG test he did to Milosevic was "extremely anomalous". In their joint report, the international group of doctors warned the Tribunal that the patient's condition was very grave and he was at risks. They said Milosevic had to be examined more thoroughly to get a precise diagnosis. The doctors asked for a 6-week rest for Milosevic's body and mind so that he could feel at least some kind of relief.

Shumilina's opinion caused much annoyance. It was the first time when a group of independent doctors proved that Milosevic's poor health condition had been caused by improper medical treatment. Shumilina was criticized and even accused of being involved in conspiracy with Milosevic. On 14 December 2005 she wrote a letter to the Tribunal to express her annoyance at the attempts made by some of doctors to play down the importance of her resolution on Milosevic's health. Among other things, she wrote that not the age of 64 had caused Milosevic's atherosclerosis but the lack of proper treatment for his arterial hypertension.

In December 2005 Leo Bokeria, Director of Moscow's Bakulev Heart Surgery Center, wrote to the ICTY President Fausto Pokar that Milosevic's health had deteriorated due to wrong

treatment. Bokeria said the aim was to “prevent cardiovascular catastrophe”, so the Tribunal’s President should hardly have any doubts about it. In December 2005 Slobodan Milosevic asked the court to let him be hospitalized in Moscow. Despite the fact that all the regulations were observed, Milosevic was refused.

The ICTY accused Milosevic of deliberately taking unprescribed drugs to worsen his health condition in order to leave for Moscow and there escape from court.

Timothy McFadden, the prison governor responsible for Milosevic, wrote a letter to the Tribunal on 19 December 2005, in which he said he had long doubted whether Milosevic was taking prescribed drugs. McFadden also reported that the ICTY prison doctor could no longer hold responsibility for Milosevic’s health, neither the Tribunal’s secretary was going to do it. Obviously, conclusions made by McFadden were not based on the results of medical treatment. Actually, Milosevic’s blood tests showed “low levels of prescribed and unprescribed medicines”. And without having any solid evidence, McFadden described the blood tests as the result of Milosevic’s deliberate actions.

In his letter of January, 6, 2006 the ICTY prison doctor Paulus Falke repeats McFadden: “The tests showed that he had been taking prescribed medicines not as regularly as he should. Besides, he took drugs neither me nor other doctors have prescribed him”. Toxicologist Donald Uges added: “I have reasons to believe Milosevic had been taking unprescribed drugs. This is what could have caused his high blood pressure”.

Dr. Tou was the only one to name a few possible reasons for low concentration of prescribed drugs in Milosevic’s blood: weak gastrointestinal absorption, inaccurate use of prescribed medicines, interaction with other substances, lowered absorption of enzymes and quick metabolism for CYP2D6. All these conclusions were based on elementary medical tests. The question is how other doctors failed to be aware of this. Obviously, it could have been done only deliberately. However, before Dr. Tou’s report was published, Falke ruled out any other causes except non-use of prescribed drugs. Falke lacked competence to make conclusions like he did. He wanted the court to have a negative image of Milosevic.

On 12 January 2006 Slobodan Milosevic demanded a sample of his blood to be taken for analysis. The procedure took place after he had been taking the medicines prescribed by Falke. The test showed the same level of medicines as before. Thus Falke’s and McFadden’s allegations were refuted. Falke insisted that Milosevic had been taking “unprescribed drugs”. But toxicologist Uges said only two medicines were spotted in Milosevic’s blood- Diazepam and Nordazepam. Appointed attorneys found out that Diazepam had been prescribed to Milosevic by Falke in the middle of October 2005. According to Dr. Tou, who did a repeated expertise, the metabolism of Nordazepam is possible only with participation of Diazepam. Dr. Uges added that “concentration of both medicines in blood was too low to have any pharmacological effect”. Even if these two medicines are found in a patient’s blood for months, they will not do any harm and cause high blood pressure in any way. In view of this, all the reports presented at the Tribunal are nothing but a provocation.

The appointed attorneys noted: “It was mentioned in none of the reports that Diazepam had been repeatedly prescribed to Milosevic by Dr. Falke: a) during a whole period of his imprisonment; b) particularly, during three days in mid October 2005. On 7 March 2006, three days before Milosevic’s death, the judges were reported that Milosevic’s blood taken for analysis on 12 January contained unprescribed Rifampicin, which could neutralize the effects of the heart medicine Milosevic was required to take.

The report published after Milosevic's death by the ICTY Vice-President Kevin Parker read: "Autopsists diagnosed a grave heart condition which caused death". If investigators were objective, they would have been noted that grave heart condition was diagnosed long before by Shumilina and Bokeria. In any case, diagnosis should be made when a patient is alive but Milosevic was refused to undergo necessary medical examination. Unbiased investigation should have been focused on the reasons of a heart attack. However, nothing of the kind was discussed.

Instead of investigating the situation with rifampicin in Milosevic's blood, Parker was busy justifying Dr. Falke. But he was doing it so clumsily that even members of the Tribunal were puzzled. The information about rifampicin appeared two months after the medicine had been spotted in blood. "Dr. Falke and his colleagues discussed a possibility to reveal the information without Milosevic's permission", Parker explained. But such explanation is absurd since nothing prevented Falke from disclosing all information. It was even more absurd to say that the information about rifampicin was hidden from Milosevic. Firstly, this explanation itself refutes all the previous (if Milosevic did not know about rifampicin, why should he be against this information be disclosed?). Secondly, in his report Parker lies when he says "Dr. Falke did not inform Milosevic on rifampicin in his blood in accordance with the Dutch regulations on anonymity in medicine".

Three days before his death Slobodan Milosevic wrote in a letter to the Russian Foreign Ministry: "the fact that my blood contains rifampicin, an antibiotic that is normally used to treat leprosy and tuberculosis, proves that none of these doctors have the right to treat me... I defended by country from them and now they want me to keep silence for ever". The fact that the court stopped all trial procedures without investigating the causes of Milosevic's death makes us think that the ICTY either organized the murder or sheltered the criminals.

Today there is hardly anyone who believes that Milosevic's killers may be found and tried. But I am confident that such mission should exist, no matter how impossible it is. Well, now those criminals enjoy power in the Hague and worldwide but it won't last for ever. Slobodan Milosevic proved resistance is possible. Men of such strength are rare nowadays. That is why their death is perceived as personal tragedy.

Never forget President Slobodan Milosevic!

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