

# Milosevic Team Seeks to Subpoena Bill Clinton

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By [MARLISE SIMONS](#)

PARIS, March 1 — Lawyers for [Slobodan Milosevic](#) have asked the court trying him on war crimes charges to issue a subpoena for [Bill Clinton](#) to testify at the trial.

The request, filed last week and disclosed Tuesday, said the testimony was needed "to ensure that the trial is both informed and fair." It said Mr. Clinton, who was president during most of the Balkan wars of the 1990's, played a "continuous role and had unique knowledge" of events. The three judges in charge of the trial are expected to decide on the issue in the next few weeks. Last year, they turned down similar requests to subpoena Prime Minister [Tony Blair](#) of Britain and the former German chancellor, [Gerhard Schröder](#).

The British lawyers who filed the motion, Steven Kay and Gillian Higgins, said they were seeking a subpoena because other avenues to obtain Mr. Clinton's testimony had been closed. Citing correspondence and meetings with American officials that began in 2004, they said they were told that the United States government opposed having Mr. Clinton testify. The trial at the [United Nations](#) war crimes tribunal in The Hague began in 2002. It is in the phase in which the former Balkan strongman is defending himself, which is expected to end in May.

The lawyers provided a list of 13 topics for discussion with Mr. Clinton, but the list was not disclosed. However, an idea of what Mr. Milosevic has in mind can be gleaned from a letter he sent to Mr. Clinton's New York office last year. The three-page letter, obtained by The New York Times from Mr. Milosevic's lawyers in Belgrade, is dated July 18, 2005, and is filled with taunting suggestions that the United States and [NATO](#) acted improperly during the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo.

Mr. Milosevic briefly mentions the personal conversations, meetings and indirect dealings the two former leaders had while Mr. Clinton was president and Mr. Milosevic was first president of Serbia and then of what remained of Yugoslavia. The letter fits in with the way Mr. Milosevic has presented himself in court, as a peacemaker, while describing the West as the warmonger and NATO as the aggressor.

"I am very aware that you will definitely not wish to testify in my favor," Mr. Milosevic wrote. "Neither do I expect this. I do expect you, however, to be willing to allow your testimony to contribute to the establishment of truth before an institution whose formation you supported."

He lists 28 questions, many shaped as accusations. These include any American role during the Bosnian war in training and arming Croatian and Bosnian Muslim forces, "in breach of the international embargo"; any American links with "terrorist" Albanian separatists and "narco-mafia" in Kosovo; and any American cooperation with an Islamic network, including Iran, to provide "arms and men" to the Bosnian Muslims in the early 1990's.

Mr. Clinton did not reply to the letter, said Branko Rakic, a member of Mr. Milosevic's legal team. But in August 2005, a State Department official wrote to Mr. Milosevic that all "testimony by current or former U.S. government officials before the tribunal must be authorized by the U.S. government" and all correspondence must go through official channels.

Mr. Milosevic has also written to President [Jacques Chirac](#) of France, asking him to testify, but he has not replied either, Mr. Rakic said.