

CNN Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer
General Wesley Clark on the ICC

excerpt of relevant discussion reproduced below)

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BLITZER: General Clark, as a former NATO commander, you see the debate in Washington, around the world about the Pentagon's plan to pull out of various peacekeeping operations, maybe even in Bosnia and Kosovo, if U.S. troops are subject to prosecution from this International Criminal Court. What's your assessment on that?

CLARK: General Dick Myers said we weren't leaving. He restated President Bush's policy: We went in together, we'll come out together from Bosnia. I think that's very important.

I know that the worst-case analysis of this is that American soldiers could be subject to whimsical or politically motivated charges, but the honest truth is, the United States intends to operate under international law. We helped build international law, we need international law. And we've got to find a way to work with this court and bring it around and make whatever modifications need to be made to it.

But I was subjected to a war crimes investigation in my role as NATO commander. It didn't bother me a bit. We had full integration of lawyers in all of our activities. We never did anything that was the remotest bit beyond the shade of the law. We would never want to do that.

BLITZER: All right. Let me just bring in General Shepperd, because we only have a few seconds left.

General Shepperd, a lot of U.S. military personnel, you know, are concerned that some Belgian or French judge may have a grudge and decide to charge U.S. troops with war crimes in a peacekeeping operation, almost as a whim. Is that a fair concern?

SHEPPERD: That's a fear, but, as General Clark said, we cannot pull out of peacekeeping worldwide. We are the worldwide peacekeeper, like it or not. What we have to do is work the legal systems to make sure that our troops do not become political pawns. But we must be subject to the rule of law wherever we are, and we will, Wolf, for sure.

BLITZER: All right, General Shepperd, we've got to leave it there, General Clark. Thanks to both of you for coming in on this Sunday, helping us better understand these very complex issues.