



Nuon Chea Lawyer Tossed from Courtroom
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Accused Nuon Chea co-counsel Andrew Ianuzzi walks outside Phnom Penh Municipal Court in 2011. Photograph: Hong Menea/Phnom Penh Post

In a development that raised few eyebrows among long-time court observers, the Khmer Rouge tribunal Trial Chamber accused Nuon Chea co-counsel Andrew Ianuzzi of contempt of court yesterday, expelling him from the courtroom for the afternoon's proceedings.

Ianuzzi – who is frequently on the receiving end of pointed admonishments from the bench – was pursuing a line of questioning pertaining to the regime's K5 Plan to create a heavily mined border between Cambodia and Thailand, when his microphone was cut. In the past, Ianuzzi has tried to raise the plan in court, saying Prime Minister Hun Sen may bear responsibility for the resulting deaths.

His microphone restored, Ianuzzi began paraphrasing the 1964 film *Seven Days in May*, which features a soft-ball US Senate hearing, likening the “staged” court proceedings to a bad operetta.

Trial Chamber President Nil Nonn responded by saying it was “obvious that the lawyer is intending to obstruct the proceedings”, and ultimately ordered security to escort Ianuzzi out.

“In my own boorish way, I’m only suggesting that if the Trial Chamber judges continue to work from a script with cues and stage direction, these proceedings take on all of the dignity of a very bad Gilbert and Sullivan,” Ianuzzi said in an interview after the hearing.

He also offered a number of theories on why he had been expelled yesterday, as opposed to the numerous other times he'd been chastised by the bench.

“I think they're sick and tired of me talking about the major problems with the trial,” Ianuzzi said. “Or maybe they're just really annoyed by me.”

According to Open Society Justice Initiative tribunal monitor Clair Duffy, Ianuzzi's relationship with the Trial Chamber had “definitely worsened over the course of this year”, but it was still unclear whether there would be more disciplinary action to come.

“It doesn’t seem that they’ve permanently refused him right of audience, but that’s not entirely clear from the oral exchanges,” Duffy said via email. “It seems akin to a teacher telling a kid to stand in the corner for the day, rather than expelling him from the school.”