

Marine Le Pen to Stand Trial Over Anti-Muslim Remarks



Paris, September 23 (RHC)-- The leader of France's far-right party National Front (FN) has been summoned to court over comparing French Muslims' street praying to the Nazi occupation during World War II. According to the prosecutor's office in the eastern French city of Lyon, Marine Le Pen will stand trial on October 20th on charges of "incitement to discrimination over people's religious beliefs."

Back in December 2010, she had complained about the fact that there were "10 to 15" places in the European country's streets where Muslims "occupied" to say their prayers whenever the mosques were full.

"I'm sorry, but for those who really like to talk about World War II, if we're talking about occupation, we could talk about that (street prayers), because that is clearly an occupation of the territory," she had said during her campaign to take over the leadership of the National Front from her father Jean-Marie Le Pen in Lyon.

"It is an occupation of sections of the territory, of neighborhoods in which religious law applies, it is an occupation. There are no tanks, there are no soldiers, but it is an occupation anyhow, and it weighs on people," she added.

The FN leader dismissed her court summon as "scandalous," once again calling street prayers an "illegal" practice by "fundamentalists."

Florian Philippot, Le Pen's deputy in the FN, also lashed out at the French judiciary to put her on trial, saying the decision is part of a scheme to smear Le Pen and the far-right party ahead of the upcoming regional polls in December.

"The only people who should be sent before the court are those who allow prayers in the street that are illegal and against the principle of secularism!" he wrote in a message posted on Twitter.

Islamophobia plagues many European countries, including France, and has resulted in increasing discrimination and acts of violence against Muslims.

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