

US GOVERNMENT COVERED UP WAR CRIMES COMMITTED BY CIA'S WARLORD

The NYT, in its infinite wisdom, has seen fit to dump this James Risen story into the Saturday news black hole, as if they were trying to hide it in a deep dark hole.

Sickeningly, that's what the story reports: that after Afghan warlord, Rashid Dostum, let perhaps 1,500 men die in a shipping container, he dumped them all in a big hole, and the US government continued to hide his crime in a deep hole of indifference and bureaucracy.

While the deaths have been previously reported, the back story of the frustrated efforts to investigate them has not been fully told. The killings occurred in late November 2001, just days after the American-led invasion forced the ouster of the Taliban government in Kabul. Thousands of Taliban fighters surrendered to General Dostum's forces, which were part of the American-backed Northern Alliance, in the city of Kunduz. They were then transported to a prison run by the general's forces near the town of Shibarghan.

Survivors and witnesses told The New York Times and Newsweek in 2002 that, over a three-day period, Taliban prisoners were stuffed into closed metal shipping containers and given no food or water; many suffocated while being trucked to the prison. Other prisoners were killed when guards shot into the containers. The bodies were said to have been buried in a mass grave in Dasht-i-Laili, a stretch of desert just outside

Shibarghan.

[snip]

A military commander in the United States-led coalition rejected a request by a Red Cross official for an inquiry in late 2001, according to the official, who, in keeping with his organization's policy, would speak only on condition of anonymity and declined to identify the commander.

A few months later, Dell Spry, the F.B.I.'s senior representative at the detainee prison at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, heard accounts of the deaths from agents he supervised there. Separately, 10 or so prisoners brought from Afghanistan reported that they had been "stacked like cordwood" in shipping containers and had to lick the perspiration off one another to survive, Mr. Spry recalled. They told similar accounts of suffocations and shootings, he said. A declassified F.B.I. report, dated January 2003, confirms that the detainees provided such accounts.

Mr. Spry, who is now an F.B.I. consultant, said he did not believe the stories because he knew that Al Qaeda trained members to fabricate tales about mistreatment. Still, the veteran agent said he thought the agency should investigate the reports "so they could be debunked."

But a senior official at F.B.I. headquarters, whom Mr. Spry declined to identify, told him to drop the matter, saying it was not part of his mission and it would be up to the American military to investigate.

Click through to see an account of the military "investigation" of this crime—predictably, if you ask a bunch of special forces guys working

with a warlord about that warlord's war crimes,
they get forgetful.

I'm going to have more on this in the next few
days, once I finish wading through the IG
Report. But in the meantime, don't let it fall
into the black hole of your weekend time away
from the computer!