

# WAR CRIMINAL AFGHAN ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF DOSTUM OPENS FIRE ON MEMBER OF OWN POLITICAL PARTY

As Afghanistan careens toward presidential elections next April and the end of authorized NATO presence in Afghanistan at the end of next year, we are beginning to see jockeying for position among the same set of militia strongmen who never have been forced to face consequences for the war crimes they committed the last two times Afghanistan was without a government.

Perhaps the most notorious of these war criminals is Rashid Dostum, who is accused of killing up to two thousand prisoners who surrendered as Kabul fell to US forces. Here is McClatchy in 2008 describing Dostum removing evidence of his war crimes:

Seven years ago, a convoy of container trucks rumbled across northern Afghanistan loaded with a human cargo of suspected Taliban and al Qaida members who'd surrendered to Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, an Afghan warlord and a key U.S. ally in ousting the Taliban regime.

When the trucks arrived at a prison in the town of Sheberghan, near Dostum's headquarters, they were filled with corpses. Most of the prisoners had suffocated, and others had been killed by bullets that Dostum's militiamen had fired into the metal containers.

Dostum's men hauled the bodies into the nearby desert and buried them in mass graves, according to Afghan human rights officials. By some estimates, 2,000 men were buried there.

Earlier this year, bulldozers returned to the scene, reportedly exhumed the bones of many of the dead men and removed evidence of the atrocity to sites unknown. In the area where the mass graves once were, there now are gaping pits in the sands of the Dasht-e-Leili desert.

/snip/

Now, Mutaqi said, "You can see only a hole. In the area around it you can find a few bones or some clothes. The site is gone . . . as for evidence, there is nothing."

The US has done absolutely nothing to see that Dostum faces prosecution for his crimes. In fact, with the recent disclosure of "bags o' cash" going directly from the CIA to Hamid Karzai, the word is that as Afghanistan's Chief of Staff of the Army, Dostum is receiving up to \$100,000 per month under the program.

Today, we learn that Dostum is running roughshod again. The scene of the crime is once again Sherberghan. It appears that Dostum's militia has engaged in gunfire with the provincial governor's security detail. Adding to the confusion surrounding this event is that the provincial governor is a member of the same political party Dostum founded. Further, it appears that Dostum's militia is also accused of firing on the National Security Directorate.

Radio Free Europe has this description of today's events:

The governor of Afghanistan's northern Jowzjan Province says his house has been attacked by ethnic Uzbek commander Abdul Rashid Dostum's militia.

Governor Mohammad Alem Saeed told RFE/RL's Radio Free Afghanistan that several attackers were injured on June 17 when his bodyguards returned fire.

Saeed said Dostum's militia also attacked the National Security Directorate's provincial office.

We learn from Khaama Press that although Dostum and Sahi belong to the same political party, they have been feuding:

According to reports the armed men of former Warlord and founder of National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan Party Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum on Monday attacked the Jowzjan provincial compound.

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Mohammad Aalim Sahi was a member of the National Islamic Movement Party of Afghanistan, however severe disputes were reported between him and Gen. Dostum recently.

According to reports Mohammad Aalim Sahi also has close relations with Afghan president Hamid Karzai.

Stars and Stripes sees this development as signalling that Afghanistan faces a very uncertain future:

In what may be a worrying sign for the future of Afghanistan, militiamen loyal to the Afghan National Army chief of staff and the bodyguards of a provincial governor exchanged fire on Monday for 20 minutes in the north of the nation, officials said.

Mohammad Alam Sayee, the governor of Jowzjan province, was returning to his compound in the provincial capital Sherberghan, when armed men affiliated with Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum moved in on the facility, Sayee's spokesman, Mohammad Yama Jamili said.

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After Sayee took refuge in his compound, tensions escalated and the two sides fired on each other, though no one was injured, according Jamili.

Jowzjan police chief Abdul Aziz Ghairat confirmed that he received a report that Dostum's men had surrounded the governor's compound, but said the firefight ended by the time his officers arrived at the scene.

This is not the first time that Dostum has feuded with a prominent figure of the political party he founded. Back in February, a member of the party became so upset with Dostum that he threatened to expose Dostum's war crimes (even though we already know about them):

The former leader of Hezb-e-Junbish Millie Islami – National Islamic Movement party of Afghanistan warned to disclose the war crimes of the party's founder and former warlord Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum if he does not prevent his interference in the party.

However a spokesman for the National Islamic Movement party of Afghanistan denied the allegations by Syed Noorullah Sadat and said Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum does not misuse from his military position to interfere in party's internal affairs.

Syed Noorullah Sadat accused Gen. Dostum for interfering in National Islamic Movement Party fo Afghanistan and warned that he will disclose the war crimes committed by him.

It would appear that Dostum is taking steps to solidify his power ahead of the coming transitions. What could possibly go wrong with a known war criminal expanding his power base?