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# Craig Murray censored for attacking Alisher Usmanov, potential Arsenal chairman

Censored | 07.09.2007 22:27

Craig Murray's web site host has pulled an article on Alisher **Usmanov** with this reason:

September 6, 2007

### **Usmanov** Redux

You may have noticed that the post regarding the less-than-salubrious nature of Alisher **Usmanov** has disappeared. This is at the instigation of Schillings, lawyers retained by **Usmanov** to brow-beat anyone who dares to show Alisher's true colours.

Pending legal advice which - as web host - I am unable to obtain prior to tomorrow, given Schilling's deadline and in light of Godfrey v Demon Internet, the post may or may not reappear. In the meantime, it is always now somewhere on the web. If you know where to look, you'll probably find it.

Cheers

Clive - webhost

The article is still available in the Google cache:

[http://google.com/search?q=cache:www.craigmurray.co.uk/archives/2007/09/alisher\\_usmanov.html](http://google.com/search?q=cache:www.craigmurray.co.uk/archives/2007/09/alisher_usmanov.html)

The text follows:

September 2, 2007

Alisher **Usmanov**, potential Arsenal chairman, is a Vicious Thug, Criminal, Racketeer, Heroin Trafficker and Accused Rapist

I thought I should make my views on Alisher **Usmanov** quite plain to you. You are unlikely to see much plain talking on **Usmanov**

elsewhere in the media because he has already used his billions and his lawyers in a pre-emptive strike. They have written to all major UK newspapers, including the latter:

“Mr **Usmanov**

was imprisoned for various offences under the old Soviet regime. We wish to make it clear our client did not commit any of the offences with which he was charged. He was fully pardoned after President Mikhail Gorbachev took office. All references to

these matters have now been expunged from police records . . . Mr **Usmanov** does not have any criminal record.”

Let me make it quite clear that Alisher **Usmanov** is a criminal. He was in no sense a political prisoner, but a gangster and racketeer who rightly did six years in jail. The lawyers cunningly evoke "Gorbachev", a name respected in the West, to make us think that justice prevailed. That is completely untrue.

### **Usmanov's**

pardon was nothing to do with Gorbachev. It was achieved through the growing autonomy of another thug, President Karimov, at first President of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic and from 1991 President of Uzbekistan. Karimov ordered the "Pardon" because of his alliance with **Usmanov's** mentor, Uzbek mafia boss and major international heroin overlord Gafur Rakimov. Far from being on Gorbachev's side, Karimov was one of the Politburo hardliners who had Gorbachev arrested in the attempted coup that was thwarted by Yeltsin standing on the tanks outside the White House.

### **Usmanov**

is just a criminal whose gangster connections with one of the World's most corrupt regimes got him out of jail. He then plunged into the "privatisation" process at a time when gangster muscle was used to secure physical control of assets, and the alliance between the Russian Mafia and Russian security services was being formed.

**Usmanov** has two key alliances. he is very close indeed to President Karimov, and especially to his daughter Gulnara. It was

### **Usmanov**

who engineered the 2005 diplomatic reversal in which the United States was kicked out of its airbase in Uzbekistan and Gazprom took over the country's natural gas assets. **Usmanov**, as chairman of Gazprom Investholdings paid a bribe of \$88 million to Gulnara Karimova to secure this. This is set out on page 366 of Murder in Samarkand.

### **Alisher Usmanov**

had risen to chair of Gazprom Investholdings because of his close personal friendship with Putin, He had accessed Putin through Putin's long time secretary and now chef de cabinet, Piotr Jastrzebski. **Usmanov** and Jastrzebski were roommates at college. Gazprominvestholdings is the group that handles Gazprom's interests outside Russia, **Usmanov's** role is, in effect, to handle Gazprom's bribery and sleaze on the international arena, and the use of gas supply cuts as a threat to uncooperative satellite states.

Gazprom has also been the tool which Putin has used to attack internal democracy and close down the independent media in Russia. Gazprom has bought out - with the owners having no choice - the only independent national TV station and numerous regional TV stations, several radio stations and two formerly independent national newspapers. These have been changed into slavish adulation of Putin. **Usmanov** helped accomplish this through Gazprom. The major financial newspaper, Kommersant, he bought personally. He immediately replaced the editor-in-chief with a pro-Putin hack, and three months later the long-serving campaigning defence correspondent, Ivan Safronov, mysteriously fell to his death from a window.

All this, both on Gazprom and the journalist's death, is set out in great detail here:

☞ [http://www.craigmurray.co.uk/archives/2007/06/russian\\_journal.html](http://www.craigmurray.co.uk/archives/2007/06/russian_journal.html)

### **Usmanov**

is also dogged by the widespread belief in Uzbekistan that he was guilty of a particularly atrocious rape, which was covered up and the victim and others in the know disappeared. The sad thing is that this is not particularly remarkable. Rape by the powerful is an everyday hazard in Uzbekistan, again as outlined in Murder in Samarkand page 120. If anyone has more detail on the specific case involving **Usmanov** please add a comment.

I reported back in 2002 or 2003 in an Ambassadorial top secret telegram to the Foreign Office that **Usmanov** was the most likely favoured successor of President Karimov as totalitarian leader of Uzbekistan. I also outlined the Gazprom deal (before it happened) and the present by **Usmanov** to Putin (though in Jastrzebski's name) of half of Mapobank, a Russian commercial bank owned by **Usmanov**. I will never forget the priceless reply from our Embassy in Moscow. They said that they had never even heard of Alisher **Usmanov**, and that Jastrzebski was a jolly nice friend of the Ambassador who would never do anything crooked.

Sadly, I expect the football authorities will be as purblind. Football now is about nothing but money, and even Arsenal supporters - as tight-knit and homespun a football community as any - can be heard saying they don't care where the money comes from as long as they can compete with Chelsea.

I fear that is very wrong. Letting as diseased a figure as Alisher **Usmanov** into your club can only do harm in the long term.

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*Alisher Usmanov*

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➤ [http://groups.google.com/group/soc.culture.usa/browse\\_thread/thread/7e6c495f75362190](http://groups.google.com/group/soc.culture.usa/browse_thread/thread/7e6c495f75362190)

➤ <http://www.alisherusmanov.blogspot.com/>

And an article about it:

➤ <http://postmanpatel.blogspot.com/2007/09/alisher-usmanov-arsenal-wannabe-owners.html>

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