

Coup d'Etat in America?

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)

Global Research, July 13, 2004

29 February 2004

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

In-depth Report: [FAKE INTELLIGENCE](#)

This article is a follow-up on an earlier text entitled:

Bush Administration "Guidelines" for Postponing or Canceling the November Presidential Elections, by Michel Chossudovsky, 10 July 2004, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO407C.html>

Based on so-called "credible" reports, Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge has warned that Osama is now "planning to disrupt the November elections". A large scale attack on American soil is said to be planned by Al Qaeda during the presidential election campaign:

"... Credible reporting indicates that Al Qaeda is moving forward with its plans to carry out a large-scale attack in the United States in an effort to disrupt our democratic process... This is sobering information about those who wish to do us harm... But every day we strengthen the security of our nation." (Quoted in AP, 8 July 2004)

"Possible targets" include the Democratic National Convention in July and the Republican Convention in New York in August.

Barely a few days prior to Tom Ridge's spectacular announcement, a spokesman of Northern Command Headquarters at Patterson Air Force Base in Colorado, confirmed that Northcom (which has a mandate to defend the Homeland) was "at a high level of readiness" and was proceeding with the (routine) deployment of jet fighters over major cities as well as the posting of troops at key locations. (Atlantic Journal and Constitution, 3 July 2004).

Canceling or Postponing the Elections

This new terror warning by Homeland Security, not to mention the impending military deployment, has served to create an aura of insecurity concerning the November presidential elections.

Meanwhile, postponement of the election has become a talking point on major news channels including CNN, following the release of a letter by the Director of the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, calling for so-called "guidelines" to cancel or reschedule the election in the case of a terror attack (For details see <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO407C.html>)

Legal procedures for canceling/rescheduling the elections are under study, at the request of DHS Secretary Tom Ridge, by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, which is examining the legal and constitutional implications. (Washington Post, 14 July, 2004)

The Military and Intelligence apparatus working in liaison with Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) are indelibly behind this process, pointing to the unthinkable: the possibility of a Coup d'Etat in America.

Meanwhile, the cancellation / rescheduling of elections issue is presented to public opinion as a mere technical question, as a means to "protecting democracy," in the case of a terror attack. CNN has asked people "to vote" on their website, on whether they think the elections should be held in the case of a terror attack. It all sounds very democratic.

Crying Wolf on Terrorism. Who is the Wolf?

The terror alert level has been raised to orange (high alert) five times since September 11, 2001. There have been numerous other terror warnings since the "color coded" alert system was first established in the wake of 9/11.

There is, however, evidence from police sources that at least two of these five high profile post-9/11 code orange terror alerts were fabricated. (February 7, 2003, and December, 21, 2003) (for details and documentary evidence see <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO402A.html>).

There is also ample evidence that Al Qaeda is an creation of the US intelligence apparatus and that the terror network is supported by the Bush Administration. (See <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/11SEPT309A.html> , <http://globalresearch.ca/by-topic/sept11/> , <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CRG204A.html>)

The most recent DHS announcement has all the appearances of yet another fabricated report of an impending attack by an illusive "outside enemy". Amply documented Al Qaeda is not only a CIA sponsored "intelligence asset", the disinformation regarding the terror attacks emanates out of US intelligence. (See <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO405E.html>)

Details of the police/intelligence investigation regarding Secretary Tom Ridge's July terror warning have not been provided. US officials, have said *that they do "not have specific knowledge about where, when or how such an attack would take place, but the CIA, the FBI and other agencies are said to be "actively working to gain that knowledge."*

Code Red Alert and Martial Law

The possibility of a code red terror alert has been announced time and again since September 11 2001, with a view to galvanizing public opinion across the country in support of an emergency situation, if and when it occurs. The terror alerts have become part of America's day to day life:

"at each threat condition [yellow, orange, red], federal departments and agencies would implement a corresponding set of "Protective Measures" to further reduce vulnerability or increase response capability during a period of heightened alert. (see <http://www.fema.gov/pdf/areyouready/security.pdf>

Supported by a barrage of media propaganda, these repeated terror alerts have created an environment of fear and intimidation, a wait and accept attitude, a false normality. US citizens are led to believe that a military solution is required to protect democracy.

In other words, the possibility of an impending attack on America by this “outside enemy” has been accepted by the American public; this tacit acceptance has set the stage for the adoption of “the highest threat level”: code red alert.

What the US public is not aware of is that a code red alert suspends civilian government, it triggers a whole series of emergency procedures. It is tantamount to a Coup d’Etat. (Although in many regards the Coup d’Etat has already taken place under the post-9/11 anti-terrorist legislation and the rigging of the 2000 elections which brought George W. Bush into the White House.)

Preparing for Code Red

Homeland Security (DHS) has in fact been contemplating a code red alert “scenario” –using Al Qaeda as a pretext– for more than a year. In May 2003, the DHS conducted a major “anti-terrorist exercise” entitled [TOPOFF 2](#). The latter was described as “the largest and most comprehensive terrorism response and homeland security exercise ever conducted in the United States.” The exercise was based on code red assumptions involving a simulated terrorist attack.(see <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO402A.html>).

A code red alert, according to [the Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#) , would create conditions for the (“temporary” we are told) suspension of the normal functions of civilian government, implying the cancellation or postponement of federal and State elections.

According to FEMA, code red would:

*Increase or redirect personnel to address critical emergency needs; Assign emergency response personnel and pre-position and mobilize specially trained teams or resources; Monitor, redirect, or constrain transportation systems; and **Close public and government facilities not critical for continuity of essential operations**, especially public safety.* (FEMA, <http://www.fema.gov/pdf/areyouready/security.pdf>)

Northern Command would take over. Several functions of civilian administration would be suspended, others could be transferred to the jurisdiction of the military. More generally, the procedure would disrupt government offices, businesses, schools, public services, transportation, etc.

A secret “Shadow government” under the classified “Continuity of Operations Plan” was installed on September 11, 2001.(See <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A20584-2002Feb28?language=printer>). **Known internally as “Continuity of Government” or COG, the secret Shadow government would become functional in the case of a red code alert, redeploying key staff to secret locations.**

Code red alert would, according to FEMA, also preclude and repress any form of public gathering or citizens’ protest which questions the legitimacy of the emergency procedures and the installation of a police state. The emergency authorities would also exert tight censorship over the media and would no doubt paralyze the alternative news media on the internet.

Code red alert would trigger the “civilian” Homeland Emergency response system. The latter is already in place including DHS [Ready.Gov](#) instructions, the Big Brother [Citizen](#)

[Corps](#), not to mention the [USAonWatch or Neighborhood Watch Program](#) which has a mandate to “identify and report suspicious activity in neighborhoods” across America.

The Role of the Military

What would be the involvement of the Military in an code red emergency situation?

In theory, [The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878](#) prevents the military from intervening in civilian police and judicial functions.

In practice, **the Posse Comitatus Act is dead**. (See Frank Morales at <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/MOR309A.html>).

The existing legislation inherited from the Clinton administration, not to mention the post 9/11 Patriot Acts I and II, “blurs the line between military and civilian roles”, **it allows the military to intervene in judicial and law enforcement activities even in the absence of an emergency situation**.

The 1996 legislation allowed the military to intervene in the case of a national emergency (e.g.. a terrorist attack). Clinton’s 1999 Defense Authorization Act (DAA) extended those powers by creating an “exception” to the Posse Comitatus Act, which permits the military to be involved in civilian affairs “regardless of whether there is an emergency”. (See ACLU at <http://www.aclu.org/NationalSecurity/NationalSecurity.cfm?ID=8683&c=24> , emphasis added)

In other words, the Clinton era legislation had already laid the legal and ideological foundations of the “war on terrorism”.

In the context of the war on terrorism, the so-called “exception” contained in the 1999 DAA legislation nullifies the provisions of the Posse Comitatus Act:

“The new proposed exception to the Posse Comitatus Act would further expand a controversial measure adopted by Congress in 1996 that permitted military involvement in “emergencies” involving chemical and biological weapons crimes.

Under that new measure, which was proposed by the Defense Department, the military would be authorized to deal with crimes involving any chemical or biological weapons — or any other weapon of mass destruction — regardless of whether there is an “emergency.” In addition, the new proposal would lift requirements that the military be reimbursed for the cost of its intervention, thus likely increasing the number of requests for military assistance.

“Under this new provision,” Nojeim said, “the mere threat of an act of terrorism would justify calling in military units. That represents a loophole large enough to drive a battalion of army tanks through.”

The defense authorization bill would also require the Pentagon to develop a plan to assign military personnel to assist Customs and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to “respond to threats to national security posed by entry into the U.S. of terrorists or drug traffickers.”

“the mere threat of an act of terrorism would justify calling in military units. That represents

a loophole large enough to drive a battalion of army tanks through.” (ibid)

Despite this 1999 “exception” to the Posse Comitatus Act”, which effectively invalidates it, the Pentagon and Homeland Security, anxious to remove all ambiguities, are nonetheless actively lobbying the US Congress for the outright repeal of the 1878 legislation.

“new rules are needed to clearly set forth the boundaries for the use of federal military forces for homeland security. The Posse Comitatus Act is inappropriate for modern times and needs to be replaced by a completely new law ...

It is time to rescind the existing Posse Comitatus Act and replace it with a new law. ... The Posse Comitatus Act is an artifact of a different conflict-between freedom and slavery or between North and South, if you prefer. Today’s conflict is also in a sense between freedom and slavery, but this time it is between civilization and terrorism. New problems often need new solutions, and a new set of rules is needed for this issue.

President Bush and Congress should initiate action to enact a new law that would set forth in clear terms a statement of the rules for using military forces for homeland security and for enforcing the laws of the United States.

(John R. Brinkerhoff, former associate director for national preparedness of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), <http://www.homelandsecurity.org/journal/Articles/brinkerhoffpossecomitatus.htm>)

Senator Joseph Biden (a Democrat), former Chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has also been waging, since the mid-1990s, a battle for the repeal of the Posse Comitatus Act.

The Patriot Legislation

In turn, the Bush administration Patriot Acts have set the groundwork of a police state. In minute detail, they go much further in setting the stage for the militarisation of civilian institutions.

The various provisions are very detailed and precise. The [USA PATRIOT ACT of 2001](#) entitled [“Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001”](#) as well as the [“Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2003,”](#) (“PATRIOT Act II”) create the conditions for the militarisation of justice and police functions.

Even under a functioning civilian government, the PATRIOT Acts have already instated several features of martial law. The extent to which they are applied is at the discretion of the military authorities.

The 2003 Patriot Act II goes much further in extending and enlarging the “Big Brother functions” of control and surveillance of people. It vastly expands the surveillance powers, providing government access to personal bank accounts, information on home computers, telephone wire tapping, credit card accounts, etc. (for further details, see Ratical.org at <http://www.ratical.org/ratville/CAH/USAPA2.html#DSEAnalysis>

The Northern Command (Northcom)

[The Northern Command \(Northcom\) \(based at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado\)](#) was set up in April 2002 specifically in the context of the pre-emptive war on terrorism.

The creation of Northcom is consistent with the de facto repeal of the Posse Comitatus Act. In fact, the position of a “Homeland Defense Command” leader *“in the event of a terrorist attack on U.S. soil”*, had already been envisaged in early 1999 by Clinton’s Defense Secretary William Cohen. (http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Civil_Liberties/Posse_Comitatus_Law.html).

Following the Bush Administration’s decision to create Northcom, the White House instructed Justice Department lawyers “to review the Posse Comitatus law in light of new security requirements in the war on terrorism.” The 1878 Act was said to “greatly restrict the military’s ability to participate in domestic law enforcement”. (National Journal, Government Record, 22 July 2002)

The role of Northern Command is defined in the Pentagon’s [“Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security \(JP-26\)”](#) . The latter constitutes a blueprint on how to defend the Homeland. Even in the case where the enemy is fabricated, and this is known at the highest levels of military-intelligence, a military coup d’Etat would become operational in terms of the detailed command military/ security provisions contained in this document ([click here to consult JP-26](#))

According to Frank Morales, ***“the scenario of a military take-over of America is unfolding.” And Northern Command is the core military entity in this takeover and militarisation of civilian institutions.***

Northcom has a mandate to “defend the homeland” against this illusive “outside enemy”, which is said to be threatening the security of America. Amply documented, the outside enemy (Al Qaeda) is a “CIA intelligence asset”. (There is an extensive bibliography on this subject. (See <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/11SEPT309A.html> , <http://globalresearch.ca/by-topic/sept11/> , <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CRG204A.html>)

[Northcom Command Mission](#) includes a number of “non-military functions” including “crisis management” and “domestic civil support” implying *“military support to federal, state and local authorities in the event of a terror attack.”*

“the preparation for, prevention of, deterrence of, preemption of, defense against, and response to threats and aggression directed towards U.S. territory, sovereignty, domestic population, and infrastructure; as well as crisis management, consequence management, and other domestic civil support.” (See <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/dod/northcom.htm>)

Northcom has what David Isenberg describes as [“a Creeping Civilian Mission”](#) . Since its inception, it has been building capabilities in domestic intelligence and law enforcement. It is in permanent liaison with the DHS and the Justice Department. It has several hundred FBI and CIA officers stationed at its headquarters in Colorado. (National Journal, 1 May 2004). It is in permanent liaison, through an advanced communications system, with municipalities and domestic civilian law enforcement agencies around the country. (See Isenberg, [op cit](#))

Meanwhile the CIA, which has a unit operating out of Northcom, has extended its mandate to issues of “domestic intelligence”.

According to Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge (22 Dec. 2003): ***“If we go to [code] Red ... it basically shuts down the country.”*** In which case, a national emergency is declared. Northern Command deploys its forces on air, land and sea. Several functions of civilian government are transferred to Northcom headquarters, which already has the structures which enable it to oversee and supervise civilian institutions.

In other words, Northcom’s “command structure” would be activated in the case of a code red terror alert. But **Northcom does not require, in accordance with the provisions of the 1999 DAA, a terror alert, an attack or a war-like situation to intervene in the country’s civilian affairs.**

To prepare for new “law enforcement” missions for the military within America, overseen by the Northern Command, the Center for Law and Military Operations, based in Charlottesville, Virginia has published a “useful” Handbook entitled “Domestic Operational Law for Judge Advocates.” According to Frank Morales, the Handbook:

“attempts to solidify, from a legal standpoint, Pentagon penetration of America and it’s ‘operations other than war,’ essentially providing the U.S. corporate elite with lawful justification for its class war against the American people, specifically those that resist the “new world law and order” agenda.” (Frank Morales, Homeland Defense and the Militarisation of America, Global Outlook, No. 6, Winter 2004, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/MOR309A.html>)

According to Morales: **“the ‘war on terrorism’ is the cover for the war on dissent.”** (Ibid)

The jurisdiction of the Northern Command now extends from Mexico to Alaska. Under (“bi-national”) agreements signed with neighboring countries, Northern Command can intervene and deploy its forces and military arsenal on land, air and sea in Canada (extending into its Northern territories), throughout Mexico and in parts of the Caribbean. (See <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/dod/northcom.htm>)

Taken together, the existing legislation grants the military extensive rights to intervene in any “emergency situation”, in practice, without the prior approval of the Commander in Chief.

Concluding Remarks

America is at the crossroads of the most serious crisis in its history.

An Al Qaeda sponsored terrorist attack is being contemplated as a “trigger mechanism” for carrying out a Coup d’Etat.

Whether it is going to be carried out is another matter. The statements of the Bush administration regarding the possibility of a red code alert must, nonetheless, be taken seriously.

The coded terror alerts and “terror events” which have been announced by DHS are part of a disinformation campaign carried out by the CIA, the Pentagon, the State Department and Homeland Security.

US intelligence is not only involved in creating phony terror warnings, it is also firmly behind

the terror groups, providing them with covert support.(See <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO301B.html>)

Documented by official police sources, at least two of the DHS's high profile post 9/11 terror alerts were fabricated. (<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO402A.html>)

Media Disinformation

A Coup d'Etat which suspends civilian institutions is not only contemplated, it has become a talking point on network TV; it is openly debated as a "solution" to "protecting American democracy" which is said to be threatened by Islamic terrorists.

The implications of a red code alert are trivialised. Through media disinformation, citizens are being prepared and gradually conditioned for the unthinkable.

This ongoing militarisation of America is not a project of the Republicans.

The "war on terrorism" is part of a bipartisan agenda. Successive US administrations since Jimmy Carter have supported the Islamic brigades and have used them in covert intelligence operations.

"Triggering Civilian Casualties"

In 1962, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had envisaged a secret plan entitled "Operation Northwoods", to deliberately trigger civilian casualties to justify the invasion of Cuba:

"We could blow up a U.S. ship in Guantanamo Bay and blame Cuba," "We could develop a Communist Cuban terror campaign in the Miami area, in other Florida cities and even in Washington" "casualty lists in U.S. newspapers would cause a helpful wave of national indignation." (See the declassified Top Secret 1962 document titled "Justification for U.S. Military Intervention in Cuba"¹⁶ (See Operation Northwoods at <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/NOR111A.html>).

Both "the war on terrorism" as well as the domestic war on terrorism are consistent, from the point of view of military planning, with the logic of Operation Northwoods, Civilian casualties are used as "a war pretext incident", to galvanize public support for a military intervention.

Mentioned time and again by DHS Secretary Tom Ridge, a "second 9/11 attack" is contemplated; Al Qaeda, we are told, is preparing

"...a large-scale attack in the United States in an effort to disrupt our democratic process."

What we are not told is that Al Qaeda is a creation of the CIA. and that Al Qaeda remains a US sponsored "intelligence asset."

"Useful Crisis"

The assumptions and rhetoric behind Homeland Security are nothing new. They echo an earlier statements by David Rockefeller to the United Nations Business Council in 1994:

"We are on the verge of global transformation. All we need is the right major crisis and the nations will accept the New World Order."

Similarly, in the words Zbigniew Brzezinski in his book, *The Grand Chessboard*:

“...it may find it more difficult to fashion a consensus [in America] on foreign policy issues, except in the circumstances of a truly massive and widely perceived direct external threat.”

It is worth mentioning that Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was National Security Adviser to President Jimmy Carter was one of the key architects of the Islamic brigades, created by the CIA at the onslaught of the Soviet Afghan war (1979-1989). (See Brzezinski at <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/BRZ110A.print.html>)

More recently, General Franks, the CENTCOM general who led the military campaign into Iraq, pointed in an October 2003 interview to the role of what he called a “massive casualty-producing event”. (See General Tommy Franks calls for Repeal of US Constitution, November 2003, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/EDW311A.html> , see also <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO402A.html>).

Franks identifies with cynical accuracy the precise Homeland Security scenario whereby military rule might be established in America using, as in Operation Northwoods, civilian casualties as a trigger mechanism:

“a terrorist, massive, casualty-producing event [will occur] somewhere in the Western world - it may be in the United States of America - that causes our population to question our own Constitution and to begin to militarize our country in order to avoid a repeat of another mass, casualty-producing event.” (quoted in *Ibid*, emphasis added)

General Franks’ statement seems to accurately reflect the mood within the US Military and Homeland Security as to how events ought to unfold. The “war on terrorism” is to provide a justification for repealing the Rule of Law, ultimately with a view to “preserving civil liberties.”

This statement from an individual, who was actively involved in military and intelligence planning at the highest levels, suggests that the “militarisation of our country” is an ongoing operational assumption. It has become part of the broader “Washington consensus”. It is a “talking point” not only in the corridors of the Pentagon, Langley and Homeland Security, but also in the mainstream media.

Democrats and Republicans

Some people think that a change in direction will occur if the Democrats win the 2004 presidential elections. Yet the Democrats are not opposed to the illegal occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Nor are they opposed to the militarisation of civilian institutions, as evidenced by their initiative to repeal the Posse Comitatus Act.

While there are substantive differences between Republicans and Democrats, Bush’s National Security doctrine is a continuation of that formulated under the Clinton Administration in 1995, which was based on a “strategy of containment of rogue states”.

In Fall 2003, the Democrats released their own militarisation blueprint, entitled *“Progressive Internationalism: A Democratic National Security Strategy”*:

"This 19-page manifesto that calls for "the bold exercise of American power, not to dominate but to shape alliances and international institutions that share a common commitment to liberal values." (See Mark Hand, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/HAN403A.html>

The militarisation of America is a project of the US corporate elites, with significant divisions within the corporate establishment on how it is to be achieved.

The corporate establishment and its associated think tanks and semi-secret societies (The Bildeberg, Council on Foreign Relations, Trilateral Commission, etc.) is by no means monolithic.

Influential voices within the elites would prefer a "softer" police state apparatus, a "democratic dictatorship" which retains the external appearances of a functioning democracy.

The Democrats' "Progressive internationalism" is viewed by these sectors as a more effective way of imposing the US economic and military agenda Worldwide. For instance, the Kerry-Edwards ticket is supported by billionaire George Soros, who has waged a scathing denunciation of George W. Bush and the Neocons.

While the US Congress and the bi-partisan consensus constitutes the facade, the Military (and their Intelligence counterparts) are, from the point of view of the corporate elites, mere foreign policy "pawns", to use Henry Kissinger's expression, acting on behalf of dominant business interests.

The Wall Street financial establishment, the military-industrial complex, led by Lockheed Martin, the big five weapons and aerospace defense contractors, the Texas oil giants and energy conglomerates, the construction and engineering and public utility companies including, the biotechnology conglomerates, are indelibly behind the militarisation of America.

Elections or no Elections?

The "war on terrorism" is a war of conquest, which supports American (and British) economic and strategic interests. Its underpinnings are supported by both Democrats and Republicans.

While a Coup d'Etat triggered by a code red alert is a distinct possibility in the months ahead, we must understand that the militarisation of civilian institutions in America is an ongoing process.

The Coup d'Etat entrenches the militarisation process. It suspends civil liberties and the antiwar movement outright. It makes any form of reversal back to civilian forms of government much more difficult to achieve.

Militarisation, however, as distinct from an outright Military Coup d'Etat, does not exclude the electoral process.

Under a Kerry-Edwards administration, the military-intelligence apparatus -which constitutes the backbone of the "war on terrorism" and of the police state- would remain functionally intact. So would Northern Command and the various Big Brother functions of

the Department of Homeland Security.

One can indeed speculate on what might happen from now until the November presidential elections.

Whether the elections take place or not, the contours of a functioning police state under the facade of Constitutional government have already been defined:

The Big Brother surveillance apparatus,

the militarisation of justice and law enforcement,

the disinformation and propaganda network,

the support to terrorist organizations,

political assassinations and torture manuals,

concentration camps, extensive war crimes and the blatant violation of international law.

On the economic front, we can expect militarisation to accelerate the gamut of neoliberal economic reforms both nationally and internationally (In the later case, they would be implemented under the auspices of the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organisation).

Militarisation will be accompanied by a new deadly wave of privatization of public services, urban infrastructure would be transferred to private companies, local economies including small scale enterprises and agriculture would be further destabilized and deregulated, etc, leading to increased levels of unemployment and the impoverishment of millions of people.

Militarisation is an integral part of the neoliberal agenda.

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About the author:

Michel Chossudovsky is an award-winning author, Professor of Economics (emeritus) at the University of Ottawa, Founder and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), Montreal, Editor of Global Research. He has taught as visiting professor in Western Europe, Southeast Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. He has served as economic adviser to governments of developing countries and has acted as a consultant for several international organizations. He is the author of 13 books. He is a contributor to the Encyclopaedia Britannica. His writings have been published in more than twenty languages. In 2014, he was awarded the Gold Medal for Merit of the Republic of Serbia for his writings on NATO's war of aggression against Yugoslavia. He can be reached at crgeditor@yahoo.com

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