

Senate Confirmation Hearings: White House Nominee to Head the CIA has Dubious Links to the Terror Network

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)

Theme: [Terrorism](#)

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Two weeks before 9/11, Porter Goss, the White House nominee for the CIA Director of Intelligence was being “briefed on the growing threat of al Qaeda” (WP, 5/04/03) by a Pakistani General who “ran a spy agency notoriously close to Osama bin Laden and the Taliban.” (WP, 5/18/02)

Following George Tenet’s resignation as Director of Central Intelligence at the CIA, the Bush administration immediately pointed to Rep. Porter Goss, as its handpicked nominee.

Porter Goss, a Florida Republican and former CIA operative, is chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. He also chaired, together with Senator Bob Graham, the Joint Senate House Committee, on the September 11 attacks.

According to the White House, “the rush to name a replacement” was driven by “worries” of a possible terrorist attack on America in the wake of Tenet’s untimely departure.

Yet if the real objective is to to make “America safer”, why then did President Bush nominate an individual who is known and acknowledged to have dubious links to the Islamic terror network?

Amply documented, Porter Goss had an established personal relationship to the Head of Pakistan Military Intelligence (ISI), General Mahmoud Ahmad, who according to the Washington Post “ran a spy agency notoriously close to Osama bin Laden and the Taliban” (Washington Post, 18 May 2002).

According to the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the ISI has over the years supported a number of Islamic terrorist organizations, while maintaining close links to the CIA:

“Through its Interservices Intelligence agency (ISI), Pakistan provided funding, arms, training facilities, and aid in crossing borders to both Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad...”

(<http://www.cfrterrorism.org/groups/harakat2.html> , see also <http://www.cfrterrorism.org/coalition/pakistan2.html>).

Moreover, according to intelligence sources and the FBI, General Mahmoud Ahmad allegedly played an undercover role in channeling financial support to the 9/11 hijackers. (<http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO111A.html> , see also

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO206A.html>)

Yet this same individual, General Ahmad, was on an official visit to Washington from the 4th to the 13th of September 2001, meeting his counterpart George Tenet as well as key members of the administration and the US Congress including Rep Porter Goss.

In late August 2001, barely a couple of weeks before September 11, Representative Porter Goss together with Senator Bob Graham and Senator Jon Kyl were on a top level intelligence mission in Islamabad, which was barely mentioned by the US media.

Meetings were held with President Pervez Musharraf and with Pakistan's military and intelligence brass including the head of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) General Mahmoud Ahmad.

The ISI headed by General Ahmad was allegedly also involved in ordering the assassination of the leader of the Northern Alliance, General Ahmed Shah Massood. (<http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO309B.html>) The kamikaze assassination took place on the 9th of September (9/9 two days before 9/11) during General Mahmoud Ahmad's official "red carpet" visit to Washington. (4-13 September 2004). The official communiqué of the Northern Alliance pointed to the involvement of the ISI headed by General Mahmoud Ahmad.

Porter Goss Hosts the General

The Pakistani General's host on Capitol Hill during his official visit to Washington was Rep. Porter Goss, Bush's nominee for the position of Director of Central Intelligence.

In fact, on the morning of September 11, Porter Goss was hosting a breakfast meeting on Capitol Hill in honor of General Ahmad, the alleged "money-man" (to use the FBI's expression) behind the 9/11 hijackers.

The 9/11 breakfast meeting was described by one press report as a "follow-up meeting" to that held in Pakistan in late August 2001, barely two weeks before 9/11.

Pakistan's ISI supports the Terror Network

This support by Pakistan's ISI to various "Islamic terrorist" organizations was pursued prior as well as in the wake of 9/11, despite the commitment of the Pakistani government to "cooperate" with Washington in the war on terrorism.

Bear in mind that at the time of the Goss-Graham mission to Islamabad in late August 2001, the ISI was still actively supporting Al Qaeda and the Taliban:

"... Musharraf's Pakistan continued to support these groups up through September 11 and the attack on the Indian parliament. [December 2001]. Some key Pakistani constituencies, including Islamists and elements of the ISI, remain supportive of Islamist fighters in Kashmir and are livid with Musharraf for moving against them." (CFR, *op cit*, emphasis added)

Moreover, according to a detailed report by Human Rights Watch:

"Official denials notwithstanding, Pakistan has provided the Taliban with military

advisers and logistical support during key battles, has bankrolled the Taliban, has facilitated transshipment of arms, ammunition, and fuel through its territory, and has openly encouraged the recruitment of Pakistanis to fight for the Taliban....

“Pakistan is distinguished both by the sweep of its objectives and the scale of its efforts, which include soliciting funding for the Taliban, bankrolling Taliban operations, providing diplomatic support as the Taliban’s virtual emissaries abroad, arranging training for Taliban fighters, recruiting skilled and unskilled manpower to serve in Taliban armies, planning and directing offensives, providing and facilitating shipments of ammunition and fuel, and on several occasions apparently directly providing combat support....

“Pakistan’s army and intelligence services, principally the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), contribute to making the Taliban a highly effective military force.” (http://hrw.org/reports/2001/afghan2/Afghan0701-02.htm#P350_92934 emphasis added)

In other words, up to and including September 11, 2001, extending to December 2001, the ISI had been supporting the terror network.

And that was precisely the period during which Porter Goss and Bob Graham established a close working relationship with the ISI chief, General Ahmad. The latter had in fact “briefed” the two Florida lawmakers at ISI headquarters in Rawalpindi, Pakistan:

[“Senator Bob Graham’s] first foreign trip as chairman [of the Senate Intelligence Committee], a late-August [2001] journey with House intelligence Chairman Goss and Republican Sen. Jon Kyl of Arizona, focused almost entirely on terrorism. **It ended in Pakistan, where [ISI Chief] Gen. Ahmed’s intelligence agents briefed them on the growing threat of al Qaeda while they peered across the Khyber Pass at a then-obscure section of Afghanistan.** It was called Tora Bora. The trio also visited Ahmed’s compound and urged him to do more to help capture Osama bin Laden. The general hadn’t said much, but the group had agreed to discuss the issue more when he visited Washington. [arriving on September 4, 2001]

So on September 11, they all reconvened in a top-secret conference room on the fourth floor of the U.S. Capitol. According to Graham’s copious notes, they discussed “poppy cultivation” before they discussed terrorism. But then the Americans pressed Ahmed even harder to crack down on al Qaeda...

And then:

“9:04 — Tim gives note on 2 planes crash into World Trade Center, NYC.”
(Washington Post, 4 May 2003)

Rep Porter Goss could have pleaded ignorance on the morning of 9/11: “I did not know about the General.” But the “Pakistani ISI connection” and the role played by its former head, General Mahmoud Ahmad have since 9/11 been amply documented.

However, at no time since 9/11 have Rep Porter Goss and his Senate counterpart Bob Graham (chairman of the Senate intelligence committee) acknowledged the role of Pakistan’s ISI in supporting Al Qaeda. In fact quite the opposite. One year after the attacks, the former head of the ISI continues to be described as a bona fide intelligence counterpart,

supportive of the US “war on terrorism”. In an interview in *The New York Times* on the first anniversary of 9/11, Sen. Bob Graham describes his August 2001 encounter with General Ahmad:

“I had just come back a few days before September the 11th from a trip... [to] Pakistan and [a] meeting with President Musharraf and with the head of the Pakistani intelligence service. **While we were meeting with the head of the intelligence service, a general whose name was General Ahmed, he had indicated he would be in Washington in early September, we — Porter Goss, myself — had invited him to meet with us while he was there. It turned out that the meeting was a breakfast the day of September the 11th.** [Official visits of this nature are planned well in advance. In all likelihood, Ahmad’s visit to the US Congress on September 11 was part of his schedule. The Head of the ISI arrived in the US on the 4th. Graham states in the interview that he got back a few days before 9/11, which suggests that the Goss-Graham mission could well have returned to Washington on board the same (military) plane as General Ahmad]

So we were talking about what was happening in Afghanistan, **what the capabilities and intentions of the Taliban and Al Qaeda were from the perspective of this Pakistani intelligence leader**, when we got the notices that the World Trade Center towers had been attacked.

Q. So you had a more of an inkling than most people that something like this was possible due to your job, but still you couldn’t have anticipated that it would happen.

A. Yeah, we had had no briefings either in the United States or in our just-concluded trip that indicated the immediacy or any of the specificity of what happened on September the 11th.

Q. But to you, probably less so than other people, it wasn’t that surprising.

A. The fact that something like Sept. 11 occurred and that it occurred in the United States was not a stunning development. The fact that we were vulnerable to this had been anticipated. The actual details, the sophistication and the carnage, the loss of life that occurred, were stunning.

Q. The fact that you had no briefings or warnings, now looking back and you see what kind of evidence was around, was there an intelligence failure?

A. Well, that’s one of the major questions that our joint inquiry is targeted to answer. I would defer a final answer until we have completed our review.” (NYT, 10 September 2002, emphasis added)

In other words, **two weeks before 9/11, the White House nominee for the CIA Director of Intelligence was being “briefed on the growing threat of al Qaeda”** (WP, 5/04/03) **by a Pakistani General who “ran a spy agency notoriously close to Osama bin Laden and the Taliban.”** (WP, 5/18/02 for further details see below). Meanwhile we are led to believe that the revamping of the CIA is required to effectively wage the global war on terrorism (GWOT).

The Goss-Graham Joint Inquiry on 9/11

The role of the ISI had been excluded from the Goss-Graham Joint Inquiry’s 858 page

Report?

(See:

http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/congress/2003_rpt/joint-intell_9-11report_dec02-rel03.htm).

While casually hinting to “Saudi support and involvement” in 9/11, the Joint Committee report has overlooked a vast body of analysis on ISI support to the terror network, in which the two Florida lawmen are personally implicated.

Needless to say, Saudi financing of Islamic organizations was part of an intelligence structure involving Pakistan’s ISI and the CIA.

The Bush’s administration’s “cooperation” with Pakistan’s ISI in the “war on terrorism”

On September 13th 2001, General Mahmoud Ahmad, the alleged “moneymen” behind the 9/11 hijackers was meeting Colin Powell at the State Department to discuss the terms of Pakistan’s cooperation in the war on terrorism.

Was it “an intelligence failure” to seek the cooperation of the Pakistani government in the “war on terrorism” in an agreement brokered by the head of a spy agency which is known to support the Islamic terror network?

Why was the Ahmad-Powell meeting never acknowledged in the Goss-Graham Report?

Reorganization of the Intelligence Apparatus

One of the recommendations of the Joint Senate House Report chaired by Goss and Graham, was a massive reorganization of the intelligence apparatus which would put the CIA in control of 70 percent of the agency’s 40 billion budget (as opposed to 12% under the current arrangement).

Moreover, in anticipation of his nomination to the helm of the agency, Porter Goss, has carefully set the stage. He has introduced a bill in the House which follows through on the Joint Senate House Report. (See Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal 2005, http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/congress/2004_rpt/report108558.pdf).

A large share of this expanded intelligence budget is to be allocated under the bill solely to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). This legislation, not only grants the Director of Central Intelligence expanded powers, it reinforces the CIA as a parallel administration responsible for US foreign policy, overshadowing the functions of the US State Department.

The legislation if adopted would “significantly expand the CIA director’s executive and management authority over the whole intelligence community”.

Below is the text of our earlier report on the the Mysterious 9/11 Breakfast meeting, first published by the CRG in June 2002 and published in the Winter 2003 issue of Global Outlook Quarterly.

The 9/11 Joint Inquiry chairmen are in “conflict of interest”:

Mysterious September 11 Breakfast Meeting on Capitol Hill

by Michel Chossudovsky

The following text published in *Global Outlook*, Winter 2003, provides details on the breakfast meeting hosted by Rep. Porter Goss on the morning of September 11

An earlier version of this text was published in June 2002 and in Michel Chossudovsky's book, *War and Globalization the Truth behind September 11*, Centre for Research on Globalization, September 2002, <http://globalresearch.ca/globaloutlook/truth911.html>)

In late August 2001, barely a couple of weeks before 9/11, Senator Bob Graham, Representative Porter Goss and Senator Jon Kyl were in Islamabad for consultations. Meetings were held with President Musharraf and with Pakistan's military and intelligence brass including the head of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) General Mahmoud Ahmad. An AFP report confirms that the US Congressional delegation also met the Afghan ambassador to Pakistan, Abdul Salam Zaeef. At this meeting, which was barely mentioned by the US media, *"Zaeef assured the US delegation [on behalf of the Afghan government] that the Taliban would never allow bin Laden to use Afghanistan to launch attacks on the US or any other country."* 1

Note the sequencing of these meetings. Bob Graham and Porter Goss were in Islamabad in late August 2001. The meetings with President Musharraf and the Afghan Ambassador were on the 27th of August, the mission was still in Islamabad on the 30th of August, General Mahmoud Ahmad arrived in Washington on an official visit of consultations barely a few days later (September 4th). During his visit to Washington, General Mahmoud met his counterpart CIA director George Tenet and high ranking officials of the Bush administration.²

9/11 "Follow-up Meeting" on Capitol Hill

On the morning of September 11, the three lawmakers Bob Graham, Porter Goss and Jon Kyl (who were part of the Congressional delegation to Pakistan) were having breakfast on Capitol Hill with General Ahmad, the alleged "money-man" behind the 9-11 hijackers. Also present at this meeting were Pakistan's ambassador to the U.S. Maleeha Lodhi and several members of the Senate and House Intelligence committees were also present. This meeting was described by one press report as a "follow-up meeting" to that held in Pakistan in late August. *"On 8/30, Senate Intelligence Committee chair Sen. Bob Graham (D-FL) 'was on a mission to learn more about terrorism.' (...) On 9/11, Graham was back in DC 'in a follow-up meeting with' Pakistan intelligence agency chief Mahmud Ahmed and House Intelligence Committee chair Porter Goss (R-FL)"* 3 (The Hotline, 1 October 2002):

"When the news [of the attacks on the World Trade Center] came, the two Florida lawmakers who lead the House and Senate intelligence committees were having breakfast with the head of the Pakistani intelligence service. Rep. Porter Goss, R-Sanibel, Sen. Bob Graham and other members of the House Intelligence Committee were talking about terrorism issues with the Pakistani official when a member of Goss' staff handed a note to Goss, who handed it to Graham. "We were talking about terrorism, specifically terrorism generated from Afghanistan," Graham said.

(...)

Mahmood Ahmed, director general of Pakistan's intelligence service, was "very empathetic, sympathetic to the people of the United States," Graham said.

Goss could not be reached Tuesday [September 11]. He was whisked away with much of the House leadership to an undisclosed "secure location." Graham, meanwhile, participated in late-afternoon briefings with top officials from the CIA and FBI." 4

While trivializing the importance of the 9/11 breakfast meeting, *The Miami Herald* (16 September 2001) confirms that General Ahmad also met Secretary of State Colin Powell in the wake of the 9/11 attacks: "*Graham said the Pakistani intelligence official with whom he met, a top general in the government, was forced to stay all week in Washington because of the shutdown of air traffic 'He was marooned here, and I think that gave Secretary of State Powell and others in the administration a chance to really talk with him'. Graham said.*"⁵

Again the political significance of the personal relationship between General Mahmoud (the alleged "money man" behind 9/11) and Secretary of State Colin Powell is casually dismissed. According to *The Miami Herald*, the high level meeting between the two men was not planned in advance. It took place on the spur of the moment because of the shut down of air traffic, which prevented General Mahmoud from flying back home to Islamabad on a commercial flight, when in all probability the General and his delegation were traveling on a chartered government plane. With the exception of the Florida press (and Salon.com, 14 September), not a word was mentioned in the US media's September coverage of 9-11 concerning this mysterious breakfast reunion.

"A Cloak but No Dagger"

Eight months later on the 18th of May, two days after the "BUSH KNEW" headline hit the tabloids, the *Washington Post* published an article on Porter Goss, entitled: "A Cloak But No Dagger; An Ex-Spy Says He Seeks Solutions, Not Scapegoats for 9/11". Focusing on his career as a CIA agent, the article largely served to underscore the integrity and commitment of Porter Goss to waging a "war on terrorism". Yet in an isolated paragraph, the article acknowledges the mysterious 9/11 breakfast meeting with ISI Chief Mahmoud Ahmad, while also confirming that "Ahmad :ran a spy agency notoriously close to Osama bin Laden and the Taliban":

"Now the main question facing Goss, as he helps steer a joint House-Senate investigation into the Sept. 11 attacks, is why nobody in the far-flung intelligence bureaucracy — 13 agencies spending billions of dollars — paid attention to the enemy among us. Until it was too late.

Goss says he is looking for solutions, not scapegoats. "A lot of nonsense," he calls this week's uproar about a CIA briefing that alerted President Bush, five weeks before Sept. 11, that Osama bin Laden's associates might be planning airline hijackings.

"None of this is news, but it's all part of the finger-pointing," Goss declared yesterday in a rare display of pique. "It's foolishness." [This statement comes from the man who was having breakfast with the alleged "money-man" behind 9-11 on the morning of September 11]

(...) Goss has repeatedly refused to blame an "intelligence failure" for the

terror attacks. As a 10-year veteran of the CIA's clandestine operations wing, Goss prefers to praise the agency's "fine work."

(...)

On the morning of Sept. 11, Goss and Graham were having breakfast with a Pakistani general named Mahmud Ahmed — the soon-to-be-sacked head of Pakistan's intelligence service. Ahmed ran a spy agency notoriously close to Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. 6 (Washington Post, 18 May 2002)

"Putting Two and Two together"

While the Washington Post scores in on the "notoriously close" links between General Ahmad and Osama bin Laden, it fails to dwell on the more important question: what were Rep. Porter Goss and Senator Bob Graham and other members of the Senate and House intelligence committees doing together with the alleged 9/11 "money-man" at breakfast on the morning of 9/11. In other words, the *Washington Post* report does not go one inch further in begging the real question: Was this mysterious breakfast venue a "political lapse", an intelligence failure or something far more serious? How come the very same individuals (Goss and Graham) who had developed a personal rapport with General Ahmad, had been entrusted under the joint committee inquiry "to reveal the truth on 9-11." (see p.)

The media trivialises the breakfast meeting, it presents it as a simple *fait divers* and fails to "put two and two together". Neither does it acknowledge the fact, amply documented, that "the money-man" behind the hijackers had been entrusted by the Pakistani government to discuss the precise terms of Pakistan's "collaboration" in the "war on terrorism" in meetings held behind closed doors at the State department on the 12th and 13th of September. 11 7 (See Michel Chossudovsky, op cit)

Smoking Gun

When the "foreknowledge" issue hit the street on May 16th, "Chairman Porter Goss said an existing congressional inquiry has so far found 'no smoking gun' that would warrant another inquiry." 8 This statement points to an obvious "cover-up". The smoking gun was right there sitting in the plush surroundings of the Congressional breakfast venue on Capitol on the morning of September 11.

Notes

1 Agence France Presse (AFP), 28 August 2001.

2. Michel Chossudovsky, Political Deception, The Missing Link behind 9/11, Global Outlook, No. 2, 2002, See also . <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO206A.html> ; See also Michel Chossudovsky, Cover-up or Complicity of the Bush Administration? The Role of Pakistan's Military Intelligence (ISI) in the September 11 Attacks, November 2001, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO111A.html>

3. The Hotline, 1 October 2002.

4 Stuart News Company Press *Journal*, Vero Beach, FL, 12 September 2001.

5 *Miami Herald*, 16 September 2001.

6. *Washington Post*, 18 May 2002.
7. Michel Chossudovsky, *op. cit.*
8. White House Bulletin, 17 May 2002.

Related references

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9/9-9/11: Shah Masood, leader of the Northern Alliance assassinated two days before 9/11, by Michel Chossudovsky, 9 September 2003, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO309B.html>

The Joint inquiry is to churn out red herrings: a data bank of unconnected occurrences on "intelligence failures", FBI lapses, etc. **Political Complicity and the 9/11 Joint Inquiry** by Michel Chossudovsky, 25 July 2003, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO307F.html>

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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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