

# Fabricating Intelligence for Political Gain

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)  
Global Research, August 03, 2004  
3 August 2004

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

## Summary

The decision to launch the code orange terror alert in New York City, Washington DC and northern New Jersey was taken on the night of July 29th, within hours of John Kerry's acceptance speech at the Democratic convention.

No "specific" intelligence out of Pakistan was available at that Thursday evening meeting at CIA Headquarters at Langley.

According to a unnamed senior intelligence official, the decision to launch the high risk (code orange) terror alert was taken on that same Thursday evening in the absence of "specific" and detailed intelligence:

"At the daily CIA's 5 p.m. counterterrorism meeting on Thursday, the first information about the detailed al Qaeda surveillance of the five financial buildings was discussed among senior CIA, FBI and military officials. They decided to launch a number of worldwide operations, including the deployment of increased law enforcement around the five [financial] buildings." [World Bank, IMF, NYSE, Citigroup, Prudential] (WP, 3 August 2004, <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/5581230/%20> )

On Thursday July 29, when the decision was taken to increase the threat level, the "precise" and "specific" information out of Pakistan including "the trove of hundreds of photos and written documents", was not yet available.

The information from the mysterious Pakistani computer engineer, Mohammad Naeem Noor Khan, was only made available ex post facto on the Friday, once the decision has already been taken:

"A senior intelligence official said translations of the computer documents and other intelligence started arriving on Friday [one day after the decision was taken to launch the operation]. (WP, 3 August 2004)

President Bush was "informed of the potential threat on Friday morning [July 30] aboard Air Force One". (WP, 2 August 2004). On that same morning, President Bush approved the decision of the CIA to raise "the threat level" in the absence of "specific" supporting intelligence.

In other words, the supporting intelligence used to justify the terror warning, not only turned out to be "outdated", as confirmed on August 2nd, it was only made available to

counterterrorism officials ex post facto, once the decision to increase the “threat level” had already been endorsed by President Bush.

## **Contradictory Timeline**

Thursday July 29,

Evening: Counterterrorism meeting at Langley, starting at 5 pm. The decision was taken at this meeting to launch the code red alert in NYC, Washington DC and northern New Jersey.

Evening, Democratic Convention: John Kerry’s acceptance speech.

Friday, July 30

Morning: President Bush is advised of the Thursday evening decision aboard Air Force One. He provides his approval to the decision.

Evening: The specific information out of Pakistan comes in, is translated and is made available to counterterrorism officials

Sunday, August 1st

Morning: The decision becomes operational. A code red high risk alert is applied at 10 am.

Afternoon: Tom Ridge informs the media in a press conference, pointing to credible, specific intelligence from multiple sources::

“the quality of this intelligence, based on multiple reporting streams in multiple locations, is rarely seen, and it is alarming in both the amount and specificity of the information.”

Tuesday, August 3

Morning: Deputy National Security Adviser Fran Townsend refutes Sec Ridge’s statement and acknowledges that the August 1st alert was based on “outdated intelligence” going back to 2000/2001. (ABC, Good Morning America and NBC, Today, 3 August 2004)

## **Complete Text**

The Administration has put the country on “high risk” terror alert six times since September 11, 2001 including the latest August 1st alert which is limited to New York City, northern New Jersey and Washington. DC. Without exception, Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda has been identified as “a threat to the Homeland”.

Since September 11, 2001, disinformation regarding an impending terror attack on the Homeland has been consistently fed into the news chain.

Since last December, following Sec. Tom Ridge’s fake Christmas Terror Alert, the US public

has been led to believe that a second 9/11 is imminent: “the near-term attacks will either rival or exceed the 9/11 attacks”.

“You ask, ‘Is it serious?’ Yes, you bet your life. People don’t do that unless it’s a serious situation.” (Donald Rumsfeld).

(See Bush’s Christmas Terror Alert, by Michel Chossudovsky, 24 December 2003, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO312D.html> )

According to official police sources, at least two out of five of the previous high profile code orange terror alerts were based on fabricated intelligence and Sec. Tom Ridge was directly behind these alerts.

(For further details, see: The Criminalization of the State, by Michel Chossudovsky, February 2004, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO402A.html> , See also Bush’s Christmas Terror Alert by Michel Chossudovsky, 24 December 2003 : <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO312D.html> )

According to Sec. Tom Ridge, the latest terror alert is “different”, because the intelligence, this time round, is said to be far more precise:

“Compared to previous threat reporting, these intelligence reports have provided a level of detail that is very specific.”

Sec Tom Ridge in his August 1st statement pointed authoritatively to “specific credible information” from multiple sources:

“ ...This afternoon we do have new and unusually specific information about where Al Qaida would like to attack....

The quality of this intelligence, based on multiple reporting streams in multiple locations, is rarely seen, and it is alarming in both the amount and specificity of the information. Now, while we are providing you with this immediate information, we will also continue to update you as the situation unfolds.

As of now, this is what we know: Reports indicate that Al Qaida is targeting several specific buildings, including the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in the District of Columbia, Prudential Financial in northern New Jersey and Citigroup buildings and the New York Stock Exchange in New York.

Let me assure you — let me reassure you, actions to further strengthen security around these buildings are already under way. Additionally, we’re concerned about targets beyond these and are working to get more information about them.

Now, senior leadership across the Department of Homeland Security, in coordination with the White House, the CIA, the FBI, and other federal agencies, have been in constant contact with the governors, the mayors and the homeland security advisers of the affected locations I’ve just named.

(For full text of transcript: <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CRG408A.html> )

Yet barely two days later, US officials were obliged to admit that the intelligence referred to by Sec Tom Ridge was not so precise after all. In fact, its even less “specific” than in previous terror alerts.

In an ABC interview, Deputy National Security Adviser Fran Townsend acknowledged that the August 1st alert was based on “outdated intelligence” going back to 2000/2001, in other words prior to 9/11:

“What we have learned about the 9/11 attacks, is that they do them (plan for attacks), years in advance and then update them before they launch the attacks,” (ABC Good Morning America, 3 August 2004).

According to Townsend:

“the surveillance actions taken by the plotters were ‘originally done between 2000 and 2001, but were updated – some were updated – as recently as January of this year,’” (NBC Today, 3 August 2004, quoted in the Guardian, 3 August 2004).

Townsend is Richard Clarke’s successor on the National Security Council. She is Number 2 on the NSC after NS Adviser Condoleeza Rice. She heads the White House Counterterrorism program.

And yet her own statements on the nature of the intelligence, blatantly contradict DHS Sec Tom Ridge. And then she tells us, that the terrorists are, so to speak, involved in some kind of long term planning.

Tom Ridge referred in his August 1st to “the quality of this intelligence, based on multiple reporting streams in multiple locations”.

Yet in this case, again, the official Homeland Security narrative is contradicted by officials intelligence reports. The latter confirm that the hundreds of photos, sketches and written documents used to justify the “high risk” terror alert, emanated largely from one single source of information, following the arrest in mid July of a 25 year old Pakistani computer engineer, Mohammad Naeem Noor Khan. (AP, 3 August 2004).

Other than a New York Times report (August 2, 2004), which has been quoted extensively by news agencies around the World, we know nothing about this illusive individual. On his computer, Noor Khan, described as a mid-ranking Al Qaeda operative, had information dating back to 2000 and this data, we are told, was the main source of intelligence used by the CIA, with its 30 billion dollar plus budget, to document the threats to financial institutions in DC, NYC and Newark, N.J.

This Pakistani connection focusing on the 25 year old engineer is presented by the media as the missing link. The fact that Pakistan’s military intelligence (ISI) has consistently been supporting Al Qaeda, while maintaining close links with the CIA is of course not mentioned. Nor is there any mention of the ISI’s role in financing the alleged 9/11 terrorists, which is

corroborated by an FBI report published in late September 2001.

Contradictory Timeline: The Thursday July 29 Meeting at Langley

The CIA held a key counterterrorism meeting on Thursday the 29th of July starting at 5 pm. (WP, 3 August 2004). This meeting, which was described as routine, was attended by senior officials from the CIA, the Pentagon and the FBI.

(See <http://www.cia.gov/terrorism/ctc.html> )

According to a unnamed senior intelligence official (who in all likelihood attended the meeting), the decision to launch the high risk (code orange) terror alert was taken on Thursday evening, within hours of of John Kerry's acceptance speech at the Democratic Convention:

"At the daily CIA's 5 p.m. counterterrorism meeting on Thursday, the first information about the detailed al Qaeda surveillance of the five financial buildings was discussed among senior CIA, FBI and military officials. They decided to launch a number of worldwide operations, including the deployment of increased law enforcement around the five [financial] buildings." [World Bank, IMF, NYSE, Citigroup, Prudential] (WP, 3 August 2004, <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/5581230/%20> )

On what intelligence was that far-reaching 29 July decision taken? Visibly nothing specific.

On Thursday, 29 July, when the decision was taken to increase the threat level, the "precise" and "specific" information out of Pakistan including "the trove of hundreds of photos and written documents", was not yet available.

The information from the Pakistani computer engineer, Mohammad Naeem Noor Khan, was only made available ex post facto on the Friday:

"A senior intelligence official said translations of the computer documents and other intelligence started arriving on Friday [one day after the decision was taken to launch the operation]. (WP, 3 August 2004)

According to a White House aid, President Bush had been "informed of the potential threat Friday morning [July 30] aboard Air Force One". (WP, 2 August 2004). In other words, President Bush's approval to raising "the threat level" was granted in the absence of "specific" supporting intelligence. The latter was not made available to counterterrorism officials until Friday evening:

'We worked on it late, and through that night,' [Friday] he [the intelligence official] said. 'We had very specific, credible information, and when we laid it in on the threat environment we're in,' officials decided they had to announce it."

At first, "top administration officials had decided to wait until yesterday [Saturday] to announce the alert, but more intelligence information was coming in — both new translations of the documents, and analysis of other sources' statements — that deepened

their concern about the information, and persuaded them to move ahead swiftly. 'There was a serious sense of urgency to get it out,' the senior intelligence official said...

"On Saturday, officials from the CIA, the FBI, the Homeland Security and Justice departments, the White House, and other agencies agreed with Ridge to recommend that the financial sectors in New York, Washington and North Jersey be placed on orange, or 'high,' alert. Ridge made the recommendation to Bush on Sunday morning, and Bush signed off on it at 10 a.m.". (WP, 3 August 2003)

Following the DHS's Sunday August 1st advisory that the Bretton Woods institutions were a potential target, the World Bank spokesman Dana Milverton retorted that the information was "largely out of date," and "a lot of it was actually public information that anyone from outside the building could have gotten." (Guardian, op cit.)

"One federal law enforcement source said his understanding from reviewing the reports was that the material predated Sept. 11 and included photos that can be obtained from brochures and some actual snapshots. There also were some interior diagrams that appear to be publicly available." (WP, 3 August 2004)

According to the NYT (August 3, 2004) report:

"the information, which officials said was indicative of preparations for a possible truck- or car-bomb attack, left significant gaps. It did not clearly describe the suspected plot, indicate when an attack was to take place nor did it describe the identities of people involved."

#### Fabricated Intelligence

Not only was "outdated intelligence" used to justify the "high risk" threat level, the actual decision to launch the code orange alert was taken within hours of John Kerry's acceptance speech, prior to receiving the supporting intelligence out of Pakistan.

Tom Ridge was asked "what he would say to skeptical people who see a political motive in the terror alert, he replied: 'I wish I could give them all Top Secret clearances and let them review the information that some of us have the responsibility to review. We don't do politics in the Department of Homeland Security.'" (WP, 3 August 2004, <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/5581230/> )

No specific intelligence from the illusive Pakistan engineer's computer was reviewed at that Thursday evening meeting on June 29. (WP, 3 August 2004)

In other words, everything indicates that the decision to increase the threat level had no foundation whatsoever.

The threat of an impending terror attack had been fabricated.

The deployment around the five financial buildings was totally unnecessary.

Public opinion had been deliberately misled.

Fabricating intelligence for political gain or as a pretext for the introduction of emergency measures is a criminal act.

Yet nobody in Washington seems to be concerned that the Bush Cabinet has triggered a campaign of fear and intimidation based on phony intelligence in the months leading up to the November presidential elections.

Related articles

Coup d'Etat in America? by Michel Chossudovsky, 13 July 2004  
<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO407B.html>

Will the 2004 Election Be Called Off? Why Three Out of Four Experts Predict a Terrorist Attack by November, by Maureen Farrell, April 2004,  
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/FAR404A.html>

CIA warns of "New 9/11": Why has John Kerry remained Mum on the Issue of Postponing the Elections? Michel Chossudovsky, 16 July 2004,  
<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO407D.html>

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

Bush Regime working out Procedures for postponing November Election by Webster Griffin Tarpley, 10 July 2004, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/TAR407B.html>

Rumor Becomes Fact as Bush Administration Asks for Authority to Suspend the Election by Michael C. Ruppert , 13 July 2004 <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/RUP407A.html>

Bush backers discuss canceling elections, Emergency Rule and Martial Law, by Webster G. Tarpley 12 July 2004 <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/407A.html>

The Criminalization of the State, by Michel Chossudovsky,  
<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO402A.html> February 2004

Homeland Defense: The Pentagon Declares War on America by Frank Morales, Global Outlook, Issue 3, Winter 2003, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/MOR312A.html>

"Homeland Defense" and the Militarisation of America by Frank Morales, 15 September 2003, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/MOR309A.html>

FBI points finger at the CIA: Terror Alert based on Fabricated Information, 14 February 2003, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CRG302A.html>

Bush's Christmas Terror Alert, by Michel Chossudovsky, 24 December 2003,  
<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO312D.html>

Manufacturing Hysteria: Bogus Terror Threats and Bush's Police State, by Kurt Nimmo, 31 December 2003, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/NIM312A.html>



Orange Code Terror Alert based on Fabricated Intelligence, by Michel Chossudovsky 3 January 2004. <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO401A.html>

E-Democracy: Stealing the Election in 2004 by Steve Moore, 11 July 2004, <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/MOO407A.html>

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#), Global Research, 2004

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)

### 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 undertaken field research in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa and the Pacific and has written extensively on the economies of developing countries with a focus on poverty and social inequality. He has also undertaken research in Health Economics (UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), UNFPA, CIDA, WHO, Government of Venezuela, John Hopkins International Journal of Health Services (1979, 1983) He is the author of 13 books including The Globalization of Poverty and The New World Order (2003), America's "War on Terrorism" (2005), The Globalization of War, America's Long War against Humanity (2015). 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](mailto:crgeditor@yahoo.com)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)



[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)