

The 9/11 Joint Inquiry chairmen are in conflict of interest: Mysterious September 11 breakfast meeting on Capitol Hill

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August 7, 2003—The chairmen of the Joint Inquiry on 9/11, Sen. Bob Graham and Rep. Porter Goss, are in conflict of interest. Or are we dealing with something far more serious?

The chairmen of the Joint Inquiry have dubious links to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) which is known to have actively supported al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Moreover, according to intelligence sources, including the FBI, Pakistan's ISI played a role in financing the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The two Joint Inquiry chairmen Sen Bob Graham and Rep Porter Goss were fully cognizant of the "Pakistani ISI connection" and the role played by its former head, General Mahmoud Ahmad.

Why then did they choose to exclude an examination of the role of the ISI from the Joint Inquiry's 858-page report?

While hinting to "Saudi support and involvement" in 9/11, the report fails to mention that the Pakistani government, its military and intelligence apparatus (ISI), have actively supported and financed a number of terrorist organizations, with the support of Washington.

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 brigades?

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 late August 2001, barely a couple of weeks before September 11, Senator Bob Graham, Representative Porter Goss and Senator Jon Kyl were on a top level 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. Amply documented, the ISI is known to support a number of Islamic terrorist organizations. (See [Council on Foreign Relations](#) (CFR)).

According to the FBI, Indian Intelligence and several press reports, the ISI Head was instrumental in providing financial support to the 9/11 terrorists. General Mahmoud Ahmad had allegedly ordered the transfer of \$100,000 to the presumed 9/11 ring-leader Mohamed Atta.

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" (to use the FBI expression) 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. This meeting was described by one press report as a "follow-up meeting" to that held in Pakistan in late August.

When the twin towers were attacked, General Mahmoud Ahmad, head of Pakistan's intelligence service, was, in Senator Graham's own words, "very empathetic, sympathetic to the people of the United States." [4]

Bob Graham's description of General Ahmad contrasts with that of the Washington Post:

"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." (Washington Post, 18 May 2002).

While the Joint Inquiry has collected mountains of intelligence material, through careful omission, the numerous press and intelligence reports in the public domain (mainstream media, alternative media, etc), which confirm that key members of the Bush administration were involved in acts of political camouflage, have been carefully removed from the Joint Inquiry's hearings.

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The following text published in [Global Outlook](#), Winter 2003, provides details on the breakfast meeting hosted by Sen Bob Gram and Rep. Porter Goss on the morning of September 11:

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 4). 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]

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 money" 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. [6]

"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."

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. [7]

Smoking Gun

When the "foreknowledge" issue hit the street on May 16, "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 Hill 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 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,
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.

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