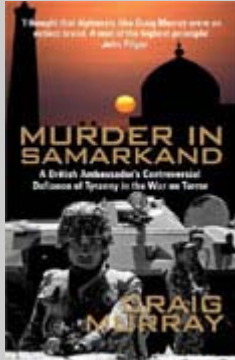


# Craig Murray

Writer and broadcaster

As Britain's outspoken Ambassador to the Central Asian Republic of Uzbekistan, Craig Murray helped expose vicious human rights abuses by the US-funded regime of Islam Karimov. He is now a prominent critic of Western policy in the region.



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**August 14, 2006**

### The UK Terror plot: what's really going on?

I have been reading very carefully through all the Sunday newspapers to try and analyse the truth from all the scores of pages claiming to detail the so-called bomb plot. Unlike the great herd of so-called security experts doing the media analysis, I have the advantage of having had the very highest security clearances myself, having done a huge amount of professional intelligence analysis, and having been inside the spin machine.

So this, I believe, is the true story.

None of the alleged terrorists had made a bomb. None had bought a plane ticket. Many did not even have passports, which given the efficiency of the UK Passport Agency would mean they couldn't be a plane bomber for quite some time.

In the absence of bombs and airline tickets, and in many cases passports, it could be pretty difficult to convince a jury beyond reasonable doubt that individuals intended to go through with suicide bombings, whatever rash stuff they may have bragged in internet chat rooms.

What is more, many of those arrested had been under surveillance for over a year - like thousands of other British Muslims. And not just Muslims. Like me. Nothing from that surveillance had indicated the need for early arrests.

Then an interrogation in Pakistan revealed the details of this amazing plot to blow up multiple planes - which, rather extraordinarily, had not turned up in a year of surveillance. Of course, the interrogators of the Pakistani dictator have their ways of making people sing like canaries. As I witnessed in Uzbekistan, you can get the most extraordinary information this way. Trouble is it always tends to give the interrogators all they might want, and more, in a desperate effort to stop or avert torture. What it doesn't give is the truth.

The gentleman being "interrogated" had fled the UK after being wanted for questioning over the murder of his uncle some years ago. That might be felt to cast some doubt on his reliability. It might also be felt that factors other than political ones might be at play within these relationships. Much is also being made of large transfers of money outside the formal economy. Not in fact too unusual in the British Muslim community, but if this activity is criminal, there are many possibilities that have nothing to do with terrorism.

We then have the extraordinary question of Bush and Blair discussing the possible arrests over the weekend. Why? I think the answer to that is plain. Both in desperate domestic political trouble, they longed for "Another 9/11". The intelligence from Pakistan, however dodgy, gave them a new 9/11 they could sell to the media. The media has bought, wholesale, all the rubbish they have been shovelled.

We then have the appalling political propaganda of John Reid, Home Secretary, making a speech warning us all of the dreadful evil threatening us and

complaining that "Some people don't get" the need to abandon all our traditional liberties. He then went on, according to his own propaganda machine, to stay up all night and minutely direct the arrests. There could be no clearer evidence that our Police are now just a political tool. Like all the best nasty regimes, the knock on the door came in the middle of the night, at 2.30am. Those arrested included a mother with a six week old baby.

For those who don't know, it is worth introducing Reid. A hardened Stalinist with a long term reputation for personal violence, at Stirling Univeristy he was the Communist Party's "Enforcer", (in days when the Communist Party ran Stirling University Students' Union, which it should not be forgotten was a business with a very substantial cash turnover). Reid was sent to beat up those who deviated from the Party line.

We will now never know if any of those arrested would have gone on to make a bomb or buy a plane ticket. Most of them do not fit the "Loner" profile you would expect - a tiny percentage of suicide bombers have happy marriages and young children. As they were all under surveillance, and certainly would have been on airport watch lists, there could have been little danger in letting them proceed closer to maturity - that is certainly what we would have done with the IRA.

In all of this, the one thing of which I am certain is that the timing is deeply political. This is more propaganda than plot. Of the over one thousand British Muslims arrested under anti-terrorist legislation, only twelve per cent are ever charged with anything. That is simply harrassment of Muslims on an appalling scale. Of those charged, 80% are acquitted. Most of the very few - just over two per cent of arrests - who are convicted, are not convicted of anything to do terrorism, but of some minor offence the Police happened upon while trawling through the wreck of the lives they had shattered.

Be sceptical. Be very, very sceptical.

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Posted by [andrew](#) on **August 14, 2006 11:53 AM** in the category [7 UK Policy](#)

## Comments

Craig, any chance of setting up permalinks so that we can link to/bookmark individual articles?

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Posted by: [TimP](#)  at August 14, 2006 01:43 PM

Excellent analysis. Will link back to you shortly.

TimP: The date/time at the bottom of each post is the permalink.

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Posted by: [Bob Morris](#)  at August 14, 2006 03:56 PM

How silly. As a former high ranking civil servant in a former commonwealth country I can assure you that you never had "very highest security clearances" as the ambassador of a tinpot proto-republic. Your expose' or whatever you fancy it to be is the deranged mutterings of a conspiracy theorist. Grow up.

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Posted by: [ScottSA](#)  at August 15, 2006 03:24 AM

Perhaps ScottSA may care to put up his/her definition of 'very highest security clearances' so that we may judge for ourselves....

I have major reservations about anything and everything that 'Dr' John Reid may have to say for himself. He has a particularly unsavoury record, both in his dealings within the Communist Party of Great Britain and in his personal contact with - and admiration for - war criminals such as Radovan Karadzic. Reid is clearly

a man of tremendous probity and fastidiousness.....

What we shall see in due course is that many, if not all, of those arrested will be released without charge. There will be an attempt to skew the legal process by leakage of so-called 'evidence' and Reid will, of course, not be around when this happens. Doubtless if there is any enquiry into such attempts to fix the result it will be some 'low-grade and disaffected civil-servant' who takes the rap. Have we not seen this before?

It's extremely difficult to believe in the 'integrity' of any politico, much less those entrusted with the reins of power. Whilst one recalls the great furore over 'sleaze' which attached to the Conservative government, that is as nothing compared with what we have now. Can any sane individual seriously proffer a view that this government is a model for honesty, integrity and decency? And that is to completely set aside any analysis of its ability to govern effectively.

These people are revealed for what they are - incompetent, self-seeking braggarts.

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Posted by: Chuck Unsworth  at August 15, 2006 07:58 AM

ScottSA,

Plainly, you know nothing about security clearances, and I suspect you are just a troll.

With a tiny number of exceptions, members of the British diplomatic service are cleared to Top Secret. There are tiny amounts of more controlled US originated material which require additional clearances. I had all additional clearances after heading the FCO section of the Embargo Surveillance Centre (thwarting Iraqi attempts at weapons procurement).

None of which is something "a senior Commonwealth civil servant" would know anything about, but I very much doubt you are one, anyway.

Craig

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Posted by: Craig  at August 15, 2006 08:27 AM

Leaving aside a silly spat over credentials, you have just torpedoed your own ship here.

By your own admission the entire British foreign service has access to all of this information, and yet John Reid, the \*ahem\* "hardened Stalinist...enforcer" imagines that he can get away with a giant lie in spite of all these eyes on the truth?

Oh, and lets not forget Bush and the entire US state department, CIA and Secret Service, most of whom have, according to you, access to these top secret documents as well. And then there's Pakistan... How many thousands of people is Reid hoping to keep silent here in order to perpetuate his big scary lie? Won't he come after you for "exposing" it?

And to what end? Why would Reid want to deprive you of your civil liberties? Just because he's a nasty Stalinist? So he can turn the English into mindless automatons? Just because he feels like it? What can you conspiracy theorists be thinking when you cook up these over the top fairy tales?

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Posted by: [ScottSA](#)  at August 15, 2006 09:04 AM

Don't be stupid, Scott. The fact that you have sufficient clearance doesn't mean

you see every paper at that clearance, whatever the subject matter.

By chance, were I still in post I would have been seeing the papers in this case as one of the suspects is an Uzbek.

You could ask the same questions you ask about the ricin plot, or Forest Gate, or Jean Charles De Menezes, or, most crucially, Iraqi Weapons of Mass destruction. When it turns out to be all lies, they ride it out. But public trust vanishes every time.

The truth is that civil servants are prepared to go along with arrant lies in the name of national security. The Iraqi WMD is the best case study. For the psychology of the process, I strongly urge you to read my book. You can buy it from Amazon.co.uk or perhaps get it from your local library.

Why do bad governments seek to amass power? Partly because they delude themselves that they really do know best and it is in everyone's interest if opposition is stifled. Partly because of the perks and buzz of untrammelled power.

In Reid's case, the point is he has never believed in liberal democracy or shown respect for persons.

Craig

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Posted by: [Craig](#)  at August 15, 2006 09:38 AM

ScottSA said: "Leaving aside a silly spat over credentials" = he lied but he won't own up.

Craig,

Thanks for this. I was already a "conspiracy theorist" which I why I heard your speech in Parliament Square the Saturday before last. I can't claim any security clearance but the whole timing of the "foiling" of the plot stank from the start. Arrests, changing airline security rules (only in the UK though?) and speeches about "Islamofascists" all in one day. An orgasmic display of state power, at its entirely inconsistent best. The state's ability to whip up emotions is a frightening thing to behold. Even crazy Doctor John is expendable in all this as soon a lightly tanned Tony will be back to mop up the mess. Thanks again, I'm off to Waterstones to track down your book...

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Posted by: [Lobster Blogster](#)  at August 15, 2006 11:12 AM

And with Dr Reid having so effectively shot himself in the foot/head so many times whilst the boss is away at play, bronzed Tony can step up to the mark to announce a New Deal, with freshly picked Information/Intelligence, which stands up to scrutiny, Leading the Way. ....if he is SMART SPARK enabled, that is.... au fait/turned on to CyberIntelAgents.

There is a lot going on in CyberSpace, Craig..... and IT is all to do with Semantic MetaData Analysis of Information to render Better Intelligence. ...  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/mbtoday/F2767105?thread=3352689&skip=20&show=20#p39229163>

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Posted by: [amanfromMars](#)  at August 15, 2006 12:43 PM

Craig said: "The truth is that civil servants are prepared to go along with arrant lies in the name of national security. The Iraqi WMD is the best case study. For the psychology of the process..."

Indeed, I can sympathize with bureaucratic insularity and the herd mentality, and

I know that the bureaucratic culture can be at times as enveloping and mind-numbing as any religion. I can understand how a great many people can be convinced that up is down and down is up.

But you are positing a lie of epic proportions which depends upon 100% complicity by thousands. The fact that not every piece of paper crosses everyone's desk is irrelevant; you know as well as I that a phonecall will put a folder on one's desk as long as one has clearance and a reasonable reason to see it. Are you suggesting that not one member of the bureaucracy is curious enough to investigate, and that not one member of the bureaucracy is willing to go to the press or at least leak it to a friend who is? You know very well that secrets cannot be kept, whether in or out of a bureaucracy, and certainly not secrets with these implications.

And then there is the evidence you seem blind to. The WTC was attacked and fell down. Your own underground was shattered. Attacks happen regularly across the globe and yet you willfully ignore this and concoct a plot to tell us that these attacks are a fabrication?

The West already suffers from the lies of Islam in the west. We don't need anymore.

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Posted by: [ScottSA](#)  at August 15, 2006 03:20 PM

It really is a case of the "government" that cried wolf, isn't it? We are expected to put our trust and faith in our governments to do what is right but when we discover that they have not been honest, that trust fades and we are all doomed to get eaten by that wolf.

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Posted by: random ranter  at August 15, 2006 03:54 PM

Thanks Scott, your blog response gave me a laugh. It's clear you're unable to challenge Craig here on the issues so you try to muddy the waters - attack his character. "Conspiracy Theorists" automatically assigns a negative connotation to any individual, no matter how reasonable their mindset may be.

The savage irony being Blair/Reid's terrorist scenario is the most flimsy and desperate of conspiracy theories - and you defend it! A population sick of lies, Westphalian human-rights relativism and murderous, exploitative foreign policy (along with a decline in social democratic ideals & practices) are putting a fire under these megalomaniacs and when asylum seekers aren't a big enough distraction - you come up with this fear-mongering BS. Tony, you want to end terrorism? Stop committing it!

They may think they're unaccountable (along with the propagandist media) but their time will come. How many times does someone have to lie to you before you get cynical? I expect the release of all "suspects" soon enough (though probably not for their families) followed by the media's obedient silence.

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Posted by: Damian  at August 15, 2006 04:24 PM

Scott: "But you are positing a lie of epic proportions which depends upon 100% complicity by thousands."

You could have said (and, I suspect, did say) the same of every routine Keystone Kops deception up to and including Bush's imaginary "Weapons of Mass Destruction". Lies of epic proportions that require the complicity of thousands happen every year, somewhere in the world, from the left and right, from businesses and governments, advertisers and politicians, christian and muslim, atheist and fundamentalist. They're revealed, in time, sometimes sooner, sometimes later.

And nobody cares. It's too common a corruption for people to care.

Even the ones who do care won't DO anything. Most of the people reading this will nod their heads and go on, and the sum total of their engagement will be to say "yeh, Craig Murray predicted this X months ago".

Which is why they keep doing stuff like this, because they know everyone's so jaded and inured to government corruption that the loudest voices will be the ones from the people like you, the ones who for whatever reason are still deluding themselves that the fire's over there... where the guys with the gasoline-stained fingers are pointing.

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Posted by: Leechman  at August 15, 2006 04:57 PM

Poor ScottSA, shoots himself in the foot again. He writes:

"Are you suggesting that not one member of the bureaucracy is curious enough to investigate, and that not one member of the bureaucracy is willing to go to the press or at least leak it to a friend who is? You know very well that secrets cannot be kept, whether in or out of a bureaucracy, and certainly not secrets with these implications."

Well, ScottSA, such people are all around you. What are you doing with you eyes and ears? Bookstores are full of books written by "members of the bureaucracy" trying to open our eyes to what is happening. Craig Murray is one of these. There are many many more. The government tries to prosecute these people under the Official Secrets Act, but usually the ensuing publicity, and the attempt at prosecution itself, just 'educates' the public even further.

And more powerful than any book, there is even a grave, very sadly holding the body of a "member of the bureaucracy", who found that the only way he could communicate his truth was by suicide. What more do you need?

Let's widen this a little.

For you and I, for all of us in this country, the greatest danger of an early and violent death comes from an 'accident' on British roads. So why cannot simple improvements in road safety, like, say, a straightforward reduction in a local speed limit, be achieved in the same sort of timescale as all those huge upheavals at all our airports recently? Because a sudden change of speed limit will never scare the British public into immediate submission to a corrupt government.

Again - you and I are far more likely to meet an early and violent death on British roads, than at a British airport or on a passenger plane journey. Or on a train or bus journey. So why are hundreds, or maybe thousands, of police officers now wandering around British airports, carrying weapons that they could not possibly use in such over-crowded and chaotic places, instead of patrolling the roads and treating sleepy, careless and dangerous drivers in the same sort of way that suspected terrorists are now routinely treated?

As they say..... what's really going on???

Democracy - RIP.

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Posted by: ken  at August 15, 2006 05:09 PM

Its instructive that everyone here flaunts the entirely discredited meme that there is some great "lie" involved with the miscalculation over WMD.

Everyone involved, from the US Democrats to the French regime to Kofi himself has stated quite bluntly that there were no untruths involved. Two joint commissions in the US and God knows how many in Britain has determined the same thing. It is widely known and acknowledged unanimously, at least in responsible circles that the WMD issue was a matter of miscalculation, and yet there is a certain subset of the population who just won't let it go. I don't know if you actually BELIEVE this nonsense or just keep spouting it out of practise, but I can tell you it doesn't help your cause.

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Posted by: ScottSA  at August 15, 2006 07:48 PM

Scott-To quote you

"Everyone involved, from the US Democrats to the French regime to Kofi himself has stated quite bluntly that there were no untruths involved. Two joint commissions in the US and God knows how many in Britain has determined the same thing. It is widely known and acknowledged unanimously, at least in responsible circles that the WMD issue was a matter of miscalculation, and yet there is a certain subset of the population who just won't let it go. I don't know if you actually BELIEVE this nonsense or just keep spouting it out of practise, but I can tell you it doesn't help your cause" -

You seem quite desperate in the way that YOU keep spouting nonsense. I know who I choose to believe or give credibility to and you are most certainly not one of them

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Posted by: max  at August 15, 2006 08:12 PM

But you are posing a lie of epic proportions which depends upon 100% complicity by thousands.

I have often heard this as the standard rebuff to any conspiracy theory. It's bull. All a lie needs is to be repeated loudly and often, in major media. All sorts of contravening documents can and do surface - but the public either never finds out due to lack of good publicity, or else such information is discredited, because it's not in the New York Times or the BBC.

If Michael Moore's Fahrenheit 2001 hadn't shown that footage of people egging President Bush's limo, I never would have known it happened. No major media source reported it, yet, once I did some research, oh yes, buried in the back pages of some minor local papers, there it was. No lie was necessary. See my point?

Plenty of documentation has put the results of the 2004 US election in doubt, but it never "hits" mainstream public consciousness, and those who bring it up are just dismissed as kooks...like Craig here...the result is we the public don't know whom to believe, and by default wind up accepting the word of those in power...

-Falafel123

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Posted by: falafel123  at August 15, 2006 08:14 PM

ScottSA says that the WMD was a miscalculation. I recommend he read Ron Suskind's THE ONE PERCENT SOLUTION and Thomas Ricks' FIASCO: THE AMERICAN MILITARY ADVENTURE IN IRAQ (title might be a bit off), which show how this was not a miscalculation, unless you call Cheney's view that if there was a one percent chance that Iraq was developing WMD, then the US would as a policy matter treat that possibility as a certainty; and if you call Cheney et al's saying there was no doubt that Iraq was developing nuclear weapons a miscalculation ... The Administration kept any doubts about the evidence hidden. They set up their own intelligence shop in the Pentagon to come up with evidence of their own because CIA was not coming up with evidence to their liking. Cheney himself visited CIA several times, obviously to pressure analysts to come up with evidence to his liking. The Administration relied on forged documents (re Iraq seeking uranium yellow cake from Niger) to sell the war. They ignored doubts that the vaunted "aluminum tubes" were highly unlikely to be for use in developing nuclear weapons.

That's not "miscalculation." It's misrepresentation.

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Posted by: Brian  at August 15, 2006 08:21 PM

ScottSA also makes much of Craig's saying he had a security clearance. That's

beside the point, in any event, because I didn't need a security clearance to suspect immediately that this "plot" was highly exaggerated if not a complete fabrication. I almost think Craig could have left the fact of his security clearance out of his article -- it simply doesn't matter.

The real mystery is why the US-UK governments aren't claiming they are foiling plots daily.

Who are the real terrorists? Imagine living in Iraq in 2002-03 and knowing that the US was likely to get UN approval to bomb you despite that your country was not a threat to anybody. Imagine living in Iran right now, knowing the same, and knowing that the US-UK machine has created thousands of corpses already in Afghanistan and Iraq AND CANNOT BE STOPPED. The US threatens such people daily. It would be far more terrifying to live under the possibility that the US would attack with worldwide approval, and that no one would help you, than it is to live in the US or UK and know that any attack will be met with universal outrage and possibly a rock concert from Sir Paul.

I doubt the US-UK killing machine has any real compunction about killing regular American or British citizens. We should be thankful that they merely claim to foil plots ...

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Posted by: Brian  at August 15, 2006 08:35 PM

To cite ScottSA:

"Everyone involved, from the US Democrats to the French regime to Kofi himself has stated quite bluntly that there were no untruths involved."

Now ScottSA, listen for example to this interview with Günter Pleuger, the former German ambassador to the UN. It appeared in the Süddeutsche Zeitung on Saturday, August 12, 2006:

SZ: „Gab es während der Irak-Krise einen Moment im Sicherheitsrat, den sie nie vergessen werden?“

SZ: "Was there a moment during the iraq-crisis in the security council that you will never forget?"

Pleuger: „Ja, der 5. Februar 2003, als US-Außenminister Colin Powell mit einer Diashow belegen wollte, dass der Irak Massenvernichtungswaffen besaß. Es war gespenstisch. Jeder im Saal wusste, dass seine Fakten falsch waren. Jeder wusste auch, dass der Krieg bevorstand.“

Pleuger: "Yes, Februar 5, 2003, when US foreign minister Colin Powell wanted to prove - using a slideshow - that the Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. It was haunting. Everybody in the hall knew that his facts were false. Everybody knew as well that the war was imminent."

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Posted by: soylent  at August 15, 2006 08:56 PM

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