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MONDAY, AUGUST 16, 2004

## Why Racial Profiling Is Dumb

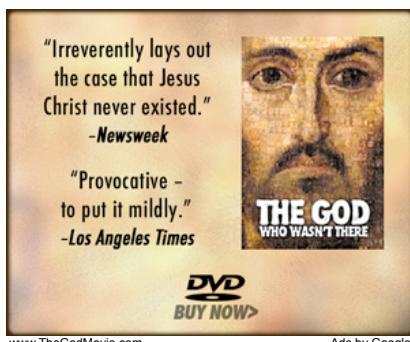
by Michael in New York on [8/16/2004 09:35:00 PM](#)

A new USA Today front page story says **Al-Qaeda is using non-Arab spies in the U.S.** to do surveillance work, etc. By the way, this info offered up by Tom Ridge seems to offer no useful purpose by being revealed at this time -- it's not a success story because Ridge says they haven't broken up a known surveillance cell, don't know how many people might be in the U.S., and says by gosh if they did know someone was an operative why they'd arrest 'em.

So why give out this info? One official said they **STILL** wanted to counteract the criticism of that Ridge terror alert/campaign plug for Bush. But does the info they reveal justify raising the terror alert? The official said the cells:

- "Have been in the USA off and on since the early 1990s, and some are still here."
- Are focused primarily on states on the coasts, though not exclusively. They include New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, Michigan and California.
- Operate under deep cover, sometimes hiding their Muslim faith by posing as Christians.
- Are isolated from each other and from al-Qaeda members who would carry out attacks."

That's all reason for serious concern but certainly no reason to take a short-term action like raising the terror alert, since none of this info involves an imminent attack or even the hint of one. So they continue to dribble out data to justify themselves but still fall short.



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## HOT OFF THE WIRE

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10 minutes ago

### Think Progress

Senate Should Ignore Nutty Glenn Beck Conspiracy Theories And Appoint Harold Koh - Our guest blogger is Henry Fernandez, a Senior Fellow at the Center For American Progress Action Fund. As ThinkProgress recently noted, a small number of c...

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### HuffPost Politics

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18 minutes ago

### Firedoglake

Operation Stonewall Stalls Johnsen and Koh - While we wait for the last ballot count in the Franken-Coleman contest, I thought I'd tie in Operation Stonewall to the Republicans' bizarre and seemingly ...

20 minutes ago

### Paul Krugman