

US extends global terror alert

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The US State Department announced Sunday that 19 foreign embassies will remain closed all week in accordance with the ongoing global terror alert announced Friday. The alert was launched, according to a White House statement, in response to a threat “possibly occurring in or emanating from the Arabian Peninsula.” Britain and a number of other European countries moved to close their facilities in Yemen as well.

US officials said on Sunday that the decision to extend the closures was based on the need to “exercise caution” and not on new information regarding possible attacks. On Monday afternoon, the State Department released information citing “a rare intercepted communication” between Ayman al-Zawahri in Pakistan and Nasir al-Wahisi in Yemen, claiming that this intercept prompted the terror alert.

The media continues to promote the claims of the government uncritically, despite the absence of any factual substantiation and the vague and non-specific nature of the purported threat. There is barely a hint from the corporate-controlled media that previous terror alerts in the course of the so-called “war on terror” have proven baseless, and no reference to the rampant lying of the government in relation to the illegal spying operations that have been exposed by whistle-blower Edward Snowden.

Lawmakers, both Democratic and Republican, continue to seize on the terror alert as supposed justification for the National Security Agency’s sweeping eavesdropping and data collection programs, which are in flagrant violation of the US Constitution. Yet there is no suggestion in the alarmist media reports that there might be an ulterior political motive behind the sudden announcement of an imminent terror threat.

Recent polls show that, despite two months of attacks on Snowden from the Obama administration, lawmakers and the media, a majority of the population

supports him and rejects efforts to portray him as a spy or traitor. Polls similarly show that a majority, despite constant official statements about the need for the spying programs to protect Americans against terrorists, continue to oppose the Big Brother operations.

The alert comes in the context, moreover, of growing popular opposition to the war in Afghanistan and mounting anger over the austerity measures being implemented across the US, and amidst signs that the US economy continues to deteriorate five years after the financial crash of 2008.

While officials have cited the end of Ramadan, threats made by Ayman al-Zawahiri, and jailbreaks throughout the region as causes for the terrorist threat, no concrete evidence of a planned terror plot has been presented. White House Press Secretary Jay Carney spoke to reporters Monday, giving vague and contradictory descriptions of the terrorist threat, which he said was “emanating from and may be directed towards the Arabian Peninsula,” but also “could potentially be beyond that or elsewhere.”

Asked about the intelligence that led to the embassy closures, Carney refused to provide any information. When pressed by one reporter to “communicate something that is non-speculative about what this threat stream seems to be about,” Carney replied, “I cannot shed light on what has generated this particular threat ... I don’t have any specific information to provide to you about this particular threat and what it’s related to.”

State Department spokespersons Jen Psaki and Marie Harf have repeated the mantra that the embassy closures were ordered from “an abundance of caution.” This is a euphemistic way of saying that the government does not have credible, specific evidence to offer to the public about the purported terrorist threat.

The possibility of a new terror attack cannot, of course, be ruled out. US foreign policy, based on

violence and threats against the populations of the Middle East and Central Asia, support for oil despots in the region, and backing for Israeli oppression of the Palestinians creates fertile soil for terrorist groups. Yemen, which is being pointed to as the center of the supposed new threat, has been targeted for US drone missile strikes for years that have killed hundreds of innocent civilians. Three such strikes have occurred over the past several weeks.

President Obama personally approved drone missile strikes in Yemen that killed three US citizens, Anwar al-Awlaki, Samir Khan, and Abdulrahman al-Awlaki.

With absolute cynicism, the congressional stooges of the military and intelligence agencies are talking up the terror threat and using it to defend the NSA spying programs. “The good news is we picked up the intelligence,” said Democratic Representative Dutch Ruppersberger of Maryland. “And that’s what we do. That’s what the NSA does.”

“They’re able to listen in and hear what’s going on,” said Charles Schumer, Democratic Senator from New York. “They all have disrupted many, many, many terrorist plots and let’s hope they’re disrupting this one, as well.”

“I think we are re-learning or re-emphasizing that security is absolutely essential in our society,” said Democratic Senator of Connecticut Richard Blumenthal.

“The NSA program is proving its worth yet again,” said Senator Lindsey Graham, Republican of South Carolina.

Senator Saxby Chambliss, Republican of Georgia, told NBC’s “Meet the Press” that ongoing terrorist “chatter” is “very reminiscent of what we saw pre-9/11.”

By their comments these leading lawmakers, make it clear that they would support the imposition of a police state.

It cannot be excluded that the government itself is preparing to use a terrorist incident as a pretext for new attacks on democratic rights and the imposition of some form of martial law. There have been frequent comments in the American media, particularly in the wake of the NSA revelations, that a new terrorist attack might lead to a sudden reversal in public hostility to the growing power of the military and intelligence complex, and that the US is “one terrorist attack away

from martial law.”

To this day, the political establishment has never furnished a credible explanation of the events of September 11th 2001, in which many of the alleged perpetrators were well known to the FBI and CIA and had been followed and monitored for months. The same has been the case for virtually every terrorist incident. From 9/11, to the abortive attempt of a Nigerian national to blow up a commercial jet over Detroit on Christmas Day 2009, to the Boston Marathon bombing, the alleged perpetrators were under US surveillance and yet were able to carry out their attacks or attempted attacks.

Less than four months ago, Boston and its environs were placed under military-police lockdown, democratic rights were suspended, and riot police roamed through private homes without warrants. Public transportation was halted and a “shelter in place” order was issued confining residents to their homes.

Since the Boston lockdown, there have been urban warfare drills in major cities across the US, including Los Angeles and Chicago. These drills are clearly intended to accustom the public to the presence of militarized police forces, backed up by military helicopters and armored vehicles, operating on the streets of American cities.

The Obama administration is continuing the “war on terror” tactics begun under Bush of deliberately fostering a climate of fear to facilitate a massive assault on democratic rights and the buildup of a police state apparatus.



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