

The Real Agenda

by steve *Tuesday, Sep 30 2014, 4:07am*

international / prose / post

Reality is never elusive it is always there to be appreciated; however, it's not immediately apparent if you are distracted or focused on something else. The mass media goes to great lengths today to keep you titillated and distracted in order for a nefarious elite group of mega-wealthy criminals to pursue their extremely destructive agenda out of the spotlight.

I need only ask one question to present reality as it is: are the many nations that have been interfered with covertly or overtly by the US and NATO in the recent past better off today, I refer to Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and a host of African and Latin American nations? Answer, a resounding **NO!** Most of the above nations are now ruined states or have been completely impoverished or fragmented into tiny powerless statelettes -- that is the REALITY of American interventions past and present, no democracy, freedom or liberty only human HOLOCAUSTS, RUINATION and RESOURCE THEFT, which is the original plan by nefarious elites that today control all western governments without exception.

Simply compare life before and after US/NATO intervention and be confronted by the Truth not the constant lies and propaganda that issues like sewage from the privately owned corporate mass media -- after 9/11 and WMD how could anyone possibly believe a word that issues from Washington?

The following story is an accurate appraisal of America's latest LIES and propaganda and its manic (futile) pursuit of World domination:

Anatomy of a Fake Terror Threat To Justify Bombing Syria

by Glenn Greenwald and Murtaza Hussain

As the Obama Administration prepared to bomb Syria without congressional or U.N. authorization, it faced two problems. The first was the difficulty of sustaining public support for a [new years-long war](#) against ISIS, a group that clearly [posed no imminent threat](#) to the homeland. A second was the lack of legal justification for launching a new bombing campaign with no viable claim of self-defense or U.N. approval.

The solution to both problems was found in the wholesale concoction of a brand new terror threat that was branded "The Khorasan Group." After spending weeks depicting ISIS as an unprecedented threat — too radical even for Al Qaeda! — administration officials suddenly began spoon-feeding their favorite media organizations and national security journalists tales of a secret group that was even scarier and more threatening than ISIS, one that posed a direct and immediate threat to the American Homeland. Seemingly out of nowhere, a new terror group was created in media lore.

The unveiling of this new group was performed in [a September 13 article](#) by the Associated Press, who cited unnamed U.S. officials to warn of this new shadowy, worse-than-ISIS terror group:

While the Islamic State group [ISIS] is getting the most attention now, another band of extremists in Syria — a mix of hardened jihadis from Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria and Europe — poses a more direct and imminent threat to the United States, working with Yemeni bomb-makers to target U.S. aviation, American officials say.

At the center is a cell known as the Khorasan group, a cadre of veteran al-Qaida fighters from Afghanistan and Pakistan who traveled to Syria to link up with the al-Qaida affiliate there, the Nusra.

But the Khorasan militants did not go to Syria principally to fight the government of President Bashar Assad, U.S. officials say. Instead, they were sent by al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri to recruit Europeans and Americans whose passports allow them to board a U.S.-bound airliner with less scrutiny from security officials.

AP warned Americans that “the fear is that the Khorasan militants will provide these sophisticated explosives to their Western recruits who could sneak them onto U.S.-bound flights.” It explained that although ISIS has received most of the attention, the Khorasan Group “is considered the more immediate threat.”

The genesis of the name was itself scary: “Khorasan refers to a province under the Islamic caliphate, or religious empire, of old that included parts of Afghanistan.” AP depicted the U.S. officials who were feeding them the narrative as engaging in some sort of act of brave, unauthorized truth-telling: “Many U.S. officials interviewed for this story would not be quoted by name talking about what they said was highly classified intelligence.”

On the morning of September 18, *CBS News* [broadcast a segment](#) that is as pure war propaganda as it gets: directly linking the soon-to-arrive U.S. bombing campaign in Syria to the need to protect Americans from being exploded in civilian jets by Khorasan. With ominous voice tones, the host narrated:

This morning we are learning of a new and growing terror threat coming out of Syria. It’s an Al Qaeda cell you probably never heard of. Nearly everything about them is classified. Bob Orr is in Washington with new information on a group some consider more dangerous than ISIS.

Orr then announced that while ISIS is “dominating headlines and terrorist propaganda,” Orr’s “sources” warn of “a more immediate threat to the U.S. Homeland.” As Orr spoke, CBS flashed alternating video showing scary Muslims in Syria and innocent westerners waiting in line at airports, as he intoned that U.S. officials have ordered “enhanced screening” for “hidden explosives.” This is all coming, Orr explained, from “an emerging threat in Syria” where “hardened terrorists” are building “hard to detect bombs.”

The U.S. government, Orr explained, is trying to keep this all a secret; they won’t even mention the group’s name in public out of security concerns! But Orr was there to reveal the truth, as his “sources confirm the Al Qaeda cell goes by the name Khorasan.” And they’re “developing fresh plots to attack U.S. aviation.”

Later that day, Obama administration officials began publicly touting the group, when

Director of National Intelligence James Clapper [warned starkly](#): “In terms of threat to the homeland, Khorasan may pose as much of a danger as the Islamic State.” Then followed an avalanche of uncritical media reports detailing this Supreme Threat, excitingly citing anonymous officials as though they had uncovered a big secret the government was trying to conceal.

On September 20, *The New York Times* [devoted a long article](#) to strongly hyping the Khorasan Group. Headlined “U.S. Suspects More Direct Threats Beyond ISIS,” the article began by announcing that U.S. officials believe a different group other than ISIS “posed a more direct threat to America and Europe.” Specifically:

American officials said that the group called Khorasan had emerged in the past year as the cell in Syria that may be the most intent on hitting the United States or its installations overseas with a terror attack. The officials said that the group is led by Muhsin al-Fadhli, a senior Qaeda operative who, according to the State Department, was so close to Bin Laden that he was among a small group of people who knew about the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks before they were launched.

Again, the threat they posed reached all the way to the U.S.: “Members of the cell are said to be particularly interested in devising terror plots using concealed explosives.” This *Khorasan-attacking-Americans* alarm spread quickly and explosively in the landscape of U.S. national security reporting. *The Daily Beast*’s Eli Lake [warned on September 23](#) — the day after the first U.S. bombs fell in Syria — that “American analysts had pieced together detailed information on a pending attack from an outfit that informally called itself ‘the Khorasan Group’ to use hard-to-detect explosives on American and European airliners.” He added even more ominously: “The planning from the Khorasan Group ... suggests at least an aspiration to launch more-coordinated and larger attacks on the West in the style of the 9/11 attacks from 2001” (days later, Lake, along with Josh Rogin, [actually claimed that](#) “Iran has long been harboring senior al Qaeda, al Nusra, and so-called Khorasan Group leaders as part of its complicated strategy to influence the region”).

On the day of the bombing campaign, NBC News’ Richard Engel [tweeted this](#).

That tweet linked to an *NBC Nightly News* report in which anchor Brian Williams introduced Khorasan with a graphic declaring it “The New Enemy,” and Engel went on to explain that the group is “considered a threat to the U.S. because, U.S. intelligence officials say, it wants to bring down airplanes with explosives.”

Once the bombing campaign was underway, ISIS – the original theme of the attack – largely faded into the background, as Obama officials and media allies aggressively touted attacks on Khorasan leaders and the disruption of its American-targeting plots. On the first day of the bombing, *The Washington Post* [announced](#) that “the United States also pounded a little-known but well-resourced al-Qaeda cell that some American officials fear could pose a direct threat to the United States.” It explained:

The Pentagon said in a statement early Tuesday that the United States conducted eight strikes west of Aleppo against the cell, called the Khorasan Group, targeting its “training camps, an explosives and munitions production facility, a communications building and command and control facilities.”

The same day, [CNN claimed](#) that “among the targets of U.S. strikes across Syria early Tuesday was the Khorasan Group.” The bombing campaign in Syria was thus magically transformed into an act of pure self-defense, given that “the group was actively plotting against a U.S. homeland target and Western targets, a senior U.S. official told CNN on Tuesday.” The bevy of anonymous sources cited by CNN had a hard time keep their stories straight:

The official said the group posed an “imminent” threat. Another U.S. official later said the threat was not imminent in the sense that there were no known targets or attacks expected in the next few weeks.

The plots were believed to be in an advanced stage, the second U.S. official said. There were indications that the militants had obtained materials and were working on new improvised explosive devices that would be hard to detect, including common hand-held electronic devices and airplane carry-on items such as toiletries.

Nonetheless, what was clear was that this group had to be bombed in Syria to save American lives, as the terrorist group even planned to conceal explosive devices in toothpaste or flammable clothing as a means to target U.S. airliners. The day following the first bombings, Attorney General Eric Holder claimed: “We hit them last night out of a concern that they were getting close to an execution date of some of the plans that we have seen.”

CNN’s supremely stenographic Pentagon reporter, Barbara Starr, [went on air](#) as videos of shiny new American fighter jets and the Syria bombing were shown and explained that this was all necessary to stop a Khorasan attack very close to being carried out against the west:

What we are hearing from a senior US official is the reason they struck Khorasan right now is they had intelligence that the group – of Al Qaeda veterans – was in the stages of planning an attack against the US homeland and/or an attack against a target in Europe, and the information indicated Khorasan was well on its way – perhaps in its final stages – of planning that attack.

All of that laid the fear-producing groundwork for President Obama to claim self-defense when he [announced the bombing campaign on September 23 with this boast](#): “Once again, it must be clear to anyone who would plot against America and try to do Americans harm that we will not tolerate safe havens for terrorists who threaten our people.”

The very next day, a Pentagon official claimed a U.S. airstrike killed “the Khorasan leader,” and just a few days after that, [U.S. media outlets celebrated](#) what they said was the admission by jihadi social media accounts that “the leader of the al Qaeda-linked Khorasan group was killed in a U.S. air strike in Syria.”

But once it served its purpose of justifying the start of the bombing campaign in Syria, the Khorasan narrative simply evaporated as quickly as it materialized. *Foreign Policy*’s Shane Harris, with two other writers, was [one of the first to question](#) whether the “threat” was anywhere near what it had been depicted to be:

But according to the top U.S. counterterrorism official, as well as Obama himself, there is “[no credible information](#)” that the militants of the Islamic State were planning to attack inside the United States. Although the group could pose a domestic terrorism threat if left unchecked, any plot it tried launching today would be “limited in scope” and “nothing like a 9/11-scale attack,” Matthew Olsen, the director of the National Counterterrorism Center, said in remarks at the Brookings Institution earlier this month. That would suggest that Khorasan doesn’t have the capability either, even if it’s working to develop it.

“Khorasan has the desire to attack, though we’re not sure their capabilities match their desire,” a senior U.S. counterterrorism official told *Foreign Policy*.

On September 25, *The New York Times* — just days after hyping the Khorasan threat to the homeland — [wrote](#) that “the group’s evolution from obscurity to infamy has been sudden.” And the paper of record began, for the first time, to note how little evidence actually existed for all those claims about the imminent threats posed to the homeland:

American officials have given differing accounts about just how close the group was to mounting an attack, and about what chance any plot had of success. One senior American official on Wednesday described the Khorasan plotting as “aspirational” and said that there did not yet seem to be a concrete plan in the works.

Literally within a matter of days, we went from “perhaps in its final stages of planning its attack” (CNN) to “plotting as ‘aspirational’” and “there did not yet seem to be a concrete plan in the works” (NYT).

Late last week, Associated Press’ Ken Dilanian — the first to unveil the new Khorasan Product in mid-September — [published a new story](#) explaining that just days after bombing “Khorasan” targets in Syria, high-ranking U.S. officials seemingly backed off all their previous claims of an “imminent” threat from the group. Headlined “U.S. Officials Offer More Nuanced Take on Khorasan Threat,” it noted that “several U.S. officials told reporters this week that the group was in the final stages of planning an attack on the West, leaving the impression that such an attack was about to happen.” But now:

Senior U.S. officials offered a more nuanced picture Thursday of the threat they believe is posed by an al-Qaida cell in Syria targeted in military strikes this week, even as they defended the decision to attack the militants.

James Comey, the FBI director, and Rear Adm. John Kirby, the Pentagon spokesman, each acknowledged that the U.S. did not have precise intelligence about where or when the cell, known as the Khorasan Group, would attempt to strike a Western target. . . .

Kirby, briefing reporters at the Pentagon, said, “I don’t know that we can pin that down to a day or month or week or six months....We can have this debate about whether it was valid to hit them or not, or whether it was too soon or too late...We hit them. And I don’t think we need to throw up a dossier here to prove that these are bad dudes.”

Regarding claims that an attack was “imminent,” Comey said: “I don’t know exactly what that word means...‘imminent’” — a rather consequential admission given that said imminence was used as the justification for launching military action in the first place.

Even more remarkable, it turns out the very existence of an actual “Khorasan Group” was to some degree an invention of the American government. NBC’s Engel, the day after he reported on the U.S. government’s claims about the group for *Nightly News*, seemed to have serious second thoughts about the group’s existence, [tweeting](#):

Indeed, a Nexis search for the group found almost no mentions of its name prior to the September 13 AP article based on anonymous officials. There was one oblique reference to it in a [July 31 CNN op-ed](#) by Peter Bergen. The other mention was [an article in the LA Times from two weeks earlier](#) about Pakistan which mentioned the group’s name as something quite different than how it’s being used now: as “the intelligence wing of the powerful Pakistani Taliban faction led by Hafiz Gul Bahadur.” Tim Shorrock [noted](#) that the name appears in [a 2011 hacked Stratfor email](#) published by WikiLeaks, referencing a *Dawn* article that depicts them as a Pakistan-based group which was fighting against and “expelled by” (not “led by”) Bahadur.

There are serious questions about whether the Khorasan Group even exists in any meaningful or identifiable manner. Aki Peritz, a CIA counterterrorism official until 2009, [told Time](#): “I’d certainly never heard of this group while working at the agency,” while Obama’s former U.S. ambassador to Syria Robert Ford said: “We used the term [Khorasan] inside the government, we don’t know where it came from....All I know is that they don’t call themselves that.” As *The Intercept* was finalizing this article, former terrorism federal prosecutor Andrew McCarthy [wrote in National Review](#) that the group was a scam: “You haven’t heard of the Khorosan Group because there isn’t one. It is a name the administration came up with, calculating that Khorosan ... had sufficient connection to jihadist lore that no one would call the president on it.”

What happened here is all-too-familiar. The Obama administration needed propagandistic and legal rationale for bombing [yet another predominantly Muslim country](#). While emotions over the ISIS beheading videos were high, they were not enough to sustain a lengthy new war.

So after spending weeks promoting ISIS as Worse Than Al Qaeda™, they unveiled a new, never-before-heard-of group that was Worse Than ISISTM. Overnight, as the first bombs on Syria fell, the endlessly helpful U.S. media mindlessly circulated the script they were given: this new group was composed of “hardened terrorists,” posed an “imminent” threat to the U.S. homeland, was in the “final stages” of plots to take down U.S. civilian aircraft, and could “launch more-coordinated and larger attacks on the West in the style of the 9/11 attacks from 2001.”

As usual, anonymity was granted to U.S. officials to make these claims. As usual, there was almost no evidence for any of this. Nonetheless, American media outlets — eager, as always, [to justify American wars](#) — spewed all of this with very little skepticism. Worse, they did it by pretending that the U.S. government was trying not to talk about all of this — too secret! — but they, as intrepid, digging journalists, managed to unearth it from their courageous “sources.” Once the damage was done, the evidence quickly emerged about what a sham this all was. But, as always with these government/media propaganda campaigns, the truth emerges only when it’s impotent.

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