

Muslim ban has nothing to do with national security

Masood Akhtar

June 27, 2017

In response to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision on Monday reinstating part of the Muslim ban executive order, President Trump issued a statement calling it “a clear victory for our national security.” He said it was needed to prevent terrorism in the United States.

His statements are not supported by historic facts and analyses. Not one single terrorist has come from the banned six Muslim-majority countries since the Refugee Act of 1980. Of the 19 hijackers on 9/11/2001, 15 came from Saudi Arabia, two from United Arab Emirates, one from Lebanon, and one from Egypt.

The most significant threat facing America actually involves individuals living right here in America either as U.S. citizens or Green Card holders. The Boston Marathon bombing in 2013, San Bernardino shooting in 2015 and Orlando nightclub shooting in 2016 are examples of that.

Americans' fear of foreign terrorists and immigrants has been inflated by most mainstream media and President Trump has managed to capitalize on that fear. When there is a terrorist attack, the mainstream media coverage seems to dominate the cycles for hours, days and sometimes weeks.

In a recent study, The Washington Post found that the news media do not cover all terrorist attacks the same way — rather, they give drastically more coverage (4.5 times) to attacks by Muslims, particularly foreign-born Muslims — even though those are far less common than other kinds of terrorist attacks.

This again plays well into the hands of terrorists and gives Americans an exaggerated sense of the threat. It is no wonder why so many Americans think that these terrorist groups make our country less secure, despite the fact that the chance of an American being killed by a foreign-born terrorist is 1 in 3.6 million each year, according to Alex Nowrasteh, an immigration policy analyst at the Cato Institute who published an analysis in September 2016 of every single terrorist attack committed on the U.S. soil by an immigrant or tourist from 1975 to 2015. He also concluded that the chance of being killed in a terrorist attack by refugees is one in 3.6 billion a year and that the chance of being murdered by anyone is 1 in 14,000.

This Muslim ban has nothing to do with national security. It has everything to do with fulfilling Trump's campaign promise. This ban will not make America safe; instead it will just do the opposite. Most mainstream media should also recognize that they have the moral responsibility of reporting all terrorist attacks the same way regardless of the religion, color or ethnicity of the perpetrator.