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Report: Trump to Ban Citizens of Seven Countries Visiting US

By Jason Ditz
January 24, 2017

According to officials who have been briefed on the matter, President Trump is planning to sign an executive order that would impose a temporary ban on visas for citizens of seven countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa, a move which some reports indicate could just be the beginning of further limits.

The ban will exclude all people from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Libya, and Yemen from visiting the United States. It is also to include a total ban on refugees entering the United States from anywhere, with some exceptions for religious minorities.

Trump campaigned on the idea of banning all Muslims from entering the United States, and while he's said to have moderated on that position since then, this appears to be at least the start of a policy in that vein. At the same time, the ban list has some conspicuous absences.

Despite presenting such moves as a national security measure intended to prevent terror, the nations from which 9/11 plotters originated (primarily Saudi Arabia, but also including Egypt and the UAE) were left off the new ban. Also, while the US may fear blowback from wars in Iraq and Syria, and constant drone strikes in Yemen, they did not include Afghanistan, 15 years into America's occupation, nor Pakistan, which has borne the brunt of America's drone war.

It is thus very difficult to figure exactly how they came by this list, with nations like Iran seemingly just included for political value, and the other countries on the list just sounding scary.