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BLOWBACK AT BOSTON?

By: Jacob G. Hornberger
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In my article last February entitled “Coming to a City Near You? Assassination and Sanction Blowback,” I wrote:

But there is another point that Americans need to ponder. That point is that the U.S. government’s assassination program in Pakistan, Yemen, and elsewhere and its sanctions program against Iran might well lead to “blowback” in the form of another major terrorist attack on American soil.

While it’s still undetermined as to who committed the Boston Marathon bombings and why, at the top of the list of suspects has got to be people who are retaliating for what the U.S. national-security state has been doing and continues to do to people in foreign countries, including the drone assassinations, the 12-year occupation of Afghanistan, the sanctions against Iran, and the support of brutal Middle East dictatorships.

Is it all worth it? That’s what Americans need to be asking themselves.

In the process of reflecting on that question, Americans need to rid themselves of the propagandistic nonsense that the U.S. national-security state has been spouting ever since 9/11 — like “The terrorists just hate us for our freedom and values” or “We’re killing people over there to keep Americans safe.

Here is what the killing and dying is all about, from my recent article, “Why the Awlakis Were Killed”:

People over there are saying to the Pentagon and the CIA:

Go home. Leave us alone. Close your military bases. Cease your sanctions, embargoes, coups, invasions, occupations, regime-change operations, threats, kidnapping, incarceration, prison camps, torture, and support of our dictators. Just go home and deal with your own problems.

On the other hand, the U.S. national-security state says:

Not on your life. We are the U.S. national-security state. We are a force for good in the world. We are here to help you. We have the right to do so. We have the right to bring you democracy and freedom and order and stability. We have the right to support your dictators, oust your rulers and install new ones, sanction and embargo you, kidnap, incarcerate, and torture you, and assassinate you. We are here to stay. You are free to protest to your heart’s content. But the minute you try to force us to return home, we will bomb, shoot, arrest, incarcerate, torture, execute, or assassinate you and anyone standing near you.

If the Boston bombings are, in fact, retaliation for U.S. foreign policy, which is a likely possibility, that’s what the deaths and injuries in Boston are all about — not to protect America from a foreign power that is invading the United States but rather to maintain the “right” of the U.S. national-security state to continue its longtime policy of interfering in the affairs of other countries. That’s what U.S. officials mean when they say that the terrorists are trying to take away our “freedom” — the “freedom” of the U.S. national-security state to do whatever it wants.

Is that worth dying for? Is that worth being maimed for? Is that worth losing your loved ones for? Is that worth living in a violence-filled dysfunctional society? Is that worth going bankrupt for? Is that worth losing your freedom for, at the hands of the national-security state itself?

Look at Switzerland. They’re not being victimized by terrorism. Why is that? The answer is very simple: The Swiss government is oriented solely to national defense — *genuine* national defense. Most Swiss families have assault weapons and other high-powered weapons in their homes. Most everyone is an expert shot. In the event of war, everyone knows where to go and what to do. Plans are already in place as to which bridges will be blown up to impede an invader’s movements. There is a strict no-surrender code in which every military commander is prohibited from surrendering and is required to fight to the death in the defense of his country. No country would dare to invade Switzerland because it would be like swallowing a porcupine. That’s why Nazi Germany decided against invading Switzerland.

Yet, unlike the United States, Switzerland has no overseas military bases. It provides no foreign aid to dictators or anyone else. It doesn’t invade and occupy countries and kill hundreds of thousands of people in the process. It doesn’t sanction or embargo people. It doesn’t try to influence foreign elections. It doesn’t engage in regime-change operations. It doesn’t instigate coups. It doesn’t install or support foreign dictatorships. It minds its own business.

The U.S. national-security state has bamboozled the American people. By changing the name of the “Department of War” to the “Department of Defense,” U.S. officials have been able to seduce Americans into believing that overseas hegemony by the Pentagon and the CIA are necessary to the defense of the United States. They’re not. They’re all about empire and interventionism or, as the Pentagon puts it, being “a force for good in the world.”

The fundamental problem is that while the Pentagon and the CIA love empire and interventionism, foreigners don’t, especially when it entails death and destruction of foreigners. For a while, foreigners will put up with it. But after a certain point, they say, “Enough is enough. Get out. Go home. Leave us alone.” That’s when the retaliation begins. That’s when a “war on terrorism” gets going, with the aim of killing and maiming those who are resisting the imperialism and interventionism. That’s also when the national-security state starts taking away the freedoms of the American people with the ostensible aim of keeping them “safe” from the threat that their policies have produced.

The ultimate issue isn’t only whether the drone assassinations should be ended ... or whether U.S. troops should be withdrawn from Afghanistan ... or whether the U.S. government should continue funding foreign dictatorships or even democratic regimes ... or whether the U.S. government should be imposing sanctions and embargoes on foreign regimes ... or whether the U.S. government should be initiating military coups .. or whether the U.S. government should even be interfering in foreign elections.

The ultimate issue is whether the time has arrived for the American people to finally dismantle the Cold War national-security state. That’s the main cancer on the body politic, the one that is metastasizing into all sorts of other cancers.