

United States Briefs

Scott Ritter's Home Raided by FBI, State Police

Aug. 7—The New York state home of the outspoken Scott Ritter, former UN weapons inspector and U.S. Marine, [was raided](#) mid-day on August 7 by the FBI and state police, based on a search warrant regarding his potential violation of the Foreign Agents Registration Act [FARA](#). Electronic devices were the particular focus of the five-and-a-half-hour search, prying into his communications. This is intended to have a chilling effect on speech in the United States.

Ritter is internationally prominent for his American leadership in calling for negotiations toward ceasefire in Ukraine. He warns that, without diplomacy, we are heading toward World War III. He spoke out, for example, at the June 12 National Press Club press conference in Washington D.C., along with other military experts, sponsored by the Schiller Institute. It was [titled](#) “The Danger of Nuclear War Is Real and Must Be Stopped.”

On the evening of the raid, Ritter [posted](#) a statement. “Today, the U.S. government declared war on me.” He committed to continue his activities for diplomacy toward peace. “I am doing what every concerned American should be doing.”

Tulsi Gabbard Confirms TSA ‘Quiet Skies’ Travel Harassment

Aug. 7—Tulsi Gabbard, formerly a congresswoman, presidential pre-candidate, and Vice-Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, has

[confirmed](#) to reporter Matt Taibbi that she has been a victim of a Transportation Security Administration (TSA) program known as “Quiet Skies,” as first [reported](#) in Tracy Beanz’s publication *UncoverDC*. It is one aspect of the security-state apparatus ostensibly designed to stop terrorism, but more often used for political purposes.

Two weeks ago, Gabbard and her husband were repeatedly stopped for extensive, additional security screening at every airport they passed through, their boarding passes marked with the “SSSS” designation of “Secondary Security Screening Selection.” The invasive searches (“they’re squeezing or patting down underwear, bras, workout clothes, every inch of every piece of clothing”) caused multiple delays of up to 45 minutes.

According to Gabbard, one TSA employee to whom Gabbard presented her military ID for identification, was shocked: “Why are you Quad-S? You’re in the military.” (Members of the military are supposed to receive access to TSA PreCheck security lines, which have *less* than usual security.)

It turns out that Gabbard, a lieutenant colonel in the National Guard, has been listed in a TSA program called Quiet Skies in which teams of multiple TSA agents and air marshals, most of them undercover, follow targets throughout airports and observe them on their flights. Is there a legitimate security reason to think Gabbard is going to hijack an airplane? She and her husband are experiencing transparent political harassment.

UncoverDC reports that Sonya LaBosco, Executive Director of the Air Marshall National Council, told *UncoverDC* that “Gabbard is unaware she has two Explosive Detection Canine Teams, one Transportation Security

Specialist [explosives], one plainclothes TSA Supervisor, and three Federal Air Marshals on every flight she boards.”

New Poll: Americans Oppose Deploying U.S. Troops To Defend Israel

Aug. 7—An online poll conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs between June 21 and July 1 shows that only 41% of Americans support the idea of U.S. troops defending Israel, even if it is attacked by its neighbors. This is down from 53% in 2021. Support from Republicans has decreased from 72% in 2021 to 55% today, and among Democrats, it has dropped from 42% in 2021 to 35% today. This is reported by *Responsible Statecraft* [Aug. 6](#).

Some of those surveyed said they would support a peacekeeping mission, if a ceasefire agreement were reached between Palestine and Israel and kept in place. Against the backdrop of the dangerous situation in Southwest Asia, *Responsible Statecraft*’s Aaron Sobczak notes, Americans are “still unwilling to send U.S. troops into another warzone, no matter the relationship. Perhaps the political will amongst Americans is shifting towards some semblance of international realism after generations of never-ending war.”

AIPAC Money Defeated Rep. Cori Bush in Aug. 6 Primary

Aug. 7—AIPAC’s hand-picked candidate Wesley Bell spent \$268 for each vote in the Democratic primary in Missouri C.D. 1, yet he still received only 51.2% of the ballots to defeat Con-

gresswoman Cori Bush in St. Louis, on August 6. According to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the final figures indicate that Bell spent just under \$17 million with \$10.7 million of that being either AIPAC's money or money organized by AIPAC. Cori Bush spent nearly \$6 million; her only large contribution came from the PAC called "Justice Democrats," which gave about \$1.8 million. This was one of the most expensive primary campaigns in history.

Rep. Bush was targeted by AIPAC after she introduced ceasefire legislation in Congress nine days after the war started in Gaza. AIPAC made her its number two target for defeat after Rep. Jamaal Bowman in New York state.

There were many scathing statements from St. Louis Jewish activists, against AIPAC and its money-influence, including noting that the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* endorsed Bell. One such [letter to the editor](#), which appeared on August 4: "The unprecedented money dump by AIPAC of more than \$8.4 million into St. Louis politics shows what this race is really about: the ability of a foreign country, working through an American super-PAC—which is itself funded in part by right-wing anti-Semitic white nationalists—to buy out Congress and spend billions in tax dollars on bombs and endless war."

Nippon Hires Mike Pompeo To Help It Buy Out U.S. Steel

July 30—Nippon Steel has hired Mike Pompeo, former Secretary of State and former CIA Director, to help the Japanese giant clinch its intended \$14.9 billion buy-out of U.S. Steel. This was reported July 19 by Bloomberg and other media, which all note that Pompeo has bipartisan opposition from Donald Trump and President Joe Biden, as well as the United Steelworkers and state lawmakers in Pennsylvania and elsewhere.

Pompeo has given new meaning to MAGA: Make Globalization Great Again! The money "math" of the deal is applauded by Wall Street and the City of London.

Nippon Steel is the world's fourth-largest steel producer, and U.S. Steel, for years the largest producer in the world, is now the 24th. The de-industrial onslaught was so bad that in 1986 the company took the word "steel" out of its name and called itself "USX," but in 2001 it returned to the name, U.S. Steel.

What can Pompeo offer to conclude the Nippon takeover? Remember, Pompeo is infamous for telling students at Texas A&M: "What's the cadet motto at West Point? You will not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do. I was the CIA director. We lied, we cheated, we stole. It was like we had entire training courses. It reminds you of the glory of the American experiment."

Sixteen U.S. Hospitals and Emergency Rooms Have Shut Down Since January

Aug. 5—In the first half of 2024, 16 U.S. hospitals and emergency rooms shut down. Below is the tally so far. The latest report from *Becker's Hospital Review* warns that 320 more hospitals are on the brink of shutdown, mostly in rural areas.

South: The Medical Center of Southeast Texas in Port Arthur; Select Specialty Hospital in Longview, Texas; Prairieville Family Hospital in Prairieville, Louisiana; Stringfellow Memorial Hospital in Anniston, Alabama; Jellico Regional Hospital in Jellico, Tennessee. And Dallas-based Steward Healthcare is closing four facilities.

Northeast: In Massachusetts, Carney, a teaching hospital, will close this month in Boston; Nashoba Valley Medical Center in Ayer; and New England Sinai, a rehabilitation hospital, in Stoughton.

Central States: Norman Regional Hospital in Norman, Oklahoma is in the process of closing. University of Missouri Health Care Women's Hospital in Columbia, Missouri. In Nebraska, Family Hospital in Papillion and Family Hospital in Omaha.

Great Lakes: In Wisconsin, Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire; Prevea Health in Green Bay will close multiple regional health centers in Wisconsin. Kettering Health in Piqua, Ohio, has closed its emergency room.

Russian Soprano Anna Netrebko Will Sing Once Again in America

Aug. 2—World-famous Russian soprano Anna Netrebko is scheduled to sing in the U.S. in February 2025, at a fundraiser event for the Palm Beach Opera. According to *The New York Times*, this will be her first U.S. appearance since 2019, when she sang at a fundraiser for the New York Metropolitan Opera.

The general manager of the New York Met, Peter Gelb, and his Canadian-Ukrainian wife, [Keri-Lynn Wilson](#), have worked to keep Netrebko off any opera stage across the Western world. Wilson has been staging over-the-top performances of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" Symphony, from which she has removed Schiller's text "Joy" ("*Freude*") and replaced it with "*Slava*"—an homage to the "Slava Ukraina" hail of Hitler's collaborators in World War II Ukraine.

Netrebko has been performing over recent months at opera houses across Europe, including in Paris, Milan, and Berlin. James Barbato, the new leader of the Palm Beach Opera, said, "She is a cultural icon, and her long-awaited return to the U.S. is not to be missed." Netrebko looks forward to Florida. "I am honored to be lending my voice to the Palm Beach Opera's annual gala, [and] I am excited to spend time in this beautiful community."