AM: Joining me now from Cardiff, Plaid Cymru’s Leanne Wood. Leanne Wood, this all takes place in the aftermath of Manchester of course and Wales has not been immune from either Jihadis or from victims of Jihadi attacks. So can I ask you what Plaid Cymru’s message to people who are thinking about how to vote and wondering about the security issue in particular, what is Plaid Cymru’s message to them this morning?

LW: Well it makes no sense to us in Plaid Cyrmru for those public services that rose to the challenge and supported so many people in Manchester. The health service, the emergency services, the police, obviously, for those to be cut and Manchester’s police service has been cut and there are plans for more cuts. And it’s absolutely awful what happened. It’s difficult to see how you can absolutely prevent it in the future, but you can give people some more confidence by making sure there are plans in place and that emergency services are properly resourced to deal with things. We wouldn’t need troops on the streets perhaps if there were enough police officers on the streets.

AM: Well that’s a very good answer about the aftermath of the attack, but what about actually catching people first? Plaid Cymru MPs have voted again and again against surveillance suggestions in the House of Commons against legislation on tighter surveillance. Aren’t you basically on the wrong side with this argument?

LW: We’re against mass surveillance. We’re in favour of more targeted surveillance. It makes sense that if people are under suspicion that the police need to keep a close eye on them and so
we support resources for that. The idea of watching everyone and being able to access everyone’s email and communications that’s where we have a problem and that’s where our MPs have voted consistently then against the Snooper’s Charter for example.

AM: And this is absolutely the heart of the argument because nobody really thinks, do they, the police are going to look at all of our emails, survey everybody. They’ve got 23 thousand suspected Jihadis in this country and they can’t deal with them. So this fantasy that there’s going to be mass surveillance of everybody, everybody’s under threat, everybody’s going to be watched by the big state if we allow these laws. It is, it’s ridiculous.

LW: But if you’re looking to keep people under surveillance that’s a very resource intensive activity.

AM: Exactly.

LW: And the police need to be adequately resourced to do that. It’s better that they watch those people who are at most risk and keep a close eye on those, rather than the entire population. There is such a thing as information overload and it’s better to concentrate resources.

AM: They were never asking for being able to look at the entire population. They know who they need to look at and they need the resources for that. Can I ask you very straightforwardly, after Manchester a lot of people are thinking we need to think again about this whole issue of security. Are you in Plaid Cymru thinking again about it?

LW: Well you have to review security all the time. I mean it’s you know it’s terrible that this has happened, but it’s not – it’s the most serious incident that’s happened since 2005 so something is clearly working in some ways, but then on the other hand the person responsible for this was brought to the attention of authorities, some think there are serious questions that need to be
answered as to why action wasn’t taken earlier to prevent this. So we need to learn lessons from this, that’s a cliché to say maybe, but you have to review at all times.

AM: The Army and some of the armed police are coming off the streets and the beaches and so forth quite soon. You’ve got a huge event in Cardiff, the Champion’s League coming up next weekend. Do you want to see more armed police back for that? Are you concerned about that event in particular?

LW: I want to see it adequately resourced security wise, obviously. It’s going to be a big event. Many people are going to come to Wales. I don’t think people should be put off from coming. It’s going to be an amazing event and I’m sure by making sure that the security side is properly resourced that people will have that confidence and assurance.

AM: Leanne Wood, from a sun-kissed Cardiff thanks for talking to us.