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January 29, 2024
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Daily News Briefing

(In coordination with the Office of Public Affairs)

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BIG PICTURE

- New York Times
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WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

Three U.S. Troops Killed in Drone Attack in Jordan

The [Associated Press](#) (01/29, Miller, Baldor) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (01/28, Gordon) reported that three U.S. service members were killed and at least 34 were injured in an Iran-backed militia's drone strike on a base in northeast Jordan, according to U.S. officials on Sunday. A U.S. official stated that the attack took place overnight at Tower 22, a small outpost near the Syrian border. The reports mentioned that the drone struck the living quarters of the troops; the president and secretary of defense said the U.S. would retaliate. Biden said in a written statement that the United States "will hold all those responsible to account at a time and in a manner (of) our choosing." Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said, "We will take all necessary actions to defend the United States, our troops, and our interests." Based on the information, Iran-backed fighters in east Syria began evacuating their posts, fearing U.S. airstrikes. The story was also reported on by [ABC News](#) (01/29, Crawford, Parks, Farrow), [BBC](#) (01/28, Staff Writer), [CBS News](#) (01/28, Becket, Hubbard), [CNN](#) (01/28, Britzky, Bertrand, Liebermann), [Fox News](#) (01/28, Wallace, Friden, Tomlinson), [The Guardian](#) (01/28, Wintour, Luscombe), [The Hill](#) (01/28, Fortinsky), [NBC News](#) (01/28, Kube, Kenny, Alsharif), the [New York Times](#) (01/28, Baker), [Politico](#) (01/28, McLeary, Seligman), [Reuters](#) (01/29, Stewart, Holland, Ali), [USA TODAY](#) (01/25, Brook, Meyer), and the [Washington Post](#) (01/28, Horton, Olorunnipa, Lamothe).

Shooting Hoops, Changing Perceptions: D.C. Students Face off vs. FBI

The [Washington Post](#) (01/28, Stein) reported that to build relationships with local communities and inspire potential future recruitment, Director Wray and other FBI officials participated in a basketball game against D.C. high school students. According to the article, Director Wray, who cheered on the students from the sidelines, commented on the game's competitiveness and the advantage of youth, saying, "The longer the game goes on, the more youth is likely to triumph." The event, which included speeches from FBI employees, a tour of FBI facilities, and interactive learning about the agency's work, aimed to change perceptions of the FBI, especially in light of its historical tensions with Black communities. The article noted that Director Wray addressed the students after the game, expressing his hope to see them again, possibly at FBI training headquarters in Quantico, receiving their FBI credentials. The article explained that this interaction highlighted the FBI's efforts to present a more approachable and diverse face to the community.

Feds To Dispatch More Resources To Fight Washington's Violent-Crime Surge

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (01/26, Gurman) reported that the Justice Department will commit more federal prosecutors, agents, analysts, and other resources to fighting gun crime in Washington, D.C., where police have struggled to curb violence even as many other U.S. cities have seen double-digit declines in homicides. According to the article, officials said Friday they would provide new tools to enable more federal investigations and prosecutions of violent crime and take particular aim at carjackings, which nearly doubled in the nation's capital last year, frustrating law enforcement and leaving residents on edge. The article explained that the effort in Washington is part of the Biden administration's emphasis on combating violent crime, which voters have cited as a top concern heading into the 2024 election, even as federal data suggest it is falling nationwide. Killings were down about 15% in the 10 largest cities last year compared with 2022, and that includes a 20% drop in both Philadelphia and Houston and 16% in Los Angeles. The article highlighted that in Washington, homicides rose 35% in 2023 compared with the year before, to 274 from 203, according to police department data. The article specified that robberies increased 67%, to 3,470 last year from 2,076 in 2022. Attorney General Merrick Garland said, "We saw an encouraging decline in violent crime in many parts of the country, but there is much more work to do, including here in the District of Columbia." The article indicated that led by the FBI, officials said they would use data to open new federal investigations into shootings and carjackings, while more prosecutors, including some from the Justice Department's Criminal Division, would focus on those cases. Officials, the article elaborated, blame a number of factors for the increase in DC's violent crime. The article noted that D.C.'s U.S. attorney, Matthew Graves, has pointed to what he described as overly lenient criminal-justice laws in the district that allow judges to sentence young defendants to shorter prison sentences, as opposed to longer mandatory minimum prison terms. Graves, speaking at a Police Executive Research Forum conference on Thursday, said that of 182 people charged with armed carjackings in Washington in 2023, 139 were juveniles, and of the 43 adults charged, 31 were age 24 or younger at the time of the offense, making them eligible for shorter sentences under the local law. [Fox News](#) (01/26, Gibson, Spunt) noted that DOJ officials said the rise in carjackings has been particularly concerning. The new resources, the article explained, include moving more prosecutors to investigate cases and a

multi-component Gun Violence Analytic Cell (GVAC) to help identify additional federal investigations that should be opened in the district. The article detailed that to help with court cases, federal prosecutors from the Justice Department's Criminal Division will work on violent crime cases alongside the U.S. Attorney's Office in D.C. According to the article, U.S. Attorney Matthew Graves is moving new prosecutors to focus specifically on carjacking and both lethal and non-lethal firearms cases. The article added that AG Garland said, "This surge in law enforcement resources will build on the department's efforts to target the individuals and organizations that are driving violent crime in the nation's capital. The Justice Department will not rest until every community in our country is safe from the scourge of violent crime." The [Washington Post](#) (01/26, Hermann) added that Matthew M. Graves, the U.S. attorney for D.C., whose office prosecutes nearly all local adult criminal offenses in the District, said in an interview that the new Gun Violence Analytic Cell, led by the FBI with help from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Drug Enforcement Administration, will help identify new leads and new avenues for prosecution in crimes such as carjackings, and fatal and nonfatal shootings. Graves, the article detailed, said that team might analyze a string of 911 calls for sounds of gunshots, even if no one was struck, to see where precisely they occur, how often and at what times of day because "All those things can be really informative of some problem brewing, that wasn't previously on law enforcement radar." In addition, the article continued, Graves said some street crews and carjacking operations have grown sophisticated, requiring investigators to seek information from cell towers, break into encrypted cellphones and collate data from various electronic devices. According to the article, he said the analytics team can help with those leads "to start building out connections and unraveling these networks." [USA Today](#) (01/26, Mayes-Osterman) noted that Justice Department spokesperson Peter Carr declined to say whether the announcement came in response to the wave of violent crime, but he said the initiative is part of a departmentwide strategy launched in May of 2021 to address the pandemic-era spike in violent crime, and builds on similar initiatives in Houston and Memphis, Tennessee. The article explained that U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Matthew M. Graves faced a maelstrom of criticism after internal reports showed his office pressed charges in just one-third of arrests in 2022. The office's prosecution rate, the article highlighted, rose to 44% in fiscal year 2023 after officials scrambled to contain the outcry. [Reuters](#) (01/26, Chiacu), [The Hill](#) (01/26, Suter), [UPI](#) (01/26, Cunningham), and [Washington Examiner](#) (01/26, Villalovas) also reported on the story.

Feds Announce Drug Enforcement Task Forces Arrest Nearly 200 Suspected Drug Traffickers

[Fox News](#) (01/26, Gibson, Spunt) reported that the Justice Department announced nearly 200 people have been arrested and charged in a series of law enforcement actions targeting large-scale drug-trafficking organizations throughout the country. According to the article, the cases in question led to the arrests of defendants in 10 states across the nation, including Alaska, netting nearly 50 kilograms of fentanyl and over 70 kilograms of meth. The article indicated that Attorney General Merrick Garland commented, "These cases represent just a fraction of the work our agents and prosecutors are doing every day to target, disrupt, and dismantle the cartels and drug trafficking organizations that are poisoning the American people." DOJ, the article continued, said all of these cases and arrests are part of Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces operations, which aim to, "identify, disrupt, and dismantle the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the United States by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks." [WTRF \(ABC-7\)](#) (01/26, Baker) quoted AG Garland as saying "Over just three days and across 10 states, the Justice Department has charged nearly 200 individuals for their alleged roles in major drug trafficking operations," and "These cases represent just a fraction of the work our agents and prosecutors are doing every day to target, disrupt, and dismantle the cartels and drug trafficking organizations that are poisoning the American people." The article detailed that Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco said, "Every year, tens of thousands of Americans die from illicit drugs trafficked into our communities, including fentanyl and other synthetic opioids," adding, "This wave of indictments and arrests — stretching from Alaska to Mississippi and from Nebraska to West Virginia — shows the reach of the Justice Department and our partners across the country and around the world when it comes to disrupting narcotics trafficking." The cases announced this week, the article detailed, were brought by federal law enforcement in four districts, leading to the arrest of defendants from 10 states that cover crime rings operating in the Eastern, Southern, and Midwest regions of the U.S. and throughout Alaska. The article noted that officials say these efforts are all part of a Department-wide Violent Crime Reduction Strategy implemented under Attorney General Garland to leverage the resources of the Department's federal prosecutors, agents, investigators, criminal justice experts, and grant programs to combat violent crime. Every U.S. Attorney's Office, the article specified, has worked with state and local partners to implement district-specific violent crime reduction strategies.

The article added that these cases represent the ongoing, targeted efforts by U.S. Attorney's Offices to seize deadly drugs and to prosecute those whose actions bring violence in communities. [Reuters](#) (01/26, O'Brien) and [UPI](#) (01/26, Hughes) also reported on the story.

Justice Department Finds Cuomo Sexually Harassed Employees And Settles With New York State

The [Associated Press](#) (01/26, Izaguirre) reported that a settlement announced Friday confirmed allegations from the damaging misconduct probe that led to the Democrat's resignation. According to the article, the U.S. Justice Department concluded former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo sexually harassed more than a dozen state employees. The article indicated that the settlement between New York and the Justice Department resolves the federal agency's sexual harassment investigation of Cuomo and outlines additional steps the state will take to change how it handles misconduct complaints. Cuomo, once a rising star in the Democratic party, the article continued, left office in 2021 after a report by Attorney General Letitia James concluded he sexually harassed at least 11 women. The article noted that he has denied wrongdoing and argued James' report was driven by politics, intended to force him from office so she could run for governor. The Justice Department investigation, the article detailed, found a similar pattern of sexual misconduct by Cuomo and said he subjected at least 13 state employees to a sexually hostile work environment. The report, the article elaborated, said Cuomo's staffers failed to adequately report allegations and retaliated against four women who raised complaints. The article added that the agency did not release a full report detailing its investigation but instead published a list of its findings. [Politico](#) (01/26, Reisman) detailed that the announcement was made as part of a civil rights settlement with his successor. The article detailed that the agreement concluded the governor's office under Cuomo violated federal Title VII rules against discrimination and retaliation between 2013 and 2021. The justice department, the article specified, found Cuomo "repeatedly subjected" women in his office to non-consensual sexual contact, ogling and gender-based nicknames, while top Cuomo staff "were aware of the conduct and retaliated against four of the women he harassed." The article highlighted that Kristen Clarke, the assistant attorney general in the agency's civil rights division, said in a statement, "The conduct in the Executive Chamber under the former governor, the state's most powerful elected official, was especially egregious because of the stark power differential involved and the victims' lack of avenues to report and redress harassment." [CNN](#) (01/26, Lybrand, Cole) noted that the department said the agreement "memorializes" many of the reforms enacted by Cuomo's successor, Gov. Kathy Hochul, "as well as additional reforms aimed at preventing sexual harassment and retaliation in the Executive Chamber." The article explained that the reforms include the governor's office creating a new "process for complaints against senior officials" so that individuals lodging complaints can have "confidence that their complaints will be handled as independently as possible," the Justice Department said. The governor's office, the article elaborated, will also have to build an "anti-retaliation monitoring policy" to help shield complainants from reprisal. The article added that Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke said in a statement, "With this settlement agreement, the Executive Chamber under Governor Hochul is undertaking additional actions that will address system failures of the past while helping prevent the recurrence of systemic sexual harassment and retaliation in the future." The [Washington Post](#) (01/26, Paybarah, Dawsey) highlighted that in announcing the settlement, the Justice Department also acknowledged Hochul's efforts to correct what it said had gone awry under her predecessor, with U.S. Attorney Breon Peace of the Eastern District of New York saying in a statement, "We appreciate the Governor's stated determination to make sure that sexual harassment does not recur at the highest level of New York State government." [Bloomberg](#) (01/26, Strohm) quoted an attorney for Cuomo, Rita Glavin, who said he "did not sexually harass anyone" and that the Justice Department investigation was based entirely on a "deeply flawed, inaccurate, biased and misleading report" in 2021 by New York Attorney General Letitia James. [CNBC](#) (01/26, Breuninger) highlighted that Cuomo's spokesman, Rich Azzopardi, suggested in a statement that Breon Peace, the U.S. attorney who signed off on the agreement, had a conflict of interest because he was the law partner of Joon Kim, who led the New York attorney general's 2021 investigation of Cuomo. The [New York Times](#) (01/26, Ashford) added that a person briefed on the Justice Department's process said the investigation included a review of the attorney general's report and public statements, as well as new interviews that turned up new victims. Additional reporting on the story was provided by [Reuters](#) (01/26, Harte), [Wall Street Journal](#) (01/26, Vielkind), [The Hill](#) (01/26, Polus), [Rolling Stone](#) (01/26, Bort), [Axios](#) (01/26, Habeshian), [Politico](#) (01/26, Reisman), [Fox News](#) (01/26, Casiano), [New York Post](#) (01/26, Golden), [The Guardian](#) (01/26, Pengelly), and [Salon](#) (01/26, McClure).

Nikki Haley Targeted in 'Swatting' Incident at Her Home

[ABC News](#) (01/28, Kerr) reported that Nikki Haley, the former South Carolina governor and 2024 Republican presidential candidate, revealed that her parents were the victims of a "swatting" hoax in December at their home

on Kiawah Island, South Carolina. The article explained that during the incident, law enforcement officers, misled by a false 911 call, had their guns drawn on Haley's parents. Highlighting the dangers of such incidents, Haley quoted, "It put the law enforcement officers in danger, it put my family in danger," and referred to the episode as an "awful situation." According to the article, this event is part of a broader context of threats against public figures, as noted by Attorney General Merrick Garland, who mentioned a "deeply disturbing spike" in threats, including those against FBI agents and other officials, underscoring the escalating tensions and risks in the current political climate. Additional reporting on the story was provided by [NBC News](#) (01/28, Concepcion, Roman), [Reuters](#) (01/27, Ulmer, Eisler, So), [New York Times](#) (01/27, Vigdor), [Fox News](#) (01/27, Pandolfo), [USA Today](#) (01/27, Kuchar), [The Hill](#) (01/27, Timotija), [The Guardian](#) (01/27, Aratani), [New York Post](#) (01/27, Levine), [HuffPost](#) (01/27, Murdock), [Politico](#) (01/27, Alafritz), [SaltWire](#) (01/27, Ulmer, Eisler, So), [The Messenger](#) (01/28, Leeman), [Newsweek](#) (01/27, Dobkin), and [NBC Nightly News](#) (01/27, Video).

Pelosi Wants FBI to Investigate Pro-Palestinian Protesters

[CNN](#) (01/28, Graef) reported that former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi faced criticism for suggesting that some pro-Palestinian protesters are connected to Russia, a claim she made on CNN's "State of the Union." Pelosi mentioned, "Some, I think, are connected to Russia. And I say that having looked at this for a long time now, as you know," but clarified, "I don't think they're plants." She also expressed a desire for an FBI investigation into the financing of these protests, saying, "I think some financing should be investigated, and I want to ask the FBI to investigate that." According to the article, this statement was met with backlash from the Council on American-Islamic Relations, with its head Nihad Awad calling Pelosi's suggestion for an FBI investigation "downright authoritarian." Additional reporting on the story was provided by the [New York Times](#) (01/28, Guo), [Rolling Stone](#) (01/28, Wade), [Reuters](#) (01/28, Singh), [The Hill](#) (01/28, Sforza), [NPR](#) (01/28, Bowman), [Daily Mail](#) (01/28, Richter), [The Daily Beast](#) (01/28, Yen), [NBC News](#) (01/28, Concepcion), [Daily Wire](#) (01/28, Staff Writer), [The Messenger](#) (01/28, Leeman), [UPI](#) (01/28, Schrader), [Fox News](#) (01/28, Panreck), and [Washington Times](#) (01/28, Touchberry).

House GOP Unveils Mayorkas Impeachment Articles Despite Lack of Evidence

The [New York Times](#) (01/28, Demirjian) reported that House Republicans released two articles of impeachment against Alejandro N. Mayorkas, Secretary of Homeland Security, accusing him of failing to uphold immigration law and breaching public trust. According to the article, the charges, set to be approved by a House committee, stem from Mayorkas's handling of migration at the U.S.-Mexico border and are part of the Republicans' critique of President Biden's immigration policies. The articles allege that Mayorkas willfully flouted laws requiring migrant detention and lied to Congress about border security, with Representative Mark Green stating, "These articles lay out a clear, compelling and irrefutable case for Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas's impeachment." The article explained that despite the charges, Democrats and legal experts argue they amount to a policy dispute rather than high crimes, with Representative Bennie Thompson dismissing the investigation as "fact-free." The article noted that the impeachment is unlikely to succeed in the Democratic-led Senate, but it highlights the political tensions surrounding immigration policy. Additional reporting on the story was provided by [Associated Press](#) (01/28, Santana), [ABC News](#) (01/28, Owen), [NBC News](#) (01/28, Stewart, Lebowitz), [NPR](#) (01/28, Staff Writer), [Washington Post](#) (01/28, Alemany), [The Guardian](#) (01/28, Luscombe), [The Independent](#) (01/28, Bowden), [UPI](#) (01/28, Moran), [The Daily Beast](#) (01/28, Bolies), [Vanity Fair](#) (01/28, McCordick), [Fox News](#) (01/28, Hagstrom), [Axios](#) (01/28, Kight), [CNN](#) (01/28, Fossum, Alvarez, Grayer), [The Hill](#) (01/28, Beitsch), [CBS News](#) (01/28, Hubbard), [Politico](#) (01/28, Carney), [NBC Nightly News](#) (01/28, Video), and [MSNBC](#) (01/28, Video). An opinion piece by the [Wall Street Journal](#) (01/28, Chertoff) was also posted.

Ex-FBI Official Who Shut down Hunter Biden Lines of Investigation Violated Hatch Act With Anti-Trump Posts

[Fox News](#) (01/28, Singman) reported that the U.S. Office of Special Counsel determined that former FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge Timothy Thibault violated the Hatch Act with his political posts on social media, following allegations of partisanship affecting FBI investigations, including actions related to Hunter Biden and former President Trump. According to the article, whistleblowers had claimed that Thibault's decision to shut down investigations into the Bidens and influence an investigation into Trump was approved by Director Wray and Attorney General Merrick Garland. The article explained that the Hatch Act Unit's chief, Ana Galindo-Marrone, concluded that Thibault's retweet from the Lincoln Project constituted a violation of the Hatch Act, stating, "Mr. Thibault has been warned that if in the future he engaged in activity prohibited by the Hatch Act while employed in a Hatch Act-covered position, OSC would consider such activity to be a willful and knowing violation of the law that

could result in disciplinary action." The article noted that Senator Chuck Grassley, who referred Thibault for investigation, emphasized the need for non-partisanship in federal law enforcement, asserting, "It's up to the bureau to restore that trust through transparency and cooperation with congressional oversight." [The Epoch Times](#) (1/27, Steiber) also reported on the story.

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COUNTERTERRORISM

Ex-FBI Officials Warn Congress of 'New and Imminent' Border Danger

The [New York Post](#) (01/27, Vincent, Levine) reported that a group of former FBI officials warned that the Biden administration's border policy poses an "imminent danger" to the US, citing the influx of "military-aged men" from various global regions, potentially including those not friendly to the US. According to the article, these officials, including former Terrorist Screening Center Director Timothy Healy and former FBI assistant directors Kevin Brock and Chris Swecker, expressed concerns in a letter sent to congressional leaders. They highlighted the risk of terror attacks similar to the October 7 attack by Hamas on Israel, emphasizing the vulnerability due to the current border situation. The letter stressed the urgent need to address this security threat, especially considering the significant number of migrant encounters reported by Customs and Border Protection. The article noted that Republican leaders have also criticized the administration's border policies, linking them to national security concerns and the ongoing crisis of drug smuggling.

Man Charged in 20-Plus Calls of False Threats in U.S., Canada Pleads Guilty

The [Associated Press](#) (01/26, Staff Writer) reported that Ashton Garcia, a 21-year-old from Washington state, pleaded guilty to making over 20 "swatting" calls across the US and Canada, including fake bomb threats and other emergency situations. According to the article, these calls, often using voice-over-internet technology to conceal his identity, led to emergency responses, with law enforcement entering homes with guns drawn and detaining individuals. Garcia's actions, which included extortion and threats of explosives, prompted a federal investigation, leading to his indictment on 10 felony counts. Prosecutors have recommended a four-year prison sentence as part of his plea agreement, with sentencing scheduled for April. The article noted that the case underlines the serious nature of such hoaxes, highlighted by a 2017 incident where a police officer killed a man while responding to a similar hoax call. The [press release](#) noted that the case is being investigated by the FBI, with substantial assistance from numerous local law enforcement agencies throughout the United States and in Canada. The [New York Times](#) (01/27, Schmall) also reported on the story.

Police Arrest Teen Said to Be Linked to Hundreds of Swatting Attacks

[WIRED](#) (01/28, Mehrotra) reported that a 17-year-old from California, known by the handle Torswats, was arrested and is being extradited to Florida to face four felony charges related to his involvement in a nationwide "swatting" campaign. According to the article, the FBI had been tracking Torswats, who is alleged to have made hoax calls that led to emergency police responses, including threats to mosques and schools. The article explained that private investigator Brad Dennis, who had been aiding the FBI's investigation, gathered crucial evidence leading to the teenager's arrest. The FBI's Seattle field office, which oversaw the investigation, declined to comment on the case. The article noted that this arrest comes as part of a broader effort to combat the surge in swatting incidents across the US, with the FBI launching the National Common Operation Picture – Virtual Command Center to track such activities in real time.

Last of NY 'Newburgh Four' Bomb Plot Co-defendants Set to Leave Prison

[Gothamist](#) (01/26, Venugopal) reported that James Cromitie, convicted in 2010 of plotting to bomb Jewish sites and military aircraft, was granted "compassionate release" by U.S. District Court Judge Colleen McMahon, who criticized law enforcement for entrapment. According to the article, McMahon's release order highlighted that Cromitie, a small-time criminal, was coerced into the plot by the FBI's informant, Shaheed Hussain, who offered incentives like expensive cars and money. The article added that the plot, deemed a "manufactured terrorist plot" by the FBI for counterterrorism success, was extensively covered by the media, with McMahon and others condemning the FBI's tactics as exploitative and creating a terrorist where none existed. The article noted that Cromitie's release follows similar orders for his co-defendants, and the case has been cited as an example of government overreach in counterterrorism efforts.

FBI Probes Antisemitic Comments Directed at Connecticut Common Council

[Connecticut News](#) (01/28, Krosnowski) reported that the Norwalk Common Council members received antisemitic postcards and experienced similar comments during a Zoom meeting, leading to police and FBI investigations. According to the article, the postcards, postmarked from California, contained discriminatory messages similar to those expressed in the disrupted meeting, and were seized by the police for investigation. Councilor Lisa Shanahan mentioned adjusting security for future meetings, focusing on better identification and control of attendees. The article noted that the incident, described as a blatant display of hatred, has prompted discussions about stronger measures to prevent such occurrences and ensure the safety of council members during virtual meetings.

Opinion: As Iran-Backed Militias Attack Americans, Biden Tries to Save Tehran Terrorists

An opinion piece written by John Bolton for the [New York Post](#) (01/28, Bolton) criticized the Biden administration for sharing intelligence about a potential terrorist attack with Iran, despite Tehran's active efforts against American interests, including directing assassination campaigns against current and former US officials. According to the article, Bolton, who has personally received FBI warnings about Iran's attempts to assassinate him, views this decision as an unforced error and a failure of judgment. He argued that the duty-to-warn policy, originating from the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, should not apply to states like Iran that threaten American citizens, and called for a strengthening of the policy in light of these circumstances. Bolton assessed that the Biden administration's approach has been misguided and that Washington should learn from this mistake to better protect American interests.

Opinion: Predator or Prey? Undercover Federal Agents Target Vulnerable Teens

An opinion piece from the [Denver Post](#) (01/26, Marshall) discussed the worrying trend of undercover federal agents targeting vulnerable teenagers, including those with intellectual disabilities, in counterterrorism operations. In the article, undercover federal agents, particularly from the FBI, were highlighted for engaging minors online in counterterrorism operations. According to the article, the agents reportedly targeted teens, some with intellectual disabilities, and coaxed them into planning acts related to terrorism. The cases of Humzah Mashkoor, Davin Daniel Meyer, and Mateo Ventura, all arrested after turning 18, exemplify this approach. These operations involved extensive interaction with the targets, including face-to-face meetings and detailed planning. The article explained that the FBI used informants to establish close connections with these minors, discussing specific logistical details like travel and equipment for joining terrorist groups. The article criticized the FBI for this method, arguing that it preys on vulnerable individuals without considering alternative, more constructive interventions that involve family and community support. The author raised ethical concerns about this practice, questioning whether the FBI's actions are leading impressionable youths to commit crimes they otherwise would not have contemplated.

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COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

Chinese Music Student Convicted of Stalking Pro-Democracy Activist at Berklee

[UPI](#) (01/26, Coote) reported that Xiaolei Wu, a 26-year-old Chinese national studying at the Berklee College of Music, was convicted of threatening and cyberstalking a fellow student who supported democracy in China. According to the article, Wu's criminal activities included sending threatening messages on WeChat and Instagram, and he even contacted China's public security agency, implying a threat to the victim's family. Special Agent in Charge Jodi Cohen of the FBI Boston Division emphasized the gravity of Wu's actions, stating, "What Xiaolei Wu did in attempting to silence and intimidate an activist who expressed dissension with the ruling Communist Party of China is not only criminal but completely against our country's democratic values. Today's conviction upholds one of our most fundamental rights -- freedom of speech -- and the FBI will ensure that anyone who tries to infringe on this right using threats or harassment will face the same fate as Mr. Wu."

FBI Scrambles to Review 22 Years of High-Level Cases Over Fears of Compromise by Convicted Spy Charles McGonigal

[Daily Mail](#) (01/27, Woodfield) reported that Charles McGonigal, a former head of counterintelligence in New York for the FBI, has caused a major internal review of his past investigations due to his conviction for conspiring with a sanctioned Russian oligarch, Oleg Deripaska, and hiding a bribe from an Albanian intelligence official. According to the article, the FBI is scrutinizing sensitive cases dating back to McGonigal's tenure as a special agent, fearing his actions may have compromised their integrity. The article explained that McGonigal, already sentenced to over

four years for his dealings with Deripaska, faces additional sentencing for the Albanian case, highlighting the gravity of his betrayal of his role in national security and counterintelligence. The article noted that the review of McGonigal's past cases indicates the depth of concern within the FBI about the potential impact of his actions on key investigations over his 22-year career.

The Pentagon Tried to Hide That It Bought Americans' Data Without a Warrant

[WIRED](#) (01/26, Cameron) reported that the Pentagon has been revealed to have purchased Americans' phone location data and internet metadata without a warrant, an activity that was kept hidden until Senator Ron Wyden delayed the appointment of a new NSA director. According to the article, this disclosure brought to light that the Defense Intelligence Agency, the NSA, and other intelligence agencies, including the FBI, were acquiring location data from private companies, circumventing the warrant process. Wyden's intervention has sparked a broader debate on surveillance reform, with a focus on legislation like the Fourth Amendment Is Not For Sale Act, which seeks to stop these warrantless data purchases. The article noted that the debate is intensifying in Congress, with conflicting views on the need for surveillance warrants and the reauthorization of Section 702, a key surveillance authority.

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CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Former Los Angeles Council Member Sentenced To 13 Years In Prison For Pay-To-Play Corruption Scandal

The [Associated Press](#) (01/26, Staff Writer) reported that a former Los Angeles City Council member was sentenced Friday to 13 years in prison for a pay-to-play bribery scandal involving real estate development projects. José Huizar, 55, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge John F. Walter, who also ordered him to pay \$443,905 in restitution to the city and \$38,792 to the IRS. Prosecutors said in a sentencing memorandum that Huizar chose "to place his own lust for money and power above the rights and interests of the people he was elected to serve." The article added that prosecutors said that from 2013 to 2017, Huizar masterminded a \$1.5 million scheme tied to the approval of downtown high-rise developments while he chaired the city's powerful Planning and Land Use Management Committee. Huizar was accused of giving favorable treatment in exchange for cash, casino gambling chips, luxury stays in Las Vegas, expensive meals, prostitution services, flights, concert and sports tickets, political contributions, and funds to settle a sexual harassment lawsuit. A DOJ [press release](#) quoted Donald Alway, the Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office, who said, "This years-long investigation uncovered one of the most audacious public corruption cases in this city's history, this case would not have been possible without the dedication of agents and prosecutors – and importantly – the cooperation of many citizens who were fed up with rampant malfeasance by public officials. Mr. Huizar ignored the needs of his constituents and instead, served his own interests by accepting bribes and a wide assortment of luxury perks from wealthy real estate moguls and others who could afford Huizar's political favors at the taxpayer's expense. My hope is that this case brings more citizens forward to the FBI when they suspect corrupt practices and foreign influence." The [Hill](#) (01/26, Irwin), [Court House News](#) (01/26, Pettersson), [KTLA \(CW-5\)](#) (01/26, Kiszla), [Los Angeles Times](#) (01/26, Smith, Zahniser), [LA ist](#) (01/26, Stoltze), [Daily News](#) (01/26, Shuster), [California Globe](#) (01/26, Symon), [LA Weekly](#) (01/26, Rocha), and the [Los Angeles Magazine](#) (01/26, McPhee) also reported on the story.

A British Painting Stolen by Mobsters Is Returned to the Owner's Son — 54 Years Later

The [Associated Press](#) (01/26, Brown) reported that an 18th-century British painting stolen by New Jersey mobsters in 1969 has been returned more than a half-century later to the family that bought it for \$7,500 during the Great Depression, the FBI's Salt Lake City field office announced Friday. The article added that the 40-inch-by-50-inch (102-cm-by-127-cm) John Opie painting — titled "The Schoolmistress" — is the sister painting of a similar work housed in the Tate Britain art gallery in London. Authorities believe the piece was stolen with the help of a former New Jersey lawmaker, and then passed among organized crime members for years before it ended up in the southern Utah city of St. George. A Utah man had purchased a house in Florida in 1989 from Joseph Covello Sr. — a convicted mobster linked to the Gambino family — and the painting was included in the sale, the FBI said. The article noted that when the buyer died in 2020, a Utah accounting firm that was seeking to liquidate his property sought an appraisal for the painting and it was discovered to likely be the stolen piece, the FBI said. The article quoted FBI Special Agent Gary France, who worked on the case, who said, "This piece of art, what a history it's had, it traveled all through the U.K. when it was first painted, and owned by quite a few families in the U.K. And then it travels overseas to the United States and is sold during the Great Depression and then stolen by the mob and

recovered by the FBI decades later. It's quite amazing." The [Daily Beast](#) (01/26, Olmsted), and [ABC News](#) (01/26, Deliso) also reported on the story.

Sexual Assaults Hit New High in 2023 For Cruise Passengers Says FBI

[Fox News](#) (01/27, Eberhart) reported that the number of reported rapes and sexual assaults on cruises hit a new high in 2023, according to stats compiled by the FBI. There were 131 reported incidents in 2023 compared to 87 in 2022 and 101 in 2019 before the coronavirus pandemic crippled the industry for about two years. The article added that the actual number of incidents is likely much higher, experts warn. Nationally, two out of three sexual assaults go unreported, according to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, and the 2010 Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act doesn't protect non-U.S. citizens. According to the article, the Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act doesn't require cruises to report crimes against non-U.S. citizens, and there's a narrow definition of rape that cruise line management companies use to "significantly" underreport incidents to the FBI. The article mentioned that the FBI said in an emailed statement that the bureau works closely with the Department of Transportation to remain in accordance with the Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act. The article quoted the FBI, which said, "The CVSSA prescribes security and safety requirements for most cruise ships that embark and disembark in the U.S., and mandates reporting to the FBI of missing persons and certain alleged criminal activity occurring on board applicable cruise vessels,".

Russian Man Who Flew on Los Angeles Flight Without Passport or Ticket Found Guilty of Being Stowaway

The [Associated Press](#) (01/26, Craig) reported that a Russian man who flew on a plane from Denmark to Los Angeles in November without a passport or ticket is guilty of being a stowaway on an aircraft, a federal jury found Friday. The article added that Sergey Vladimirovich Ochigava arrived at Los Angeles International Airport on Nov. 4 via Scandinavian Airlines flight 931 from Copenhagen. A U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer could not find Ochigava on the flight's manifest or any other incoming international flights, according to a complaint filed Nov. 6 in Los Angeles federal court. The article mentioned that after a three-day trial, the court's jury found Ochigava, 46, guilty of one count of being a stowaway on an aircraft. He faces a maximum sentence of five years in federal prison when he is sentenced Feb. 5, the DOJ said in a statement. [KNBC \(NBC-4\)](#) (01/27, Soto) reported that the FBI and CBP along with assistance from Copenhagen Airport Police investigated the case. The [New York Post](#) (01/27, McEntyre), and the [Los Angeles Times](#) (01/27, Leon) also reported on the story.

Cross Burning In South Carolina Stirs Debate Over Hate-Crimes Laws

The [Washington Post](#) (01/26, Craig) reported that Monica and Shawn Williams, both Black veterans of the U.S. Army, thought they had bought a retirement home in a neighborhood that lived up to South Carolina's slogan: "Smiling Faces, Beautiful Places." But within hours of moving into their three-bedroom house near Myrtle Beach in 2021, the Williamses said their next-door neighbors, a White couple, started scowling at them. The uncomfortable stares eventually led to racial slurs and a bitter two-year dispute. Then, on the day after Thanksgiving, they discovered a cross set on fire just outside their yard. The article stated that the FBI is investigating what happened to the Williamses. In December, after news of the cross burning became public, the FBI visited the house where Butler and Hartnett live. An FBI spokesman said the investigation is ongoing.

Man Who Ran Dogfighting Ring With More Than 50 Dogs Training at His Property Sentenced

[ABC News](#) (01/26, Haworth) reported that an Ohio man has been sentenced to more than a decade in prison after it was discovered he was running a dogfighting ring from his residence where he kept more than 50 dogs, according to authorities. The article noted that law enforcement first investigated 40-year-old Michael Valentine of Bidwell, Ohio, in 2019 after a dog attacked a small child who was living with him, according to a press release from the DOJ detailing the case against Valentine. The article added that three years later on March 8, 2022, a second search was carried out at Valentine's property -- this time as part of a fentanyl distribution investigation -- and the search revealed Valentine had kept more dog fighting paraphernalia, as well as two assault-style rifles, the DOJ said. The article quoted Acting Special Agent in Charge Robert J. Springer of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Inspector General (USDA-OIG), who said, "The relevant provisions of the Animal Welfare Act were designed to protect animals from being used in illegal fighting ventures, which often entail other forms of criminal activity including drug trafficking and illegal possession of firearms, the USDA-OIG thanks the Justice Department, who prosecuted the case, and Gallia County Sheriff's Office and the FBI for their assistance with the investigation."

Colorado Man Indicted by Federal Grand Jury for Aiming Laser Pointer at Denver Police Helicopter

[CBS News](#) (01/26, Richardson) reported that the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Colorado announced Friday that a man has been indicted by a federal grand jury after pointing a laser at an aircraft that was being operated by police. The article added that 27-year-old Josef Alejandro Marmolejo-Lucio, age 27, of Denver, has been indicted on a single count of aiming a laser pointer at an aircraft, according to the attorney's office. The attorney's office says on Oct. 5, 2023, Marmolejo-Lucio aimed the laser pointer at "Air 1," a helicopter that was being operated by the Denver Police Department. According to the article, Marmolejo-Lucio had his initial court appearance on Wednesday before U.S. Magistrate Judge Scott T. Varholak. The case is being investigated by the FBI and Assistant U.S. Attorney Cyrus Chung is overseeing the prosecution.

Two Women Tried to Expose Jeffrey Epstein Three Decades Ago. Why Didn't the FBI Stop Him?

The [Independent](#) (01/28, Blanco) reported that ██████████ contacted the FBI in 1996 after ██████████ were molested by Epstein. While the recent unsealing of documents provided some clarity regarding the extent of his criminal enterprise, federal authorities have failed to answer why it took so long to prosecute the disgraced financier. The article stated that while the public attention has been largely placed on the prominent names linked to Epstein and the scandalous revelations in the last batch of unredacted documents, core questions about the way federal investigators essentially ignored the ██████████ reports have yet to be answered.

Couple Working as Chauffeurs Accused of Stealing \$34M From Oregon Publishing Giant in Exaggerated and Bogus Charges

[NBC News](#) (01/26, Lentheng) reported that an Oregon couple who worked for an Oregon publishing giant have been charged with stealing \$34 million in exorbitant and bogus charges, including lavish properties and a private jet, according to court documents. The article added that Sergey V. Lebedenko, 53, and his wife Galina A. Lebedenko, 48, were charged with wire fraud and money laundering for allegedly defrauding Win McCormack, a 79-year-old political activist and founder of Tin House Books, from 2016 to 2023. According to the article, for years, Sergey Lebedenko worked as a driver for McCormack, and their business relationship soon changed with time and he and his wife housesat for McCormack and ran his errands, a criminal complaint filed Monday in the U.S. District Court of Oregon said. The Lebedenkos charged their services to McCormack's American Express card in the name of their business, Astra Car Service. However, McCormack did not regularly check his card charges, and for years the couple raked in piles of money — including \$9 million in 2019 alone — right under McCormack's nose, the complaint said. The article stated that the charges were flagged to the FBI in December by McCormack's legal representatives, per the complaint. The article mentioned that the complaint said McCormack spoke to agents from the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation unit on Jan. 4, 2023, and told them he later discovered Astra Car Service LLC had charged a total of \$34 million on McCormack's AmEx card from 2016 to 2023.

Insider Trader Who Made \$1 Million on Merck's Pandion Deal Gets Five Months

[Bloomberg](#) (01/26, Dolmetsch) reported that a man who made more than \$1 million insider trading on confidential information about Merck & Co.'s 2021 acquisition of Pandion Therapeutics was ordered to spend five months behind bars. The article added that Brandon Wong was sentenced Friday by US District Judge Edgardo Ramos in Manhattan. Wong pleaded guilty in April to insider trading based on deal information that his friend Seth Markin, then an FBI trainee, stole off the computer of his girlfriend, a corporate lawyer.

Ex-Gang Leader Who Spent Years in Witness Protection Charged in Fire That Killed Kids, Pregnant Women

The [New York Post](#) (01/26, Farberov) reported that a former Los Angeles gang leader-turned-federal informant has been charged with a dozen counts of murder in connection with a horrific 1993 apartment building fire that killed children and pregnant women — after he spent years in the witness protection program and on the lam. The article added that Juan "Termite" Romero, 57, was recently arrested in California for allegedly setting fire to a building in Westlake more than three decades ago. The article stated that the May 3, 1993, inferno killed seven children, ranging in age from 15 months to 11 years, along with three women, two of whom were moms-to-be. Forty other residents of the three-story building were injured. The article noted that in the mid-2000s, Romero became an FBI informant and agreed to testify against one of his former gang high-ups in an unrelated racketeering case. In exchange, he was whisked into the federal witness protection program.

Republican State Senator Asks Possibility of Reopening AG Paxton Impeachment Case

[CBS News](#) (01/27, Fink) reported that state Senator Drew Springer wrote a letter to Lt. Governor Dan Patrick and the 30 other Senators Thursday asking if it's possible to reopen impeachment proceedings against Ken Paxton. The article added that it comes after the Attorney General announced that he was no longer contesting the civil lawsuit

brought by four whistleblowers, which ultimately led to Paxton's impeachment in the Texas House. The article mentioned that the whistleblowers filed suit against the Attorney General's Office claiming they were wrongfully fired after they went to the FBI more than three years ago to report allegations of bribery among other things against Paxton. Paxton has denied any wrongdoing despite his office's announcement they will no longer challenge the lawsuit. [Fox News](#) (01/26, Pandolfo) also reported on the story.

Arkansas Squatters Stake Claim on Land, Says It Belongs to Them Since They Are Part of Exclusive Group

[Fox News](#) (01/27, Whitten) reported that squatters have staked their claim on land in Arkansas, claiming that they are part of a sovereign citizen group known to have engaged in violent confrontations with law enforcement. The article added that in a press release, Sharp County Sheriff Shane Russell said that the investigation into the squatters began in August 2023. Authorities said that they were alerted to a couple who moved into an RV and an "enclosed property" owned by someone else. The pair allegedly built a permanent structure, dug a septic line, installed solar panels, and began storing large amounts of water. The article noted that on Thursday, Jan. 25, a large group of law enforcement executed a search warrant on the squatters and arrested the two individuals without incident. Authorities said that the pair initially refused to identify themselves, but that the male suspect identified himself as Saleem Yosiyah YisraEl. The article mentioned that authorities said that they found multiple vehicles on the property with "fictitious license plates." Along with the illegal vehicles, authorities found evidence of illegal scams that the pair were conducting from the RV. The scam involved the Postal Service and several thousand dollars of Iraqi currency, police said. Authorities concluded that the FBI is investigating the alleged fraudulent documentation and cybercrimes.

FBI Searching for "Fledgling Bandit" Wanted for Robbing Four Banks in Colorado

[CBS News](#) (01/26, McRae) reported that the FBI is searching for a man who has robbed four banks in different Denver metro area cities in the past six weeks. The article stated that the FBI said they dubbed the suspect the "Fledgling Bandit" because he "appears to be new to this violation." He is described as a white or Hispanic male in his 30s, 5-foot-6 to 5-foot-8 tall, 180 pounds with a medium build, with brown hair that is possibly cut in a fade style and a stud earring.

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CYBER DIVISION

Sextortion Training Materials Found on TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube, According to New Report

[NBC News](#) (01/27, Kolodny) reported that a form of cybercrime called "financial sextortion" is rapidly rising in North America and Australia, with a major portion driven by a non-organized cybercriminal group in West Africa who call themselves "Yahoo Boys," according to a new study from the Network Contagion Research Institute (NCRI). The article added that sextortion is "a crime that involves adults coercing kids and teens into sending explicit images online," according to the FBI. The criminals threaten their victims with the wide distribution of explicit images, including to the victims' friends and family, unless the victims pay them, repeatedly, through a variety of peer-to-peer payment apps, cryptocurrency transfers, and gift cards. NCRI, a nonprofit, found cybercriminals used the social apps Instagram, Snapchat, and Wizz to find and connect with their marks. The article noted that Yahoo Boys' tactics gained popularity among some as a way to get rich quickly in West Africa, where there are scant other means of earning income, according to a 2023 Atavist investigation. Popular songs referencing Yahoo Boys have lent the cybercriminal gangs cultural clout. The article mentioned that in the U.S., people who have experienced sextortion (or their parents or guardians) can report it via the FBI's cybercrime portal IC3.gov online, or a local FBI field office.

FBI Dismantles Blackcat, Triggering Strong Reaction

[IN CYBER NEWS](#) (01/26, Staff Writer) reported that on December 19, 2023, the FBI announced it had infiltrated the Russian cybercriminal group ALPHV/BlackCat, the world's runner-up in ransomware attacks. The federal agency seized the group's dark website and got its hands on decryption keys, which allowed more than 500 organizations to retrieve their data. The article added that BlackCat reacted strongly to the operation. The Ransomware-as-a-Service (RaaS) first regained temporary control of its dark website, then maintained the FBI had only reached a part of the infrastructure. According to the cybercriminal group, the authorities' operation made it impossible to decrypt the data of 3,000 additional victims. The article stated that to encourage its affiliates to continue launching

attacks, the group drastically cut its commission to 10% of the bounty, compared to 20% and 40% previously. More importantly, BlackCat lifted all restrictions on its members, including those against attacking hospitals and critical infrastructure. The article quoted Lisa O. Monaco, United States Deputy Attorney General, who said, "With a decryption tool provided by the FBI to hundreds of ransomware victims worldwide, businesses and schools were able to reopen, and health care and emergency services were able to come back online. We will continue to prioritize disruptions and place victims at the center of our strategy to dismantle the ecosystem fueling cybercrime,".

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CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

Supreme Court Is Urged to Rule Trump Is Ineligible to Be President Again Because of the Jan. 6 Riot

The [Associated Press](#) (01/26, Sherman) reported that lawyers have urged the Supreme Court to declare Donald Trump ineligible for the presidency due to his involvement in the Jan. 6 Capitol riot, arguing that he organized and incited the violence to overturn his 2020 election loss. According to the article, in their filing, they detailed Trump's actions leading up to the riot, including his December 19, 2020, tweet about the planned protest and his speech on Jan. 6, stating, "Trump lit the fuse." The article explained that Trump's lawyers, countering these claims, argue that keeping him off the ballot would disenfranchise millions and create chaos, insisting that he did not engage in insurrection and that the presidency is not covered by the relevant 14th Amendment provision. The article noted that the case, which will be heard on February 8, presents the high court with its first examination of the 14th Amendment's insurrection clause, with potential implications for Trump's eligibility in the 2024 presidential election. Both the Colorado Supreme Court ruling and the Maine secretary of state's decision that Trump is ineligible to appear on their states' ballots are pending appeals. Additional reporting on the story was provided by [NBC News](#) (01/26, Hurley), [The Atlantic](#) (01/26, Pearlstein), [CNN](#) (01/26, Biskupic, Cole, Cohen), [Reuters](#) (01/26, Kruzel), [USA Today](#) (01/26, Groppe), and the [New York Times](#) (01/26, VanSickle).

Peter Navarro Decries Contempt of Congress Charges Violates Constitution's Separation of Powers

[The Hill](#) (01/26, Irwin) reported that Peter Navarro, a former adviser to President Trump, argued that compelling him to testify before Congress violates the Constitution's separation of powers, as he was sentenced to four months in prison for contempt of Congress related to the Jan. 6 Capitol riot. According to the article, Navarro, convicted on two counts of contempt for failing to comply with a congressional subpoena, claimed the Department of Justice's long-standing policy supports his position that senior advisors cannot be compelled to testify. He described his sentencing as part of a broader effort to target Trump, stating, "If anybody thinks they're not trying to put Donald Trump in prison for 700 years, they just need to look at what they did to me yesterday." The article noted that Navarro's case was celebrated by Rep. Bennie Thompson, chair of the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection, who applauded the U.S. Attorneys for their successful prosecution. [Fox News](#) (01/26, Video) also reported on the story.

Judge 'Shocked' by Efforts to 'Rewrite History' of Jan. 6 Attack, Those Who Label Perpetrators 'Hostages'

[ABC News](#) (01/26, Mallin) reported that Senior Judge Royce Lamberth of the D.C. district court issued a sharp criticism of attempts to "rewrite history" of the Jan. 6 Capitol attack, expressing shock at public figures who label the perpetrators as "hostages" and deny the severity of their actions. The article explained that in his ruling tied to the sentencing of Jan. 6 defendant James Little, Lamberth, with nearly 40 years of judicial experience, refuted claims of political prosecution and emphasized that the lawbreakers on Jan. 6 cannot be seen as anything but criminals. He specifically addressed the rhetoric used by former President Donald Trump and others, who referred to Jan. 6 defendants as "hostages," asserting that such misrepresentations are unfounded and cannot be condoned by the court. The article noted that Lamberth's comments reflect his extensive experience in presiding over numerous high-profile Jan. 6 cases, including those of Jacob Chansley, the "QAnon Shaman," and former Proud Boys member Christopher Worrell.

Illinois Hearing Officer, Ex-G.O.P. Judge, Says Trump Engaged in Insurrection

The [New York Times](#) (01/28, Smith) reported that Clark Erickson, a former Republican judge in Illinois, opined that Donald Trump engaged in insurrection by attempting to remain in office after the 2020 election, a stance related to the Jan. 6 Capitol riot. However, Erickson advised that the State Board of Elections should not disqualify Trump from the Illinois primary ballot, suggesting the matter be left to the courts. This nonbinding opinion comes amidst

Trump's candidacy challenges in 35 states based on a 14th Amendment clause disqualifying officials who engaged in insurrection, with footage from the Jan. 6 riot being presented as evidence.

Houston Man Charged After Found Taking Selfies and Videos in Capitol During Jan. 6 Siege

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (01/28, Limehouse) reported that Duong Dai Luu, a 47-year-old from Katy, was indicted on federal charges for his participation in the Jan. 6 Capitol siege, during which he took multiple selfies and videos. According to the article, the FBI identified Luu's presence inside the Capitol using Google location data and recognized him in the videos based on his distinctive attire. Luu admitted to an FBI Task Force Officer that he entered the Capitol following the Trump Rally, acknowledging that it was improper to be inside the government building without permission.

Milwaukee Man Arrested for Allegedly Assaulting Capitol Police With Chemical Spray During Jan. 6

[KGW \(NBC-8\)](#) (01/28, DePaola) reported that Andy Steven Oliva-Lopez, a 27-year-old from Milwaukee, was arrested by the FBI on Tuesday for his involvement in the Jan. 6 Capitol riot. According to the article, identified by the Portland and Washington FBI offices through video footage, Oliva-Lopez is accused of assaulting Capitol police with a chemical spray and entering a restricted area of the Capitol grounds. The article noted that the U.S. Attorney's Office for D.C. and the Department of Justice National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section are prosecuting the case, part of the larger investigation into the Jan. 6 riot that has led to over 1,265 people being charged nationwide.

Cheney Recirculates Stefanik Jan. 6 Statement After She Reportedly Deletes It

[Politico](#) (01/27, Alafriz) reported that a bitter public clash between Liz Cheney and Rep. Elise Stefanik highlighted deep fissures within the GOP regarding the Jan. 6 Capitol riot. Cheney, who was vice chair of the House Select Committee on the Jan. 6 attack, accused Stefanik of backtracking on her earlier condemnation of the violence and labeled her a "total crackpot." Stefanik, a staunch Trump supporter, has downplayed the significance of the Jan. 6 attack and referred to those imprisoned for related offenses as "hostages," contrasting sharply with Cheney's stance and her work on the committee. The article explained that this exchange reflects the ongoing tension within the Republican Party over Jan. 6 and its implications for the GOP's future, particularly as Stefanik is considered a potential vice presidential pick for Trump, who continues to face scrutiny over his role in the events of Jan. 6. [The Hill](#) (01/27, Timotija) also reported on the story.

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OTHER FBI NEWS

23andMe Breach Targeted Jewish and Chinese Customers, Lawsuit Says

The [New York Times](#) (01/26, Carballo, Schmall, Tumin) reported that the genetic testing company 23andMe is being accused in a class-action lawsuit of failing to protect the privacy of customers whose personal information was exposed last year in a data breach that affected nearly seven million profiles. The article added that the lawsuit, which was filed on Friday in federal court in San Francisco, also accused the company of failing to notify customers with Chinese and Ashkenazi Jewish heritage that they appeared to have been specifically targeted, or that their personal genetic information had been compiled into "specially curated lists" that were shared and sold on the dark web. The article noted that "The current geopolitical and social climate," the lawsuit argued, "amplifies the risks" to users whose data was exposed. Representative Josh Gottheimer, Democrat of New Jersey, called for an FBI investigation into the breach earlier this month, noting the focus on Ashkenazi Jews. The article quoted Gottheimer, who wrote in a letter to Director Wray, "The leaked data could empower Hamas, their supporters, and various international extremist groups to target the American Jewish population and their families,"

International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Saturday

[CBS News](#) (01/26, Owens) reported that Mary Pat Higgins, the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum President and CEO says she recognizes a rise in anti-Semitism. "It's increased almost 400% since October 7th, and that is antisemitism here in the United States," she said. According to Higgins, antisemitism is everybody's problem. Acknowledging the problem is part of the solution, she thinks. The article added that her concern is shared by law enforcement. The article quoted Director Wray, who said, "The Jewish community represents something like 2.4%

of the American population, and yet about 60% of religiously motivated violence is directed at Jewish victims. And that should be alarming to everybody."

FBI Springfield Urges Identity Theft Protection

[WCIA \(CBS-3\)](#) (01/28, Wood) reported that Identity Theft Awareness Week takes place Jan. 29 through Feb. 2, and FBI Springfield is putting a spotlight on protecting personally identifiable information, or PII. The article quoted David Nanz, FBI Springfield Special Agent in Charge, who said, "Be resolute in protecting your personal information, taking the extra step to keep your personal information private can be the difference between being empowered or being endangered."

Last Victim of Maui Wildfires Identified Months After Disaster

[CBS News](#) (01/27, Breen) reported that the last victim of the Maui wildfires has been identified, officials said Saturday, bringing the death toll on the Hawaiian island to 100. The victim was identified as Lydia Coloma, 70, of Lahaina, according to the Maui Police Department. Lahaina was nearly destroyed by the fast-moving August fires, with one resident calling it "unrecognizable." Thousands of structures, most of them homes, burned. The article added that the identification of Coloma means that there are no identified individuals who died in the fires whose families have not been located or notified. There are also no more unidentified bodies related to the fires. The article mentioned that the death toll from the fires remained unclear for weeks after the flames were brought under control. Nearly two weeks after the fires, the FBI estimated that between 1,000 and 1,100 people were missing. Three weeks after the fires, the FBI updated their list to reflect that there were believed to be 385 people who were missing and 115 dead. The article stated that in September, the death toll dropped to 97, with 31 people missing, the number dropped a little bit because the Department of Defense and all of their physical anthropologists were able to help us discern better who was in cars or houses.

Opinion: Sam Altman Says OpenAI Has a Plan to Combat Election Misinformation

An opinion piece by the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (01/28, Warmesley) stated that this year, nearly half of the global population will head to the polls in a succession of national elections — and all over the world, generative AI (or GenAI) is going to unleash a tsunami of toxic and untrustworthy political content, including remarkably convincing "deepfaked" images and videos showing candidates saying and doing things that never actually happened. According to the author, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman said he was taking aggressive action to safeguard the world's elections and ensure that his company's ChatGPT technology wasn't used to misinform the public or corrupt the world's democratic processes. The author mentioned that instead of relying on OpenAI to save us from misinformation, the entire AI tech ecosystem is going to need a more systemic solution. That will start with building advanced and scalable tools capable of detecting, flagging, and hopefully, removing problematic GenAI-created content at scale. The author added that Director Wray noted recently, that AI models are now getting pretty good at identifying fake content. These capabilities can be leveraged to build solutions capable of monitoring the outputs of multiple GenAI models simultaneously and expunging deepfakes from everywhere they live on the web.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Kim Jong Un Supervised Tests of Cruise Missiles Designed to Be Fired From Submarines, North Korea Says

- Associated Press: Kim Jong Un Supervised Tests of Cruise Missiles Designed to Be Fired From Submarines, North Korea Says
- Reuters: North Korea Tests Submarine-Launched Cruise Missiles

U.N. Says Gaza Aid Is at Risk as Nations Pause Relief-Agency Funding

- Wall Street Journal: U.N. Says Gaza Aid Is at Risk as Nations Pause Relief-Agency Funding
- New York Times: Details Emerge on U.N. Workers Accused of Aiding Hamas Raid

Iran Launches 3 Satellites Into Space That Are Part of a Western-Criticized Program as Tensions Rise

- Associated Press: Iran Launches 3 Satellites Into Space That Are Part of a Western-Criticized Program as Tensions Rise

Two Masked Attackers Kill 1 in Shooting at Istanbul Church

- New York Times: Two Masked Attackers Kill 1 in Shooting at Istanbul Church

After Two Years of Bloody Fighting, Ukraine Wrestles With Conscription

- New York Times: After Two Years of Bloody Fighting, Ukraine Wrestles With Conscription

This Ambush Shows How Ukraine Is Holding the Line

- Wall Street Journal: This Ambush Shows How Ukraine Is Holding the Line

Houthi Attacks Disrupt Shipping, Draw U.S. Into Direct Conflict

- Wall Street Journal: Houthi Attacks Disrupt Shipping, Draw U.S. Into Direct Conflict

Israel Struggles to Destroy Hamas's Gaza Tunnel Network

- Wall Street Journal: Israel Struggles to Destroy Hamas's Gaza Tunnel Network

After Help From Kenyan Police Is Blocked, Haitians Ask: What Now?

- New York Times: After Help From Kenyan Police Is Blocked, Haitians Ask: What Now?

Finland's Presidential Election, First Since Joining NATO, Heads to Runoff

- New York Times: Finland's Presidential Election, First Since Joining NATO, Heads to Runoff

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OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Donald Trump Must Pay An Additional \$83.3 Million To E. Jean Carroll In Defamation Case, Jury Says

- Associated Press: Donald Trump Must Pay An Additional \$83.3 Million To E. Jean Carroll In Defamation Case, Jury Says
- New York Times: Jury Orders Trump to Pay Carroll \$83.3 Million After Years of Insults
- Washington Post: Trump Ordered to Pay E. Jean Carroll \$83.3m in Defamation Damages Trial
- CNN: Jury Finds Trump Must Pay \$83.3 Million to E. Jean Carroll
- Politico: Trump Ordered to Pay \$83.3M for Defaming E. Jean Carroll

Biden Calls Regional Partners Ahead of CIA Chief's Meeting in Push for Another Gaza Hostage Deal

- Associated Press: Biden Calls Regional Partners Ahead of CIA Chief's Meeting in Push for Another Gaza Hostage Deal
- CNN: Efforts to Secure Hostage Deal and Pause in Gaza Fighting Step up as Biden Dispatches CIA Chief
- CBS News: CIA Director William Burns to Hold Hamas Hostage Talks Sunday With Mossad Chief
- Times of Israel: U.S. Sees Signs of Progress on Deal to Release Hostages, Temporarily Pause Hamas War
- Al Jazeera: Qatar PM to Meet Israel, U.S. Intel Chiefs on New Gaza Captives Deal

Texas Attorney General Refuses To Grant Federal Agents Full Access To Border Park

- CBS News: Texas Attorney General Refuses To Grant Federal Agents Full Access To Border Park: "Your Request Is Hereby Denied"
- Washington Times: Texas Attorney General Rejects Biden Demands Over Border Standoff
- Daily Caller: Texas AG Ken Paxton Doubles Down on Refusal of Surrendering Border to Biden
- American Military News: Biden Demands Texas Give up Control of Border Area by Friday

U.S. Condemns Ban on Venezuelan Opposition Leader's Candidacy and Puts Sanctions Relief Under Review

- Associated Press: U.S. Condemns Ban on Venezuelan Opposition Leader's Candidacy and Puts Sanctions Relief Under Review
- Reuters: U.S. Reviewing Venezuelan Sanctions Policy in Wake of Court Decision
- Bloomberg: U.S. Reviews Venezuela Sanctions as Machado Blocked From Vote
- New York Times: Venezuela's Highest Court Bars Opposition Leader From Running for President

Don't Delete Slack Or Signal Chats, U.S. Agencies Warn Companies

- Bloomberg: Don't Delete Slack Or Signal Chats, U.S. Agencies Warn Companies

GOP Lawmaker Moves To Defund 'Sanctuary' Cities, Slams 'Hypocrisy' As They Seek Federal Aid For Migrant Crisis

- Fox News: GOP Lawmaker Moves To Defund 'Sanctuary' Cities, Slams 'Hypocrisy' As They Seek Federal Aid For Migrant Crisis

U.S. Court Skeptical of Florida Challenge to Biden 'Catch and Release' Border Policy

- Reuters: U.S. Court Skeptical of Florida Challenge to Biden 'Catch and Release' Border Policy

Many Black Men Wonder What Biden Has Done For Them

- Washington Post: Many Black Men Wonder What Biden Has Done For Them

A Drug Test Cost a D.E.A. Agent His Job. He Sued, and Got It Back.

- New York Times: A Drug Test Cost a D.E.A. Agent His Job. He Sued, and Got It Back.

U.S. And China To Hold High-Level Talks Aimed At Curbing The Fentanyl Crisis

- NBC News: U.S. And China To Hold High-Level Talks Aimed At Curbing The Fentanyl Crisis

FIFA Convictions Are Imperiled by Questions of U.S. Overreach

- New York Times: FIFA Convictions Are Imperiled by Questions of U.S. Overreach

Palestinian Americans' Lawsuit In Oakland Seeks To Halt U.S. Support For Israel

- New York Times: Palestinian Americans' Lawsuit In Oakland Seeks To Halt U.S. Support For Israel

U.N. To Investigate Claim That Employees Participated In Oct. 7 Attack

- New York Times: U.N. To Investigate Claim That Employees Participated In Oct. 7 Attack

Investigators Sought Jeff Bezos' Tax-Return Leaker; They Stumbled Upon Donald Trump's

- Wall Street Journal: Investigators Sought Jeff Bezos' Tax-Return Leaker; They Stumbled Upon Donald Trump's

Trump's \$50 Million Mystery Debt Looks Like 'Tax Evasion'

- The Daily Beast: Trump's \$50 Million Mystery Debt Looks Like 'Tax Evasion'

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BIG PICTURE

New York Times

- Kyiv Considers an Unpopular Proposal: A Stricter Draft
- Dossier Details Alleged Actions Of Aid Workers
- The National Dilemma of the Man in Room 117

- Black Pastors Pressing Biden On Cease-Fire
- On Trial, Trump Uses the Courtroom as a Stage
- Favorites Line Up for a Marathon to November

Wall Street Journal

- Bankers Feel Sting As Their Bonuses Fall Again
- Three U.S. Troops Are Killed In Drone Strike at Jordan Base
- Argentina President Holds Firm Amid Early Pushback
- Publisher Battles Book Bans in U.S.
- Tapped to Fix Boeing, CEO Now in Hot Seat
- Junior Heads to College, But Empty-Nesters Need the Tutors

Washington Post

- Analysts Warn Many Black Voters Growing Weary of Biden
- U.S. Recovery Outpaces Other Nations'
- Musk Faces a Battle for More Control of Tesla
- 3 U.S. Troops Killed in Drone Attack in Jordan
- Surging Red Sea Violence Could Imperil Aid for Yemen

Financial Times

- Joe Biden Halts Permits for LNG Projects Under Climate Campaign Pressure
- U.S. Urges China to Help Deter Iran-Backed Houthis in Back-Channel Meeting
- U.S. Agrees to Sell Turkey Jets After Ankara Approves Sweden's NATO Bid

ABC News

- 3 U.S. Troops Killed in Hostile Fire Attack by Iran-Backed Militants; Bronze Statue of Baseball Legend Jackie Robinson Disappears; Customer Turns Tables on Hostess With a Lifesaving Decision.

CBS News

- 3 American Troops Killed in Drone Attack on Base in Jordan; Doughnut Shop Owner Spent Childhood in Internment Camp.

NBC News

- From Campaign to Courtroom: Trump Testifies in Defamation Damages Trial; U.S. Economy Shows More Robust Growth as Recession Fears Ease; Testimony Begins in Trial of Mother Charged in School Shooting Committed by Son.

Fox News

- Kevin McCarthy: I Am Always Going to Be Active for My Country; Ted Cruz: Biden's Border Deal Is 'Designed Not to Secure the Border'; Joe Biden's Hemorrhaging the Youth Vote: Lisa Boothe.

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WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

White House

President Biden

- 10:00 AM: The President participates in a political event at St. John the Baptist Church
- 3:55 PM: The President departs Columbia, South Carolina en route to Joint Base Andrews

- 5:30 PM: The President departs Joint Base Andrews en route to the South Lawn
- 5:40 PM: The President arrives at the White House

Vice President Harris

- No events scheduled.

US Senate

- No events scheduled.

US House of Representatives

- Hearing: The Future of Data Privacy and Artificial Intelligence at VA – 3:30 PM – Host: Committee on Veterans' Affairs
- Business Meeting: H.R. 5585 Agent Raul Gonzalez Officer Safety Act; H.R. 6976 Protect Our Communities from DUIs Act; H.R. 6678 Consequences for Social Security Fraud Act; H.R. 6679 No Immigration Benefits for Hamas Terrorists Act – 4:00 PM – Host: Committee on Rules

Cabinet Members

- **Secretary of State Blinken** meets with Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani at the Department of State at 9:30 AM.
- Secretary Blinken meets with Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Keith Rowley at the Department of State at 11:00 AM.
- Secretary Blinken meets with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Department of State at 2:00 PM.
- Secretary Blinken holds a joint press availability with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Department of State at 3:15 PM.

Visitors

- **Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani** meet with Secretary Blinken at the Department of State.
- **Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Keith Rowley** meets with Secretary Blinken at the Department of State.
- **NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg** meets with Secretary Blinken at the Department of State.

General Events

- CSIS: El Salvador's 2024 Elections: Voting in a One-Party State? – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Online Event, 10:00 AM. Please join the Americas Program for a timely conversation on elections and the future of democracy in El Salvador. With general elections in El Salvador slated for February 4, the re-election of Nayib Bukele seems a foregone conclusion. More troubling however is the possibility that a set of electoral reforms shrinking the size of the Legislative Assembly and modifying the process for counting votes from Salvadorans living abroad will serve to engineer a legislature in which the opposition may not garner a single seat, effectively transforming El Salvador into a one-party state with the patina of democratic legitimacy. In light of the already troubling restriction of civil and political rights under Bukele's first term, such a development is a concerning portent for El Salvador and the region at large. This event will seek to raise awareness of the electoral reforms pushed by Bukele and his allies to constrain the ability of opposition candidates to compete. It will also evaluate scenarios for a post-election El Salvador, and how the opposition and civil society can respond in the event they are excluded from government. Finally, it will consider the implications for the United States of potential one-party rule in El Salvador.

- CSIS: The Impossible State Live Podcast: Slow Boil: What to Expect from the DPRK in 2024 – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Online Event, 11:00 AM. Though it appears things could not get any worse with Kim Jong-un, there will likely be an uptick in North Korean belligerence in 2024. CSIS data shows North Korea tends to ramp up provocations in U.S. election years. Please join the Impossible State podcast for a special discussion on what to expect from North Korea in 2024. The conversation will be moderated by Dr. Ellen Kim and feature Dr. Victor Cha, Senior Vice President and Korea Chair at CSIS. During this episode, Dr. Kim and Dr. Cha will discuss the Korea Chair's latest publication, *Slow Boil: What to Expect from the DPRK in 2024*, and more.
- AEI: US International Trade Policy and the Agricultural Sector in 2024 and Beyond – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: AEI, 1:00 PM. The past seven years have left the US trade agenda in shambles. The Trump administration reversed a 75-year trend toward more-open global markets—pulling the US out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, crippling the World Trade Organization (WTO) Dispute Settlement Body, imposing supplemental tariffs on all steel and aluminum imports, and plunging the US in a costly trade war with China. Hopes that the Biden administration would be better were short-lived. Supplemental tariffs remain in place, and minimal progress has been made toward WTO reform. Looking ahead to the presidential election, now-candidate Donald Trump promises to impose a 10 percent tariff on all foreign imports, putting US agriculture at risk of retaliatory actions by major trading partners. Join AEI scholars and a panel of experts as they analyze what to expect in 2024 and beyond.
- Atlantic Council: How Ukraine fights Russian disinformation: Beehive vs mammoth – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Online Event, 9:00 AM. In 2023, the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats and the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab interviewed two dozen Ukrainian officials and experts leading the country's efforts to counter Russian information operations. The result is a groundbreaking new report documenting how they've been doing it, what's working, and their advice for Western governments also facing Russian information threats. This event, featuring report co-authors Jakub Kalenský and Roman Osadchuk, will discuss the main lessons learned by Ukraine over the last decade, and explore how Ukraine's resilience can serve as a model for Europe and elsewhere.
- Atlantic Council: War in Sudan: Risks of prolonged conflict and regional instability – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Online Event, 9:00 AM. After nearly ten months of fighting in Sudan, civilians remain caught in the middle of devastating conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). As the crisis continues, global concerns about widespread internal displacement and potential ethnic cleansing are on the rise. In fits and starts, regional leaders have attempted to mediate between the SAF and RSF: For example, the African Union recently formed a panel tasked with helping Sudan restore peace. But a ceasefire remains elusive. With outside actors supporting, arming, and resupplying different sides in the conflict, the potential for continued violence and a human rights disaster remains high. Join us for a panel with high-level experts discussing the war in Sudan and pathways towards peace on Monday, January 29, at 9 a.m. ET.
- Atlantic Council: Digital transformation in Saudi Arabia and its impact on women – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Online Event, 11:00 AM. Join the WIn Fellowship, part of the Atlantic Council's empowerME initiative, for a dynamic workshop on Monday, January 29th at 11:00 AM EST (7:00 PM KSA). Delve into the transformative power of digital technology in Saudi Arabia's startup ecosystem, exploring its impact on women entrepreneurs. Saudi Arabia is undergoing a significant digital revolution, fueled by the ambitious goals of Vision 2030. Government initiatives and widespread technology adoption are propelling the nation towards becoming a leading digital economy. This exciting landscape presents a wealth of opportunities for entrepreneurs of all backgrounds to build and thrive in a dynamic environment. In 2021, women's participation in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia was recorded at 28 percent, higher than the European average of 17.5 percent and a significant increase from previous years.
- Atlantic Council: Qatar's prime minister on regional de-escalation, war in Gaza, and US-Qatar relations – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Online Event, 12:00 PM. The Atlantic Council is hosting a virtual #ACFrontPage conversation featuring Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, prime minister and minister of foreign affairs of Qatar, on Monday, January 29, 2024 at 12:00 pm ET. With the continuing conflict between Israel and Hamas and the looming threat of a broader regional war, Al-Thani will outline Doha's role in current negotiations over the war in Gaza and Qatar's strategic vision for de-escalating

tensions and promoting regional security and prosperity in the Middle East. As a major non-NATO ally of the United States, Qatar plays a pivotal role in seeking and proposing solutions to the current conflict and other regional and global issues of crucial importance to the United States. Al-Thani will also discuss US-Qatar relations, Doha's role in ensuring regional security, and Qatar's foreign-policy vision.

- Atlantic Council: Industry Minister Víctor Bisonó on the Dominican Republic's economic growth and resilience – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Atlantic Council, 3:00 PM. As the Dominican Republic prepares to host the IDB annual meeting and the sixth Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA) Ministerial Meetings in March and the tenth Summit of the Americas in 2025, the year ahead presents a unique opportunity to spotlight strides in the country's economic development and leadership including its fast-growing and dynamic private sector. Minister Bisonó will address the steps taken to become a destination for nearshoring and to bring in new foreign investment. What are the Dominican Republic's plans for advancing its role as part of the broader drive toward greater supply chain resilience in the Americas? What are the specific policies, and how are historic impediments being addressed, to attract foreign businesses and investors? What are the sectors and product opportunities that might catapult the Dominican Republic's economic growth?
- Atlantic Council: Adapting our defense capacities to a changing world: A discussion with Commissioner Thierry Breton – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Atlantic Council, 5:45 PM. The Atlantic Council's Europe Center is delighted to host a conversation with European Commissioner for the Internal Market Thierry Breton. This conversation will take place in-person on Monday, January 29 from 5:45 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. ET. Since Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, the European Union and the United States have provided steadfast support for Ukraine, delivering unprecedented and world-leading levels of military, humanitarian, and financial aid. For transatlantic partners to continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes, military support including artillery shells and defense systems will be instrumental as Ukraine's fight for survival continues. The EU has played an increasingly important role in Europe and Ukraine's security. To secure the future of its defense industry production and keep up the drumbeat of support for Ukraine, the EU is also drafting new proposals in support of Europe's defense industry and capabilities to build a stronger Europe and to bolster NATO and the transatlantic alliance.
- Wilson Center: Bystander Society: Conformity and Complicity in Nazi Germany and the Holocaust – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: Online Event, 4:00 PM. Drawing on personal accounts of experiences in the Third Reich and in wartime Poland, Latvia and Lithuania, Bystander Society explores the conditions for widespread passivity in face of violence against others. Fulbrook reconceives 'bystanding' in terms of changing interpersonal relations: indifference, ignorance (or choosing to ignore), and a sense of impotence, are historically produced. Many became increasingly complicit or involved in wartime perpetration; a few sought retreat or resistance; but remaining an 'innocent bystander' was largely a postwar myth.
- The Hudson Institute: A Conversation with Rep. Darrell Issa on US-South Asia Relations – Monday, January 29, 2024. Location: The Hudson Institute, 2:00 PM. The South Asian and Indian Ocean regions are critical for America's national security interests and will be key to countering China's military and economic rise through a United States-led Indo-Pacific coalition. As part of this coalition, the US has placed a strategic bet on India, demonstrated by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's June 2023 state visit to Washington and President Joe Biden's September 2023 visit to New Delhi. Meanwhile, American policymakers have an interest in maintaining political and economic stability and monitoring extremism and terrorism across South Asia. This year will also be a crucial moment for countries in this region, as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka will all hold elections. For a conversation about US relations with South Asia and a look ahead at the challenges and opportunities in the coming year, Hudson Institute's Dr. Aparna Pande will host Representative Darrell Issa. They will discuss where relations stand between the United States and the countries of South Asia, especially in the context of American interests in the Indo-Pacific and the region's relevance to American strategy and policy

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