

From

To

Subject: FBI Public Affairs News Briefing Friday, July 26, 2019

Date: Fri, 26 Jul 2019 10:30:51 +0000

Importance: Normal

Mobile version and searchable archives available at fbi.bulletinintelligence.com.

 FBI News Briefing

TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: FRIDAY, JULY 26, 2019 6:30 AM EDT

TODAY'S TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEADING THE NEWS

- Wray Raises Encryption Concerns At Cyber Conference.
- Democrats Mull Next Steps On Impeachment Following Mueller Testimony.

COUNTER-TERRORISM

- Syrian Refugee Pleads Not Guilty To Pittsburgh Church Bomb Plot Charges.
- Teen Pleads Guilty To Plotting New York Muslim Community Bombing.
- DOJ Official Vows To Step Up Fight Against Hezbollah Amid Iran Tensions.

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

- Senate Intelligence Committee: Russia Targeted Election Systems In Every State In 2016.
- Wikileaks Criticizes New UK Prime Minister For Likely Supporting Assange Extradition To US.
- ODNI's Joyce Corell Discusses The Need For Security In Federal Supply Chains.
- Opinion: Compromised CIA Technology May Have Led To Iran Identifying Spy Ring.
- Opinion: Expanding Covert Agent Secrecy Law Could Discourage CIA Officers To Report On Controversial Activities.

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

- Epstein On Suicide Watch After Being Found Unresponsive In Cell.
- Attorney Says Review Raises Doubts About Fatal Texas Drug Raid.
- Threats Of "Lethal Force" Against Law Enforcement Prompt Texas FBI Operation.
- Prosecutor Says More Could Be Charged In R Kelly Case.
- US Examining Photo Of Armed Students At Emmett Till Sign.
- NYPD Officer Charged In Murder-For-Hire Plot Blocked From Contact With Son.
- Lawsuit Reveals What FBI Agents Found In 2014 Raid Of Arizona Body Donation Center.
- Suspect Arrested In California Shooting Spree That Killed Four.
- FBI Asks Public To Look Out For North Carolina "Pink Lady Bandit."
- Alabama Man Gets 10 Years For Shooting Sheriff Deputy.
- FBI Says Whitesboro, Schuyler Incidents Related.
- Federal Authorities Said To Investigate Hudson County Lottery Pool.
- Former Suffolk Cop Sentenced Over Civil Rights Violation.
- Bloods Gang Member Sentenced On Heroin Conviction.

- FBI, Homeland Security Raid Cerritos Home.
- Former Dayton Commissioner Accused Of Corruption No Longer KeyBank Market President.
- Three Flint Men Face Charges Over Marijuana Grow Robbery.
- Second Man Faces Federal Charges In Killing Of South Dakota Woman.
- Two Men Sentenced On Child Exploitation Charges.
- Albuquerque Man Faces Gun, Drug Charges.
- Inmate Gets Seven More Years For Hiring Hitman.
- Man Sentenced To Eight Years For Meth Possession, Intent To Distribute.
- Man Likely To Get 30 Years For 1999 Kidnapping, Assault.
- Granger Man Gets Prison, Order To Pay Back \$1.6 Million.
- 14 Charged In TDOC Contraband Investigation.
- Ex-Milton Mayor Thompson's Sentencing Delayed.
- St. Clair Sheriff's Office Helps FBI Bring In Child Porn Fugitive.
- Authorities Offering \$32,000 For Info On Assault Of Baltimore Police Employee.
- Man Busted On Meth Charges Sentenced To Eight Years.
- FBI Explains How Intrust Robber Was Caught So Quickly.
- San Fernando Valley Shooting Suspect In Custody.

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

- Puerto Rico's Next Governor Already Under Fire.
- FBI Reportedly Probing California Political Consultant's Work.
- Former Oyster Bay, New York Supervisor Expected To Plead Guilty To Corruption Charges.
- FBI Reportedly Probing Online Reputation Management Firms.
- Amid Federal Probe, Oklahoma Charter Schools Operator Will Continue To Get State Funding, Accreditation.
- FBI Affidavit Alleges Mail, Wire Fraud By Outcome Health, Co-Founders.
- North Carolina Mega-Donor's PAC Forfeited \$475,000 To Federal Authorities.
- FBI Probing Possible Insider Trading At Long Island Iced Tea Corp.
- US Finds Potential Fraud In Student Loan Repayment Programs.
- Rolls-Royce Defendant Skips \$9 Million Bail.
- Seattle Doctor Charged In Opioid Kickback Scheme.

CYBER DIVISION

- FBI Probing Ransomware Attack On Collierville, Tennessee.
- Cybersecurity Firm: More Than 23 Million Stolen Credit Cards Are Being Traded On Dark Web.
- Tech Firms Step Up Fight Against Terrorists Using Platforms To Recruit, Campaign.
- Facebook Removes Fake Accounts From Russia, Thailand, Ukraine, Honduras.
- British Cyber Expert To Be Sentenced Today In US For Creating Malware.
- Judge Hears Arguments In Georgia Voting Machine Lawsuit.
- Brazilian President's Cellphone Hacked Amid Scandal Intrigue.
- Attempting To Define Cyber Command's Future Role.
- Opinion: Appropriate Language And Rhetoric Critical For Framing Problems By Military Professionals.
- NSA's Cybersecurity Directorate Selects Leadership.
- Congress Debating Which Agency Should Manage Cyberthreats To US Oil And Gas Pipelines.

LABORATORY

- DNA Evidence Links Maryland Man To 1999 Kidnapping Of 10-Year-Old Girl.

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

- FBI Phoenix Warns Of Phone Scammers Posing As Federal Agents.
- Barr Announces Five Child Murderers In Federal Custody Will Be Executed.

- Trump Calls Dousing Attacks On NYPD Officers "Unacceptable" And "Tragic."
- Author Of "Orange Is The New Black" Calls For Criminal Justice Reform.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- Canadian Police Continue Search For Suspects In American's Murder.
- Europol: Police Bust Global Balkan Cocaine Cartel.

OTHER FBI NEWS

- FBI Agents Settle Into New Rapid City, South Dakota Location.
- New Honolulu SAC Named.
- Newington Rotary Club Drawing Attention To Trafficking In Connecticut.
- "BTK" Serial Killer's Daughter In "Extended Period Of Trying To Recover."
- FBI Warns Families About Kidnapping Scams.

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

- Budget Deal Easily Passes House, But With Two-Thirds Of Republicans Opposed.
- Barr Discusses Antitrust Concerns Related To Tech Companies With States.
- DOJ Pressing States To Support T-Mobile/Sprint Merger.
- Southwest Airlines Grounding Boeing 737 MAX Planes Until Next Year.
- White House To Fight Ruling Blocking New Asylum Rules.
- Administration Mulls Travel Ban On Guatemala.
- Morgan: 52 Miles Of New Wall System Has Been Built.
- Democrats Boycott Senate Hearing On Border Bill.
- House Democrats Confront Officials Over Family Separations.
- Record 61,000 Unaccompanied Migrant Children In Federal Custody Since October.
- Border Patrol Chief Was Member Of Racist Facebook Group Under Investigation.
- House Approves TPS For Venezuelans.
- Sixteen Marines Charged With Smuggling Migrants.
- Migrants Transported Away From Nuevo Laredo To Monterrey.
- Mexico's Murder Rate Hit Record High In 2018.
- Senate Confirms Milley As Next Joint Chiefs Chairman.
- Senate Committee Backs Craft To Be UN Ambassador.
- Lawmakers Delay Action To Hold Conway In Contempt.
- House Panel Subpoenas Kushner And Ivanka Trump's Personal Emails, Texts.
- Norton Seeks To Block Administration's Plan To Relocate Federal Workers.
- Different Judge Will Hear Trump Suit To Block Democrats Getting His New York Tax Returns.
- Altered Presidential Seal Projected Behind Trump At Turning Point USA Event.
- Democrats Say They Will "Own" August Recess.
- Giuliani Says He Had To Borrow \$100,000 From Trump Lawyer To Pay Taxes.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

- Navy SEALs Sent Home For Drunken Behavior In Iraq.
- Ignatius: US Turning Its Back On Kurdish Allies In Syria.
- Pompeo, Ghani Agree To "Accelerate Efforts" To End War In Afghanistan.
- Trump "Very Disappointed" After Swedish Court Charges A\$AP Rocky With Assault.
- Pompeo: US Still Wants North Korea Talks Despite Launches.
- Pompeo Says He's Willing To Go To Tehran To Take Message To Iranians.
- Pompeo Urges Turkey Not To Make Russian Missile System "Operational."
- Senate Panel Advances Saudi Sanctions Measure.
- Tunisian President Essebsi Dies At 92.
- Concerns Rise About Potential Chinese Military Response To Hong Kong Protests.

- Headlines From Today's Front Pages.
- Mongolian President To Visit White House Next Week.
- US Sanctions Maduro's Stepsons, Others For Alleged Food Corruption.
- Media Analyses: Johnson Echoes Trump In Pledging To Deliver Brexit.

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

- Today's Events In Washington.

LEADING THE NEWS

Wray Raises Encryption Concerns At Cyber Conference.

The [Washington Times](#) (7/25, Blake, 492K) reports that Director Wray "echoed" Attorney General Barr on Thursday "by calling on tech companies to help solve investigative setbacks caused by criminals using encrypted devices and messaging platforms." Wray "made the plea while speaking at the International Conference on Cyber Security at Fordham University in New York, where Mr. Barr raised similar concerns during his keynote address earlier in the week. 'Cybersecurity is a central part of the FBI's mission,' said Mr. Wray, according to his prepared remarks. 'But as the attorney general discussed earlier this week, our request for lawful access cannot be considered in a vacuum. It's got to be viewed more broadly, taking into account the American public's interest in the security and safety of our society, and our way of life. That's important because this is an issue that's getting worse and worse all the time.'"

In a paywall-protected article, [Law360](#) (7/25, Subscription Publication, 8K) reports that Wray "called on tech companies to build a way for authorities to access encrypted devices, backing up" Barr's comments "earlier this week and echoing what has become a familiar government refrain. 'There's one thing I know for sure: It cannot be a sustainable end state for us to be creating an unfettered space that's beyond lawful access for terrorists, hackers, and child predators to hide,'" Wray said.

[CNBC](#) (7/25, Fazzini, 3.62M) reports that Wray said he strongly supported Barr's comments "that tech companies need to provide a way for law enforcement to access criminals' and suspects' encrypted phones and apps. 'I get frustrated when I hear people suggest that we are trying to weaken encryption or weaken cybersecurity more broadly,' Wray said. 'As the attorney general discussed a few days ago, our requests can't be assessed in a vacuum. That's important because this is an issue that is becoming worse and worse all the time.'"

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Rundle, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that Manhattan US Attorney Geoffrey Berman echoed Wray's and Barr's comments, saying, "We're not talking about a back door into these systems. We're talking about cooperation with private companies that will allow us access to the information when we need it." Brooklyn US Attorney Richard Donoghue said the US had "struck the balance between privacy and public safety" with the Fourth Amendment.

Democrats Mull Next Steps On Impeachment Following Mueller Testimony.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 4, 1:50, Muir, 597K) reported on "the divide on Capitol Hill among Democrats: Do they move forward with impeachment one day after Robert Mueller testified before the American people, saying he did not exonerate the President?" ABC's Mary Bruce: "Less than 24 hours after Robert Mueller was sworn in, Democrats were eager today to pivot back to their agenda. ... Mueller's testimony add[ed] new fire to the impeachment debate," but was "not enough to move the needle" for House Speaker Pelosi.

Norah O'Donnell said on the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 7, 1:45, 251K) that Mueller's "appearance on Capitol Hill yesterday was not quite what Democrats were hoping for and did not make impeachment any more likely, [so] the Democrats are regrouping." Lester Holt said on [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 5, 0:55, 127K) that Democrats "are still debating whether to pursue impeachment of the President. ... This is a big split among Democrats and it

didn't change because of yesterday." NBC's Kristen Welker: "Democrats are still very divided about how to move forward. ... There's broad agreement the Mueller hearings did not deliver the kind of punch they were hoping for to start impeachment proceedings, and that it actually may have blunted momentum, but there are still Democrats who are not ready to give up on impeachment."

The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Bade, Debonis, 14.2M) reports Democrats are now "struggling to figure out their next move" after the "highly anticipated hearing...fell flat, forcing some Democrats to second-guess their strategy while aggravating divisions in the party over impeachment." The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Hulse, 18.61M) writes that President Trump "was probably never going to be impeached" before the 2020 election, and "the absence of an electrifying Washington moment" during Mueller's testimony "makes that a near certainty."

[The Hill](#) (7/25, Beavers, 2.98M) reports, "Several rank-and-file Democrats in the House are feeling deflated" over Mueller's testimony, "with some blaming the media and their own party for overhyping hearings they say fell short of expectations. While many Democrats publicly heralded Mueller's testimony," some "privately expressed disappointment in his, at times, shaky performance, the brevity of his answers and the lack of a big moment that would have shifted the electorate's sentiment on whether President Trump was guilty of obstruction." [Politico](#) (7/25, Johnson, Everett, 4.29M) says "impeachment took a blow" with Mueller's "muted and sometimes shaky testimony."

Despite all this, [Politico](#) (7/25, Cheney, Desiderio, 4.29M) says in another report, impeachment supporters "showed new signs of life Thursday." Five more Democrats "publicly endorsed an impeachment inquiry post-Mueller, joining more than 90 lawmakers who had already come out in favor," including Rep. Katherine Clark (D-MA), "vice chair of the House Democratic Caucus and the highest-ranking Democrat to join the effort." The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Fandos, Davis, Stolberg, 18.61M) says "some senior lawmakers" are now "pushing...to begin formal impeachment hearings soon." House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler "has gradually become convinced that his panel should proceed with impeachment hearings and do so as expeditiously as possible, though he has not stated so publicly, according to lawmakers and aides familiar with his thinking." Nadler said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#)^{Vi} (7/25, 706K), "[Attorney General] Barr has been lying about what was in the report. It was important that that be demolished, and that the findings of the report – which are very, very damning to the President – be put before the American people."

Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA) was asked on [CNN's The Lead](#)^{Vi} (7/25, 963K) why she favors an impeachment inquiry. Speier said, "The President has obstructed justice on 12 different occasions. Even if you were to be of the opinion that he actually didn't get to go all the way through with it because Don McGahn didn't follow through, the intent to obstruct justice is a crime as well." But the [Daily Caller](#) (7/25, Conklin, 716K) reports that House Intelligence Chairman Adam Schiff, a vocal critic of the President, "is 'not convinced' Democrats should follow through with impeachment proceedings. He told CNN that the only way Trump will be removed from office is if he is 'voted out' in 2020."

In an op-ed in the [New York Times](#) (7/25, 18.61M), President of the American Constitution Society Caroline Fredrickson writes, "Special Counsel Robert Mueller publicly confirmed 100 percent of the devastating findings of his report, and made clear that his inquiry does not exonerate the president. She contends that "examination of the questions concerning President Trump's actions and other misconduct identified by Mueller should be the highest priority for every member of Congress, no matter their party affiliation. Public accountability requires nothing less, because no one in this country, no matter how high, should be above the law.

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Morgan) reports the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee "is expected to move its obstruction investigation of the president into federal court this week with a lawsuit to compel former White House Counsel Don McGahn to testify and a separate legal request for access to the Mueller probe's grand jury evidence."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Thomas, McCormick, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports Democratic presidential candidates have steered away from discussing the issue. While a majority of the two dozen contenders have backed some form of impeachment inquiry, they are generally not discussing it on the campaign trail. Joe Biden did say in an interview with Urban One Radio's Tom Joyner that aired Thursday, "I think Nancy [Pelosi]'s going about it the right way."

The [AP](#) (7/25, Miller) writes, "While the Mueller probe loomed as a pressing political problem for Trump," the President "also saw that it could be turned into an asset. From the start, he's peppered his campaign rallies with complaints about the swirling investigation getting in the way of his agenda. And Trump has no plans to let go of the now-concluded Mueller inquiry as his focus turns toward reelection." Hugh Hewitt writes in his [Washington Post](#) (7/25, 14.2M) that Trump "has decisively repulsed the attempt to deny him the opportunity to win that vindication at the polls in November 2020. Indeed, the president is now obviously, and with a high probability of success, going on the offensive."

Rep. Devin Nunes (R-CA), ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee, said on [Fox News' The Story](#) (7/25), "I think [Mueller and his staff] were working with the Democrats. I think when you look at Mueller's team, it was a team that we still don't know how that got put together. ... I think what we didn't expect is that Mr. Mueller didn't seem to know a whole lot about the report."

Rep. Doug Collins (R-GA), ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, said on [Fox News' The Story](#) (7/25), "What's really amazing to me, I think the House Judiciary Committee, I think they are just so delusional about what they wanted to Mueller to say and what it didn't say and they tried to convince themselves of the new narrative since then."

Michael Gerson writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, 14.2M), "Something did end during the Mueller hearings, at least for me. It was the death of the deus ex machina – the hope that a G-man of mythic abilities would decisively intervene on the side of good and save the honor of the country. ... I invested a great deal of trust in Mueller, who is the living repudiation of the shoddiness and shallowness of the Trump era. ... When politics is contaminated by hatred and cruelty, our ritual of renewal is a national election with a decisive result. And that means the savior is us."

The [Washington Post](#) (7/24, Zak, Yuan, 14.2M) assesses that Mueller "was a star witness who eschews stardom. ... Democrats tried to cast him as a patriot who has exposed a corrupt and criminal president. Republicans tried to cast him as a figurehead who had no control over a posse of partisan assassins." [CNN](#) (7/25, Wolf, 83.16M) assesses "it was on one hand refreshing to see a congressional witness answer simply and maddening because both Democrats and Republicans actually wanted answers from him. What was left for Democrats was to read incriminating sections from the obstruction of justice portions of the redacted report and for Mueller to verifying them. And for Republicans, it was an opportunity to poke holes in the report's reasoning and try to tie Mueller in knots, which they did to some effect as he shuffled through the redacted version of the report in a three-ring binder containing the report and trying to follow along."

In her column in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) Kimberly Strassel writes that a key aspect of the Mueller report is how it originated, namely the Steele Dossier. She contends that Mueller's opening statement confirms that the omission has been deliberate. She argues that it reinforces the need for Attorney General Barr's investigation into the origins of the Russia inquiry.

In a 2,500-word fact-check piece, the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Rizzo, Kessler, 14.2M) looks at "some of the claims made by lawmakers that were factually shaky or misleading" during the Mueller testimony. The [Daily Caller](#) (7/25, Athey, 716K) criticizes the Post for "fact check[ing] only Republicans" in the piece.

Republicans Continue To Question Mueller's Condition. A continuing substory of the Mueller hearings regards Mueller's condition during his first public congressional testimony

in six years. The [Washington Times](#) (7/25, Mordock, 492K) reports Republicans “had expected former special counsel Robert Mueller’s feeble testimony” according to Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL), who said Thursday that “the 74-year-old prosecutor’s health had been a hot topic in GOP prep sessions.” Senate Judiciary Chairman Lindsey Graham told the Times, “I know he’s in a weakened condition.” The [Washington Examiner](#) (7/25, Pearce, 448K) reports Mueller “stuttered, misheard questions, and gave elusive answers for nearly seven hours of testimony.” In a Thursday [tweet](#), Rudy Giuliani referred to Mueller’s “impaired cognition.”

[Politico](#) (7/25, Forgey, 4.29M) reports White House counselor Kellyanne Conway said Thursday, “I feel great empathy and compassion for folks who, as some of these headlines suggest, may be feeble or not understanding some of the questions – asking them to be repeated, clearly not conversant with the facts and with his own report.” [Breitbart](#) (7/25, Key, 673K) reports Conway added, “I’ve read the polls that very few Americans say they’ve read the Mueller report. I’d like to know if that number includes Bob Mueller himself.” Conway said on [Fox News](#) (7/25) that the Mueller hearings were “seen by most Americans as a political exercise, not a legal exercise. I saw Mueller as somebody who resents being used and abused by people...who can’t just move on.”

Anne Applebaum writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, 14.2M), “In principle, it shouldn’t matter” whether Mueller “speaks a lot or a little, whether he is charming or charmless, whether he stumbles occasionally or does not ever stumble. ... He is meant to produce evidence, not entertain.” However, “we don’t live in a world where only facts matter. What matters, even more, is trust. What matters more is who presents the facts and how they are presented.”

In an op-ed in [The Hill](#) (7/25, 2.98M), former FBI Assistant Director Kevin Brock writes Mueller’s “unsteady testimony before Congress this week should not define his legacy.” However, Mueller’s “rough day of congressional testimony brought added texture to what the American people are seeing more clearly with each passing day: The processes and infrastructure of government that we trust to fairly administer justice were imperiled for naked political motivations and advantage. It was cynical and wrong, and it begs for reform so that it never happens again.”

Mueller Hearings Drew Smaller TV Audiences Than Comey And Cohen. The [AP](#) (7/25, Bauder) reports, “Nearly 13 million people watched former special counsel Robert Mueller’s testimony before two House committees on the biggest broadcast and cable news networks,” according to Nielsen data. The hearings drew smaller audiences than did “well-publicized hearings involving three other Trump-era figures: former FBI director James Comey (19.5 million), Trump attorney Michael Cohen (15.8 million) and Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh (20.4 million).” The [Daily Caller](#) (7/25, 716K) reports Fox News “blew away the competition” in the ratings for its coverage with just over three million viewers; second-place MSNBC had about 2.4 million, each of the broadcast networks about two million, and CNN just over 1.5 million.

The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (7/25, Griswold, 78K) reports former MSNBC host Krystal Ball “criticized her former network Thursday for pushing ‘conspiracy theories’ about Donald Trump and Russia after special counsel Robert Mueller’s disappointing testimony before Congress.” Ball “stressed that her critique was not a personal attack on her former colleagues, many of whom she still considers friends, but complained that ‘nearly all of [them] got swept up in the ratings bubble that was feverish Russian conspiracy theories.’”

The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Grynbaum, 18.61M) writes, “Television’s Trump bump may be fading. Or perhaps the reticent witness – a career prosecutor who delivered terse, technical answers – was not the type to keep Americans tuned in for a marathon day of viewing. Whatever the reason, the ratings...failed to match the big viewership for other recent political spectacles.”

COUNTER-TERRORISM

Syrian Refugee Pleads Not Guilty To Pittsburgh Church Bomb Plot Charges.

The [AP](#) (7/25) reports from Pittsburgh, "A Syrian refugee accused of plotting to bomb a Christian church in Pittsburgh to inspire Islamic State of Iraq followers has pleaded not guilty to terrorism charges." Mustafa Mousab Alowemer "entered his plea Wednesday during his arraignment in federal court. His lawyers have dismissed the alleged plotting as 'puffery and bragging.'" Alowemer "is charged with attempting to provide material support and resources to the Islamic State of Iraq and two counts of distributing information about an explosive, destructive device, or weapon of mass destruction."

Teen Pleads Guilty To Plotting New York Muslim Community Bombing.

[WROC-TV](#) Rochester, NY (7/25) reports from Rochester, New York, "The fourth suspect who plotted to bomb a Muslim community near the Pennsylvania border has pleaded guilty." Police said Nicholas Pheilshifter, 16, "along with three others planned to bomb Islamburg, in Tompkins County." Pheilshifter "pleaded guilty to attempted criminal possession of a weapon as a case of terrorism," and "he faces seven years in prison and five years of post release supervision." Pheilshifter is scheduled to be sentenced on August 9. In June, "three others pleaded guilty in connection to the incident." Investigators "said they had made explosive devices using mason jars and duct tape, with black powder inside the jars along with projectiles like BBs and nails."

DOJ Official Vows To Step Up Fight Against Hezbollah Amid Iran Tensions.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (7/25, Dunleavy, 448K) reports, "A top Justice Department official made it clear Thursday that combating Hezbollah is a top priority for the department, a move that puts pressure on the terrorist organization's sponsor, Iran." Principal Deputy Attorney General John Cronan, "who leads the department's team that investigates Hezbollah financing and narcoterrorism, laid out the government's efforts and plans for dismantling and neutralizing the Iranian-backed terrorist group during a conference commemorating the victims of the Hezbollah bombing of a Jewish cultural center in Argentina 25 years ago. 'Destroying Hezbollah's support networks and neutralizing the Hezbollah threat is a top priority for this Department of Justice and will continue to be,' Cronan said, though full details of the operations can't be shared. 'Investigations may be covert, charges may be sealed, defendants may be cooperating, and Hezbollah supporters may be facing non-terrorism crimes as we work to build terrorism charges,' he said."

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

Senate Intelligence Committee: Russia Targeted Election Systems In Every State In 2016.

The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Sanger, Edmondson, 18.61M) reports the Senate Intelligence Committee "concluded Thursday that election systems in all 50 states were targeted by Russia in 2016, an effort more far-reaching than previously acknowledged and one largely undetected by the states and federal officials at the time." But while the report's warning that the US "remains vulnerable in the next election is clear, its findings were so heavily redacted at the insistence of American intelligence agencies that even some key recommendations for 2020 were blacked out." [Bloomberg](#) (7/25, Dennis, 4.73M) says the report "recounted 'extensive' efforts by Russia to compromise the U.S.'s election infrastructure from 2014 to 'at least 2017' and urged new efforts to deter the threat."

Mary Bruce reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/25, story 5, 0:30, Muir, 597K), "This bipartisan report outlines sweeping attempts by Russia to interfere in the 2016 election. It says that Russia targeted all 50 states, though no votes were changed. And the report warns that swift action needs to be taken to shore up these systems, because they say Russia will be

at it again." The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 6, 0:20, O'Donnell, 251K) briefly covered the report as well.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Strobel, Hughes, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) says the report recommends states adopt voting machines that have a verified paper trail and that are not connected to wireless networks, and urges states not to implement online voting. [CQ Roll Call](#) (7/25, Lesniewski, 154K) reports that a "key objective, according to the report, is to reinforce the 'primacy' of states in running elections. Oregon Democrat Ron Wyden offered a dissent, saying he could not support such a statement, but in general, the report appears to be overwhelmingly bipartisan. Three other Democrats on the panel expressed general, but not universal, agreement with the report." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/25, Megerian, 4.64M) reports that "experts warn that time is running out to boost local and state defenses before the 2020 election. That message was amplified Thursday when the Senate Intelligence Committee released a bipartisan report on gaps in election infrastructure security, from voter registration to voting machines."

The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Demirjian, Itkowitz, 14.2M) reports that the SSCI "echoed findings from other federal officials who have said there is no evidence that any votes were changed or that any voting machines were compromised." The [Washington Examiner](#) (7/25, Dunleavy, 448K) says that SSCI concluded "that 'Russian government-affiliated cyber actors conducted an unprecedented level of activity against state election infrastructure in the run-up to the 2016' but found 'no evidence' that vote tallies were altered or that voter registry files were deleted or modified, though the committee said that the intelligence community's insight into that is limited. The committee said one official made the car thief analogy, saying that the car thief 'didn't go in, but we don't know why.'" [ABC News](#) (7/25, Ferran, 2.97M) reports that Russia did "successfully exfiltrated the personal data of hundreds of thousands of voters from systems in at least two states, the report says: Illinois and another unnamed state. Illinois was previously named by local officials as likely a victim state mentioned in an indictment secured in July 2018 by then-special counsel Robert Mueller against purported Russian military intelligence cyber operatives."

[The Hill](#) (7/25, Chalfant, Miller, 2.98M) reports that SSCI Chairman Richard Burr said, "It is my hope that the Senate Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report will provide the American people with valuable insight into the election security threats still facing our nation and the ways we can address them." SSCI Ranking Member Mark Warner "echoed Burr, saying neither the federal government nor the states were 'adequately prepared' when Russia attempted to infiltrate U.S. voting statements in 2016 but said they have taken steps since then to ensure election systems are better secured." [Gizmodo](#) (7/25, Cameron, 2.7M) reports that Wyden "renewed a call Thursday for Congress to immediately intervene and impose mandatory security standards on election systems nationwide."

[Vox](#) (7/25, Ward, 2.27M) says that report "underscores two vital points: 1) that determined foreign actors can gain access to America's election infrastructure, and 2) Russia is skilled and willing to meddle inside of it."

[Business Insider](#) (7/25, Sheth, 3.67M) says that the SSCI report is the "first volume of its final multi-part report on Russia's interference in the 2016 US election. The panel had been conducting its investigation of the matter in parallel with the FBI and other congressional committees since the US intelligence community first revealed Russia was meddling in the race." [TechCrunch](#) (7/25, Shieber, 605K) reports that through "two and a half years the committee has held 15 open hearings, interviewed more than 200 witnesses and reviewed nearly 400,000 documents, according to a statement, and will be publishing other volumes from its investigation over the next year."

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#)^{Vi} (7/25, 706K), "That Intelligence Committee report is bipartisan. What it shows is that...this misinformation and disinformation attack on our democracy as early as 2014, well before the 2016 election, they are continuing." Rep. Will Hurd (R-TX) said on [CNN's Situation Room](#)^{Vi} (7/25, 980K), "I

would like to see all of Congress pay a little bit more attention on how we counter this threat...that the Russians are trying to do instead of just white-gloving the Mueller Report.”

Meanwhile, the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Timberg, Romm, 14.2M) reports that Iran also “has, within its borders, substantial capacity to wage Russian-style influence operations in the United States ahead of next year’s election,” and nations including China, Israel, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela have also demonstrated such capacities. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) says in an editorial that it is essential that the Justice Department complete its investigation of ongoing foreign interference efforts separate from any lingering aspects of Mueller’s investigation of the Trump Administration. [Politico](#) (7/25, Matishak, 4.29M) also covers the Senate report.

Report Critical Of Officials’ Reaction Prior To Election. [Newsweek](#) (7/25, Touchberry, 1.53M) reports that according to the report, government officials “feared that warning the public about ongoing efforts by Russia to subvert the 2016 U.S. elections would sow discord in the integrity of America’s voting systems.” The report “revealed that officials at ‘all levels of government’ were concerned with eroding election integrity and thus chose not to offer detailed warnings to staffers at the state level, which in turn led local officials to not react with ‘any additional urgency,’ causing ‘confusion and a lack of information.’” [Fox News](#) (7/25, Re, 27.59M) says that report “faulted the FBI and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for providing inadequate warnings to state governments. The panel found that alerts often went to the wrong people or contained insufficient information, and blended in with previous general warnings the states had received.”

[NPR](#) (7/25, Lucas, 3.12M) also reports on the SSCI document, as does [Engadget](#) (7/25, Lawler, 437K), [CNET News](#) (7/25, Reichert, Morse, 1.99M), [StateScoop](#) (7/25), [Mother Jones](#) (7/25, Vicens, 881K), the [New York Post](#) (7/25, Fredericks, 4.57M), [Bloomberg](#) (7/25, 4.73M), and [The Verge](#) (7/25, Hollister, 2.05M).

McConnell Blocks House Democrats’ Election-Security Legislation. [CNN](#) (7/25, Barrett, Collier, 83.16M) reports that on Thursday, Senate Majority Leader McConnell “personally” objected to “House-passed legislation backed by Democrats. This comes after Republican Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith of Mississippi objected to a trio of bills on Wednesday, in keeping with long standing GOP arguments that Congress has already responded to election security needs for the upcoming election.” McConnell called the House legislation partisan, and said that any supported in the Senate must be bipartisan. [Vox](#) (7/25, Zhou, 2.27M) reports that McConnell “has argued that election security bills could get the federal government too involved in states’ efforts.”

[USA Today](#) (7/25, Johnson, 10.31M) reports that “barely a day after” Mueller “sounded an alarm over Russian election meddling,” Senate Republicans “blocked two bills, both offered by Democrats, that would have required political campaigns to report attempts at interference by foreign interests. A third Democratic proposal, aimed at thwarting hacking attacks against senators and their staffs, also bit the dust.” The [AP](#) (7/25, Mascaro, Jalonick) reports Senate Minority Leader Schumer “called inaction by Congress a ‘disgrace’ and pledged to keep pushing for votes. Mueller’s testimony ‘should be a wake-up call,’ he said.”

The [AP](#) (7/25) reports that “Even if Congress were immediately to send funds to states to replace voting equipment, it would be difficult to make substantial upgrades in time for the 2020 elections. It can take months to decide on replacement machines, develop security protocols, train workers and test the equipment. Republicans said Thursday that \$380 million was allocated to the states in 2018 and not all of that money has been spent.”

[CQ Roll Call](#) (7/25, Lesniewski, 154K) reports that Sen James Lankford (R) is “making clear that he still wants to get support for encouraging states to have paper audit trails and to boost the ability of election officials to get timely security clearances.” Lankford, “who has been working with Minnesota Democrat Amy Klobuchar, told reporters Thursday that with the 2020 primaries and caucuses just around the corner, security enhancements would be meant for the next midterms.”

Pompeo Expresses Confidence In Election Security. Secretary of State Pompeo was asked on [Fox News Special Report](#) (7/25, 1.53M) if he is confident the US is prepared if Russia tries to interfere in the 2020 elections. Pompeo said, "I am. I don't know that we will achieve perfection. But take a look, there's been an election after 2016. We had one in 2018 as well. The Russians had intent to mess around in that as well. We were pretty effective. We certainly had safe and secure elections, and we reduced the Russians' capacity to have an impact on impact on that election."

More Commentary. Stanley McChrystal, a retired General, and David Eichenbaum, a Democratic media consultant, write for [Politico Magazine](#) (7/25, 4.24M) that "today's digital battlefield presents an entirely new landscape—one where state and non-state actors participate in a raging asynchronous information war that poses a serious threat to our democracy. It's a war America is losing—badly." They recommend the creation of "a nonpartisan, non-governmental Fair Digital Election Commission to protect the integrity of our elections by detecting, exposing, evaluating and remediating the impact of disinformation."

Democratic presidential candidate John Hickenlooper writes in an op-ed for [NBC News](#) (7/25, 6.14M) that "Inaction is not an option. We are going to need to find concrete solutions if we hope to safeguard our country from the very real cyberthreats" Mueller's report identifies.

Wikileaks Criticizes New UK Prime Minister For Likely Supporting Assange Extradition To US.

The [Washington Times](#) (7/25, Blake, 492K) reports WikiLeaks "reacted to Boris Johnson becoming British prime minister Wednesday by pouncing on recent comments he made relevant to the website's jailed publisher, Julian Assange." WikiLeaks "said on Twitter that 'it should be unthinkable for the new PM to support the extradition of Assange,' who is wanted by the US and currently imprisoned in the UK."

ODNI's Joyce Corell Discusses The Need For Security In Federal Supply Chains.

[FedTech](#) (7/25) interviews Joyce Corell, Assistant Director for Supply Chain and Cyber at the NCSC, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, about federal supply chain security. Asked about identifying risks in the supply chain, Corell said, "Your defense contractors, who are building the stuff, might be in a position to detect that something has gone wrong. ... The intelligence community does what the intelligence community does. But in the commercial sector, there is vast, untapped information available from commercial data providers." On best practices, she noted, "I think there are common best practices. One is to think about security as the fourth pillar. When you're buying goods and services, the community that does the purchasing looks at cost, schedule and performance. Those are the three pillars. Historically, people working in the supply chain environment have said, 'Performance, doesn't that include security?' Well, it doesn't. Security really needs to be the fourth pillar."

Opinion: Compromised CIA Technology May Have Led To Iran Identifying Spy Ring.

In her syndicated column appearing in the [Kansas City \(MO\) Star](#) (7/25, 549K), Rachel Marsden writes that "Iran released a stash of documents this week that purportedly identify the CIA officers involved in the spy ring." Iran's counterespionage chief "said that CIA officers were recruiting Iranians online, and he claimed Iran had penetrated CIA systems that were masquerading as more benign websites." Marsden suggests that Iran may have received assistance from China, which "Foreign Policy magazine in 2018 explain[ed] how Chinese counterespionage dismantled the CIA's in-country espionage network from 2010 to 2012, leading to the exposure and execution of the CIA's Chinese assets." Marsden contends that the "disastrous episode was blamed on the agency's use of a supposedly secure covert communication system that had been migrated over from the Middle East and allowed recruited assets to communicate with their CIA handlers." She asserts that, "given that China, Russia and Iran are allies, what are the odds that the Chinese shared their findings about the CIA's spy

network with the Russians and Iranians? And if the system was originally developed for CIA intelligence operations in the Middle East, information about that system would clearly be useful to Iranian intelligence and to Russia's efforts in countering CIA operations in Syria and elsewhere in the region."

Opinion: Expanding Covert Agent Secrecy Law Could Discourage CIA Officers To Report On Controversial Activities.

In an op-ed in [Just Security](#) (7/25), Stanton Foundation National Security Fellow at the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press Linda Moon writes that an expansion of the Intelligence Identities Protection Act (IIPA) of 1982, "which was pushed by the CIA and is fast-tracking through Congress as part of this year's intelligence authorization bills, would remove the overseas requirement entirely, meaning that intelligence agencies could criminalize the disclosure of the identities of clandestine officers and agents in perpetuity, including after retirement or even after death." Moon argues that "without the overseas requirement, there is a concern that the IIPA could be used to threaten legal action for reporting on controversial activities...whose identity is common knowledge but whose activities might be classified." She contends the "CIA has not been shy in wielding the law as a threat in similar cases in the past – two independent journalists who figured out the names of key individuals in the CIA's efforts against al-Qaeda agreed to censor the name of one of these officers after the CIA repeatedly invoked the IIPA. The proposed expansion would just heighten that concern."

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Epstein On Suicide Watch After Being Found Unresponsive In Cell.

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 5, 2:00, O'Donnell, 251K) reported Jeffrey Epstein is "on suicide watch after being found on the floor of his cell at a New York City jail." CBS' Mola Lenghi added that "law enforcement sources say Epstein was found lying on the floor of his jail cell earlier this week, semiconscious, despondent and crying, with slight bruising around his neck." Lenghi said that officials at the correctional center where Epstein is being held are "reviewing internal security cameras to try to figure out what happened inside [his] cell."

On [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 3, 2:00, Muir, 597K), Whit Johnson reported, "Investigators initially thought he'd tried to take his own life or make it seem that way. Now, they're looking into whether he was assaulted by another inmate or whether he had even paid someone to beat him up. They've interviewed another inmate, Nick Tartaglione, a former cop accused of murder." On [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 3, 1:45, Holt, 127K), Stephanie Gosk reported, "Tartaglione's lawyer says his client was questioned, but is not a suspect."

Attorney Says Review Raises Doubts About Fatal Texas Drug Raid.

The [AP](#) (7/25, Lozano) reports from Houston, "An independent review by the family of a woman who along with her husband were killed in a drug raid earlier this year by Houston police is casting doubts on how authorities have portrayed the deadly shooting, attorneys said Thursday." The January 28 drug raid in which Rhogena Nicholas and her husband, Dennis Tuttle, "were fatally shot in their home and five officers were injured came under scrutiny after police alleged one of the officers who was shot, Gerald Goines, lied in a search warrant about having a confidential informant buy heroin at the home." According to the AP, "Family and friends of Tuttle and Nicholas have continuously dismissed allegations the couple sold drugs." On Thursday, attorneys for Nicholas' family "said a forensic review of the crime scene found evidence contradicting how the shooting took place and how long it took to finish."

[KHOU-TV](#) Houston (7/25, Dougherty, 207K) reports, "Attorneys representing the family of the woman killed in January's botched drug raid in southeast Houston are claiming a private investigation found Rhogena Nicholas was shot from outside of her home," which "contradicts

what police said happened that day." The attorneys "filed a petition with probate court requesting depositions from officers to address these findings," and "they said in addition to their private investigator showing Nicholas was shot from outside of her home on Harding Street, they also showed where several other rounds were fired into the home as well." The attorneys "said black tar heroin was never sold there – something they said police lied about," and "they also said 30 minutes after the shootout supposedly ended in the home, a neighbor took cellphone video where two gunshots were fired inside of the home."

Threats Of "Lethal Force" Against Law Enforcement Prompt Texas FBI Operation.

The [Waco \(TX\) Tribune-Herald](#) (7/25, Hoppa, 129K) reports, "An hourslong standoff with a person at a Robinson home ended sometime around midday Thursday, but officials with the FBI, Robinson police and McLennan County Sheriff's Office were mum on how it ended." According to the Tribune-Herald, "Emergency vehicles before noon left the scene in the 700 block of Stegall Drive, where an individual had threatened 'lethal force' against law enforcement agencies gathered there starting about 7 a.m., Robinson police Lt. Tracy O'Connor said, reading an FBI statement." O'Connor "said the agencies were conducting a 'court-authorized law enforcement operation.'"

[KCEN-TV](#) Waco, TX (7/25, Wilson, 51K) reports, "The person in the home would not cooperate with officers and threatened to use 'lethal force against law enforcement,' O'Connor said," and "as of 10 a.m., the Robinson Police Department, McLennan County Sheriff's Office, EMS, FBI, and the fire department were still outside the home trying to coax the person out." KCEN-TV adds, "By about 12:30 p.m. the bomb squad was seen leaving the neighborhood, but roads remained closed," and "officials later reported no explosives were on scene."

[KWTX-TV](#) Waco, TX (7/25, 189K) reports, "The FBI had what a law enforcement source described as a 'considerable presence' late Thursday afternoon in a Robinson neighborhood where a local man died of a gunshot wound as agents arrived early in the morning to serve warrants, but the source says there was no standoff at the home." The FBI "declined throughout the day to provide specific information about what local law enforcement sources had described as a standoff, but as two-dozen local and state law enforcement vehicles streamed out of the neighborhood just before noon Thursday, and agency spokeswoman Michelle Lee did say there is 'no longer any threat to the public.'" Sources "said FBI agents went to the home in the 700 block of East Stegall Drive to serve search and arrest warrants," and "late Thursday afternoon, the law enforcement source said agents spent the day processing evidence and confirmed there was no standoff."

Prosecutor Says More Could Be Charged In R Kelly Case.

The [AP](#) (7/25) reports from Chicago, "More charges and more defendants could be added to the federal case against R. Kelly in Chicago that currently alleges child pornography and other crimes by the R&B singer and two associates, a prosecutor told a judge Thursday." Prosecutor Angel Krull "said a more far-ranging indictment could replace the charging document that led to Kelly's arrest as he walked his dog in Chicago in mid-July," but "she offered no hints about possible new investigative targets." Kelly, 52, "is being held without bond on charges that include producing child pornography and coercing minors to engage in sex." Kelly "faces similar federal charges in New York, along with Illinois charges brought by Cook County prosecutors." Krull "also requested an order protecting evidence and limiting what lawyers can say publicly about it."

US Examining Photo Of Armed Students At Emmett Till Sign.

The [Mississippi Center For Investigative Reporting](#) (7/25, Mitchell) reports, "Three University of Mississippi students have been suspended from their fraternity house and face possible investigation by the Department of Justice after posing with guns in front of a bullet-riddled sign honoring slain civil rights icon Emmett Till." According to MCIR, "One of the students

posted a photo to his private Instagram account in March showing the trio in front of a roadside plaque commemorating the site where Till's body was recovered from the Tallahatchie River" after "the 14-year-old black youth was tortured and murdered in August 1955." MCIR adds, "It is not clear whether the fraternity students shot the sign or are simply posing before it." The sign "is part of a memorial effort by a Mississippi civil rights group and has been repeatedly vandalized, most recently in August 2018."

The [AP](#) (7/25, Amy) reports, "Ole Miss spokesman Rod Guajardo said the image was reported in March to the university's Bias Incident Response Team, which takes reports of incidents where students, faculty or staff are targeted because of their race or other characteristics." Guajardo "said university police asked the FBI to investigate, but says the FBI declined to open an inquiry because the photo 'did not pose a specific threat,'" but "U.S. Attorney Chad Lamar told the Mississippi Center for Investigative Reporting that federal prosecutors are examining the case."

NYPD Officer Charged In Murder-For-Hire Plot Blocked From Contact With Son.

[WCBS-TV](#) New York (7/25) reports, "A New York City police officer accused in a murder for hire plot was back in court Thursday." A judge "put a stop to communication between the jailed officer and her 5-year-old son." Valerie Cincinelli "appeared in divorce court in Nassau County to face the estranged husband she is accused of plotting to kill," and "the judge revoked her visitation calls with her son after she was accused of demonstrating poor judgement in one recent call and violating protocols for contact from behind bars." Cincinelli "is also accused of plotting to kill her boyfriend's teen-aged daughter." WCBS-TV adds, "One of Cincinelli's brothers committed suicide earlier this month. He was an FBI agent." The [New York Daily News](#) (7/25, Light, McShane, 2.52M) also reports.

Lawsuit Reveals What FBI Agents Found In 2014 Raid Of Arizona Body Donation Center.

The [New York Post](#) (7/25, Bowden, 4.57M) reports, "Buckets of body parts, a cooler filled with male genitalia and a woman's head sewn onto a male torso 'like Frankenstein' were found by FBI agents during a raid on an Arizona body donation center, a new lawsuit reveals." According to the Post, "The stomach-churning scene was discovered by FBI agents at the now-shuttered Biological Resource Center in 2014 as part of a multi-state investigation into the illegal trafficking and sale of human body parts, as reported by the Arizona Republic." The Post adds, "Details of the grim find were revealed in a lawsuit filed against the center this week by 33 defendants whose loved ones' bodies were donated to the facility under the guise they would be used for scientific purposes."

[The Hill](#) (7/25, Campisi, 2.98M) reports, "The Phoenix facility, which served as a body donation center and tissue bank, was raided in 2014 by FBI agents in hazmat suits as part of the agency's multistate investigation into the illegal trafficking and sale of human body parts," and "agents found bodies cut up with chainsaws and band saws, and 'pools of human blood and bodily fluids were found on the floor of the freezer' with no identification tags to mark the corpses, the lawsuit reportedly alleges." The Hill adds, "The center's owner, Stephen Gore, was sentenced to a year of deferred prison time and four years of probation after pleading guilty in October to illegal control of an enterprise."

[Newsweek](#) (7/25, 1.53M) reports, "According to the testimony of former FBI Assistant Special Agent Mark Cwynar, they found a 'cooler filled with male genitalia,' 'a bucket of heads, arms and legs,' and 'infected heads,' a CNN News Wire report says."

Suspect Arrested In California Shooting Spree That Killed Four.

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 3, 0:25, O'Donnell, 251K) reported a suspect was arrested Thursday after "a shooting spree that left at least four people dead." Police say Gerry Zaragoza, 26, "killed his father and brother" and then shot "a woman and man at a gas

station." [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, lead story, 1:35, Holt, 127K) reported that at least six people were shot across three locations in Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/25, Fry, Winton, Ormseth, 4.64M) reports "the shootings and manhunt...lasted roughly 12 hours." On [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (7/25, lead story, 2:00, Muir, 597K), Clayton Sandell reported authorities are "trying to figure out a motive."

FBI Asks Public To Look Out For North Carolina "Pink Lady Bandit."

[WWAY-TV](#) Wilmington, NC (7/25, 6K) reports, "The FBI is asking the public to be on the lookout for a woman who is accused of robbing three banks in three different states." The robber has been dubbed the "Pink Lady Bandit," reportedly, "because in at least two of the robberies she carried a distinctive pink handbag."

[WNCN-TV](#) Raleigh-Durham, NC (7/25) reports the suspect "has robbed at least three banks since July 20" and "has now struck in North Carolina."

Alabama Man Gets 10 Years For Shooting Sheriff Deputy.

The [Mobile \(AL\) Press-Register](#) (7/25, Carter, 840K) reports, "A Stockton, Ala., man has been sentenced to 10 years in prison for being a drug user in possession of a firearm, the U.S. Attorney's Office announced." Carl Bullin fired at Baldwin County sheriff's deputies in December of 2019. Reportedly, the case was "investigated by the Baldwin County Major Crimes Task Force, the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office, the Bay Minette Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation."

FBI Says Whitesboro, Schuyler Incidents Related.

[WKTV-TV](#) Utica, NY (7/25, 3K) reports, "The two federal investigations in Whitesboro and Schuyler, Tuesday, were related." Reportedly, "the FBI has returned calls about a heavy police presence in Whitesboro on Tuesday," and the agency "confirmed the incident was related to a court order."

Federal Authorities Said To Investigate Hudson County Lottery Pool.

The [Hudson County \(NJ\) Jersey Journal](#) (7/25, Conte, 1.8M) reports, "Multiple people, including one county employee, have been called to testify in a federal probe into an alleged illegal lottery contest that hundreds of Hudson County employees pay a \$20 fee to enter." Reportedly, "The feds are looking into whether the organizers of the game, based on numbers drawn in the state lottery's official Pick-6, are taking a cut of the total pool money." Asked for comment, an FBI spokeswoman in Newark said, "The FBI can neither confirm nor deny the existence of investigations."

Former Suffolk Cop Sentenced Over Civil Rights Violation.

[Newsday \(NY\)](#) (7/25, Kessler, 932K) reports, "A former Suffolk police officer was sentenced to 1 year in prison Thursday for pressuring a woman he arrested to twice engage in sexual acts in a police precinct." Christopher McCoy "pleaded guilty in October 2018 to a single federal misdemeanor count of deprivation of civil rights under color of law." Suffolk Police Commissioner Geraldine Hart said in a statement, "The Suffolk County Police Department assisted the FBI in its criminal investigation into this matter."

Bloods Gang Member Sentenced On Heroin Conviction.

The [Wilmington \(NC\) Star News](#) (7/25, Bellamy, 154K) reports, "A man that Wilmington police characterized as a high-ranking member of the Bloods street gang has been sentenced to more than 12 years in prison." Reportedly, "The case was investigated as part of an FBI-led operation called 'Dodge Ball,' focused on gang members involved in the distribution of heroin, possession of firearms and associated violence."

FBI, Homeland Security Raid Cerritos Home.

The [Los Cerritos \(CA\) Community News](#) (7/25, Hews, 102K) reports, "FBI and Homeland Security personnel raided a home in on the 17000 block of Maurice Dr. in Cerritos." Reportedly, "Neighbors said that three carloads and about a dozen officers went into the house, took 'all sorts of stuff out of the house and the garage.'" Agents are said to have been at the residence "for about 1.5 hours."

Former Dayton Commissioner Accused Of Corruption No Longer KeyBank Market President.

The [Dayton \(OH\) Daily News](#) (7/25, Gnau, Hulse, Sweigart, 121K) reports, "Former Dayton City Commissioner Joey Williams – charged with corruptly soliciting a bribe while in office – is no longer market president at KeyBank." Williams, who faces federal charges following an FBI corruption investigation, "has been accused of taking more than \$50,000 in money and benefits such as home renovations from an unnamed individual in 2015 in exchange for using his influence to get the city and CityWide Development Corp. to award them contracts."

Three Flint Men Face Charges Over Marijuana Grow Robbery.

The [Grand Blanc \(MI\) View](#) (7/25) reports, "An indictment was unsealed Monday charging three Flint men with conspiring to rob a Sanilac County marijuana grow operation, announced U.S. Attorney Matthew Schneider. Joining Schneider in the announcement was Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge Timothy R. Slater." SAC Slater said, "Because of the hard work of the FBI and its law enforcement partners, these men will face the consequences of their reckless actions."

Second Man Faces Federal Charges In Killing Of South Dakota Woman.

The [AP](#) (7/25) reports a federal indictment named Ramon Simpson "with kidnapping resulting in death and conspiracy to commit kidnapping in the killing of Phyllis Hunloff." Simpson is the second man charged in Hunloff's death.

Two Men Sentenced On Child Exploitation Charges.

[KIDY-TV](#) San Angelo, TX (7/25) reports, "An Abilene man was one of two defendants sentenced to serve time in federal prison on charges of child exploitation." James Vernon was sentenced to 15 years, and Christopher Mayhall was sentenced to 20 years. Reportedly, "The two cases were unrelated; however, the men were both sentenced by a federal judge in Midland, according to a press release from the United States Attorney's Office Western District of Texas – U.S. Attorney John F. Bash and FBI Special Agent in Charge Emmerson Buie Jr., El Paso Division."

Albuquerque Man Faces Gun, Drug Choices.

[KVEO-TV](#) Harlingen, TX (7/25, Resendiz) reports Henry Felix was arrested on Tuesday and "charged in a federal complaint with possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime; being a felon in possession of a firearm; and possession of heroin with intent to distribute." Reportedly, "The FBI Violent Crime Task Force...arrested Felix after executing a search warrant of his residence in Albuquerque."

Inmate Gets Seven More Years For Hiring Hitman.

The [AP](#) (7/25) reports Mason Stickney has been sentenced to more than seven years in prison for trying to "hire someone to kill three people, including a police officer." Reportedly, another inmate "alerted authorities and worked with them to put Stickney in contact with a hit man who was actually an undercover FBI agent."

Man Sentenced To Eight Years For Meth Possession, Intent To Distribute.

The [York County \(ME\) Journal-Tribune](#) (7/25, Gotthelf, 25K) reports Joshua Kaufman "has been sentenced in federal court to eight years in prison and five years of supervised release for possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine." Reportedly, "This case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and Southern Maine Gang Task Force, which is comprised of investigators from the FBI; the Portland, South Portland and Lewiston Police Departments; the York County Sheriff's Office; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration."

Man Likely To Get 30 Years For 1999 Kidnapping, Assault.

The [Somerset County \(PA\) Daily American](#) (7/25, Ellich, 38K) reports Timothy Nelson pleaded guilty to "kidnapping and aggravated sexual abuse in federal court on Thursday – 20 years after the crime was committed." In the years since then, Nelson's victim "grew into a strong woman and a state police trooper and FBI agent never gave up on finding the man who hurt the Shade Township resident on Sept. 19, 1999."

Granger Man Gets Prison, Order To Pay Back \$1.6 Million.

[WBND-TV](#) South Bend, IN (7/25, Hudson) reports James Cotton "was sentenced to 63 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$1,666,721 in restitution for devising a scheme to defraud his former employer." Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Indianapolis Division Grant Mendenhall said, "We expect the people we work with to be honest and trustworthy, but Mr. Cotton chose to betray his employer's trust for his own financial gain."

The [South Bend \(IN\) Tribune](#) (7/25, Wright, 182K) reports, "Cotton admitted that from approximately January 2009 to October 2017, he devised a fraud scheme to obtain money from his employer by means of false representations, according to court documents. Cotton created five sham businesses which did not have any actual employees and did not engage in any legitimate business activity."

14 Charged In TDOC Contraband Investigation.

[TVC-TV](#) Chattanooga, TN (7/25, 101K) reports, "14 people face several counts stemming from a Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC) contraband investigation." TDOC Commissioner Tony Parker reportedly "has been intimately involved in the national fight against contraband and has taken part in conversations with the FCC, ASCA, the FBI and mobile technology leaders to find ways to reduce cell phone utilization in contraband introduction."

Ex-Milton Mayor Thompson's Sentencing Delayed.

The [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#) (7/25, Blanks, 170K) reports, "A sentencing hearing for ex-United Way of Santa Rosa County Director Guy Thompson has been delayed by one month so doctors retained by Thompson's lawyers can perform a forensic mental health evaluation on the former mayor, according to court documents." Thompson "pleaded guilty in May to 20 counts of wire fraud and three counts of tax evasion after an FBI investigation revealed he embezzled more than \$650,000 from United Way of Santa Rosa County between 2011 and 2018.

Thompson executed a complex bank fraud scheme using several banks throughout Santa Rosa County to redirect money meant for charity into his own personal coffers."

St. Clair Sheriff's Office Helps FBI Bring In Child Porn Fugitive.

The [Anniston \(AL\) Star](#) (7/25, Hanner, 57K) reports, "The St. Clair County Sheriff's Office assisted the FBI on Tuesday in apprehending" Charles Stoker of Indianapolis, a fugitive wanted on child pornography charges. St. Clair County Sheriff Billy Murray "said his office received a request from the FBI in locating the man."

Authorities Offering \$32,000 For Info On Assault Of Baltimore Police Employee.

The [Baltimore Sun](#) (7/26, Davis, 1.33M) reports, "Authorities are offering up to \$32,000 in rewards for information that leads to the arrest of three people who assaulted a Baltimore police civilian employee Wednesday." Reportedly, "Detective Jeremy Silbert wrote in an email that the FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives are each offering separate \$5,000 rewards for information on each of the three suspects in the case and Metro Crime Stoppers are offering an additional \$2,000."

Man Busted On Meth Charges Sentenced To Eight Years.

The [Santa Clarita Valley \(CA\) Signal](#) (7/25, Holt, 11K) reports Patrick Fry, "one of two Saugus men arrested just over a year ago for involvement in a nationwide meth-trafficking ring was sentenced earlier this month in a Pennsylvania court to at least eight years in prison." Reportedly, "Several law enforcement agencies including the FBI dismantled the 'multi-state drug trafficking organization that used the U.S. Postal Service to mail packages of crystal methamphetamine and marijuana from California to traffickers in Montgomery County dating back to at least April 2016 and the arrests of five leaders who spearheaded the corrupt organization.'"

FBI Explains How Intrust Robber Was Caught So Quickly.

[KWCH-TV](#) Wichita, KS (7/25, 162K) reports the FBI on Thursday detailed "how officers managed to locate and quickly arrest" Jeremy Vos, who was accused of robbing an Intrust Bank branch inside a Dillons grocery store. Reportedly, "The FBI says Vos left the bank and came back with his ID." Police went to Vos' house, where they found clothing matching bank employees' descriptions. They then went to the house of one of Vos' friends, who told police "Vos messaged her that morning saying he was 'going to rob a bank,' and that 'he had money and wanted to buy'" marijuana. Vos was arrested at the friend's house.

San Fernando Valley Shooting Suspect In Custody.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/25, Fry, Winton, Ormseth, 4.64M) reports, "A 26-year-old who embarked on a shooting rampage that left four dead – beginning with his own family and ending with a stranger on a bus – was arrested Thursday afternoon after an hours-long manhunt that cast a shadow of fear across the sweltering San Fernando Valley, police said." Gerry Zaragoza "was taken into custody about 2:30 p.m. when two law enforcement officers with the LAPD and FBI joint fugitive task force spotted him walking on Canoga Avenue near Gault Street."

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

Puerto Rico's Next Governor Already Under Fire.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 6, 0:20, Muir, 597K) reported that with Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rosselló announcing "he will step down next Friday, the Secretary of Justice is in line to take over, but she's already under fire...for her handling of aid after Hurricane Maria." [Bloomberg](#) (7/25, Kaske, Albright, 4.73M) reports Secretary of Justice Wanda Vázquez is under investigation by the island's Office of Government Ethics for "her conduct as the commonwealth's chief law-enforcement officer." Zulma Rosario, executive director of Puerto Rico's Office of Government Ethics, on Thursday ordered a review of "accusations that Vazquez ignored evidence of possible corruption in the provision of hurricane relief." Rosario said in an interview Thursday, "What we're investigating is her alleged denial or refusal to investigate these claims as secretary of justice."

[USA Today](#) (7/25, Bacon, Ortiz, 10.31M) reports that "Vázquez's close political ties to Rosselló, along with her own political history, have many people here viewing her as only a temporary solution." Soon after Rosselló's announcement, "#WandaRenuncia began trending on

Twitter." Carlos A. Suárez Carrasquillo, a lecturer at the University of Florida, said, "Vázquez is unlikely to stay as a permanent governor. Especially if accusations keep piling up and protest against her continue and pick up steam."

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{vi} (7/25, story 7, 1:25, Holt, 127K) reported, "Vázquez inherits a government dealing with a year's long recession, allegations of rampant corruption, and rebuilding after Hurricane Maria."

NYTimes Analysis: Puerto Rico Governor's Hubris Led To His Fall. In an analysis, the [New York Times](#) (7/25, Mazzei, Robles, 18.61M) says Rosselló "misread the anger brewing among his people after years of economic stagnation and broken promises." According to the Times, Rosselló "packed his team with trusted friends who in many cases had as little experience in government as he did." In the end, "with crisis enveloping his administration, the governor found himself increasingly isolated, having lost support from the public, the leaders of his political party and many of his own aides, who tendered their resignations."

FEMA To Require Puerto Rico To Submit Requests To Access Relief Funds. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Scurria, Coronado, Acevedo, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that pointing to the political turmoil in Puerto Rico, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said Thursday it would further restrict the territory's access to federal funds for repairing hurricane damage. Puerto Rico must submit requests to the agency to draw down all funds related to Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

WPost: Puerto Ricans Should Continue To Demand Change. In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, 14.2M) says Puerto Ricans must "continue to press for change that will root out the corruption and dysfunction that for far too long have marked how the U.S. territory has been governed." According to the Post, "what is needed is an orderly transition, thorough investigation of any wrongdoing and implementation of a system to ensure that federal aid is effectively dispersed to where it is needed." It supports the "appointment of a federal coordinator to oversee relief funds, similar to the efforts undertaken in New Orleans and New York following Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy."

FBI Reportedly Probing California Political Consultant's Work.

The [Monterey County \(CA\) Weekly](#) (7/25, Duan, 94K) reports, "Before two agents from the FBI's Oakland field office stepped foot on the Central Coast to start questioning people about John Fickas' political work and the money that flows in and out of local politics, they made a call to detectives at the Salinas Police Department. 'They contacted us to get information about the sexual assault investigation,' says Assistant Chief Roberto Filice," who "says the agents indicated they weren't interested in that case, one in which Fickas, a longtime coach at North Salinas High School and a political operative who's been involved in numerous local campaigns, is charged with drugging and raping a woman and a girl." One person the FBI interviewed told the Weekly that "the agents' questions focused entirely on money – how cash was used in local elections and how Fickas moved money around."

Former Oyster Bay, New York Supervisor Expected To Plead Guilty To Corruption Charges.

[Newsday \(NY\)](#) (7/25, Murphy, 932K) reports, "Former Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor John Venditto is expected to plead guilty to state corruption charges Friday in a deal that will spare the former Republican powerbroker any jail time, sources close to the case said." Venditto, 70, of Massapequa, New York "is expected to admit in Nassau County Court to a felony charge of corrupt use of position or authority and a misdemeanor charge of official misconduct, according to the sources. 'My only comment is that there is an agreement that the pleas will result in a conditional discharge with no fine, no probation, no jail time and no other punishment in any regard,' Manhattan attorney Marc Agnifilo, one of Venditto's lawyers, told Newsday on Thursday." Venditto "served two decades as Oyster Bay's top elected official before resigning in

January 2017 as a separate federal corruption case was pending against him that ended in May 2018 with his acquittal."

FBI Reportedly Probing Online Reputation Management Firms.

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 9, 4:10, O'Donnell, 251K) reported, "Tonight, a CBS News investigation has captured the attention of the FBI." CBS "We looked into an industry that has been booming in recent years...called online reputation management," and "found that some companies hired to clean up Google searches may be breaking the law." CBS (Axelrod) added, "Reputation management companies...legally try to trick Google by flooding the internet with positive content about their clients," but "some companies employ other, shadowy tactics." According to CBS, "So far, federal prosecutors have sent at least two cases to the FBI."

Amid Federal Probe, Oklahoma Charter Schools Operator Will Continue To Get State Funding, Accreditation.

The [Tulsa \(OK\) World](#) (7/25, Eger, 205K) reports from Oklahoma City, "The Oklahoma State Department of Education is proceeding as normal with accreditation and state funding for Oklahoma's largest online school operator, despite ongoing state and federal law enforcement investigations." According to the World, "At its monthly meeting, the State Board of Education approved Epic Charter Schools' accreditation for 2019-2020 along with the full slate of public schools across the state," and "afterward, State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister told reporters she had consulted with Ricky Adams, the director of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation, about whether Epic should continue to be included in the distribution of state aid dollars for the new fiscal year when monthly payments begin on Aug. 1. 'The word we heard back (from OSBI) was, "Keep moving as normal,'" Hofmeister said."

FBI Affidavit Alleges Mail, Wire Fraud By Outcome Health, Co-Founders.

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (7/25, Marotti, Meisner, 2.65M) reports, "The FBI was conducting a criminal investigation of Outcome Health and its executives as recently as November, nearly a year after the company settled a civil lawsuit by big-name investors alleging Outcome Health and its co-founders committed fraud to secure almost \$500 million in funding." According to the Tribune, "An affidavit for a warrant to search a company laptop, sought in November 2018, was briefly unsealed Wednesday in federal court in Chicago and contains allegations that there was 'probable cause to believe' co-founders Rishi Shah and Shradha Agarwal and other employees 'conspired to commit wire fraud...and committed mail and wire fraud.'" The Tribune adds, "No charges have been filed against Outcome Health, Shah or Agarwal," and "it was unclear if the federal investigation is continuing, but the U.S. attorney's office moved quickly to reseal the affidavit for the search warrant on the same day."

North Carolina Mega-Donor's PAC Forfeited \$475,000 To Federal Authorities.

[WRAL-TV](#) Raleigh, NC (7/25, Fain, 338K) reports from Raleigh, North Carolina, "A political action committee funded by mega-donor Greg Lindberg, and specifically mentioned in Lindberg's federal bribery indictment, forfeited more than \$475,000 to the U.S. Department of Justice shortly after the indictment was filed, new campaign finance records show." According to WRAL-TV, "N.C. Growth and Prosperity is a PAC that Lindberg and his team created last year, and its political purpose was never publicly clear," but "the treasurer was John Palermo, a Lindberg associate indicted by a federal grand jury in March along with Lindberg, then-North Carolina Republican Party Chairman Robin Hayes and another Lindberg associate named John Gray." WRAL-TV adds, "All four are accused of trying to funnel bribe money to state Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey, who was cooperating with federal investigators." All four "have pleaded not guilty, and a trial is tentatively slated for September."

FBI Probing Possible Insider Trading At Long Island Iced Tea Corp.

[Quartz](#) (7/25, Detrixhe, Rohrllich, 368K) reports, "Even during the heady days of the epic bitcoin bubble in 2017, Long Island Iced Tea Corp.'s pivot to blockchain was a particularly brash ploy to latch onto the crypto hype," and "more than a year later, court records show that authorities are still digging into what they believe was a sophisticated insider trading operation designed to supercharge the stock's rise." According to Quartz, "The beverage company's stock skyrocketed nearly 300% when it said it was changing its name to Long Blockchain on Dec. 21, 2017, and indicated that it was 'shifting its primary corporate focus' from tea to distributed-ledger technology," and "since then, the Farmingdale, New York-based company has been delisted from the Nasdaq stock market and investigated by two US financial regulators, with authorities poring over evidence from recorded phone calls and a hacked iPhone."

US Finds Potential Fraud In Student Loan Repayment Programs.

The [AP](#) (7/25, Binkley) reports, "Tens of thousands of federal student loan borrowers may be getting their monthly payments lowered by lying about their income and family size, yet the U.S. Education Department is doing little to catch them, according to a report released Thursday by a federal watchdog agency." According to the AP, "Among the most extreme cases reported by the Government Accountability Office are two separate borrowers who claimed to have 93 relatives in their households, along with 3,300 cases in which borrowers said they had no income even though federal data suggest they made \$100,000 a year or more. All were approved for lower loan payments." Investigators "were reviewing the Education Department's oversight of its popular income-driven repayment plans, which allow borrowers to pay lower monthly rates based on their incomes and family sizes."

Rolls-Royce Defendant Skips \$9 Million Bail.

In a paywall-protected article, [Law360](#) (7/25, Subscription Publication, 8K) reports, "A Russian man who pled guilty to conspiracy over bribes Rolls-Royce paid to win contracts on a state-owned gas project in Asia has failed to show up for his sentencing, abandoning \$9 million in bail and prompting a judge to issue a warrant for his arrest." Vitaly Leshkov, "who had been expected in Ohio federal court Tuesday, was one of two foreign consultants scheduled to be sentenced this week along with an executive and two employees at British engineering firm Rolls-Royce." According to Law 360, "All but one of the defendants were foreign, and those who showed up got relatively lenient sentences, in part for cooperating with prosecutors."

Seattle Doctor Charged In Opioid Kickback Scheme.

The [AP](#) (7/25) reports, "A Seattle pain doctor is facing charges related to a major nationwide kickback scheme involving fentanyl prescriptions." Dr. Rajni Jutla "is accused in an indictment returned in U.S. District Court Wednesday of accepting more than \$109,000 in kickbacks between 2012 and 2016 from Arizona-based Insys Therapeutics." Prosecutors "said she took sham speaking fees to more broadly prescribe an oral fentanyl spray approved for a specific type of cancer pain."

CYBER DIVISION

FBI Probing Ransomware Attack On Collierville, Tennessee.

The [Memphis \(TN\) Commercial Appeal](#) (7/25, Kennedy, 338K) reports that the FBI "is investigating after a ransomware attack severely impacted the town of Collierville's computer systems last week, town officials said," and "while the source of the attack has not been identified, spokesperson Jennifer Casey said the hack had little impact on the public." According to the MCA, "City staff discovered the cyber breach the morning of July 18 and have worked around the clock since then to get the city's computer systems back up and running, Casey said." The city "had no direct communication with the hacker, at the direction of the FBI." Casey

"said the town still had 'limited functionality' on the computer front and that some systems could take several weeks to get back to normal."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Kamp, Calvert, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports on the growing incidences of ransomware attacks against cities and towns in the US, and said the FBI has noted a growing patterns of attacks against larger enterprises rather than individual users.

USA Today: Paying Ransomware Hackers Only Encourages More Cyberattacks.

In an editorial, [USA Today](#) (7/25, 10.31M) argues that public officials should not give in to ransomware demands. When it comes to taxpayer dollars, the editorial says, "they should be spent to prevent ransomware attacks," because paying will only result in more attacks and allows hackers to invest in more sophisticated software.

In an op-ed for [USA Today](#) (7/25, 10.31M), Richard A. Clarke, who was White House counterterrorism coordinator under Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, argues that when corporations are hit with a cyberattack, CEOs often choose to pay the hacker because it is the less costly option. He asserts that "we cannot deny mayors the option CEOs have so frequently chosen."

Cybersecurity Firm: More Than 23 Million Stolen Credit Cards Are Being Traded On Dark Web.

[ZDNet](#) (7/25, Osborne, 299K) reports that the cybersecurity firm Sixgill claims that more than 23 million credit and debit cards were available on the dark web in the first half of 2019. The researchers found that almost two thirds of the stolen cards originated in the US, followed by the UK at less than ten percent. Russia was the origin of only 316 cards. Reportedly, "three trading posts accounted for 64 percent of the cards on offer during the first half of 2019"

Tech Firms Step Up Fight Against Terrorists Using Platforms To Recruit, Campaign.

In a piece for [Forbes](#) (7/25, 9.71M), Zak Doffman writes that Facebook wrote in a blog post on Wednesday that "When terrorists misuse the internet...they often upload the same piece of content to multiple platforms to maximize their reach," and "this has allowed the social media giant – along with Google, Microsoft and Twitter under the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) alliance – to 'more quickly identify and take action against potential terrorist content on our respective platforms.'" According to Doffman, "In 2018, the alliance reached its intended milestone of assembling 100,000 such hashes," but "in the first half of 2019...the number has already doubled," and "there are now 'more than 200,000 unique hashes in the database,' each of which is described as a digital fingerprint pointing to a known piece of terrorist content."

Facebook Removes Fake Accounts From Russia, Thailand, Ukraine, Honduras.

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Tanakasempipat) reports from Bangkok, Thailand, "Facebook Inc said on Thursday it had erased over 1,800 accounts and pages from Thailand, Russia, Ukraine and Honduras, its latest move to counter deceptive political propaganda and other abuses of its service." Reuters adds, "Across the four countries, a total of 294 accounts, 1,509 pages and 32 groups were taken down for what the company calls 'coordinated inauthentic behavior.'" Facebook "has been cracking down on such accounts globally after coming under fire from governments and rights groups around the world for not developing tools quickly enough to combat extremist content and propaganda operations. 'We don't see a connection between them, but they all were using networks of fake accounts to mislead people about who they were and what they were doing,' Nathaniel Gleicher, Head of Cybersecurity Policy, told Reuters in a phone briefing."

British Cyber Expert To Be Sentenced Today In US For Creating Malware.

The [AP](#) (7/26, Moreno) reports from Milwaukee, "Just as Marcus Hutchins was hailed as a hero for helping stop a worldwide computer virus in May 2017, his criminal past as a malware developer was about to catch up to him." FBI agents "had been investigating the 25-year-old British cybersecurity wunderkind for years," and "less than two months after his claim to fame, they arrested him and accused him of creating malware to steal banking passwords – charges for which he will be sentenced Friday. 'It is this darker side of Hutchins' life that brings him before the Court for sentencing in this case,' prosecutors said in a filing ahead of his sentencing hearing in federal court in Milwaukee." Prosecutors "note Hutchins accepted responsibility for his actions during a plea deal in April, and they also gave him credit for his role in finding a 'kill switch' to the WannaCry virus."

Judge Hears Arguments In Georgia Voting Machine Lawsuit.

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (7/25, Niese, 895K) reports that US District Judge Amy Totenberg, "who is deciding whether to shut down Georgia's 27,000 electronic voting machines heard testimony Thursday that they flipped votes, lost ballots and posed election security risks." Judge Totenberg "considered a request that she immediately put the state's 17-year-old voting machines out of service for this fall's local elections, which include votes for the Atlanta school board, the Fulton County Commission and city councils across the state." Georgia officials "are already preparing to announce a replacement voting system that would go into use statewide in the March 24 presidential primary," but "the concerned voters and election integrity advocates who sued say Georgia's existing voting machines are fundamentally insecure and susceptible to hacking," and "they also plan to challenge the state's incoming voting machines, which will still use touchscreens but with the added component of printed-out ballots that create a backup of electronic vote counts."

The [AP](#) (7/25, Brumback) reports that attorneys "for election integrity activists grilled Georgia election officials about cybersecurity measures taken to protect the state's elections infrastructure, seeking Thursday to convince" Judge Totenberg "to order an immediate halt to the state's use of outdated voting machines." Their lawsuit "argues that the paperless touchscreen voting machines Georgia has used since 2002 are unsecure, vulnerable to hacking and can't be audited," and "it seeks statewide use of hand-marked paper ballots."

Brazilian President's Cellphone Hacked Amid Scandal Intrigue.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Lopes, 14.2M) reports, "Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's cellphone was hacked as part of an operation that also targeted senior members of his government, Brazil's justice ministry said on Thursday." Four men "have been arrested on suspicion of having broken into the cellphones of several cabinet ministers and hundreds of judges and prosecutors. 'They are wasting their time with me,' Bolsonaro told reporters on Thursday." On Twitter, "he called the hacks 'a grave attack against Brazil and its institutions' that must be punished, and said he has never discussed sensitive or national security issues on his cellphone." The Post adds, "No information from Bolsonaro's phone has yet to appear publicly, but the arrests widen a scandal that has challenged the president's mandate as a self-proclaimed crusader against corruption."

Attempting To Define Cyber Command's Future Role.

[Fifth Domain Cyber](#) (7/25, Pomerleau) reports on the evolution and outlook for Cyber Command. It is "an organization whose workforce and capabilities have grown rapidly, but whose future remains uncertain." Some experts have noted that the Department of Defense "isn't operating in domestic networks, but rather trying to thwart attacks before they get to the US." However, others "contend that the new approach and authorities might embolden decision makers to rely on cyberwarriors for a new host of problems." Leaders at Army Cyber Command "have hinted that they want the organization shift to be something along the lines of Army Information Warfare Command." Cyber Command's current leader, Gen. Paul Nakasone, "had

previously testified in 2018 to Congress that during his most recent assignment leading the cyber offensive against ISIS that information operations were the most eye-opening." Some in the national security community "have cautioned that cyber operations are being viewed too narrowly. Rather, it should be considered under a larger umbrella of information operations."

Opinion: Appropriate Language And Rhetoric Critical For Framing Problems By Military Professionals.

In an op-ed in [Fifth Domain Cyber](#) (7/25), University of Utah Professors of Communication and Argumentation Sean Lawson and Michael K. Middleton write that, in a recent study, "we examined uses of the Pearl Harbor metaphor in the United States cybersecurity debate from its earliest appearance in 1991 until just before the Russian cyberattack on the 2016 US presidential election." They contend the "continued reliance on cyber Pearl Harbor-like doom scenarios to frame our thinking has had real, negative impacts. Constant worry about such doomsday scenarios has clouded our ability to perceive actual threats. There is a growing chorus of experts who claim that this is precisely what occurred in the run-up to Russia's 2016 attacks." They argue that "the importance of language and rhetoric for appropriately framing and responding to problems is embraced by military professionals and academics alike. Hyperbolic analogies like cyber Pearl Harbor are not only inadequate, but may actually be harmful to our ability to engage with the cyber threats we face today."

NSA's Cybersecurity Directorate Selects Leadership.

[CyberScoop](#) (7/25, Vavra) reports an NSA spokesman said Neal Ziring "will be the Cybersecurity Directorate's technical director." Dave Frederick "will be the new deputy director." In addition to the roles of director, technical director, deputy director, and chief of staff, Neuberger and her team "still have a lot of personnel questions before the directorate starts operating in October." The NSA has not "determined the number of people that will comprise the directorate in all, although it will be 'sizable,' according to the spokesperson."

Congress Debating Which Agency Should Manage Cyberthreats To US Oil And Gas Pipelines.

[E&E Publishing](#) (7/25, Sobczak, Subscription Publication) reports Congress is attempting to decide which agency should have authority over monitoring cyberthreats to US oil and gas pipelines. Coats "warned in a threat assessment early this year that China has the ability to bring down an American gas pipeline for 'days to weeks' through cyber means." Rep. Debbie Lesko (R-AZ), the top Republican on the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation and Maritime Security, "has called securing pipeline networks a 'critically important task and sought additional authority for TSA's pipeline program, including a legal basis for borrowing personnel from other DHS agencies." Another bill from Reps. Fred Upton (R-MI) and David Loebsack (D-IA) "would shift some gas pipeline focus to DOE, by directing the agency 'to establish policies and procedures to coordinate federal agencies, states, and the energy sector' handling of gas distribution and transmission security."

LABORATORY

DNA Evidence Links Maryland Man To 1999 Kidnapping Of 10-Year-Old Girl.

The [Baltimore Sun](#) (7/25, 1.33M) reports, "Timothy D. Nelson Jr. pleaded guilty Thursday in the Johnstown, Pennsylvania, federal courthouse and agreed to a deal that will likely result in a 30-year sentence" for kidnapping and sexually assaulting a 10-year-old girl in 1999. Reportedly, "FBI agent Robert Jones says the child was able to help investigators recover a discarded paper bag and napkins that eventually linked Nelson to the crime."

[WESA-FM](#) Pittsburgh (7/25, Press, 4K) says the "50-year-old from Cumberland, Maryland, is admitting he abducted the girl in Cairnbrook, Pennsylvania, took her to West Virginia and assaulted her before releasing the child."

The [AP](#) (7/25) and [KDKA-TV](#) Pittsburgh (7/25, 144K) also reported on this.

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

FBI Phoenix Warns Of Phone Scammers Posing As Federal Agents.

[KTVK-TV](#) Phoenix (7/25, 302K) reports, "The FBI office in Phoenix is warning the public about an 'impersonation' phone scam that could be targeting Arizona residents." FBI agents "say that during the scam, a caller pretends to be an FBI special agent, asks for money, and threatens to arrest the person if money isn't sent." KTVK-TV adds, "In one instance reported in Tucson this month, a victim reported receiving a phone call from someone who claimed to be an FBI employee." The caller "told the victim that he had an arrest warrant and that he would be arrested if he didn't send money," and "other calls followed from criminals claiming to be affiliated with the FBI. 'These claims are false and the calls are not real,' reads a statement from the FBI office in Phoenix."

Barr Announces Five Child Murderers In Federal Custody Will Be Executed.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 9, 0:20, Muir, 597K) reported the Administration has "announced the federal government will resume executing prisoners awaiting the death penalty for the first time in 16 years." The [AP](#) (7/25, Balsamo, Long) reports Attorney General Barr has instructed the Bureau of Prisons to "resume executing federal death-row inmates...ending an informal, two-decade moratorium." The first five men to be executed are "all accused of murdering children." Barr is quoted as saying, "The Justice Department upholds the rule of law – and we owe it to the victims and their families to carry forward the sentence imposed by our justice system." The AP says President Trump "has spoken often – and sometimes wistfully – about capital punishment and his belief that executions serve as both an effective deterrent and appropriate punishment for some crimes, including mass shootings and the killings of police officers."

[Bloomberg](#) (7/25, Sobczyk, Stohr, 4.73M) reports the Justice Department said in a statement Thursday the inmates were "convicted of murdering, and in some cases torturing and raping, the most vulnerable in our society – children and the elderly." The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Barrett, Berman, 14.2M) reports that DOJ "has scheduled executions in December and January for the following prisoners: Daniel Lewis Lee, for the killing of a family of three, including an 8-year-old girl; Lezmond Mitchell for the killing of a 63-year-old and her 9-year-old granddaughter; Wesley Ira Purkey for the rape and murder of a 16-year-old girl and the murder of an 80-year-old woman; Alfred Bourgeois for molesting and killing his 2-year-old daughter; and Dustin Lee Honken, for shooting and killing five people, including two children."

According to [Reuters](#) (7/25, Lynch), "Early in the Trump administration, former Attorney General Jeff Sessions ordered the Federal Bureau of Prisons to examine what steps might be required to resume the use of the death penalty," and in March 2018, Sessions "also called on federal prosecutors to seek the death penalty when bringing cases against drug dealers and traffickers as part of a strategy to help combat the opioid crisis."

The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Benner, 18.61M) reports that prosecutors "still seek the death penalty in some federal cases, including for Dylann S. Roof, an avowed white supremacist who gunned down nine African-American churchgoers in 2015, and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the Boston Marathon bomber. But the federal government has only executed only three inmates since it reinstated the death penalty in 1988, including the Oklahoma City bomber Timothy J. McVeigh."

On the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 4, 1:50, O'Donnell, 251K), Jeff Pegues reported, "One reason for the federal moratorium was concerns the three-drug cocktail administered

during lethal injections was leading to botched executions." The Justice Department said on Thursday "that it would use a single drug, pentobarbital, going forward."

The [AP](#) (7/25, Wu) reports, "Executions on the federal level have long been rare. The government has put to death only three defendants since restoring the federal death penalty in 1988, the most recent of which occurred in 2003, when Louis Jones was executed for the 1995 kidnapping, rape and murder of a young female soldier." Robert Dunham, "the executive director of the nonprofit Death Penalty Information Center, said he was concerned the process for resuming executions was rushed. 'The federal government hasn't carried out any executions in 15 years and so that raises serious questions about the ability to carry out the executions properly,' he said."

Trump Calls Dousing Attacks On NYPD Officers "Unacceptable" And "Tragic."

The [New York Post](#) (7/25, Marsh, Feis, 4.57M) reports President Trump on Thursday "waded into the slew of recent water-bucket attacks on NYPD cops, slamming" New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio "for letting the lawlessness unfold on his watch." Trump [tweeted](#), "We love our Law Enforcement Officers all around this great Country. What took place in NYC with water being tossed on NYPD officers was a total disgrace. It is time for @NYCMayor @BilldeBlasio to STAND UP for those who protect our lives and serve us all so well ..." In another tweet, Trump added, "... What took place was completely unacceptable, and will not be tolerated. Bill de Blasio should act immediately!"

When he was asked on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (7/25, 535K) about the water dousing attacks, Trump said, "It's a bad mayor, probably the worst mayor in the history of New York City. He has done a bad job and now he is running for president. The people can't even believe it. He's a horrible mayor. The policemen and women cannot stand him. They don't respect him. ... I thought that was tragic, watching that scene a couple of days ago. When I first saw it, I couldn't believe it."

HUD Secretary Carson was asked on [Fox News' The Story](#) (7/25) about the recent incident in New York City in which buckets of water were thrown at police officers. Carson said, "There's no question that people do what they think they're going to get away with and I think it's incumbent upon all the leadership of every city to make it clear that they're not going to tolerate anarchy and you're certainly not going to tolerate attacks on the police. Recognizing that these are people who put their lives on the line every day. Are there bad apples among the police? Of course there are. There are bad apples amongst teachers, amongst doctors, amongst politicians...but the fact of the matter is you can't condemn a whole group of people on the basis of what one does."

Author Of "Orange Is The New Black" Calls For Criminal Justice Reform.

In an op-ed for the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, 14.2M), Piper Kerman, author of "Orange Is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison," writes that "women have been the fastest-growing population in U.S. prisons and jails for decades," not because the US is "amidst a female-driven crime spree; it is because we as a nation have used incarceration as a first response when it should be a last resort." Kerman hopes that "more Americans can see our dysfunctional criminal-justice system for what it is and take to heart the need to reform it." The goal, Kerman writes, is to "keep women and girls out of prison and jail whenever possible – while holding them accountable for their mistakes in ways that build community rather than shred it."

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Canadian Police Continue Search For Suspects In American's Murder.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/25, story 7, 1:50, Muir, 597K) reported police in Canada continue to search for two teen suspects "linked to the deaths of an American woman and her boyfriend,

found dead on a road trip." ABC (Gutman) added, "Police haven't had a sighting of the pair in three days, and there have been no reports of stolen vehicles, which leads them to believe that the two are on foot and still in that area."

Europol: Police Bust Global Balkan Cocaine Cartel.

The [AP](#) (7/25) reports from the Hague, Netherlands, "European Union police agency Europol says an international operation has smashed a Balkan crime ring that transported cocaine from South America to Europe in private planes." Europol "announced Thursday the operation led to 11 arrests in Europe and five in Asia along with the seizure of more than a ton of cocaine and 2 million euros (\$2.2 million) in cash." Europol "says the Balkan drug traffickers used private planes to move cocaine between South America and Europe and shipped drugs to Hong Kong and Macao in Asia."

OTHER FBI NEWS

FBI Agents Settle Into New Rapid City, South Dakota Location.

[KNBN-TV](#) Rapid City, SD (7/25) reports that FBI agents in Rapid City, South Dakota "are settling into their new home this week, and meeting with law enforcement and other federal agents." According to KNBN-TV, "The FBI's old office was in downtown Rapid City, and they outgrew it over the years." The new office "is located off of Concourse Drive in Rapid Valley and will house their investigative operations and victim services." Agents "say as South Dakota continues to grow, the federal law enforcement presence needs to grow as well. 'The threat and what we're facing out here is very significant and we try to keep our presence as staffed as possible,' said Jill Sanborn, Special Agent in charge, Minneapolis division, 'but we also want to allow opportunity for growth. That growth will allow us to add partnerships with other agencies.'"

New Honolulu SAC Named.

The [Guam Daily Post](#) (7/25, Halloran) reports, "Eli S. Miranda is the new special agent in charge of the FBI's Honolulu Field Office, which covers Guam, the FBI announced Thursday." Miranda "most recently served as the director of the High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group." Miranda "investigated organized crime, and drugs and money laundering, as well as terrorism and counterintelligence cases."

Newington Rotary Club Drawing Attention To Trafficking In Connecticut.

The [Hartford \(CT\) Courant](#) (7/25, McWilliams, 698K) reports, on the Newington Rotary Club's efforts to "bring more awareness to the issue of trafficking in Connecticut. On Tuesday, which is also the United Nation's World Day Against Trafficking, the club will host a forum with faith leaders and experts to push forward a community conversation on the issue." FBI Special Agent Kurt Siuzdak reportedly "said that human trafficking is a form of modern day slavery that is pervasive across the country," adding that the FBI investigates such crimes as one of its top civil rights concerns.

"BTK" Serial Killer's Daughter In "Extended Period Of Trying To Recover."

[ABC News](#) (7/25, Effron, Smith, 2.97M) reports, "Kerri Rawson, the daughter of the notorious 'BTK' serial killer Dennis Rader, said she has been in an 'extended period of trying to recover' after releasing her best-selling memoir about her struggle and personal journey after learning her father is a murderer." ABC says Rawson's image of her father "was shattered on Feb. 25, 2005, when an FBI agent showed up at Rawson's front door and said her father was being named among the country's most notorious serial killers."

FBI Warns Families About Kidnapping Scams.

[KTXL-TV](#) Sacramento, CA (7/25, Wong, 67K) reports, "The FBI is warning those who have family in Mexico or who travel there to beware of kidnappings and kidnapping scams." Victims of such scams "shared their experiences anonymously." One woman reportedly said that "the FBI was more helpful than local Mexican police in getting her husband released," telling KTXL, "Their support system, their help in bringing him back home, amazing."

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Budget Deal Easily Passes House, But With Two-Thirds Of Republicans Opposed.

The House passage of the Bipartisan Budget Act – with all but 16 Democrats in favor and two-thirds of Republicans opposed – is portrayed by the [AP](#) (7/25, Taylor) as "a rare cease-fire" in Democrats' "battles" with President Trump, who publicly backed the bill. The "measure, passed by a [284-149](#) vote, would head off another politically dangerous government shutdown and add a measure of stability to action this fall on a \$1.37 trillion slate of annual appropriations bills." But "GOP conservatives, many of whom won election promising to tackle entrenched federal deficits, generally recoiled from it."

The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Cochrane, 18.61M) reports, "Only 65 Republicans joined the Democratic majority...despite President Trump's endorsement and pressure from some outside groups, including the Chamber of Commerce, to avoid a potentially catastrophic default on the government's debt." The President [tweeted](#) before the vote, "House Republicans should support the TWO YEAR BUDGET AGREEMENT which greatly helps our Military and our Vets. I am totally with you!" But House Minority Leader McCarthy "correctly predicted that less than half of his 197-member conference would support the bill."

[The Hill](#) (7/25, Brufke, Elis, 2.98M) reports, "The legislation would ramp up defense spending to \$738 billion and \$740 billion over the next two fiscal years, respectively, compared with the current level of \$716 billion. Nondefense spending would rise to \$632 billion and \$634.5 billion during the same period, an increase from this year's \$605 billion." The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Werner, Paletta, 14.2M) reports that supporters "called the legislation a signal product of divided government, a compromise with something for everyone to love or hate." But conservatives "expressed opposition to the deal because it increases spending by \$320 billion over existing law and suspends the debt ceiling without doing anything to rein in the spiraling deficit and debt." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Duehren, Davidson, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) says the bill effectively ends the 2011 Budget Control Act, which set spending limits

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/25, Haberkorn, 4.64M) reports GOP leaders "touted that the plan includes \$100 billion less in new spending than what Democrats wanted and prevented steep cuts to defense." However, the [Washington Times](#) (7/25, Dinan, 492K) reports, "rank-and-file Republicans who usually leap to the president's defense begged off this time." House Freedom Caucus members Reps. Warren Davidson (R-OH), Jody Hice (R-GA), and Mark Meadows (R-NC) write in [USA Today](#) (7/25, 10.31M), "This is a bad deal for the president. It's a bad deal for conservatives. Most importantly, it's a bad deal for the forgotten men and women who voted to shake up Washington, D.C. when they sent President Trump to the White House. This is not draining the swamp – it's feeding the swamp and entrenching the status quo."

Nonetheless, the President [tweeted](#) after the vote, "I am pleased to announce the House has passed our budget deal 284-149. Great for our Military and our Vets. A big thank you!" A [Politico](#) (7/25, Bresnahan, Zanona, Emma, 4.29M) report is headlined "Sweeping Budget Deal Passes House Despite Weak GOP Support," while the [Washington Examiner](#) (7/25, Ferrechio, 448K) headlines its report "Republicans Abandon Trump-Backed Budget Deal." [Reuters](#) (7/25, Cowan) and [CQ Roll Call](#) (7/25, Shutt, 154K) also have reports.

Democrats touted the measure on Twitter while Republicans criticized it. Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA) [tweeted](#), "The Bipartisan Budget Act contains acceptable budget caps & suspends the debt limit so we can engage in a disciplined appropriations process, invest in our

country, & grow the economy – while protecting the full faith & credit of the US.” Rep. Ben Ray Luján (D-NM) [tweeted](#), “The American people elected @HouseDemocrats to put an end to government dysfunction and uncertainty. This bipartisan budget caps agreement is one of the many ways we’re living up to our commitments to invest in our communities and national security.” Rep. Tom O’Halloran (D-AZ) [tweeted](#), “Today I voted for a bipartisan budget deal that funds critical programs for #AZ01 families and ensures our servicemembers can complete their missions at home and abroad.”

Rep. Ron Estes (R-KS) [tweeted](#), “Today the House voted on a spending bill that will add \$2 trillion to the federal debt over the next decade and give DC free reign to increase government spending at will for the next two years.” Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY) [tweeted](#), “Imagine if bills were named based on what they actually did. Today, I forced a vote to rename the budget bill that suspends the debt limit, ‘A Bill to Kick the Can Down the Road, and for Other Purposes.’” Rep. Lloyd Smucker (R-PA) [tweeted](#), “Today I voted against the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 because we cannot continue to spend beyond our means.”

NBC’s Jonathan Allen [tweeted](#), “Democrats passed a major budget deal with Trump today that will probably keep the ship of state sailing between now and Election Day 2020. Republicans mostly voted against it, so they can go home and say they were against all this rancid spending. Reminds me of 2008 bailout vote.”

Barr Discusses Antitrust Concerns Related To Tech Companies With States.

[Politico](#) (7/25, McGill, 4.29M) reports “a group of state attorneys general” met with Attorney General Barr on Thursday “to discuss antitrust concerns related to major tech companies, as the Justice Department launches a review of whether online platforms are reducing competition.” The states said in a joint statement, “Our bipartisan coalition of eight state attorneys general was pleased with the opportunity to meet with [Barr] to talk about the real concerns consumers across the country have with big tech companies stifling competition on the internet. It was a productive meeting and we’re considering a range of possible antitrust actions against such companies.”

DOJ Pressing States To Support T-Mobile/Sprint Merger.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, FitzGerald, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports the Justice Department is urging state officials to back a planned settlement that would allow T-Mobile and Sprint to combine by selling assets to Dish Network. The talks seek to persuade the state attorneys general who have filed a federal antitrust suit seeking to stop the merger. The discussions include attorneys general from states that decided not to join the lawsuit.

WSJournal: DOJ Should Move Forward With Approval Of T-Mobile-Spring Merger.

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) expresses dismay that the Justice Department, which had appeared to be set on approving the T-Mobile/Sprint merger, is now holding up the deal by negotiating with states who are seeking to block the merger. The Journal argues the merger is good for consumers, who will benefit from a faster rollout of 5G service and lower prices, and it urges the DOJ to move forward with the approval.

Southwest Airlines Grounding Boeing 737 MAX Planes Until Next Year.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 4, 1:35, Holt, 127K) reported Southwest Airlines on Thursday said it won’t fly Boeing’s 737 MAX planes until next year, which could mean “higher ticket prices over the holidays.” NBC’s Tom Costello reported the airline “said it’s cutting service to Newark airport and doesn’t expect to fly the MAX until January fifth at the earliest.” Costello added that “Boeing is warning it could cut production if FAA recertification is delayed until the fall or winter.”

White House To Fight Ruling Blocking New Asylum Rules.

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Chiacu) reports the White House said yesterday it plans to “fight a federal judge’s decision blocking the Trump administration from enforcing a new rule that aimed to bar almost all asylum applications at the US-Mexico border.” US District Judge Jon Tigar in the Northern District of California “issued a preliminary injunction on Wednesday blocking the rule, which would require asylum-seekers to first pursue safe haven in a third country they had traveled through on their way to the United States.” In a statement, the White House said, “We intend to pursue all available options to address this meritless ruling and to defend this Nation’s borders.”

Administration Mulls Travel Ban On Guatemala.

Citing an unnamed White House official, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Restuccia, Montes, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports the Administration is considering imposing a travel ban on Guatemala after the country backed away from plans to accept Central American asylum seekers. The Journal adds that President Trump threatened earlier this week to punish Guatemala after the collapse of negotiations to designate the nation a safe third country for asylum seekers.

Morgan: 52 Miles Of New Wall System Has Been Built.

Acting CBP Director Mark Morgan was asked on [Fox News’ Fox News @ Night](#) (7/25) about the Washington Examiner report that the Administration has not installed any new wall. Morgan said, “It is a matter of semantics. What I can tell the American people is new wall absolutely has been built. ... If you ask a Border Patrol agent where you had a dilapidated, ineffective barrier, or you had a vehicle barrier that was five feet tall and people would walk over and all of a sudden you have a 30-foot tall wall system that has new lighting, it has roads and technology, that’s a new wall. Fifty-two miles of that new wall system has been built. Another 52 miles is on track to be built and within 18 months, a total of 205 miles of new wall will be built. And if we can get the DOD funding, that’s going to be another 250 miles of wall.”

Democrats Boycott Senate Hearing On Border Bill.

The [Washington Times](#) (7/25, Dinan, 492K) reports Democrats “boycotted a Senate committee Thursday in order to sink a bill designed to fix the surge” of migrants at the US-Mexico border. The Times notes that “under the Judiciary Committee’s rules, at least two Democrats needed to be present for senators to debate and pass the bill. But only one – Sen. Dianne Feinstein, the ranking Democrat – showed up in order to complain about the process.” Chairman Lindsey Graham, “who’s been trying to pass the bill for a month, said he’ll move next week to change the rules so that the committee can act without being stymied by another boycott.” Said Graham, “Somebody’s going to lead around here. It will be this committee.”

Morgan Blames Congress For Failing To Address Problems With Asylum Process.

Acting CBP Director Mark Morgan said on [Fox News’ Fox News @ Night](#) (7/25), “I’m glad that the American people understand that this is a crisis and this is something that’s going to impact this country for a very long time and it’s been an issue that Congress has known about for decades and has not been able to do a thing.” Morgan added that Congress knows “what they need to do, meaningful legislation to address loopholes in our asylum and they refused to do it. ... It’s not one political party or the other. It’s Congress. What I’m being told right now unfortunately, I don’t have hope that they are going to pass the meaningful legislation they need to address the loopholes in the asylum process.”

House Democrats Confront Officials Over Family Separations.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 6, 1:40, Holt, 127K) reported on “angry confrontations at a House hearing” yesterday where Democrats “condemn[ed] how the Trump Administration split migrant families, sometimes sending parents back to their home countries without their children.” House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler: “You were doing deportation before the

reunification without any knowledge of whether the parents are being reunified." Border Patrol Chief of Operations Brian Hastings: "Yes." Nadler: "In other words, you're kidnapping the child." Hastings: "Not kidnapping the child." Nadler: "Taking a parent without their child is kidnapping." NBC (Bennett) added, "The Trump Administration is still under fire for that prior family separation policy."

Record 61,000 Unaccompanied Migrant Children In Federal Custody Since October.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (7/25, Bedard, 448K) reports that "a record 61,000 unaccompanied migrant children have surged over the US-Mexico border and been handed to federal care facilities since October, and there are still over two months left in the fiscal year." Jonathan Hayes, the director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement at DHS, "said that the agency on one day held a high of 13,700, and it is down to 11,000." The Examiner says "the shocking numbers are the latest evidence of the border crisis that the Trump administration is working to solve."

Border Patrol Chief Was Member Of Racist Facebook Group Under Investigation.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Horton, 14.2M) reports that "revelations over secret Facebook groups popular with Border Patrol agents were eye-popping," and "days later, officials said those responsible for posts were previously investigated, with unclear results." In testimony Wednesday, Border Patrol Chief Carla Provost "acknowledged she herself was a member of one of the groups; she had been active since at least last fall, according to images published by the Intercept." Provost told lawmakers she was in the group to evaluate "how I am representing my workforce." She added, "I didn't think anything of it at the time," saying she was "unaware of the nature of the posts until ProPublica published a report on July 1," which showed posts contain "caustic remarks about the deaths of migrants, sexually explicit images and xenophobic comments."

House Approves TPS For Venezuelans.

The [Miami Herald](#) (7/25, Daugherty, 1.09M) reports the House voted [272-158](#) on Thursday to pass granting Temporary Protected Status, or TPS, for Venezuelans. The TPS bill, sponsored by Reps. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) and Darren Soto (D-FL), now heads to the Senate for consideration "a day before the House leaves Washington for a six week recess."

Sixteen Marines Charged With Smuggling Migrants.

The [AP](#) (7/25, Watson) reports that "a human smuggling investigation by the military led to the arrest of 16 Marines Thursday while carrying out a battalion formation at California's Camp Pendleton, a base about an hour's drive from the US-Mexico border." The AP says two weeks ago, "two Marines were arrested near the border by a Border Patrol agent," and "were accused of smuggling three Mexicans into the United States." According to the AP, the Marine Corps "said information gained from those arrests led to Thursday's arrests."

In its lead story, the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, lead story, 1:20, O'Donnell, 251K) reported that none of the 16 arrested, all members of the same battalion, "were among the 6,600 active duty and National Guard troops assigned to the southwest border." Officials say more arrests are expected. [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 2, 1:55, Holt, 127K) reported the Marine Corps said in a statement that "an additional eight Marines were taken aside to be questioned on their involvement in alleged drug offenses unrelated to today's arrest." On [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 2, 1:50, Muir, 597K), Martha Raddatz said, "Having 16 Marines arrested at once will likely lead to even more investigations and even more of a spotlight on human smuggling."

Migrants Transported Away From Nuevo Laredo To Monterrey.

The [AP](#) (7/25, Verza) reports that "busloads...carrying at least 450 Hondurans, Guatemalans and Salvadorans" have traveled recently "from Nuevo Laredo, across from Laredo, Texas, to Monterrey, where they are left to fend for themselves with no support on housing, work or schooling for children, who appear to make up about half the group." According to the AP, Mexico "has received some 20,000 asylum seekers returned to await US immigration court dates under the program colloquially known as 'remain in Mexico,'" but "there had been no sign of such large-scale moving of people away from the border before now, after the program expanded to Nuevo Laredo in violence- and cartel-plagued Tamaulipas, a state where the US State Department warns against all travel due to kidnappings and other crime."

Mexico's Murder Rate Hit Record High In 2018.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Harrup, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports Mexico's murder rate hit a record last year, and homicides continue to climb this year. Mexico's National Statistics Institute said there were 35,964 murders last year, a 12 percent increase from 2017.

Senate Confirms Milley As Next Joint Chiefs Chairman.

The [AP](#) (7/25, Burns) reports the Senate voted [89-1](#) on Thursday to confirm Army Gen. Mark Milley to be the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Milley will succeed Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, whose term expires Oct. 1. [Reuters](#) (7/25, Zengerle) reports that during his confirmation hearing earlier this month, Milley told the Senate Armed Services Committee he would not be "intimidated into making stupid decisions" and would give his best advice to President Trump "regardless of pressure."

Hyten's Confirmation Process To Advance Amid Sexual Misconduct Allegations.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Demirjian, Sonne, 14.2M) reports President Trump's pick to serve as JCS vice chairman "will be scheduled for a public confirmation hearing despite sexual misconduct allegations against him, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee said Thursday." The confirmation hearing for Air Force Gen. John E. Hyten "could happen as soon as next week," but it "is not clear whether his accuser, an Army colonel, will also be a part of a public hearing." The hearing is "expected to be dominated by questions about the allegations that Hyten made sexually abusive contact with the colonel on more than a half-dozen occasions." Hyten, however, has denied the allegations.

Senate Committee Backs Craft To Be UN Ambassador.

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Zengerle) reports the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday voted 15-7 to back Kelly Craft, currently the US Ambassador to Canada, as President Trump's envoy to the United Nations. Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ), the committee's ranking member, said he felt Craft lacked the "seriousness and professionalism" to represent the US at the world body, noting that "she had spent 356 days out of her 21 months as ambassador to Canada outside of the country." Craft's backers, however, "said she was a tough negotiator on a new US trade deal with Canada and Mexico."

Lawmakers Delay Action To Hold Conway In Contempt.

[Reuters](#) (7/25) reports House lawmakers have "backed off on plans to hold White House senior adviser Kellyanne Conway in contempt of Congress for defying a subpoena last week." Conway failed to appear at a July 15 congressional hearing relating to allegations she violated the Hatch Act. The House Oversight Committee "subpoenaed Conway to compel her testimony," but a vote to hold her in contempt on Thursday "was postponed."

House Panel Subpoenas Kushner And Ivanka Trump's Personal Emails, Texts.

The [AP](#) (7/25, Daly) reports the House Oversight and Reform Committee voted along party lines Thursday "to authorize subpoenas for personal emails and texts used for official business by top White House aides, including Ivanka Trump and her husband Jared Kushner." Chairman Elijah

Cummings said his panel has "obtained 'direct evidence' that the president's daughter, Kushner and other top aides were using personal accounts for official business in violation of federal law and White House policy." According to the AP, Cummings "said Ivanka Trump has used private email accounts for official business while her husband has used the messaging application WhatsApp." The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Sonmez, 14.2M) reports that Ivanka Trump "sent hundreds of emails throughout much of 2017 to White House aides, Cabinet officials and her assistants using a personal account, many of them in violation of federal records rules." [Reuters](#) (7/25, Wolfe, Brice) and [Bloomberg](#) (7/25, 4.73M), among other outlets, also cover the committee's vote.

Norton Seeks To Block Administration's Plan To Relocate Federal Workers.

The [Washington Times](#) (7/25, Richardson, 492K) reports the Administration is "moving ahead with plans to relocate federal agencies with hundreds of employees to flyover country, but they won't be leaving the swamp without a fight." Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) "announced this week legislation requiring all positions currently located in the National Capital Region to remain there," accusing the Administration of attempting to "sabotage" the Bureau of Land Management. Under the Administration's relocation plans, "about 300 BLM staffers would be scattered across the Western states," while two Department of Agriculture agencies "have already started moving to temporary offices in the Kansas City area." In a statement, Norton said, "Staff losses at BLM and USDA will directly hurt public lands, small-town farmers, and our agriculture policy, not to mention impact hundreds of federal employees and their families."

Different Judge Will Hear Trump Suit To Block Democrats Getting His New York Tax Returns.

[Politico](#) (7/25, Faler, 4.29M) reports federal Judge Trevor McFadden "decided Thursday that a different judge should handle President Donald Trump's suit to prevent House Democrats from obtaining his New York state tax returns, delaying a decision on the president's request for a restraining order against the Democrats." McFadden, "a Trump appointee, rejected a bid by Trump lawyer William Consovoy to have McFadden hear both that case and a separate lawsuit" by House Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal seeking the President's federal returns. Consovoy "argued the cases are so similar that McFadden ought to handle both." McFadden "disagreed, noting one involved federal tax law and the other state law." In addition he "said Democrats are plaintiffs in one case and defendants in the other, and that could have ramifications for their legal strategies in the cases."

IRS Turned Over Nixon's Tax The Same Day House Committee Requested Them.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Stein, 14.2M) reports letters released by House Democrats Thursday show that the IRS "turned President Richard Nixon's tax returns over to a congressional committee the same day in 1973 that the panel requested them for a review." The documents "appear to contradict the Trump administration's claims that House Democrats' demands for the president's tax returns are 'unprecedented,' and suggest a split between this administration and prior IRS officials over the interpretation of the law."

Altered Presidential Seal Projected Behind Trump At Turning Point USA Event.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Brice-Saddler, Thebault, 14.2M) reports that when President Trump addressed Turning Point USA's student summit this week, an altered presidential seal that appeared "to poke fun at the president's golfing penchant and accusations that he has ties to Russia" was displayed on the screen to his right. The eagle on the altered seal had two heads, which is "a symbol historically tied to empire and dominance." The eagle "closely resembles the bird on the Russian coat of arms and also appears on the flags of Serbia, Albania and Montenegro. Its left talons, rather than clasping 13 arrows, appear to clutch a set of golf clubs." The [AP](#) (7/25) says the White House did not know the altered seal would be displayed at the

event. According to spokesman Judd Deere, officials “never saw the seal” before it was displayed.

The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Mervosh, Chokshi, 18.61M) says it appears to have been “a simple mistake by the audiovisual team, who perhaps pulled the wrong image off the internet.” The [Washington Times](#) (7/25, Vogt, 492K) reports Turning Point USA said they had “zero malicious intent” and “said it was a simple Google Image search mistake.” The Times cites “a source” who “said that a member of TPUSA’s AV team was fired following the incident.”

Democrats Say They Will “Own” August Recess.

The [AP](#) (7/25, Kellman) reports congressional Democrats “pivoted away from questions of impeachment” Thursday and said they will “own” the August recess “on issues like health care and prescription drug costs.” In the wake of former special counsel Robert Mueller’s testimony, “which dulled some Democratic hopes of moving closer to formal impeachment proceedings” against the President, House Speaker Pelosi privately “advised members of her caucus to talk about impeachment if they must to advance their prospects of winning re-election next year – but not in a way that challenged other members’ views.” Pelosi said, “We will own August, make it too hot to handle for the Senate” to ignore Democratic legislative goals.

Giuliani Says He Had To Borrow \$100,000 From Trump Lawyer To Pay Taxes.

[Bloomberg](#) (7/25, Larson, 4.73M) reports President Trump’s attorney Rudy Giuliani “said he was forced to borrow \$100,000” from another Trump lawyer, Marc Mukasey, “to pay his taxes after his wife tied up a joint bank account in their bitter divorce case.” Giuliani, who “discussed the loan outside New York state court in Manhattan after his wife’s lawyer raised it at a hearing on Thursday,” said he still owes Mukasey \$10,000. Said Giuliani, “I had to borrow the money to pay taxes, because she was holding up the account. ... I’ll pay that back to him as soon as this is decided.” Bloomberg adds that Giuliani “argues his income is drying up as the divorce case drags on, and that \$800,000 he’s made so far this year from other business ventures has been spent entirely on ‘marital expenses’ tied to the couple’s lavish lifestyle.”

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Navy SEALs Sent Home For Drunken Behavior In Iraq.

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 2, 0:35, O’Donnell, 251K) reported a platoon of 22 Navy SEALs has “been sent home from Iraq. Defense officials tell CBS News they took part in a drunken July 4th party, which not only violated regulations against consuming alcohol in Iraq, but resulted in allegations of sexual assault. A [tweet](#) from the Special Operations Command said their commander lost confidence in the team’s ability to accomplish the mission. Defense officials say the SEALs were sent home because all of them invoked a code of silence and refused to talk about what had happened at the party.”

Ignatius: US Turning Its Back On Kurdish Allies In Syria.

David Ignatius writes in his [Washington Post](#) (7/25, 14.2M) column that Gen. Mazloum Abdi, the commander of the Syrian Democratic Forces, told him an interview that “instead of receiving thanks” for assisting the US mission to defeat ISIS, “his fighters have been coping with new threats. President Trump announced last December that he wanted to quickly withdraw US troops from their support of the SDF...and turn security in the area over to Turkey, the Kurds’ historical enemy.” Ignatius says, “Fortunately, Trump was talked out of that profoundly unwise move by his military and civilian advisers, and about 1,000 US Special Operations forces remain in the country.” But now, “a mortal new danger is emerging because of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s threat this month to invade the Kurdish area.” Ignatius calls on the US to intervene.

Pompeo, Ghani Agree To "Accelerate Efforts" To End War In Afghanistan.

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Brice) reports Secretary of State Pompeo and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani "agreed that it was time to 'accelerate efforts' to end the war in Afghanistan, the State Department said on Thursday." When the two spoke by phone on Wednesday, Pompeo assured Ghani that the US "remains committed to a conditions-based drawdown of troops, according to the State Department."

Asked on [Fox News Special Report](#) (7/25, 1.53M) if he got any pushback after the President said he could wipe Afghanistan off the face of the Earth, Pompeo said, "My team is on the ground there I think even as we speak working for reconciliation. We've made real progress. This is consistent with what the President said, goodness now, you're in a half ago, that he wanted to end these endless wars. Afghanistan is one of those wars. I think you will see real progress in the weeks ahead where we get less violence, a complete reduction in the scope of the conflict there. ... What this will permit us to do is when that violence level comes down we will be able to have discussions with all Afghans" to "create the right conditions and when that happens we can begin to withdraw US forces."

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Sediqi, Jain) reports the call came as "three bombs rocked the Afghan capital of Kabul on Thursday, killing at least 11 people and wounding 45, officials said." The attacks coincided with a visit by JCS Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford, who met with Ghani and NATO officials in the city. Pompeo told Ghani in Wednesday's call that Dunford and US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad had been dispatched to Kabul to "discuss in detail the next steps" and a "conditions-based" drawdown of foreign forces.

Trump "Very Disappointed" After Swedish Court Charges A\$AP Rocky With Assault.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (7/25, story 10, 0:20, Muir, 597K) reported a Swedish court on Thursday charged American rapper A\$AP Rocky with assault. The rapper, who has been jailed for three weeks, will face trial on Tuesday for his role in a street fight. ABC noted that "some Hollywood names, even President Trump, [are] trying to intervene on his behalf."

President Trump took to [Twitter](#) after yesterday's court ruling to write, "Very disappointed in Prime Minister Stefan Löfven for being unable to act. Sweden has let our African American Community down in the United States. I watched the tapes of A\$AP Rocky, and he was being followed and harassed by troublemakers. Treat Americans fairly! #FreeRocky" In a second [tweet](#), Trump wrote, "Give A\$AP Rocky his FREEDOM. We do so much for Sweden but it doesn't seem to work the other way around. Sweden should focus on its real crime problem! #FreeRocky"

Reporting the tweets, the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Itkowitz, 14.2M) says "big-name celebrities, such as Kim Kardashian and Kayne West, implored Trump to intervene, which he did, tweeting last week that he'd be calling 'the very talented Prime Minister of Sweden to see what we can do about helping A\$AP Rocky.' But after the news came that Sweden isn't releasing the rapper, whose real name is Rakim Mayers, Trump was no longer praising the Swedish leader." The [Washington Times](#) (7/25, Howell, 492K), among other outlets, also reports the story.

Pompeo: US Still Wants North Korea Talks Despite Launches.

[Bloomberg](#) (7/25, Cirilli, Wadhams, 4.73M) reports Secretary of State Pompeo "said the door remains open for diplomacy with North Korea even though it launched short-range missiles early Thursday and that he hopes working-level talks between the two countries will begin in the next month or so." Pompeo "described the missile launches as more a negotiating tactic than a move that would create a rupture" or lead President Trump "to reverse his commitment to talks" with Kim Jong-un.

On [Bloomberg TV's What'd You Miss?](#)^{Vi} (7/25), Pompeo said, "Everybody tries to get ready for negotiations and create leverage and create risk for the other side. President trump

has been incredibly consistent here. We want diplomacy to work. We want Chairman Kim to deliver on the promise he made to President Trump, which is that he would denuclearize. I was there the day they signed the document. I have had Chairman Kim tell me this personally no less than half a dozen times. We remain convinced that there is a diplomatic way forward, a negotiated solution to this. We look forward to the opportunity. Chairman Kim told President Trump that he would send his working team to negotiate with ours. It will be in a couple of weeks." In a later interview on [Fox News Special Report](#) (7/25, 1.53M), Pompeo similarly said, "North Korea engaged in activity before we were having diplomatic conversations far worse than this, more importantly far more dangerous for America and Japan and for South Korea than this. I think this allows the negotiations to go forward. Lots of countries posture before they come to the table."

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Brunnstrom, Wroughton, Alexander) reports that when asked about the launches, State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus told reporters yesterday, "We want to have diplomatic engagement with the North Koreans. We urge no more provocations," adding that the Administration "is committed to diplomatic engagement with the North Koreans and we continue to press and hope for these working-level negotiations to move forward."

In a report titled "While Trump And Kim Talk, North Korea Appears To Expand Its Nuclear Arsenal," the [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Shi, Bürge, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) says that while North Korea has engaged in talks with the Administration, satellite images reveal that Pyongyang has ramped up production of long-range missiles and the fissile material used in nuclear weapons. According to the Defense Intelligence Agency, North Korea may have produced 12 nuclear weapons since the first Trump-Kim meeting in Singapore last year.

President Trump, meanwhile, said last night on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (7/25, 535K), "I'm actually getting along very well with [Kim] but we will see what happens. I mean, you know, the sanctions are on. The hostages are back. We are getting the remains back. They haven't done nuclear testing. They really haven't tested to missiles other than, you know, smaller ones, which is something that lots test. But I think with North Korea, we have been doing very well, but that doesn't mean it's going to continue. We have a relationship, President Obama had no relationship. You would have been at war. Had Hillary Clinton won this election, you'd be at war with North Korea. I have no doubt about that."

Missiles Launched By North Korea Believed To Be New Design. [Reuters](#) (7/25, Shin, Lee) reports that in the wake of North Korea having "test-fired two new short-range ballistic missiles on Thursday," the government of South Korea, "which supports efforts by North Korea and the United States to end years of hostility, urged the North to stop acts that are unhelpful to easing tension." The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Choe, 18.61M) says the launches "appear...to undercut what President Trump has repeatedly touted as his biggest diplomatic achievement in dealing with North Korea." The Times reports that "after studying the photos North Korea released from the tests in May, South Korean and United States analysts said the missile looked like a copy of Russia's Iskander short-range ballistic missile," which "would be a potent new addition to the North's growing fleet of ballistic missiles."

The [AP](#) (7/26, Kim) reports North Korea announced Friday that it had tested a "new-type tactical guided weapon" that was meant to be a "solemn warning" about South Korean weapons development and its plans to hold military exercises with the US this summer.

Pompeo Says He's Willing To Go To Tehran To Take Message To Iranians.

[Bloomberg](#) (7/25, Cirilli, Wadhams, Carey, 4.73M) reports Secretary of State Pompeo said Thursday "he would be willing to travel to Tehran to address the Iranian people about US foreign policy as the Trump administration applies maximum pressure on the Islamic Republic to renegotiate a nuclear accord." In an interview on [Bloomberg TV's What'd You Miss?Vi](#) (7/25), Pompeo said, "Sure, if that's the call, happily go there. I'd like a chance to go, not do propaganda but speak the truth to the Iranian people about what it is their leadership has done and how it has harmed Iran." Pompeo "likened such a trip to how Iranian Foreign Minister Javad

Zarif communicates with the American public during his trips to the United Nations in New York.”

Under the headline “US Aims A Megaphone At Iranian Public As Part Of Pressure Campaign,” the [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/25, Rasmussen, Amon, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) details an Administration plan to win over the Iranian public with an information campaign blaming the country’s economic hardship on its leaders using hashtags, YouTube videos and traditional pro-US media outlets broadcasting in the region. According to the Journal, a key player in the campaign is Len Khodorkovsky, former creative director of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign’s lead ad agency in 2016 and now a State Department public affairs official.

Pompeo: US Goal To “Not Create Wealth” For Ayatollah. Pompeo said on [Fox News Special Report](#) (7/25, 1.53M), “What we’ve done is really straightforward. Our strategy is simple and elegant. It goes like this...do not create wealth for the Ayatollah, who is wreaking havoc around the world, the largest destabilizing influence in the Middle East and the world’s largest state sponsor of terror. Our economic campaign has been designed to cut up their capacity to inflict malign activity and we’ve been very successful at that.”

British Navy To Escort Tankers Through The Strait Of Hormuz. [Reuters](#) (7/25, Macaskill, Saul) reports that Britain has “started sending a warship to accompany all British-flagged vessels through the Strait of Hormuz, a change in policy announced on Thursday after the government previously said it did not have resources to do so.” Reuters points out that “tensions have spiked between Iran and Britain since last Friday when Iranian commandos seized a British-flagged tanker,” which “came two weeks after British forces captured an Iranian oil tanker near Gibraltar, accused of violating sanctions on Syria.”

According to the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Taylor, 14.2M), “The British government has been criticized for not providing the navy with enough ships to protect its interests in the region.” The Post says the Times of London “reported this week that almost half of Britain’s fleet of frigates and destroyers is inactive because they are undergoing repairs.”

Pompeo Urges Turkey Not To Make Russian Missile System “Operational.”

[Bloomberg](#) (7/25, Cirilli, Wadhams, 4.73M) reports Secretary of State Pompeo “urged Turkey not to make the S-400 missile defense system it purchased from Russia ‘operational’ as President Donald Trump holds off on implementing new sanctions required by law.” Pompeo said on [Bloomberg TV’s What’d You Miss?Vi](#) (7/25), “We have made clear to the Turks that the activation of the S-400 is unacceptable. We have already taken the action of curtailing the F-35 program that was an important part of what Turkey was doing. There could be more sanctions to follow, but, frankly, what we would really like is the S400 not to become operational. That is our objective. It is what we have been talking to the Turks about for months and months. We have told them that it is simply incompatible with the F-35. They have taken delivery of some of the components today and we are urging them to reconsider that decision.”

Senate Panel Advances Saudi Sanctions Measure.

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Zengerle) reports the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday “backed legislation that would impose sanctions on the Saudi royal family and block some weapons sales, pushing back against President Donald Trump’s close ties to the kingdom.” Three Republicans joined Democrats in the 13-9 vote backing the measure “despite expected opposition from Trump.” The [AP](#) (7/25, George) says support for the bill “is just the latest sign that anger over the US-Saudi relationship is not ebbing in Congress, despite significant pushback from Trump and senior officials in his administration who say the alliance is a national security imperative.”

Secretary of State Pompeo was asked on [Fox News Special Report](#) (7/25, 1.53M) if the President’s veto Wednesday of legislation prohibiting arms sales to Saudi Arabia sends the message to the Crown Prince that “he’s essentially off the hook for the Khashoggi killing.”

Pompeo said, "It sends the message to the kingdom of Saudi Arabia that we are with them, and that we are going to support them and that they are a good ally and keeping Americans safe."

A [Washington Post](#) (7/25, 14.2M) editorial says yesterday's Senate vote "showed that there remains strong and bipartisan congressional support for holding Saudi Arabia accountable for its disastrous intervention in Yemen, as well as for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi." The Post says the vote sends "a strong message that the murder of Khashoggi and Saudi war crimes in Yemen continue to complicate US relations with Saudi Arabia, in large part because of the refusal of Mr. Trump to hold the regime – and, in particular, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman – accountable. Unfortunately, Mr. Trump isn't getting the message: On Wednesday, he vetoed three previous congressional resolutions blocking arms sales to Saudi Arabia."

Tunisian President Essebsi Dies At 92.

The [AP](#) (7/25, Bouazza) reports Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi, the country's first democratically elected leader, died Thursday at age 92. In "a hasty ceremony hours after Essebsi died at a military hospital in Tunis," the leader of parliament, Mohamed Ennaceur, "took over as interim president" until an election is held. The AP cautions that "Essebsi's death while still in office could lead to new power struggles in the only country to emerge from the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings with a functioning democracy and relative stability."

Concerns Rise About Potential Chinese Military Response To Hong Kong Protests.

The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Ramzy, 18.61M) reports that in Hong Kong, "after weeks of antigovernment demonstrations and some incidents of violence, questions about" a potential response from the Chinese military "have been revived." According to the Times, "Chinese officials and state media have reacted with increasing vitriol to the protesters, particularly after some painted slogans on the central government's liaison office in Hong Kong on Sunday night and splashed ink on the national crest." The Times says "the exact number of troops stationed in the territory is not formally announced, but estimates range between 6,000 and 10,000."

Secretary of State Pompeo was asked on [Fox News Special Report](#) (7/25, 1.53M) if he is concerned that China may use military force to stop the protests in Hong Kong. Pompeo said, "We've watch most of these protests be peaceful for a number of weeks now. I hope that remains the case. As for how the United States would respond, I don't want to get out in front of the President's decision on this. There's a lot of context."

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Amazon's Streak Of Record Profit Ends](#)

[Nissan To Cut 12,500 Jobs As Its Profit Plunges](#)

[ECB Signals Rate Cut, Possible Stimulus Relaunch](#)

[Jeffrey Epstein Burrowed Into The Lives Of The Rich And Made A Fortune](#)

[Get Off My Lawn! Homeowners Ward Off Drivers Misled By GPS](#)

New York Times:

[Mueller Testimony Deepens Democratic Divide On Impeachment](#)

[Russia Targeted Elections Systems In All 50 States, Report Finds](#)

[A Heat Wave Bakes Europe, Where Air-Conditioning Is Scarce](#)

[Automakers, Rejecting Trump Pollution Rule, Strike Deal With California](#)

[Puerto Rico Governor Misread Anger Brewing Against Him](#)

[U.S. To Resume Executions Of Federal Inmates On Death Row](#)

Washington Post:

[Iranians, Others Take Russian Cue In Election Disinformation Efforts](#)

[Heat Wave Smashes Records Across Europe](#)
[Content Moderators See It All — And Suffer](#)
[California Auto Deal Sidesteps Trump](#)
[Federal Executions To Return In December Federal Death Penalty To Restart](#)
[Democrats Second-Guess Calling Mueller, Struggle Over Next Steps](#)

Financial Times:

[ECB Paves Way For Fresh Stimulus Package](#)
[Critics Dismiss Facebook's Hand-Wringing Over Regulation](#)
[Barnier Dubs Johnson's Brexit Deal Terms "Unacceptable"](#)

The Washington Times:

[Mueller Draws Blank On Fusion GPS, Firm At Center Of Trump-Russia Conspiracy Theory](#)
[Republicans Aware Of Mueller 'Frailty' Ahead Of Hearing](#)
[House Approves Trump's Spending Hikes, Debt Holiday](#)
[Hecklers, Boors, Brawlers Giving Youth Sports A Bad Game](#)
[Puerto Rico's Political Crisis Rages On As Protesters Turn On Rossello's Successor](#)
[Would-Be Refugee Warns Against Dangerous Trek: 'I'm Like You, And I Found A Way'](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Los Angeles-Man On Murderous Rampage; Marines Arrested For Human Smuggling; Jeffrey Epstein-Unresponsive In Cell; Democrats-Mueller's Testimony; Senate Intelligence Cmte-Russian Meddling Report; Puerto Rico-Governor Resigns; Canada-Teens Wanted For American's Murder; DC-Teens Attack Man Outside Washington Hilton; DOJ-Death Penalty; Sweden-A\$AP Charged With Assault; Ole Miss-Student Murdered; Seattle-Airport Shuttle Bus Crash; Missouri-Train Topples Off Tracks; Juul-Congressional Investigation; Europe-Heat Wave; Billy Joel Invites Blind Autistic Child To Play With Him.

CBS: Marines Arrested For Human Smuggling; Navy SEALs-Sent Home From Iraq For Drunken Behaviors; Los Angeles-Man On Murderous Rampage; DOJ-Death Penalty; Jeffrey Epstein-Unresponsive In Cell; Senate Intelligence Cmte-Russian Meddling Report; Democrats-Mueller's Testimony; Europe-Heat Wave; FBI Investigation-Online Reputation Management; Juul-Congressional Investigation; Chicago-Three Teens Accused Of Beating Special Needs Teen; Distracted Driving Study; France-Daredevil Flies Over English Channel On Hover Board; Hubble Space Telescope.

NBC: Los Angeles-Man On Murderous Rampage; Marines Arrested For Human Smuggling; Jeffrey Epstein-Unresponsive In Cell; Boeing-737 MAX Grounding; Democrats-Mueller's Testimony; Immigration-Treatment Of Migrants; Puerto Rico-Governor Resigns; Europe-Heat Wave; Alaska-Climate Change Effects; E-Scooters Concerns; Atlanta-Toddler On Conveyor Belt At Airport; New York-Nonprofit Builds Mechanical Hands.

Network TV At A Glance:

Jeffrey Epstein-Unresponsive In Cell – 5 minutes, 45 seconds
Marines Arrested For Human Smuggling – 5 minutes, 5 seconds
Democrats-Mueller's Testimony – 4 minutes, 30 seconds
Los Angeles-Man On Murderous Rampage- 4 minutes, 0 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Senate Intelligence Cmte-Russian Meddling Report; North Korea-Short Range Missile Test; Jeffrey Epstein-Unresponsive In Cell; Los Angeles-Man On Murderous Rampage; Canada-Teens Wanted For American's Murder; Stocks.

CBS: Senate Intelligence Cmte-Russian Meddling Report; Senate-Election Bill Struck Down; Marines Arrested For Human Smuggling; North Korea-Short Range Missile Test; Amtrak-High Speed Trains; Stocks.

FOX: Iran-Medium Range Ballistic Missile; North Korea-Short Range Missile Test; Senate-Election Bill Struck Down; House-Budget Bill.

NPR: Immigration-Guatemala Travel Ban; Marines Arrested For Human Smuggling; DOJ-Death Penalty; SpaceX-Capsule Launched To International Space Station.

Mongolian President To Visit White House Next Week.

The [AP](#) (7/25) reports Mongolian President Khaltmaa Battulga is set to meet with President Trump next week at the White House. The White House said Battulga's visit on Wednesday "will center on deepening cooperation between the US and Mongolia," and the leaders will discuss "a range of issues, including defense and security, trade and investment, and sovereignty the rule of law."

US Sanctions Maduro's Stepsons, Others For Alleged Food Corruption.

The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Casey, Jakes, 18.61M) reports US officials have accused Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro "of a corruption scheme in which his officials, family members and business partners made off with large sums of money meant to feed the country's starving population." The allegations "appeared Thursday in a new round of sanctions targeting three stepsons of Mr. Maduro and a Colombian business partner of theirs named Alex Saab, among others." US officials said that "for years the men had used shell companies and no-bid contracts to siphon off government money, largely from Venezuela's state-run food program, for their own profit."

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Chiacu, Wroughton) reports in a statement, Treasury Secretary Mnuchin said, "Alex Saab engaged with Maduro insiders to run a wide-scale corruption network they callously used to exploit Venezuela's starving population." The [AP](#) (7/25, Goodman, Lugo) reports the Treasury Department alleges Saab "utilized a network of shell companies spanning the globe – the UAE, Turkey, Hong Kong, Panama, Colombia and Mexico – to hide huge profits from no-bid, overvalued contracts obtained through bribes and kickbacks."

Secretary of State Pompeo said on [Bloomberg TV's What'd You Miss?Vi](#) (7/25), "We add to the list of individuals in Venezuela who are sanctioned nearly every week. We try and find the right entities, the right people. In this case, it was a group of individuals this week that we have sanctioned. Our aim is clear. ... The first principle there is Maduro is not the duly elected leader. ... We want Maduro to leave so there can be free and fair elections with the ultimate goal of ensuring that there is democracy and freedom in Venezuela. For that to happen, the Cubans have to leave. You can't have a couple thousand Cuban intelligence and military officials in the country running the security apparatus and have the Venezuelan people flourish."

Guaidó: "Exiles Must Tell The World The Story Of Venezuela's Pain." Interim Venezuelan President Juan Guaidó writes in the [Miami Herald](#) (7/25, 1.09M) in that recent years, "at least 4 million Venezuelans have filtered into different regions of the world," and most "have done so against their wishes. They are Venezuelans who never thought they would leave the land in where they were born." He argues that those who in "forced exile" are "the best ambassadors we have to explain and denounce to the world the magnitude of the catastrophe caused by Venezuela's dictatorship, sustaining the support of the community of democratic nations."

Media Analyses: Johnson Echoes Trump In Pledging To Deliver Brexit.

[Reuters](#) (7/25, Faulconbridge, Maclellan) reports British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday "promised...that Brexit would make Britain the greatest place on earth, echoing" President Trump's "patriotic rhetoric...in his first speech to parliament as prime minister." Said Johnson, "Our mission is to deliver Brexit on the 31st of October for the purpose of uniting and re-energizing our great United Kingdom and making this country the greatest place on earth."

The [Washington Post](#) (7/25, Booth, Adam, 14.2M) says Johnson's opposition "charged that he had no realistic plan to leave the EU by October," but Johnson "swatted away their criticisms

as the moans of 'defeatists' and 'gloomsters.'" The Post adds, "Taking a page from the Trump playbook, he asked why his critics did not believe in Britain as much as he did." The [AP](#) (7/25, Lawless, Kirka) reports Johnson later spoke with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, "who once again repeated the bloc's insistence that it will not renegotiate the agreement on departure terms that it struck with" former Prime Minister Theresa May.

The [New York Times](#) (7/25, Castle, 18.61M) says "any faint hope that Mr. Johnson would adopt a conciliatory stance once installed in Downing Street was dispelled Wednesday night when he axed around half of the cabinet of his predecessor, Theresa May, in a cull that shocked many with its scope and blunt messaging." The Times adds that on Thursday, "with staunch supporters of Brexit installed in key cabinet positions," Johnson "outlined tough demands on Brexit that Michel Barnier, the European Union's chief negotiator, immediately described as 'unacceptable.'" According to the Times, Johnson is "fueling speculation that he was prepared to go to a general election if he is blocked by lawmakers from leaving the European Union without any agreement."

In a column titled "Boris Johnson Will Accelerate The Decline Of Europe," Fareed Zakaria writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/25, 14.2M) that Johnson "has assured the House of Commons that Britain will be out of the European Union in fewer than 100 days." Zakaria argues that "it is clear that were Brexit to happen, it would accelerate the decline of Europe as a global actor."

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

- President Trump — Receives his intelligence briefing; meets with the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Homeland Security.
- Vice President Pence — and adviser to the President, Ivanka Trump, travel to Jacksonville, FL, visiting Operation New Hope.

US Senate:

- No public schedule released.

US House:

- House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda for the week including 'H.R. 397, the Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act' (aka the Butch Lewis Act) and 'H.R. 3239 – Humanitarian Standards for Individuals in Customs and Border Protection Custody Act', possible consideration of 'H.R. 2203, the Homeland Security Improvement Act', and consideration of 'H.R. 3352 – Department of State Authorization Act of 2019', as amended, 'H.R. 434 – Emancipation National Historic Trail Study Act', 'H.R. 759 – Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and Alabama-Coushatta Tribes of Texas Equal and Fair Opportunity Settlement Act', as amended, 'H.R. 3375 – Stopping Bad Robocalls Act', 'H.R. 2035 – Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act of 2019', as amended, 'H.R. 776 – Emergency Medical Services for Children Program Reauthorization Act of 2019', 'H.R. 1058 – Autism CARES Act of 2019', 'H.R. 2507 – Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2019', and 'H.R. 693 – PAST Act' under suspension of the rules

Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 9:00 AM

- House Committee on Homeland Security 'Member Day Hearing', with testimony from Members of Congress

Location: Rm 310, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC; 9:00 AM

- Patients testify to House Oversight Committee on 'the devastating impacts of skyrocketing drug prices' – Hearing on 'The Patient Perspective: The Devastating Impacts of Skyrocketing

Drug Prices on American Families', with testimony from patients Ashley Krege, Sa'ra Skipper, Pam Holt, and David Mitchell

Location: Rm 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 9:30 AM

- Dem Rep. Earl Blumenauer briefing on Congressional trip to Mexico – Democratic Rep. Earl Blumenauer holds 'pen and pad' briefing following Ways and Means Congressional delegation trip to Mexico last week

Location: Rm 1100, Longworth House Office Building, 9 Independence Ave SE, Washington, DC; 11:30 AM

- House of Representatives breaks for Labor Day / summer District Work Period

Cabinet Officers:

- Secretary of State Mike Pompeo attends meetings and briefings at the State Department

Visitors:

- No visitors scheduled.

This Town:

- Bipartisan representatives hand wash Vietnam Veterans Memorial – Republican Reps. Brian Mast, Don Bacon, Jack Bergman, Paul Cook, Mike Gallagher, Mark Green, Trent Kelly, Barry Loudermilk, Phil Roe, Elise Stefanik, and Michael Waltz and Democratic Reps. Gil Cisneros, Conor Lamb, Mikie Sherrill, Abigail Spanberger, Elaine Luria, and Jimmy Panetta wash the Vietnam Veterans Memorial by hand, to 'show respect and gratitude' for fallen Vietnam vets

Location: Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 5 Henry Bacon Dr NW, Washington, DC; 7:30 AM

- U.S. reveals first set of GDP data for Q2 2019 – Bureau of Economic Analysis publishes advance GDP data for the second quarter of 2019 * Last month's final data for the first quarter of 2019 showed that the annual rate of real GDP was 3.1% in Q1; 8:30 AM

Copyright 2019 by Bulletin Intelligence LLC Reproduction or redistribution without permission prohibited. Content is drawn from thousands of newspapers, national magazines, national and local television programs, radio broadcasts, social-media platforms and additional forms of open-source data. Sources for Bulletin Intelligence audience-size estimates include Scarborough, GfK MRI, comScore, Nielsen, and the Audit Bureau of Circulation. Data from and access to third party social media platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others, is subject to the respective platform's terms of use. Services that include Factiva content are governed by Factiva's [terms of use](#). Services including embedded Tweets are also subject to [Twitter for Website's information and privacy policies](#). The FBI News Briefing is published five days a week by Bulletin Intelligence, which creates custom briefings for government and corporate leaders. We can be found on the Web at BulletinIntelligence.com, or called at (703) 483-6100.