

FBI PUBLIC AFFAIRS – DIRECTOR’S AM NEWS BRIEFING

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2020 5:00 AM EST

Kris Says FBI’s Proposed Surveillance Reforms Are Insufficient. The [Washington Times](#) (1/15, Mordock, 492K) reports that the FBI’s proposal “to prevent future blunders in its applications for Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act warrants was blasted as ‘insufficient’ Wednesday by the adviser overseeing the bureau’s reforms.” David Kris said Director Wray’s proposed actions are not enough to ensure the court’s confidence in future applications. In a brief filed with the FISA court, Kris said, “These efforts are a reasonable beginning, but they are not sufficient and should be expanded and supplemented.”

The [Washington Examiner](#) (1/15, Dunleavy, 448K) reports that Kris wrote in the filing, “Standards and procedures, checklists and questionnaires, automated workflows, training modules, and after-the-fact audits are all important, but they cannot be allowed to substitute for a strong FBI culture of individual ownership and responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of FISA applications. ... Without that, even the best procedures will not suffice; indeed, expanded procedures dictating multiple layers of review and approval could backfire, creating a kind of moral hazard in which each layer believes, or assumes, that errors have or will be caught by the others. Organizational culture is paramount to real reform, and the inspector general’s report suggests that the FBI’s culture of accuracy has suffered.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/15, Barrett, 14.2M) says Kris “argued that to ensure better FBI practices, Justice Department lawyers should be more directly involved in the training of agents on surveillance applications, and in the drafting of applications, noting that the FBI, while part of the Justice Department, does not always work well with them.” Kris wrote, “Historically, the FBI has not always worked cooperatively with DOJ, especially in foreign intelligence and national security matters.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/15, Savage, 18.61M) reports, “In his most significant additional proposal, Mr. Kris suggested that the court consider ordering the F.B.I. to change its policy on who signs the factual affidavit that accompanies a wiretap application in a counterintelligence or counterterrorism investigation. An agent based at the field office running the case should sign it, not a supervisor at F.B.I. Headquarters in Washington, as is currently the case, Mr. Kris said.” According to the Times, “The idea is that if the responsible officials are closer to and more directly familiar with cases, they will be more likely to spot errors or omissions in the draft document that case agents compile. ‘This would represent a major change in practice, with potentially profound consequences, because it would tend to shift responsibility away from F.B.I. Headquarters in particular cases,’ Mr. Kris wrote.”

[Fox News](#) (1/15, Re, 27.59M) reports, “The unclassified findings were a stark rebuke to Wray, who had filed assurances to the FISC last week that the agency was implementing new procedures and training programs to assure that the FBI presents accurate and thorough information when it seeks secret warrants from FISC judges. At the same time, Wray acknowledged the FBI’s ‘unacceptable’ failures as it pursued Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) warrants to surveil members of the Trump team.” Among other outlets reporting this story are the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/15, Viswanatha, Subscription Publication, 7.57M), the [Daily Caller](#) (1/15, 716K), and [National Interest](#) (1/15, Ross, 81K).

Wittes Defends Kris Appointment. The [Washington Examiner](#) (1/15, Chaitin, 448K) reports, “A ‘good friend’ of former FBI Director James Comey defended the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court’s controversial pick to oversee reforms in the FISA process.” Benjamin Wittes, editor-in-chief of Lawfare, “chided Republican outrage over the selection of former Obama administration lawyer David Kris, who on the blog and elsewhere has spoken out in support of the FBI’s Trump-Russia investigation and criticized the House Intelligence Committee’s 2018 memo on alleged FISA abuses. ‘One thing you will not see in the current spate of attacks on [Kris] is people of either party who know anything about FISA participating in the attacks. There’s a reason for that,’ Wittes tweeted on Tuesday. ‘They all know that there is nobody who knows more or who stands more for nonpartisan expertise.’”

McCabe To Discuss FISA Reform At NYC Event. The [Daily Caller](#) (1/15, 716K) reports, “Andrew McCabe will take part in a forum at New York University to address reforms to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act in the wake of the Justice Department inspector general’s report.” According to the Caller, “McCabe was the FBI’s No. 2 when the FBI submitted false information to the FISA Court in order to obtain wiretap warrants against Carter Page.” McCabe “also pushed to include the unverified Steele dossier in an intelligence community assessment of Russia’s meddling in the 2016 election.” Andrew Weissmann, “a top prosecutor on the special counsel’s team, will also take part in the event.”

US Counterterrorism Officials Warn Police About Potential Ambush Attacks. [CNN](#) (1/15, Campbell, 83.16M) reports from Los Angeles, “Federal counterterrorism officials are warning police departments across the

country to maintain a heightened state of awareness for the potential for ambush-style attacks against officers." CNN adds, "In a new intelligence report viewed by CNN, entitled 'PERSISTENT THREAT OF TERRORIST AMBUSH ATTACKS ON FIRST RESPONDERS,' analysts from the National Counterterrorism Center warn that police officers and emergency services personnel remain key targets for terrorists, who may either seek to lure public safety officers into ambushes, or stage ambush attacks without significant advanced planning. 'Due to their high visibility and 24/7 accessibility, on-duty first responders are susceptible to becoming victims of ambush attacks,' states the report issued this week." The report "states that the appeal of ambush-style attacks for terrorists 'likely stems from the nature of the target, the attack concealment, and the element of surprise,'" and "it also indicates 'the suddenness of an ambush attack may limit reaction and response by first responders, potentially providing the attacker with a tactical advantage.'"

Lawmakers Struggle With Privacy Issues In Combating Terrorist Funding. The [Washington Times](#) (1/15, Mordock, 492K) reports, "Terrorists, both domestic and foreign, are increasingly using Bitcoin for illicit transactions because it is nearly impossible to track, law enforcement officials and scholars told a congressional committee Wednesday." The House Committee on Financial Services "held the hearing as it mulls legislation to crackdown on terrorism financing." However, lawmakers and "the witnesses struggled to find answers on how to more closely scrutinize such transactions without sacrificing privacy rights."

Mnuchin: Tech Firms Should Work With Law Enforcement. [Reuters](#) (1/15) reports, "Apple Inc and other technology companies should cooperate with U.S. investigators, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said on Wednesday as law enforcement officials continued probing last month's fatal shooting at a U.S. naval base in Florida." According to Reuters, "On Tuesday, President Donald Trump lashed out at Apple in a tweet for refusing to unlock phones in criminal investigations while the company benefited from the federal government's help on trade issues." The FBI "is seeking to unlock two iPhones involved in the case regarding the shooting of three Americans by a Saudi Air Force officer at the U.S. Naval Station in Pensacola, Florida. Attorney General William Barr this week called on Apple to help," and "their request has renewed attention to privacy issues in the digital age, with Apple and its rivals arguing strong encryption protects users while law enforcement officials counter it allows criminals to evade justice. 'I understand the president's view, and it is absolutely critical for our technology companies to cooperate with law enforcement,' Mnuchin told CNBC in an interview."

Three Arrested At Pearl Harbor After Live Mortar Round Found In Vehicle. [USA Today](#) (1/15, Stanglin, 10.31M) reports, "Three civilians were arrested at Hawaii's Joint Base Pearl-Harbor-Hickam after a security guard spotted a live mortar round in a vehicle waiting to enter the main gate late Tuesday, military officials said." USA Today adds, "The guard at the main Nimitz Gate had ordered the vehicle to turn around when he detected the smell of marijuana and saw the ordnance in plain sight, according to spokesman Charles Anthony. The vehicle was attempting to enter the base without authorization." An Explosive Ordnance Disposal team "safely removed the round that Anthony described as 'an explosive device' and 'a deadly weapon.' He said no firing device was found in the car and it is unknown how the men obtained the device."

University Of Missouri Cuts Ties With Confucius Institute. The [AP](#) (1/15) reports from Columbia, Missouri, "The University of Missouri will end a nine-year partnership with the Confucius Institute in August because of changing federal guidelines for the program, university officials announced Wednesday." The institute, "which is mostly funded by the Chinese Ministry of Education, hosts lectures, trips and other events that promote Chinese culture. Visiting Chinese instructors also teach classes in Mandarin in the Columbia public school district." The AP adds, "A bipartisan report from Congress in February 2019 urged U.S. colleges and universities to cut ties with the institutes, concluding that the partnerships give Chinese authorities too much control over U.S. programs. FBI Director Christopher Wray testified to Congress that the agency was monitoring Confucius Institutes, saying they had displayed 'a fairly significant pattern of espionage.'"

The [Kansas City \(MO\) Star](#) (1/15, Williams, 549K) reports, "The University of Missouri is closing its Chinese government-funded Confucius Institute. Mandarin classes taught to Columbia public school children by teaching interns from China will stop at the end of the school year." According to the Star, "The feds, in a letter to the university in July, said MU's Confucius Institute teaching interns, who are Chinese nationals, could not be left alone in a classroom with grade school children. Having a full-time teacher who speaks no Mandarin in the room, the letter said, was no help 'because they cannot evaluate the substance or quality of information' being shared with the schoolchildren. So the institute will close."

The [Columbia \(MO\) Missourian](#) (1/15, Bacharier, 17K) reports, "The institute is funded almost solely by the Chinese Ministry of Education and is part of a network of similar institutes across the country. Since its opening at MU in 2011, the Confucius Institute has hosted lectures, events and exchange trips embracing Chinese culture at MU and Columbia Public

Schools." The Missourian adds, "As part of the institute's relationship with the school district, visiting Chinese instructors teach classes in Mandarin Chinese. These instructors come for one year only and are paired with a full-time public school teacher certified in a foreign language, district spokeswoman Michelle Baumstark said." The university "cited recent changes to U.S. State Department guidelines – which require state-certified teachers in Mandarin Chinese to be present in every classroom with Confucius Institute staff – as too costly to continue its partnership with the institute. MU notified Shanghai Normal University, its partner in the agreement with the institute, of its decision Wednesday."

ODNI Reportedly Wants To Avoid Public Session In Congress Of Annual Threats Briefing.

[Politico](#) (1/15, Matishak, 4.29M) reports, "The U.S. intelligence community is trying to persuade House and Senate lawmakers to drop the public portion of an annual briefing on the globe's greatest security threats" said to be because "last year's session provoked an angry outburst from President Donald Trump." Politico adds, "Officials from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence...don't want agency chiefs to be seen on-camera as disagreeing with the president on big issues." Discussions, says Politico, have "been kept at an informal, staff-level" because formal invitations have not yet been issued.

Geltzer And Goodman Urge Attention To Statements On Russia, Iran, Soleimani Killing. Joshua Geltzer and Ryan Goodman write at [Just Security](#) (1/15) that "the country should be paying close attention to" the public threat assessment and warns "that President Trump is denigrating his own intelligence community in ways that he may find of short-term benefit but that will cause long-term damage to our nation's security." Geltzer and Goodman urge attention to how "the intelligence community characterize[s] the threat posed by Iran"; "how the actual intelligence corresponds to how Trump and his advisers have characterized the intelligence that preceded the Soleimani strike"; and "how the community is (or isn't) fitting into Trump's distinctive approach to national security decision-making."

Virgin Islands AG Claims Epstein Was Trafficking Children As Late As 2018. The [New York Times](#) (1/15, Watkins, 18.61M) reports the attorney general of the Virgin Islands alleges that Jeffrey Epstein "sexually abused and trafficked hundreds of young women and girls on his private Caribbean island, some as recently as 2018, significantly expanding the scope of his alleged conduct." A lawsuit filed by the VI AG claims Epstein "was bringing girls as young as 11 and 12 to his secluded estate in the Virgin Islands...and kept a computerized database to track the availability and movements of women and girls." The Times says the suit "was filed against Mr. Epstein's estate and seeks the forfeiture of" two private islands owned by Epstein, "as well as the dissolution of numerous shell companies he established in the territory that officials have said acted as fronts for his sex trafficking enterprise."

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/15, story 4, 1:55, Holt, 1.11M), Stephanie Gosk reported, "This suit alleges for the first time that Epstein continued to abuse girls long after he struck what many considered a sweetheart plea deal with federal prosecutors in Florida."

US Charges Virginia Man In Swatting Attacks. The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/15, story 4, 1:50, O'Donnell, 4.76M) reported, "A 19-year-old man accused of being part of a nationwide ring of white supremacists appeared in federal court in Virginia today. He is charged in a wave of swatting attacks. That's making false 911 calls prompting SWAT teams to move in on unsuspecting victims." CBS (Pegues) added that John Kelley "was charged with being part a right wing group that engaged in swatting, calling in fake bomb threats and active shooter reports around the country, allegedly targeting African Americans and Jews." US Attorney Zachary Terwilliger is quoted saying, "It's a group that the FBI believes is related to white supremacy." According to CBS, "In November of 2018, court documents say a member of the group called police to say he had placed three pipe bombs at this African American church in Alexandria, Virginia, and would kill everyone at the church."

The [Daily Beast](#) (1/15, Weill, 1.39M) reports that Kelley, 19, "is accused of leading a notorious troll team loosely affiliated with the neo-Nazi group Atomwaffen Division. Through 2018, Kelley's online chat group allegedly compiled personal information and led swatting attacks (hoaxes in which trolls try to trick an armed police force into showing up at an innocent person's house) against politicians, businesses, journalists, and historically black churches." Kelley "and his circle, who convened on a series of online chat rooms, 'all appeared to share racist views, with particular disdain for African Americans and Jewish people,' according to a probable cause statement from an FBI agent involved in his arrest last week."

FBI: National Dark Web Drug Ring Sent Hundreds Of Fentanyl Pills To Ohio. The [Cincinnati Enquirer](#) (1/15, Knight, 223K) reports, "After an investigation by FBI agents in Cincinnati, five people have been indicted in a 'prolific' drug ring that officials say moved \$2.8 million through drug trafficking and money laundering." According to the Enquirer, "The federal indictment states the group began forming as early as 2013 and dealt drugs in dark web markets places with names like Silk Road, Empire, Dream, Sleep and Nightmare." The group "operated under the names PillCosby and Slanggang," and "those

indicted include: Khleri Sirotkin, 36, of Colorado; Kelly Stephens, 32, of Colorado; Sean Deaver, 36, of Nevada; Abby Jones, 37, of Nevada; and Sasha Sirotkin, 32, of California." FBI agents "said the group had bases of operation in Las Vegas, Los Angeles and multiple locations in Colorado," and "the FBI estimates the group sold 33.9 kilograms of fentanyl in five months in 2019."

[WLWT-TV](#) Cincinnati (1/15, 319K) reports, "According to the 21-count indictment, the co-conspirators used several Dark Web marketplace accounts and encrypted messaging apps in order to sell illegal drugs online." According to WLWT-TV, "None of the five individuals are from the Cincinnati area, but federal authorities said pressed fentanyl pills, along with heroin, methamphetamine and cocaine were shipped to southern Ohio," and "these drugs were then sent across the nation." The investigation "was coordinated out of the Cincinnati Field Office of the FBI and is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force joint investigation conducted by the Southern Ohio Digitized Organized Crime Group." [WKRC-TV](#) Cincinnati (1/15, 161K) also reports.

Avenatti's Bail Revoked For Violating Terms Of Release. The [New York Post](#) (1/15, Saul, 4.57M) reports attorney Michael Avenatti has been "ordered detained pending trial following his arrest late Tuesday for money laundering and other charges." Avenatti's bail was "revoked during a Wednesday hearing, following new charges from federal prosecutors that he'd violated the terms of his release while awaiting three separate trials for extortion and embezzlement." The [New York Times](#) (1/15, Zaveri, 18.61M) reports Avenatti is "accused of stealing millions of dollars from clients and of lying about his business and income to an I.R.S. collection agent, creditors and a bankruptcy court, among others" and "prosecutors outlined several new accusations involving some of the same victims identified in the case."

Emails Show Loughlin's Husband Was Told To Keep USC Athletic Director "Out Of" Scheme.

[USA Today](#) (1/15, Garrison, 10.31M) reports from Boston, "Fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli rejected a University of Southern California administrator's offer to help with his daughter's application into the school through the regular admissions process, and later joked about it with his wife, actress Lori Loughlin, prosecutors allege." USA Today adds, "The exchange is included among emails attached as exhibits in a new motion filed by prosecutors on Tuesday in the nation's college admissions scandal." Federal prosecutors "cited a September 2016 email from a USC development official to Giannulli offering to 'flag' his older daughter's application and provide one-on-one interviews, classroom visits and a "customized tour of the campus for the family." "Thanks so much, I think we are squared away," Giannulli wrote back to the USC administrator, declining the invitation. He forwarded the exchange to Loughlin, telling his wife, "The nicest I've been at blowing off somebody."

The [Boston Herald](#) (1/15, Martinez, 410K) reports, "The motion is the prosecution's response to the couple's demands for more evidence in the college admissions scandal. The feds filed two motions and a 484-page exhibit list, including call logs and copies of emails between Loughlin, Giannulli and scandal mastermind Rick Singer." Federal prosecutors "also included a copy of a \$50,000 check from Giannulli's trust to USC's athletic arena, which prosecutors allege was part of a bribery scheme, and a redacted acceptance letter from USC among other items."

[ABC News](#) (1/15, Hutchinson, 2.97M) reports that prosecutors aid that Loughlin and Giannulli "rejected a 'legitimate approach' to help one of their daughters get into USC, choosing instead to use their wealth to allegedly pursue an illegal path that got them indicted in the massive 'Operation Varsity Blues' scandal." Both Loughlin and Giannulli "have pleaded not guilty and have vowed to fight the charges. If convicted, they could each face a prison sentence of up to 20 years, according to prosecutors."

[Fox News](#) (1/15, McCarthy, 27.59M) reports, "According to the file obtained by Fox News, prosecutors say that only two defendants in the college admissions scandal, William McGlashan and Robert Zangrillo, have turned over necessary discovery evidence. The government, meanwhile, asserts it turned over a swath of evidence starting in May that included emails, phone logs, bank records and more. 'The Defendants believe that it is premature to do so at this time,' the new court filing reads. 'The Government disagrees with the Defendants' assertion that it is "premature" to provide their own discovery.'" The [Boston Business Journal](#) (1/15, Subscription Publication, 866K) also reports.

Judge Casts Doubt On Impulsiveness Of Collins' Crime. The [Buffalo \(NY\) News](#) (1/15, Zremski, 391K) reports, "The judge who will sentence Chris Collins on insider trading charges on Friday appears to have doubts about the defense argument that the then-congressman's crime was a rash and isolated act. 'How can the argument that Defendant Collins committed an emotional and impulsive act on June 22, 2017, be reconciled with his lying to law enforcement approximately ten months later?' U.S. District Court Judge Vernon S. Broderick said in an order Wednesday." The News adds, "That question highlighted more than five pages of inquiries the judge presented to both sides in the case, as well as the U.S. Probation Office. Collins, a Republican who lived in Clarence while serving in Congress, has pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit securities fraud and lying to an FBI agent."

US Charges Former Puerto Rico Education Secretary In Bribery, Fraud Schem. The [Miami Herald](#) (1/15, Wyss, 1.09M) reports, "Puerto Rico's former Education Secretary Julia Keleher – once considered a rising star and crusading reformer in education circles – has been indicted on allegations she used school land for personal gain, the FBI announced Wednesday." The FBI said Keleher and Ariel Gutiérrez-Rodríguez "had been indicted by a Puerto Rico grand jury on Tuesday in the bribery and fraud scheme." The indictment "alleges that Keleher used her position to give 1,034 square feet of a school called Padre Rufo to a company associated with Gutiérrez-Rodríguez in exchange for 'financial benefits' connected to her leasing and purchasing an apartment in the Ciudadela apartment complex in San Juan. 'Anyone involved in the bribery of a public official seeks to put their own interests above those of the People of Puerto Rico. However, those corrupt parties will eventually pay a much higher price to the criminal justice system, and we will continue to deliver them to the federal courthouse,' Douglas Leff, the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI, said in a statement."

Fox News Analysis: Experts Says US Behind On Preparations To Secure Elections. [Fox News](#) (1/15, Nath, 27.59M) reports, "President Trump says he's getting serious about election security, but some critics say it's too little, too late." Fox adds, "American cyber experts are gearing up" and "the cyber command of the U.S. military is at the front lines" having "forward-deployed their elite cyber warriors to Montenegro to focus on stopping Russian interference," but "some experts are now saying the government needs to take a more pro-active stance." Rebecca H. Sussman of Signum Vari said that the Administration does not have a full strategy for stopping Russian efforts, and that voting machines are "vulnerable" and "most devices store backups of voter data and the votes themselves on USB or thumb drives," and, according to the companies that make the machines, "all contain component parts from overseas, including China," and those parts "could easily be hacked at the source."

Appeals Court Hears Arguments Over Resumption Of Federal Executions. [USA Today](#) (1/15, Phillips, 10.31M) reports the Justice Department tried to persuade appeals court judges Wednesday "that it has the authority to decide how to execute prisoners on federal deathrow, regardless of the rules in the states where inmates were convicted." The hearing before the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals "comes about six months after" Attorney General Barr announced he is "resuming executions after a nearly two-decade hiatus." The case hinges on the interpretation of the meaning of "manner": Congress declared 80 years ago "that federal executions must be carried out 'in the manner prescribed by the state' where inmates were convicted."

FBI Wants To Talk To Subjects Of Fox Nation's Hoffa Investigation. [Fox News](#) (1/15, Shawn, 27.59M) reports, "The FBI wants to interview the two people who told Fox Nation that they know where Jimmy Hoffa is buried. 'Over the years, our office has followed all credible leads we received from the public,' the FBI office in Detroit told Fox News. 'We are aware of the recent reports of two individuals, who claim to have knowledge about the whereabouts of Mr. Hoffa. Just as we would with anyone who purports to have information relevant to this – or any – ongoing investigation, the FBI welcomes the opportunity to speak to those individuals.'" According to Fox News, "The Fox Nation investigation into the disappearance of Hoffa, the iconic labor leader who vanished in Detroit on July 30, 1975, will now include the claims of Phil Moscato Jr. and Frank Cappola." Both men "were interviewed as part of our Fox News reporting and the Fox Nation series 'Riddle: The Search for James R. Hoffa,' which can be seen on the streaming service. They independently claim that Hoffa's body was transported to New Jersey and buried by the Garden State mafia killers who orchestrated the murder."

DOJ Changing How Inmate Risk Is Assessed. The [AP](#) (1/15, Balsamo) reports the Justice Department is "changing the system it uses to assess whether an inmate is likely to commit crimes after being released from prison, aiming to ensure the process is fairer and more effective." The federal Bureau of Prisons has "already assessed nearly all the 175,269 inmates in federal custody to identify programs they may need to help reduce the risk of recidivism." However, the DOJ "plans to rescreen all those inmates under new guidelines that officials say place a stronger emphasis on accurately measuring an inmate's change behind bars and are intended to reduce potential bias." According to the article, "the impetus for the change is a criminal justice overhaul signed into law in late 2018."

House Sends Articles Of Impeachment To Senate. The [AP](#) (1/15, Mascaro) reports that after the House "voted 228-193, almost entirely along party lines" to send the formal articles of impeachment against President Trump to the Senate, Democratic House leaders in "a dramatic procession across the U.S. Capitol," delivered the articles late Wednesday, "setting the stage for only the third trial to remove a president in American history." The [Washington Examiner](#) (1/15, Ferrechio, 448K) says

the resolution "allows the House to continue to transmit evidence to the Senate that supports their claim the president should be convicted of two impeachment articles they passed in December."

[The Hill](#) (1/15, Beavers, Lillis, 2.98M) reports that Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN), who opposed the impeachment articles, was "the only Democrat to buck the party line and vote against the resolution." Rep. Justin Amash (I-MI), "who switched from Republican to Independent last year, voted in favor of the resolution." Asked on [CNN's The Lead](#) (1/15, 345K) about the strength of the case for removing the President for office, Amash said, "I think it is very strong case if the senators are willing to listen. So, we should have a Senate trial that is a full and fair trial and people should be allowed to call witnesses, and I think both sides should call witnesses, and make the case for their side." The [New York Post](#) (1/15, Moore, 4.57M) provides similar coverage of the vote.

The [Washington Times](#) (1/15, Muñoz, 492K) says that during the floor debate Wednesday, Democrats "used the opportunity to make another stand on the House floor to argue their case that the allegations against Mr. Trump merit a danger to the country." Meanwhile, Republicans "continued to attack the process of the investigations, which they said were rigged against them and the president. They also hammered the Democrats for holding on to the articles for nearly four weeks."

House Intelligence Chairman Adam Schiff said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (1/15, 249K), "This is something that's rarely happened in history. It has been only three occasions where the impeachment of a president has gotten to this stage. That is for a good reason. We expect only the most serious abuse, those that threaten the oath of office, the constitutional structure that our founders presented will reach this point. Here, where you had a President trying to withhold millions of military aid to an ally in war to try to get help in cheating in the next election, that is very much what the framers had in mind for these circumstances."

[USA Today](#) (1/15, Jansen, Hayes, Wu, 10.31M) reports that as she "signed the resolution sending the articles of impeachment" to the Senate, House Speaker Pelosi "was flanked by the six chairmen who investigated Trump." [Bloomberg](#) (1/15, Dennis, House, 4.73M) reports that after the House sent the articles to the Senate, Senate Majority Leader McConnell "invited the seven House impeachment managers to return at 12 p.m. on Thursday to read the articles aloud on the Senate floor." Chief Justice John Roberts "will be sworn in at 2 p.m. to preside over the trial. He will then swear in all 100 senators as jurors." McConnell also said the President "will receive a formal summons to send his defense counsel, which will be the first time the White House will participate in the impeachment process." McConnell said the trial will begin "in earnest" on Tuesday.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/15, Andrews, Wise, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that although senators will swear an oath to be impartial, many have already made their position known. The [New York Times](#) (1/15, Hulse, 18.61M) says that "if recent history is any guide, President Trump's impeachment trial will be an intensely partisan display that will make the polarization of the Clinton era look like a bygone period of political harmony." While the trial "provides an opportunity for senators to show that the institution can still rise above brutal partisan combat at a moment of constitutional gravity," there "is little reason for optimism as" McConnell "has repeatedly expressed deep disdain for the House proceedings and the conduct of his political rivals across the aisle, a reflection of the view held by most of his Republican colleagues."

Peter Alexander said in the lead story for [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/15, lead story, 2:40, Holt, 1.11M) that Democrats are "demanding the Senate call additional witnesses, like former National Security Adviser John Bolton," but "Republicans are attacking it as a partisan sham, emphasizing that House Democrats never subpoenaed Bolton."

Paul Says He'll Force Tough Witness Votes If Republicans Side With Democrats . [Politico](#) (1/15, Everett, 4.29M) says Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) "is waging a fierce campaign to prevent the Senate from hearing witnesses...vowing to force tough votes on his fellow Republicans if they break with the president or back Democrats' demands for new evidence." Paul says if that occurs, "he will make the Senate vote on subpoenaing the president's preferred witnesses, including Hunter Biden and the whistleblower who revealed the Ukraine scandal – polarizing picks who moderate Republicans aren't eager to call. So he has a simple message for his party: end the trial before witnesses are called."

Meanwhile, the [New York Times](#) (1/15, 18.61M) reports Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) "claimed credit...for pressing" McConnell "to allow the Senate to vote on whether to subpoena witnesses or new documents," and "said she had been working with a small group of Republicans," including Sens. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), and Mitt Romney (R-UT), "to leave open the possibility." The [Washington Post](#) (1/15, Viebeck, Bade, Kim, 14.2M) says Republicans "rallied behind the idea of parity between the two parties in possibly calling witnesses."

The [Washington Post](#) (1/15, Wagner, Sonmez, 14.2M) reports that Collins also "responded...to the news of House Democrats' newly released materials by arguing that the documents prove that the House didn't complete its impeachment investigation before sending the articles over to the Senate." Collins asked, "Doesn't that suggest that the House did an incomplete job, then?" Schiff said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (1/15, 249K) that "the reason why we haven't had documents up until now is because the President has refused to turn them over. If Sen. Collins or other senators are interested in the documents or why they haven't been available yet, they should turn those questions to the White House and say, why are you hiding this? Why are you holding this back?"

White House Counselor Kellyanne Conway said on [CNN's Cuomo Prime Time](#) (1/15, 376K), "We'll respect the process in the Senate however it unfolds. We do feel the Senate process will be one more fair to the President than whatever that was in the House and second, more familiar to the public. So most Americans are not familiar to whatever make it up as you go along process that happened in the House, whether it was Adam Schiff growing mushrooms in the dark basement with the depositions that we couldn't have access to, the President couldn't challenge witnesses, present witnesses, challenge evidence, present evidence, have his lawyers present. You had a bunch of professors testifying about extortion, bribery, quid pro quo, the Mueller report, none of which is in these articles. ... These articles of impeachment are thin, they are specious."

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) said on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (1/15, 535K), "The House will be able to make their case for 24 hours. Hopefully, we do this in a couple of days. Then, the defense team of the President will make their case based on the record established in the House. Then, there will be a effort to call witnesses or ask for documents. I hope that nobody will be called as a witness because every witness requested by the Democrats were available to the House. They chose not to call them. Executive privilege applies to all these witnesses. So, I am hoping this can all be done in about a week and I predict a bipartisan acquittal of President Trump."

The [New York Times](#) (1/15, Fandos, Stolberg, 18.61M) says that while "the process could damage the president, exposing conduct that some voters find unacceptable," he "is almost certain to use his likely acquittal in the Republican-controlled Senate as a complete exoneration and turn the considerable apparatus of his campaign to stoking public outrage over the process." However, [Reuters](#) (1/15, Cornwell) reports that although the Senate is "expected to acquit Trump," his impeachment "will remain as a stain on his record and the televised trial in the Senate could be uncomfortable for him as he seeks re-election." [Politico](#) (1/15, Caygle, Ferris, 4.29M) reports that Pelosi "has repeatedly noted" that Trump's presidency "will forever be accompanied with the asterisk of impeachment." Pelosi said Wednesday, "And yes it is a fact – when someone is impeached, they are always impeached. It is true, once someone is impeached it cannot be erased."

Donald Trump Jr. said on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (1/15, 535K), "Name one accomplishment of the Democrats in the last few years. Name a single thing they have done. That's why they have to run on impeachment because it's all they've got for their side."

Copyright 2020 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 Director's Morning 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.

Please direct comments and concerns to FBI@BulletinIntelligence.com.