

FBI PUBLIC AFFAIRS – DIRECTOR’S AM NEWS BRIEFING

TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2021 5:00 AM EDT

Ten Including Police Officer Killed In Colorado Supermarket Shooting. The [AP](#) (3/22, Nieberg, Slevin) reports a shooting at a Boulder, Colorado, supermarket “killed multiple people Monday, including a police officer, and a suspect was in custody, authorities said.” Boulder Police Kerry Commander Kerry Yamaguchi “said at a news conference that the suspect was being treated but didn’t give more details on the shooting or how many people were killed.” Boulder County District Attorney Michael Dougherty “said authorities know how many people were killed and suggested they are not releasing the number because they need to notify families of the victims.” The [Denver Post](#) (3/22, 660K) reports, “A source with knowledge of the investigation told the Daily Camera newspaper that there are at least six people killed.” [CNN](#) (3/22, 89.21M) later reported on its website that 10 people were killed.

[HuffPost](#) (3/22, Karanth, Visser, Russo, Ruiz-Grossman, 363K) reports, “Multiple federal agencies, including the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) were assisting the state in its investigations.”

All three broadcast networks opened their Monday evening newscasts with the story, which was in progress as they aired. David Muir said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/22, lead story, 2:40, 7.52M) that there were “reports...of multiple victims,” and “police could be seen walking a man away in handcuffs.” On the [CBS Evening News](#) (3/22, lead story, 1:55, Garrett, 4.38M), Mola Lenghi said, “There were reports of police on megaphones demanding people evacuate the store, and SWAT teams were seen storming the building, including from the roof.” Lester Holt said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/22, lead story, 1:30, 5.95M), “Witnesses described hearing a volley of shots, a man opening fire with what may have been a military-style long gun, sending shoppers and workers scrambling for safety.”

The [Boulder \(CO\) Daily Camera](#) (3/22, 88K) reports, “Few details about the incident were available Monday evening, but Boulder police Cmdr. Kerry Yamaguchi said ‘multiple’ people had been killed including a male officer. ... According to police, the shooting was first reported at King Soopers...at around 3 p.m. Yamaguchi did not have details as to how the shooting played out or any possible motive for the shooting.”

[Reuters](#) (3/22, Coffman), [Bloomberg](#) (3/22, 3.57M), the [New York Times](#) (3/22, Pietsch, Wright, Vigdor, 20.6M), [USA Today](#) (3/22, Ortiz, 12.7M), the [Washington Post](#) (3/22, Vargas, Salcedo, 10.52M), and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/22, Elinson, Frosch, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) are among the other major sources covering the shooting.

DOJ Considering Sedition Charges Against Members Of Oath Keepers. The [New York Times](#) (3/22, Benner, 20.6M) reports, “Justice Department officials have reviewed potential sedition charges against members of the Oath Keepers militia group who attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6, and they have been weighing whether to file them for weeks,” according to law enforcement officials. The Times says the DOJ “has rarely brought charges of sedition, the crime of conspiring to overthrow the government, and has not successfully prosecuted such a case in more than 20 years.” Kris Van Cleave said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (3/22, story 7, 1:55, Garrett, 4.38M), “Members of the Oath Keepers, Three Percenters, and Proud Boys have been charged with conspiracy to organize, travel to Washington, and breach the Capitol.”

Federal Prosecutors Prepare For Plea Talks In Capitol Siege Probe. The [Washington Post](#) (3/19, Hsu, Barrett, 10.52M) reports, “Two months into one of the biggest criminal investigations in U.S. history, prosecutors are preparing to start plea discussions as early as this week with many of the more than 300 suspects charged in the U.S. Capitol riot – even as investigators race to piece together larger conspiracy cases against those suspected of the most serious crimes,” according to sources. The Post adds, “The planned plea talks follow efforts by the D.C. U.S. attorney’s office...to first create a system for efficiently organizing what they expect will be upward of 400 criminal cases and the growing pile of associated evidence, these people said.” The Post adds, “FBI agents and prosecutors are rushing to understand the actions and intentions of not just individuals, but also extremist groups like the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, and exactly how a mob of roughly 800 people broke into the Capitol on Jan. 6.”

Suspect In Sicknick Assault Ordered Jailed Until Trial. [USA Today](#) (3/22, 12.7M) reports George Pierre Tanios, who is “accused of assaulting Capitol Police officer Brian Sicknick, who died after the Jan. 6 riot, was ordered jailed pending trial” on Monday. Pierre Thomas reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/22, story 6, 2:15, Muir, 7.52M) that Tanios “is accused of conspiring to assault officers with a toxic chemical. Officer Sicknick later died. ... Magistrate Judge Michael Aloï declar[ed], ‘It’s hard for me not to look at this as anything other than an assault on our nation.’”

The [Washington Post](#) (3/22, Hsu, Davies, 10.52M) reports prosecutors said “that a day before the riot, Tanios visited a gun store and bought four cans of two types of bear or pepper spray, including one that appears to be the same type that a co-

defendant is accused of using on Sicknick. Prosecutors also said he asked the manager of the West Virginia store whether he could bring firearms or a pepperball pistol the shop had on display into D.C."

[Reuters](#) (3/22) reports that Judge Aloï "lamented a 'culture, radicalized by hate' that played out at the Capitol on Jan. 6 during a peaceful transition of power. 'We all witnessed it as Americans: Forcing yourself against law enforcement officials that had nothing but bike racks,' Aloï said. 'Why wouldn't you just turn the other way and go home? The fact that all of them weren't thinking that – it's just frightening to me.'" Prosecutors "said they had reason to believe that Tanios' mother would try to help her son flee the country to her native Lebanon if he is released from custody. The mother denied the claim in court." Tanios of Morgantown, West Virginia, "and a friend, Julian Elie Khater, of State College, Pennsylvania, are facing multiple criminal counts, including assaulting police with a deadly weapon and obstructing an official proceeding."

[BuzzFeed News](#) (3/22, Tillman) reports, "Khater is accused of deploying a chemical spray and coordinating with Tanios to bring it to the Capitol that day. The two men aren't charged with killing Sicknick, and the charging documents do not link the alleged assault to his death. US Capitol Police has not released a cause of death."

The [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (3/22, Roebuck) writes that Sicknick shared a New Jersey childhood and support for former President Donald Trump with the men accused of attacking him.

Pennsylvania Detective Divorcing Wife After Her Arrest In Capitol Siege Probe. The [New York Post](#) (3/22, Steinbuch, 7.45M) reports, "A police detective in Pennsylvania has filed for divorce from his wife after she was seen in videos taking part in the riots at the US Capitol with another man – whom she had been communicating with since November about the protest, according to reports." Michael Heint, "a 30-year member of the Shaler Township Police Department, filed the papers in the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas last month after he asked his wife, Jennifer Marie Heint not to travel to the nation's capital on Jan. 6 – but she did anyway, Police Chief Sean Frank said." Jennifer Heint, 55, "is now facing several federal charges including violent entry and disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds and parading, demonstrating or picketing in a Capitol building, the paper said. The FBI identified her through her association with Kenneth Grayson, who is seen in videos talking to Jennifer inside the Rotunda."

Tennessee Woman Arrested In Capitol Siege Probe Appeals Detention Ahead Of Trial. The [Tennessean](#) (3/22, Timms, 645K) reports, "U.S. Capitol riot suspect Lisa Eisenhart has filed an appeal to a judge's decision keeping her in nearly solitary confinement conditions." Eisenhart "was charged in connection with the deadly Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol alongside her son, Eric Munchel. The pair are being tried together and remain in detention in Washington, D.C." The Tennessean adds, "Eisenhart's attorneys note that she has been removed from the general population at D.C. jail facilities because she is under a protective custody policy unique to the riot suspects. At that facility, housing a woman at that security level means solitary, usually a severe punishment, the attorneys said."

WPost Report: Stone's Name "Keeps Appearing" In Riot Court Filings. The [Washington Post](#) (3/22, Hsu, Roig-Franzia, Barrett, 10.52M) reports under the headline "Roger Stone Keeps Appearing In Capitol Breach Investigation Court Filings" that Stone's "name and image were invoked by both prosecutors and defendants in court filings over the last week, underscoring the increasingly visible presence of former president Donald Trump's political confidant in the Jan. 6 Capitol breach investigation."

Fourteenth Juror Seated For Chauvin Trial. The [AP](#) (3/22, Karnowski, Forliti) reports that the 14th juror "was seated Monday for the trial of a former Minneapolis police officer charged in George Floyd's death, nearly completing the panel ahead of opening statements next week." Hennepin County Judge Peter Cahill "said Friday that he wanted to select 15 jurors, with 12 to deliberate and three alternates who will deliberate only if needed."

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (3/22, 855K) reports that the latest juror "is a newlywed and a social worker in Wright County whose clients are coping with mental health difficulties." She "was unwavering in her confidence that she could judge only the evidence presented in the trial and added that her profession has provided her with the ability to be empathetic and keep an open mind about people."

[USA Today](#) (3/22, Hayes, McCoy, Baker, 12.7M) reports that the unidentified juror's selection "brings the pool to five men and nine women," and eight "identify as white, two as multiracial and four as Black." The [Washington Post](#) (3/22, Bailey, Berman, 10.52M) also reports.

Pittsburgh Police Officers Criticized Protestors And Senior Officers On Facebook. The [AP](#) (3/22, Lauer, Beaty) reports the existence of a since-deleted Facebook group called "Pittsburgh Area Police Breakroom," where current and former police officers criticized progressive police chiefs, "made transphobic posts," and "bullied members who supported anti-police brutality protesters or Joe Biden in a forum billed as a place officers can 'decompress, rant, share ideas.'" The AP "was able to view posts and comments from the group, which has 2,200 members, including about a dozen current and former police

chiefs...and at least one judge and one councilman," but the group "appeared to have been deleted or suspended from view" after the AP started asking questions. The [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (3/22, Lauer, Beaty, 426K) provides additional coverage.

Supreme Court Will Hear Appeal Over Tsarnaev Case. The [AP](#) (3/22, Sherman) reports that the Supreme Court "said Monday it will consider reinstating the death sentence for Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, presenting President Joe Biden with an early test of his opposition to capital punishment." The appeal was "filed by the Trump administration, which carried out executions of 13 federal inmates in its final six months in office, including three in the last week of President Donald Trump's term." [USA Today](#) (3/22, Fritze, 12.7M) reports that the Supreme Court "took the case Monday without comment," and the justices will "hear arguments in the fall."

[Reuters](#) (3/22, Raymond) reports that the appeal "presents a potential challenge for President Joe Biden, who has said he wants to eliminate the death penalty at the federal level." White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki "said Biden continues to have 'grave concerns' about capital punishment but has also expressed 'horror' about Tsarnaev's actions and the bombing."

The [New York Times](#) (3/22, Liptak, 20.6M) reports that the First Circuit Court of Appeals had upheld Tsarnaev's "convictions on 27 counts," but the court "ruled that his death sentence should be overturned because the trial judge had not questioned jurors closely enough." Judge O. Rogerie Thompson wrote for the panel, "A core promise of our criminal justice system is that even the very worst among us deserves to be fairly tried and lawfully punished."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/22, Barnes, 10.52M) reports, "The court plans to review a decision by a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 1st Circuit. In July, the panel agreed with Tsarnaev's lawyers that the judge overseeing his trial did not adequately vet potential jurors for bias. It also said some evidence was improperly withheld that might have indicated Tsarnaev's older brother, Tamerlan, was more culpable for the attack." The Post adds, "No federal executions currently are scheduled, and it seems likely because of Biden's opposition that current Justice Department policy would mean something of a moratorium on executions, either official or not," but "the Supreme Court has been considering whether to take up Tsarnaev's case for two months, and the Biden administration did not intervene to express a contrary view of the government's request."

The [Boston Herald](#) (3/22, Dwinell, 327K), [NBC News](#) (3/22, Williams, 4.91M), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/22, Kendall, Bravin, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), the [Boston Globe](#) (3/22, 1.04M), [Politico](#) (3/22, Gerstein, 6.73M), and the [CNN](#) (3/22, 89.21M) website provide additional coverage.

Toxin Sent In Letter To Kansas County Office. The [Wichita \(KS\) Eagle](#) (3/22, Swaim, 261K) reports the Sedgwick County, KS Finance Department received a certified letter Monday containing a white powder later identified as diaminotoluene, a toxic substance is used in dye making. The letter was from "a group claiming to be part of a Moorish nationalist group." Eight county employees "were decontaminated as a precaution," and one employee "was sent to an area hospital." The FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force is investigating.

[KFDI-FM](#) Wichita, KS (3/22) reports on its website that the Finance Division employee who opened the letter "noticed an odor. ... Shortly after, she began experiencing respiratory issues and skin irritation."

Wolverine Watchmen Member Arrested On Weapons Charges In Michigan. The [Detroit Free Press](#) (3/22, Witsil, 2.16M) reports Maxwell Wyckoff of Clarkston, MI was arraigned Monday in District Court on one count of converting a semiautomatic weapon to an automatic weapon and one count of possessing a muffler or silencer device. Wyckoff is allegedly a member of the Wolverine Watchmen, "the Michigan group accused of having ties to the thwarted kidnapping plot against Gov. Gretchen Whitmer," which has been under investigation by the FBI and other agencies.

[MLive \(MI\)](#) (3/22, Burns, 828K) reports Wyckoff is not directly tied to the kidnapping scheme, but the weapons were discovered in the course of that investigation. The Wolverine Watchmen have also been linked to the creation of "ghost guns." FBI Special Agent Richard J. Trask II testified on Oct. 13 that "A ghost gun is basically a weapon that is created and has no serial number or no way to track the weapon."

[WDIV-TV](#) Detroit (3/22, 568K) reports that, as a result of an investigation by the FBI and the Michigan State Police, "search warrants were authorized on the residences of multiple members of the Wolverine Watchmen, including Wyckoff" as a result of an investigation into the Wolverine Watchmen.

Groups See Potential Downside To Criminalizing Domestic Terrorism. [Vox](#) (3/22, Narea, 1.88M) reports domestic terrorism carries no criminal penalties, although it can be "an element of other federal crimes...and result in an enhanced sentence." The Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act was introduced by Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and "endorsed by the NAACP and the Anti-Defamation League among other groups" to criminalize domestic terrorism, but "civil rights

groups...argue it would enable law enforcement to target political dissidents, and those in marginalized communities who are frequently the victims of domestic terrorism, in violation of their constitutional rights." The FBI pursuit of "black identity extremists" — a category...for which terrorism experts see no legitimate basis" is held up as an example of questionable domestic antiterrorism policy.

Sidney Powell Requests Dismissal Of Dominion Voting System's \$1.3B Defamation Lawsuit.

[The Hill](#) (3/22, Neidig, 5.69M) reports Sidney Powell, the "conservative legal firebrand who helped spearhead President Trump's court challenges to his 2020 defeat, is seeking to throw out a \$1.3 billion defamation lawsuit against her from the election technology company Dominion Voting Systems." In a motion "submitted in federal district court in DC on Monday, Powell argued through her attorneys that the case should be dismissed because it was filed in the wrong jurisdiction and that the claims she made about Dominion were protected under the First Amendment." Her attorneys "argued that 'reasonable people would not accept such statements as fact but view them only as claims that await testing by the courts through the adversary process.'"

Ex-FBI Agent Strzok Repeats Claims About Republican Senators' Role In Russia Disinformation.

The [Washington Times](#) (3/22, Scarborough, 626K) reports fired FBI agent Peter Strzok is "rebooting an unverified Democratic claim that two Republican senators relied on Kremlin disinformation from a Ukrainian politician." Strzok "re-aired the claim in a March 16 tweet." Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) Ron Johnson (R-WI) "have hotly denied the allegation." They "assert that Democrats, not Republicans, injected Ukrainian politician Andriy Derkach's name into the investigative record in a probe of Hunter Biden, President Biden's son." Last week, the DNI "released the ICA on foreign influence in the 2020 election." The ICA "said one of the key facilitators was Mr. Derkach and his Ukraine network of social media and political operatives." Strzok "sprang into action on Twitter, reviving the Democrats' disinformation claims from last year." Strzok tweeted, "Report details some of the same players – Kilimnik – and new ones, like Derkach, who routed Russian disinformation to Rudy and Sens. Johnson and Grassley,"

Demonstrators Frustrated By Lack Of Federal Hate-Crime Charges In Atlanta Spa Killings.

[NBC Nightly News](#) (3/22, story 6, 1:30, Holt, 5.95M) reported, "We're back now with protests and demands for answers after the Atlanta spa killings as federal officials said they don't have evidence yet of a hate crime and some communities take new steps to keep Asian-Americans safe." NBC (Alexander) added, "It's been almost a week since a gunman stormed into three Atlanta-area spas, killing eight people, six of them Asian women," but "the shootings have not been labeled a hate crime. Federal officials say as of now there is not enough evidence to bring federal hate crime charges against the suspect." Frank Figliuzzi, NBC News National Security Analyst: "Proving a hate crime almost causes you to get inside the head of the defendant and figure out why they did something. And so, you're going to be looking for any evidence that, for example, they had prior beliefs or ideologies that went toward hate, white supremacy, targeting of Asians, targeting of women."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (3/22, story 8, 2:00, Garrett, 4.3M) reported, "Tonight in the aftermath of that horrific murder spree in Georgia, law enforcement is investigating a new wave of attacks on Asian-Americans." CBS (Stassmann) added, "Fear and anger across the country. Asian-Americans and their supporters remembered Atlanta's murder victims all weekend and refused to accept a rash of anti-Asian racist attacks. But in New York, this 37-year-old Asian woman was punched twice in the face. On her way to a protest. Police say this man is the suspect. And this 68-year-old victim was sucker punched. His alleged attacker yelled anti-Asian slurs and now faces a hate crime charge."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (3/22, story 7, 1:25, Holt, 5.95M) reported that New York City police are "now searching for this man, accused of punching Katie Hou in the face as she left a rally with her daughter," while "in California, the Compassion in Oakland group has cross-cultural support. More than 1,200 volunteers signed up as chaperones after horrific attacks on seniors."

In an opinion piece for [MSNBC](#) (3/18, 8.1M), former FBI official Frank Figliuzzi writes, "We potentially have motives of gender and race — that checks two of the boxes in the federal hate crime law. Prosecutors could pick one or both — gender as a motive would probably be easier to prove here — but let's call this what it is: a hate crime. Reports indicate the defendant lashed out against his victims, all but one women, six of whom were Asian women, as the figurative, and even literal, embodiment of his alleged addiction."

Judge Denies Ghislaine Maxwell's Third Request To Leave Jail.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/22, Jacobs, 10.52M) reports from New York that US District Judge Alison Nathan on Monday "denied Ghislaine Maxwell's third attempt to seek release from jail, ruling that the longtime companion of sex offender Jeffrey Epstein would still be a flight risk if she gave up her French and British citizenship and had her assets closely monitored — new conditions Maxwell recently proposed." Judge

Nathan "found that Maxwell's newest pitch for release did nothing to change the conclusion that the daughter of late publisher Robert Maxwell 'poses a risk of flight and that there are no combination of conditions that can reasonably assure her appearance.'" Maxwell's attorneys "had proposed that she would relinquish her European citizenship and put her assets into an account that would be monitored by a former judge." Judge Nathan "rejected the unusual proposal, noting that her 'assessment' of Maxwell's background 'has not changed.'"

The [AP](#) (3/22, Neumeister) reports that Judge Nathan "noted that Maxwell, who is a U.S. citizen, wanted to retain control over \$450,000 of her assets to cover living expenses, along with other assets, including jewelry and other personal property potentially worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. 'While those amounts may be a small percentage of the Defendant's total assets, they represent a still-substantial amount that could easily facilitate flight,' Nathan said. The judge also said she continues to have concerns that Maxwell exhibited a 'lack of candor regarding her assets when she was first arrested.'"

Pittsburgh Police Looking At Hate Motivation In Attack On 12-Year-Old. [KDKA-TV](#) Pittsburgh (3/22, Martino, 144K) reports on its website Pittsburgh police "are consulting with the FBI" after Charles Turner attacked a 12-year-old boy with a boxcutter at a McDonald's, injuring the boy in the neck. Police believe the attack was random and are trying to determine if it was a hate crime. Turner is accused of shouting racial slurs during the attack on the boy. He was charged with attempted homicide.

Baltimore Officials Push Back Against Federal Probe. The [Washington Post](#) (3/22, Thompson, Wiggins, 10.52M) reports, "A lawyer for Baltimore City Council President Nick Mosby and State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby is pushing back against a federal investigation into the couple's tax and business affairs, alleging misconduct by U.S. prosecutors and asking that the inquiry be suspended. 'I request that these prosecutors be immediately removed from this baseless and politically-motivated investigation,' said A. Scott Bolden, who represents the Mosbys, in a letter to the Office of Professional Responsibility for the U.S. Justice Department." The letter "came after the Baltimore Sun reported Friday that a federal grand jury had subpoenaed a range of financial records related to the Democratic power couple: tax returns, bank statements, credit card statements, loan documents and canceled checks. They subpoenaed Marilyn Mosby's campaign treasurer and requested records tracing back to 2014, some related to the Mosbys' private travel and consulting businesses, the Sun reported."

FirstEnergy Hires Ethics And Compliance Officer Amid Bribery Probe. The [AP](#) (3/22, Gillispie) reports from Cleveland, "One of the nation's largest electric utility holding companies under investigation by multiple federal agencies announced Monday that it had hired a new ethics and compliance officer." The AP adds, "Akron-based FirstEnergy said in a news release that Antonio Fernandez will join the company on April 12. He had been chief compliance and privacy officer for Public Service Enterprise Group, a publicly traded electric utility based in Newark, New Jersey." According to the AP, "The U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are investigating FirstEnergy for its role in what authorities say was a \$60 million bribery scandal in Ohio. The company has been accused by federal authorities of secretly funding a \$60 million bribery scheme led by then-Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder to win legislative approval for an energy bill that would have provided \$1 billion in subsidies for two aging nuclear power plants in the state." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/22, Tokar, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) also reports.

Federal Officials Warn Of Fraudsters Claiming Unemployment Relief. [NPR](#) (3/22, Kaste, 3.69M) reports, "Unemployment benefits fraud was rampant in 2020 as the government rushed to send out COVID-19 relief. The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General has estimated the amount of benefits stolen was at least \$63 billion, based on earlier patterns of unemployment fraud. But a lot of the fraud is coming to light only now, during tax time. 'People are getting letters from the IRS or different state agencies about the unemployment benefits that they supposedly received last year, when in fact they didn't,' says Crane Hassold, senior director of threat research for the email security company Agari." NPR adds, "The passage of the Biden administration's American Rescue Plan means billions of dollars more for unemployment benefits, extending supplemental pandemic aid through the summer. It's welcome news for people still out of work, but it also raises the stakes for an unemployment system that continues to be targeted by scammers."

Oregon Fraudster Gets Maximum Sentence. The [Oregonian](#) (3/22, 1.02M) reports Joseph David Galvan was sentenced Monday to the maximum sentence of three years and 10 months in federal prison for defrauding 18 victims, including his own family and his ex-wife's relatives. He was also ordered to pay more than \$650,000 in restitution. Galvan's father, Daniel Galvan, helped the FBI track his son down and urged the judge to give him the maximum sentence.

Microsoft Releases New Tool To Further Mitigate Solarwinds Hack Damage.

[Bloomberg](#)

(3/22, Dennis, 3.57M) reports that Microsoft "released the 'Exchange On-Premises Mitigation Tool' last week," and it is meant to "contain damage from a massive hack of its email server software." The tool "has helped to reduce the number of vulnerable entities in the last week," and it was developed through discussions with Anne Neuberger, the deputy national security adviser for cyber and emerging technology, who "worked with Microsoft to find a simple solution for smaller businesses facing time consuming and difficult cleanup of the hack." The [AP](#) (3/22) reports the one-click Microsoft tool was "created to protect against cyberattacks and to scan systems for compromises and fix them." Since the release of the tool, "the number of vulnerable systems has fallen to fewer than 10,000 from at least 120,000 at the peak."

Official Says CISA Plans To Implement New Authority To Fight Ransomware.

[NextGov](#)

(3/22) reports CISA in coming months intends "to activate its newly minted power to force internet service providers to supply the identity of their customers, so officials can warn them about vulnerabilities in their systems." Brandon Wales, CISA's acting director, said, "It's an important new authority, one that the agency has been pushing for a couple of years, and we're actually getting ready to bring it live, as we've finished up some of our procedures and training, in the next 60 days or so." Wales "spoke with Auburn University's Frank Cillufo during an event on the ransomware threat Monday." Wales "said the risk ransomware presents to the industrial control systems is increasing, noting that another water facility was recently targeted." In the last National Defense Authorization Act, Congress "gave CISA the authority to subpoena ISPs to hand over the contact information of entities where the agency observes an opening for exploitation."

North Korean Appears In US Court On Sanctions, Money-Laundering Charges.

[Reuters](#)

(3/22) reports, "A North Korean businessman accused by the United States of laundering money to circumvent U.S. and U.N. sanctions intended to curb his country's nuclear weapons program appeared in a U.S. court on Monday after extradition from Malaysia." The Justice Department said Mun Chol Myong, "who it said was affiliated with North Korea's primary intelligence organization, the Reconnaissance General Bureau, was the first North Korean ever extradited to the United States. It said Mun appeared in federal court in Washington, where he was indicted in May 2019 on six counts of money laundering, including conspiracy to commit money laundering." Reuters adds, "Alan Kohler, assistant director of the FBI's counterintelligence division, said bringing overseas defendants to justice was one of its biggest challenges, especially in the case of North Korea. 'We hope he will be the first of many,' he said."

The [AP](#) (3/22) reports from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, "North Korean diplomats vacated their embassy in Malaysia and were expelled Sunday, after the two nations cut diplomatic relations in a spat over the extradition of a North Korean criminal suspect to the United States." The AP adds, "FBI agents in Minneapolis investigated the case, the agency's field office said it represents the first-ever extradition to the United States of a North Korean national. In Malaysia on Sunday, the North Korean flag and embassy signage were removed from the premises in a Kuala Lumpur suburb. Two buses ferried the diplomats and their families to the airport, where they were seen checking in for a flight to Shanghai."

Attorney For Huawei Official Challenges Officer's Claim He Didn't Share With FBI.

The [AP](#) (3/22, Morris) reports from Vancouver, British Columbia, "The refusal of a retired Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer to testify at an extradition hearing for a senior executive for Chinese communication giant Huawei is 'unprecedented' and should bring into doubt the credibility of his written affidavit saying he didn't share information with the FBI, defense lawyers said Monday." Meng Wanzhou, "Huawei's chief financial officer who is also the daughter of the company's founder, was arrested at the Vancouver airport in late 2018 at the request of the U.S., which wants her extradited to face fraud charges. The arrest infuriated Beijing, which sees her case as a political move designed to prevent China's rise. The U.S. accuses Huawei of using a Hong Kong shell company called Skycom to sell equipment to Iran in violation of U.S. sanctions. It says Meng committed fraud by misleading the HSBC bank about the company's business dealings in Iran."

[Reuters](#) (3/22, Berman, Warburton) reports, "The defence has argued that abuses of process, including alleged coordination between Canadian and American authorities during her detainment that resulted in the collection and sharing of identifying information about Meng's electronic devices, should invalidate the extradition." On Monday, Meng's attorney, Scott Fenton "said that retired Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) staff sergeant Ben Chang would have been the most important witness on the issue of whether police wrongfully shared identifying details about Meng's electronic devices with the FBI. Fenton further claimed that the RCMP failed to review or preserve Chang's texts and emails after he retired in 2019. He said this led to the automatic destruction of records relevant to the case, which amounted to 'unacceptable, unexplained negligence' on the part of the RCMP." Also reporting are the [Globe and Mail \(CAN\)](#) (3/22, 1.09M) and the [National Post \(CAN\)](#) (3/22, 75K).

Media Analyses: Administration Under Pressure After Images Of Texas Migrant Facility Released.

All three broadcast networks had critical assessments of the situation at the US-Mexico border, with much of the focus on photos of the Donna, Texas, facility released by Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX). Cecilia Vega said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/22, story 5, 4:20, Muir, 7.19M) that the images show a "severely overcrowded tent facility. ... The Biden Administration [is] not allowing journalists in, but these pictures taken over the weekend and released by [Cuellar] show migrants – many of them unaccompanied minors – on the floor in cramped pods. Pods built to hold no more than 260 people, instead, one housing more than 400 boys. The White House says they're working as quickly as possible to move these kids into shelters and homes. But the Administration still refuses to call the situation a crisis." White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki: "Children presenting at our border who are fleeing violence, who are fleeing prosecution, who are fleeing terrible situations is not a crisis."

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (3/22, story 5, 1:55, Holt, 5.95M), Gabe Gutierrez reported that the pictures offer "the first look inside one of the overflow facilities for migrant children in Donna, Texas. The images were provided to NBC News with faces already obscured" by Cuellar, who "would not say who took the pictures, only that they were taken this past weekend." Cuellar: "I think the public needs to know the conditions of those facilities." Psaki: "They are not places that we want children to be staying for an extended period of time. Our alternative is to send children back on this treacherous journey. That is not, in our view, the right choice to make." Gutierrez: "Today, the White House announced it was sending top officials to Mexico and Guatemala to discuss the root causes of the surge. Right now, more than 15,000 migrant children are in federal custody, more than 800 held by the Border Patrol for more than 10 days – far longer than the three-day legal limit."

Major Garrett said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (3/22, story 6, 2:35, 4.3M), "Pressure is growing tonight on the Biden Administration to address the crisis at the southern border caused by the surge of unaccompanied minors crossing from Mexico. The US is currently holding roughly 16,000 children, some of them barely old enough for elementary school." The [AP](#) (3/22, Merchant, Lemire, Boak) says the "Administration has tried for weeks to keep the public from seeing images like those that emerged Monday showing immigrant children in U.S. custody at the border sleeping on mats under foil blankets, separated in groups by plastic partitions." The [Houston Chronicle](#) (3/22, 982K) reports, "The pictures – released by a member of the Biden's own party who has grown increasingly critical of the administration's approach to the border – offered Republicans more fuel as they seek to keep the heat on" Biden. The photos were first published by [Axios](#) (3/22, Kight, 1.26M) on Monday morning.

Psaki was asked on [CNN's The Lead](#) (3/22, 1.1M) if the President believes the conditions in the photos released by Cuellar are acceptable. Psaki said, "No, he doesn't, and that's why he wants to move children as quickly as possible out of the Border Patrol facilities. They are not meant for children, and that's why he wants to open more shelters. He wants to increase and expedite processing at the border, and this is an issue he's focused on every single day."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/22, 10.52M) reports that "after hedging last week on whether the influx of migrants, many of them children, at the U.S. border constituted a crisis...Psaki said Monday that children seeking refuge in America was not a crisis." Nevertheless, Psaki "said the Biden administration is trying to deter migrants from coming, and has placed more than 17,000 radio spots in Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras since Biden took office, with the message: 'This is not the time to come. Our borders are not open.'"

Republican critics weighed in on Twitter. Rep. Jerry Carl (R-AL) [tweeted](#), "It's time for President Biden to get serious about the crisis at the border. This is a problem for all of America, and we need to secure our border NOW." Rep. Tony Gonzales (R-TX) [tweeted](#), "I have been sounding the alarm for weeks urging the Biden Administration to take this crisis seriously. I hope these photos finally wake them up. I'll continue to urge our administration to give border patrol, HHS and law enforcement the resources they need to combat this crisis." Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-IA) [tweeted](#), "Thousands of children are making the dangerous trip across the border alone & there is no longer enough room in federal facilities to house them. This is unacceptable – the American people deserve an explanation about how we got here & how the Admin plans to fix this crisis."

Rep. Young Kim (R-CA) [tweeted](#), "The situation at our Southern border is a security, humanitarian & public health crisis, & the Biden administration's policies are making it worse. We can secure our border & create a fair, legal immigration system. But not if we don't work together." Rep. Greg Steube (R-FL) [tweeted](#), "Joe Biden isn't being honest with the American people about the crisis at our southern border. His policies have overwhelmed our border, spent \$90 million for hotel rooms for illegal immigrants, and opened our country up to new health and security threats."

Harris: "We Were Left With A Very Challenging Situation." The [Washington Post](#) (3/22, 10.52M) reports that Vice President Harris told reporters in Jacksonville, Florida, "that while she will not visit the border 'today,' she has in the past and plans to do so in the future. 'We were left with a very challenging situation,' Harris said when asked about Republican pressure to get the situation under control." Harris is quoted as saying, "We've got to treat this issue in a way that is reflective of our values as Americans and do it in a way that is fair and is humane. There's a lot of work going into that."

Top Border Officials Visiting Mexico And Guatemala. [Axios](#) (3/22, Kight, 1.26M) reports "three of President Biden's top border officials" – National Security Council border affairs coordinator Roberta Jacobson, NSC Senior Director for the Western Hemisphere Juan González, "and the State Department's recently-appointed Northern Triangle special envoy Ricardo Zúñiga" – were dispatched to Mexico on Monday, and from there will travel on to Guatemala. [USA Today](#) (3/22, Morin, 12.7M) says Jacobson, "Biden's border czar," will "meet with officials about the influx of migrants coming to the U.S.-Mexico border seeking asylum." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/22, 3.37M) reports NSC spokeswoman Emily Horne said the goal of the trip "was to come up with 'an effective and humane plan of action to manage migration' and 'build a more hopeful future in the region.'"

Border Patrol Has Detained More Than 11K Unaccompanied Minors In Past Three Weeks. [CNN](#) (3/22, Alvarez, 89.21M) reports on its website that Border Patrol "has detained more than 11,000 unaccompanied migrant children between February 28 to March 20, according to preliminary government data reviewed by CNN, already eclipsing the number of minors apprehended in the full month of February. ... In all of February, Border Patrol apprehended nearly 9,300 unaccompanied children at the US southern border, up from around 5,600 in January." [Fox News](#) (3/22, Singman, 23.99M) reports on its website that the Administration "is partnering with San Diego to turn the city's convention center into a temporary shelter to support unaccompanied children seeking asylum."

[Politico](#) (3/22, Herrera, 6.73M) runs a 3,700-word feature titled "Under Biden, A New Kind Of Family Separation" that says that while border agents "are no longer tearing children from their parents," under the Administration's "policy of letting in only minors, parents are making painful decisions just on the other side of the border."

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