

Emails On Clinton's Server Not Sensitive

WASHINGTON (AP) — Neither of the two emails sent to Hillary Rodham Clinton now labeled by intelligence agencies as "top secret" contained information that would jump out to experts as particularly sensitive, according to several government officials.

One included a discussion of a U.S. drone strike, part of a covert program that is widely known and discussed. A second conversation could have improperly referred to highly classified material, but it also could have reflected information collected independently, U.S. officials who have reviewed the correspondence told The Associated Press.

Still, it's looking increasingly likely the issue of whether Clinton mishandled classified information on her home-brew email server will have significant political implications in the 2016 presidential campaign.

Clinton, who has been seen from the outset as the front-runner for the Democratic nomination, agreed this week to turn over to the FBI the private server she used as secretary of state. And Republicans in Congress have seized on the involvement of federal law enforcement in the matter as a sign she was negligent in handling the nation's secrets.

On Monday, the inspector general for the 17 spy agencies that make up what is known as the intelligence community told Congress that two of 40 emails, in a random sample of 30,000 messages that Clinton gave the State Department for review, contained information deemed "Top Secret," one of the government's highest levels of classification.

Evidence Disputes Evidence 50 Years Ago

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Recently discovered medical files further dispute a St. Louis woman's allegations that her baby was stolen from a hospital here five decades ago and a federal investigation into the case has now been closed.

U.S. Attorney Richard Callahan said during a news conference Friday that the medical records show Melanie Diane Gilmore, who was named Diane Jackson at birth, was born at a different hospital than the one the mother claimed.

Adoption and child welfare records previously obtained by The Associated Press also say Gilmore was born at City Hospital No. 1, and abandoned there.

That contradicts the story of Gilmore's mother, Zella Jackson Price, who alleged that Gilmore was stolen at birth from another St. Louis hospital, Homer G. Phillips, after she was told the child had died.

"We can now say with complete confidence that there is no truth to that allegation and our investigation is now closed," Callahan said.

Louisiana's Towns Head Into The Water

DELACROIX, La. (AP) — Rocky Morales is watching his small Louisiana town of Delacroix slowly melt into the water. The woods where he played hide-and-seek as a boy are gone. It's all water and mud back there now. So, too, is the nearby marsh where townsfolk once trapped for muskrat, otter and mink.

Many of the fishermen who once lived here — his friends and relatives — have disappeared as well, fleeing behind the levees protecting New Orleans out of fear one more hurricane will send the rest of Delacroix into the sea.

Ten years after Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast — killing more than 1,830 people and causing more than \$150 billion in damage in the nation's costliest disaster — New Orleans has been fortified by a new \$14.5 billion flood protection system. But outside the iconic city, efforts have lagged to protect small towns and villages losing land every year to erosion. And as that land buffer disappears, New Orleans itself becomes more vulnerable.

In the past century, more than 1,880 square miles of Louisiana land has turned into open water — an area nearly the size of Delaware. And the loss continues, with an average 17 square miles disappearing annually, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Cemeteries are disappearing into the Gulf. Entire barrier island chains, Andrew Jackson-era brick forts, Jean Lafitte's pirate colony, lighthouses, bridges, roads, schools and entire towns have been washed away.

Islamic State Leader Raped Hostage

WASHINGTON (AP) — American hostage Kayla Mueller was repeatedly forced to have sex with Abu Bakr Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State group, U.S. intelligence officials told her family in June.

"They told us that he married her, and we all understand what that means," Carl Mueller, Kayla's father, told The Associated Press on Friday, which would have been his daughter's 27th birthday. Her death was reported in February.

Her mother, Marsha Mueller, added, "Kayla did not marry this man. He took her to his room and he abused her and she came back crying."

The news is but the latest in a litany of horrors perpetrated by the Islamic State group, which has beheaded, burned and crucified male captives while passing around women as sex slaves.

Mueller was held for a time by Islamic State financier Abu Sayyaf and his wife, known as Umm Sayyaf. Al-Baghdadi took Mueller as a "wife," repeatedly raping her when he visited, according to a Yazidi teenager who was held with Mueller and escaped in October 2014.

Coaster Clear That Fatally Struck Man

SANDUSKY, Ohio (AP) — A safety inspection found no major problems with a roller coaster that struck and killed a man who entered a restricted area to look for a lost cellphone at Ohio's Cedar Point amusement park, a spokesman said Friday.

Police say 45-year-old James A. Young had just finished riding the Raptor on Thursday and jumped over a fence to retrieve something he dropped during the 57 mph ride. The Erie County coroner says it was his cellphone.

Sandusky police said Young was struck by the ride or someone on it. No one else was hurt.

Phil Long, an assistant chief with the Sandusky police, said Friday that the department had received at least a few calls from people who might have witnessed what happened or had information about it. Long said an initial police report wasn't available for release.

The ride was examined overnight by state safety officials and found to be in safe working order, so it resumed operating Friday, park spokesman Bryan Edwards said. He wouldn't comment on whether officials are considering any changes to the Raptor or the area around it.

Prison Slaying Casts Pall On Reduction

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California's efforts to ease its famously harsh use of solitary confinement are clashing with a bloody reality after an inmate who spent decades alone in a tiny cell was sent back to the general population and killed by fellow inmates within days.

Hugo "Yogi" Pinell's repeated assaults on guards landed him in solitary confinement beginning in the early 1970s, making him one of the longest-serving solitary confinement inmates in the nation, said Keramet Reiter, a University of California, Irvine, professor of criminology who studies the issue.

His involvement in a bloody 1971 San Quentin escape attempt that left six dead, including three guards, also helped spur the creation of super-maximum prisons like Pelican Bay State Prison, designed to isolate the most incorrigible and dangerous criminals and gang leaders, Reiter said.

More recently, the 45 years Pinell spent in segregation helped drive the national debate over the isolation of prisoners. The issue recently drew criticism from both President Barack Obama and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy.

Pinell's life behind bars traced the rise of extreme isolation as a prison-management tool from its start to its recent decline, she said.

Kerry Calls For Democracy As US Flag Is Raised In Cuba

BY BRADLEY KLAPPER
AND MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN

Associated Press

HAVANA — Jubilant crowds waved American flags and chanted "Long live the United States!" as the Stars and Stripes rose over the newly reopened U.S. Embassy in Cuba on Friday after a half-century of often-hostile relations. Secretary of State John Kerry celebrated the day but also made an extraordinary, nationally broadcast call for democratic change on the island.

Hundreds of Cubans mixed with American tourists outside the former U.S. Interests Section, newly emblazoned with the letters "Embassy of the United States of America." They cheered as Kerry spoke, the United States Army Brass Quintet played "The Star-Spangled Banner" and U.S. Marines raised the flag alongside the building overlooking the famous Malecon seaside promenade.

Meeting more than 54 years after the severing of diplomatic relations, Kerry and Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez set an early September date for the start of talks on full normalization of a relationship so long frozen in enmity.

Not all the talk was as warm as the sunny summer day. Kerry and Rodriguez said their nations would continue to disagree over issues such as democracy and human rights. But they also said they hoped to make progress on issues ranging from maritime security and public health to the billions of dollars in dueling claims over confiscation of U.S. property and the U.S. economic embargo on the island.

It seemed that virtually all of Cuba was glued to television or listening by cellphone as Kerry directly addressed the island's people on political reform. That's a subject that has remained off-limits in Cuba even as the single-party government has implemented a series of economic reforms and re-established diplomatic ties with the U.S.

"We remain convinced the people of Cuba would be best served by a genuine democracy, where people are free to choose their leaders, express their ideas, practice their faith," Kerry said. He spoke before an audience of Cuban and U.S. diplomats on the embassy grounds and hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of islanders watching and listening live.

Addressing reporters with Kerry after

the ceremony, Rodriguez responded by indignantly opening his remarks with complaints of U.S. human rights transgressions — from police shootings of black men to mistreatment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, the U.S. naval base that Cuba says must be returned.

"Cuba isn't a place where there's racial discrimination, police brutality or deaths resulting from those problems," Rodriguez said. "The territory where torture occurs and people are held in legal limbo isn't under Cuban jurisdiction."

Many Cubans disagree with that assessment, including Afro-Cubans who say discrimination is still rampant despite the revolution's egalitarian ideals, and human rights groups who say regular, short-term arrests of government opponents aim to intimidate dissent and include beatings.

In New York, Republican presidential contender Marco Rubio, a Cuban-American senator from Florida, said he would reverse the Obama administration's new Cuba policy on his first day in office, arguing it gives the Castro government international legitimacy and more resources to repress its people.

Kerry acknowledged that the Obama administration would have a difficult fight in Congress to end the U.S. trade embargo of Cuba so that normal business ties between the two countries could resume.

"There is no way Congress will lift the embargo if we are not making progress on issues of conscience," Kerry said.

President Barack Obama also called for change in Cuba when he announced the new U.S. policy of engagement in December, but his words were less pointed than Kerry's in Havana.

Cuba formally reopened its Washington embassy last month. The U.S. raised its flag in Havana then, too, though saving the formal ceremony for Kerry's visit. Three Marines who took part in the flag-lowering in 1961 handed over the new flag to Marines who raised it on Friday.

Kerry was the first secretary of state to visit since 1945, and his speech was remarkable for its bluntness and the national spotlight in which it came.

Many Cubans lauded Kerry's call for reform, including greater access to technology on an island with one of the world's lowest rates of internet penetration. They paired their praise with calls for the United States to lift the 53-year-old trade embargo and allow easier travel

between the two countries.

"More democracy, elections, we hope for that to come with this diplomatic opening," said Julio Garcia, a 51-year-old mechanic.

Self-employed graphic designers Danay Lopez, 28, and her husband Yosvel Martinez, 32, watched the ceremony with their 3-year-old son, singing both countries' national anthems and shouting "Long live Cuba!" and "Long live the United States!" as the event drew to a close.

"Kerry spoke about democracy, freedom, Wi-Fi, and he's right," Lopez said. "We want all that to be freed up, but (also) for the U.S. to free up travel, and I don't want my son to live under the embargo."

Like Obama, Kerry said a longtime U.S. strategy of trying to isolate Cuba and provoke regime change by choking off trade and fomenting grass-roots agitation had failed.

"It would be equally unrealistic to expect normalizing relations to have a transformative impact in the short term," he said. "After all, Cuba's future is for Cubans to shape."

After speaking to reporters with Rodriguez, Kerry briefly walked Old Havana's historic Plaza de San Francisco with Havana City Historian Eusebio Leal, stopping to look in shops and greet local residents and store owners before heading to an afternoon flag-raising at the home of the embassy's chief of mission.

He addressed a group of diplomats, Cuban-Americans and advocates of diplomacy with Cuba before a trio of Marines raised the Stars and Stripes in the stately home's back garden. The event was attended by dissidents including Jose Daniel Ferrer, Miriam Leiva and Yoani Sanchez, who tweeted a selfie with Kerry and a photo of the secretary of state meeting privately with a group of dissidents.

The dissidents were not invited to the embassy ceremony, avoiding tensions with Cuban officials who typically boycott events attended by the country's small political opposition.

Soon after Kerry was heading home Friday evening, diplomats who negotiated the July 20 embassy reopening will launch full-time into discussing how to bring about measures such as re-establishing direct flights and mail service.

Greece's Euro Partners Approve Billions In New Loans

BY LORNE COOK
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Associated Press

BRUSSELS — Finance ministers of the 19-nation euro single currency group on Friday approved the first 26 billion euros (\$29 billion) of a vast new bailout package to help rebuild Greece's shattered economy.

The approval came after Greece's parliament passed a slew of painful reforms and spending cuts after a marathon overnight session that divided the governing party, raising the specter of early elections.

"Of course there were differences but we have managed to solve the last issues," Eurogroup chairman Jeroen Dijsselbloem told reporters in Brussels. "All the intense work of the past week has paid off."

Ten billion euros will be available to recapitalize Greece banks, while a second slice of 16 billion euros will be paid in installments, starting with 13 billion euros by Aug. 20 when Greece must make a new debt payment to the European Central Bank.

"On this basis, Greece is and will irreversibly remain a member of the Euro area," said European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker after the deal was sealed.

The final rescue package would eventually give Greece up to 86 billion euros (\$93 billion) in loans over three years in exchange for harsh spending cuts and tax hikes.

The deal must still be approved by some national parliaments, including Germany, but that is largely considered to be a formality. Some nations, such as Finland, have already given their approval.

The move saves Greece from a disorderly default on its debts which could have

come as soon as next week and helps end months of uncertainty that has shaken world markets, but it means more hardship for ordinary Greeks.

Greece's most influential creditor and perhaps its harshest critic welcomed the agreement as "a good result."

"We must nonetheless remain cautious because of course we are providing huge sums of money," German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble said.

"If the Greeks don't want this program, it won't work," he told ZDF television. "But that's why we are only paying out step by step and making sure that we don't make the risks greater than is inevitable if we want to help Greece."

A key sticking point has been whether to forgive some of Greece's debts.

The International Monetary Fund has insisted that Greece must be given some form of debt relief before it will participate in any new bailout, but a number of the country's euro partners oppose such a move.

"It is equally critical for medium and long-term debt sustainability that Greece's European partners make concrete commitments ... to provide significant debt relief, well beyond what has been considered so far," IMF chief Christine Lagarde said in a statement.

Keen to have the IMF on board, the finance ministers said the eurogroup "stands ready to consider, if necessary, possible additional measures" such as longer grace and repayment periods.

But this would only take place in October, once a review has been made of whether Greece is fully respecting the bailout terms.

The bailout bill passed

through the Greek parliament thanks to support from opposition parties, with 222 votes in favor, 64 against, 11 abstentions and three absent in the 300-member parliament.

Although approved by a comfortable majority, the result was a blow to Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, who saw more than 40 of his 149 radical left Syriza party lawmakers vote against him. He has come under intense criticism from party hardliners for capitulating to the creditors' demands for budget cuts - austerity measures he had promised to oppose when he won elections in January.

The bill includes reforms increasing personal, company and shipping taxes, reducing some pensions, abolishing tax breaks for some groups considered vulnerable and implementing deep spending cuts, including to the armed forces.

State television said Tsipras was expected to call a vote of confidence in his government, but that was not confirmed. Government spokeswoman Olga Gerovasili said any action would come after Aug. 20.

Tsipras has maintained his public popularity in Greece despite his U-turn on austerity policies, and consistently leads opposition parties in opinion polls. An election would allow him to remove the hard line elements from his party, but it is not a risk-free option.

"An election in the next few months would create more political uncertainty, delay economic recovery and impede reform implementation and the possibility of opening talks on debt relief as desired by the (International Monetary Fund) as a condition of its involvement in funding the

program," said Joan Hoey, analyst for Europe at the Economist Intelligence Unit.

"However, it appears to be unavoidable if Greece is to have a government capable of implementing the agreement."

Syriza dissenters angrily challenged the government during the all-night parliamentary session.

"I feel ashamed for you. We no longer have a democracy ... but a eurozone dictatorship," prominent party member and former energy minister Panagiotis Lafazanis said before the vote. Lafazanis signed a declaration with another 12 left-wing politicians Thursday saying they would start a new anti-austerity movement. He stopped short of quitting Syriza.

The terms of the new bailout were agreed earlier this week with creditor negotiators from the European Central Bank, European Commission and IMF.

"We took a painful decision of responsibility, and took a step back," Tsipras said in his defense of the bailout.

France, a key Greece ally, welcomed the move, with Finance Minister Michel Sapin saying he hopes the agreement will help Greece "again have confidence in itself."

"Too much time was wasted for too long," he said.

Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos, who flew to Brussels after the night long parliamentary debate, said that "any deal is only as good as what you make of it."

"So let's hope the Greek people will be able to make the best of this deal, to make the best of the reforms and the ability to reform and mitigate any negative consequences that surely exist," he said.

Series Of Explosions Rocks Texas Oil Field Chemical Supplier

CONROE, TX (AP) — A series of explosions rocked an oil field chemical supply company north of Houston on Friday, setting off a fire that sent a broad, dense column of thick, black smoke towering into the otherwise blue skies.

DrillChem said no one was in the plant on the eastern fringe of Conroe, about 40 miles north of Houston, at the time of the explosions. Authorities said they knew of no one who was injured in the explosions or blaze that erupted about 4:30 p.m.

Firefighters took about two hours to bring the fire under control.

"The facility was empty at the time of the fire and we are thankful that no injuries have been reported," said DrillChem CEO Brandon Hayes in a statement. "We are working closely with local authorities to determine the cause of the fire and assess the extent of the damage."

Units from several fire departments and a hazardous-materials team were at the scene. Residents up to 2

miles from the fire site were told to remain indoors. By nightfall, the alert had been reduced to a half-mile radius.

Air monitors have been set up to check for toxic air pollutants, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been notified, Conroe Fire Marshal Mike Legoudes said.

Wayne Patterson, who lives less than a mile from the facility, had just stepped from his back door with his dogs when he "saw a huge cloud of black smoke," he told The (Conroe) Courier

newspaper.

"The last explosion ... we heard about three or four, but the last one shook the house," he said.

Patterson said he received a text message requesting to turn his air conditioning off. His son, who lives about a half-mile away from the explosion, drove to Patterson's house to seek shelter.

"Our eyes were burning. It's not too bad, but they are burning," he said.