

NSA Helped British Spies Hack Company

WASHINGTON (AP) — Britain's electronic spying agency, in cooperation with the U.S. National Security Agency, hacked into the networks of a Dutch company to steal codes that allow both governments to seamlessly eavesdrop on mobile phones worldwide, according to the documents given to journalists by Edward Snowden.

A story about the documents posted Thursday on the website The Intercept offered no details on how the intelligence agencies employed the eavesdropping capability — providing no evidence, for example, that they misused it to spy on people who weren't valid intelligence targets. But the surreptitious operation against the world's largest manufacturer of mobile phone data chips is bound to stoke anger around the world. It fuels an impression that the NSA and its British counterpart will do whatever they deem necessary to further their surveillance prowess, even if it means stealing information from law-abiding Western companies.

The targeted company, Netherlands-based Gemalto, makes "subscriber identity modules," or SIM cards, used in mobile phones and credit cards. One of the company's three global headquarters is in Austin, Texas. Its clients include AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon and Sprint, The Intercept reported.

The Intercept offered no evidence of any eavesdropping against American customers of those providers, and company officials told the website they had no idea their networks had been penetrated. Experts called it a major compromise of mobile phone security.

The NSA did not immediately respond to a request for comment. In the past, former agency officials have defended using extra-legal techniques to further surveillance capabilities, saying the U.S. needs to be able to eavesdrop on terrorists and U.S. adversaries who communicate on the same networks as everyone else. The NSA, like the CIA, breaks the espionage and hacking laws of other countries to get information that helps American interests.

Raises May Help Wal-Mart Workers

WASHINGTON (AP) — For roughly 500,000 Wal-Mart workers set to receive pay raises, something is better than nothing.

But it still won't be enough for many of them to afford housing and transportation and feed and raise children without government aid, according to economists and researchers.

The nation's largest private employer — with 1.3 million jobs — unveiled a salary bump for many of its lowest-paid workers on Thursday, promising a 1.1 percent increase in the average full-time wage over the next year, to \$13 an hour. Part-time workers would get a 5.2 percent raise, to an average \$10 an hour, by February 2016.

Both fall below the \$15 an hour "living wage" many union-backed Wal-Mart employees have been pushing for. Driven by rising income inequality and a decades-long decline in middle-class jobs, workers are also campaigning for steep wage hikes at other major non-unionized employers, including McDonalds and other fast food chains.

Despite the raise, incomes for many Wal-Mart workers would still hover near the poverty line, reinforcing an image that some more socially-minded consumers find offensive.

Police Identify 19-Year-Old As Gunman

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Police believe a 19-year-old arrested in a Las Vegas road-rage killing was the gunman in the deadly shooting.

Las Vegas police Capt. Chris Tomaino said Thursday that Erich Nowsch was arrested on suspicion of murder.

He says authorities believe Nowsch was the gunman who killed 44-year-old Tammy Meyers.

Tomaino says police are still looking for one other suspect in the killing.

Lawyer: Superbug Victims Was A Teen

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The lawyer for one of the people infected by a "superbug" bacterial outbreak at a Los Angeles hospital says his client is an 18-year-old student who remains hospitalized in grave condition.

Attorney Kevin Boyle says the teenager visited Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center last year for a procedure that involved using an endoscope to examine his pancreas.

The lawyer says his client was treated and released but soon became gravely ill and was hospitalized for 83 days. He was eventually sent home but relapsed and was readmitted. Boyle declined to release the teen's name or say what school he attends.

He says doctors linked the illness to an endoscope contaminated with the drug-resistant, potentially fatal CRE bacteria.

UCLA says at least seven people have been infected and two have died.

Immigrant's Frustration Rises In US

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Brenda Armendariz, her husband and their two Mexico-born children were hoping to resolve their constant fears of being deported after President Barack Obama issued his latest executive orders on immigration.

But now that a federal judge in Texas has blocked Obama's efforts to protect four million more immigrants, her family is disillusioned and her children feel stuck as the president's offer of temporary legal status moves frustratingly beyond their reach.

About a third of the immigrants now living in the United States illegally would be eligible for temporary protection if Obama's latest orders are upheld in court, either because they were brought to the U.S. as children or because their own children have legal status in the country.

But the advances and retreats on reform have been so frequent over the years that many thousands of immigrants who are already eligible for protection have given up for now — they aren't applying for the work permits and Social Security numbers they are entitled to under Obama's first executive order in 2012.

There are a litany of reasons why, including general distrust of the government, fear they'll be deported, and the nearly \$500 in fees it costs to apply. But the constant uncertainty created by Washington's political divide also keeps them away.

Leaders To Rebuke Mayor For Comments

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats on Thursday assailed former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani for questioning President Barack Obama's love of country, and urged the potential field of Republican presidential candidates to rebuke him for his comments.

Giuliani said at a New York City event on Wednesday night, "I know this is a horrible thing to say, but I do not believe that the president loves America."

"He doesn't love you. And he doesn't love me. He wasn't brought up the way you were brought up and I was brought up through love of this country," said Giuliani, who sought the 2008 GOP presidential nomination. His comments were reported by Politico and the New York Daily News.

Democratic National Committee chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz said it's time for Republican leaders to "stop this nonsense."

Several likely GOP candidates declined to get involved Thursday. Giuliani, meanwhile, softened his remarks somewhat in an interview, saying he didn't mean to question the president's patriotism.

Official: Mission To Retake Mosul To Begin In April, May

BY LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The operation to retake Iraq's second largest city from Islamic State militants will likely begin in April or May and will involve about 12 Iraqi brigades, or between 20,000 and 25,000 troops, a senior U.S. military official said Thursday.

Laying out details of the expected Mosul operation for the first time, the official from U.S. Central Command said five Iraqi Army brigades will soon go through coalition training in Iraq to prepare for the mission. Those five would make up the core fighting force that would launch the attack, but they would be supplemented by three smaller brigades serving as reserve forces, along with three Peshmerga brigades who would contain the Islamic State fighters from the north and west.

The Peshmerga are Kurdish forces from northern Iraq.

The official said there also would be a Mosul fighting force, largely made up of former Mosul police and tribal forces, who would have to be ready to go back into the city once the army units clear out the Islamic State fighters.

Included in the force would be a brigade of Iraqi counterterrorism forces who have been trained by U.S. special operations forces. The brigades include roughly 2,000 troops each. The official was not authorized to discuss the operation publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Military leaders don't often disclose as many details of an operation before

it takes place, but in some cases it can have an impact on the enemy, trigger a reaction or even prompt some militants to flee before the assault begins.

The operation itself comes as no surprise to the Islamic State group. Iraqi leaders have for months made it publicly clear that they were planning an operation to retake Mosul and that they were eager to get started. In addition, U.S. officials had already acknowledged that they were beginning preparations for the Mosul mission, including using airstrikes to shut down supply lines that the insurgents were using to get equipment or people in and out of the city.

Asked why U.S. Central Command was telegraphing the timeframe and details of the operation to the enemy, the official said it was important to highlight the effort the Iraqi security forces are putting into the mission and how committed they are to it.

The official said the U.S. will provide military support for the operation, including training, air support, intelligence and surveillance. The official said there has been no decision made yet on whether to send in some U.S. ground troops to help call in airstrikes. That decision would be made by senior defense and military leaders and President Barack Obama.

Islamic State militants overtook Mosul last June, as the group marched across large sections of Iraq and Syria, sending Iraqi forces fleeing. At this point, officials estimate there are between 1,000 to 2,000 Islamic State insurgents in the city of Mosul. Military leaders have been talking about retak-

ing the city for some time, but they have said they won't launch the operation until the Iraqi troops are ready.

The official said they wanted to retake Mosul in the spring, before the summer heat and the holiday month of Ramadan kick in.

"But by the same token, if they're not ready, if the conditions are not set, if all the equipment they need is not physically there and they (aren't) trained to a degree in which they will be successful, we have not closed the door on continuing to slide that to the right," he said.

Under the plan, the approximately 3,200 Iraqi forces that have completed the training already or are going through it now would replace the five main brigades wherever they are now, and those five units would then go through several weeks of final training before the Mosul operation begins.

The official also revealed for the first time that Qatar has agreed to host a training site for coalition forces to train moderate Syrian rebels who would return to Syria to fight the Islamic State forces there. Other sites are in Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

The training facility in Jordan is ready to go. The technical agreement on the Turkey training site was signed Thursday, and it is nearly ready. The facility in Saudi Arabia will be ready to open in one to three months, and the site in Qatar will be finished in six to nine months, the official said.

The U.S. and other coalition nations will train the Syrian fighters so they can return to their own country and battle the Islamic State group.

Obama Heads To Chicago To Designate Monument, Boost Mayor

BY MATTHEW DALY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama is turning a historic South Side neighborhood in Chicago into a national monument Thursday, in a visit that also could provide a political lift to the city's mayor.

Obama formally designated the neighborhood where African-American railroad workers won a historic labor agreement in the 1930s as the Pullman National Monument. In the process, the president's trip to his hometown may help boost turnout for his former chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, who is up for re-election on Tuesday.

A Chicago Tribune columnist called the president's announcement — commemorating African-Americans who served as porters, waiters and maids on the iconic Pullman sleeper cars — "a big fat presidential bro-hug" to Emanuel, the president's "little buddy."

The White House says Obama is focused on the historical designation, which honors the neighborhood built by industrialist George Pullman in the 19th century for workers to manufacture luxurious railroad sleeping cars.

The 203-acre Pullman site includes factories and buildings associated with the Pullman Palace Car Company, which was founded in 1867 and employed thousands of workers to construct and provide service on railroad cars. While the company employed a mostly white work-



ANTHONY SOUFFLE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE/TNS
President Barack Obama speaks on the designation of the Pullman National Monument Thursday at Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy in Chicago.

force to manufacture railroad passenger cars, it also hired former slaves to serve as porters, waiters and maids on its iconic sleeping cars.

The railroad industry — Pullman in particular — was one of the largest employers of African-Americans in the United States by the early 1900s. Pullman workers played a major role in the rise of the black middle class and, through a historic labor agreement won by the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, they helped launch the civil rights movement of the 20th century, the White House said.

Emanuel doesn't have big-name challengers in his push for a second term, but he faces the possibility of a runoff election if he doesn't get more than 50 percent of the vote Tuesday. A Tribune poll found he's close to achieving that mark.

Before leaving Washington, Obama signed a proclamation in the Oval Office designating the Browns Canyon National Monument in Colorado, a 21,000-acre site along the Arkansas River popular for whitewater rafting. In Chicago, he was also expected to announce designation of the Honouliuli National Monument in Hawaii, the site of an internment camp where Japanese-American citizens and prisoners of war were held during World War II.

The White House said the three new monuments "help tell the story of significant events in American history and protect unique natural resources for the benefit of all Americans."

The new monuments will bring to 16 the number of national monuments Obama has created under the 1906 Antiquities Act, which grants presidents broad authority

to protect historic or ecologically significant sites without congressional approval.

Some Republicans have complained that Obama has abused his authority, and they renewed their complaints over the new designations, especially the Colorado site, the largest in size by far among the three new monuments.

Obama should "cut it out," said Rep. Ken Buck, R-Colo. "He is not king. No more acting like King Barack."

Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colo., said he was outraged by what he called "a top-down, big-government land grab by the president that disenfranchises the concerned citizens in the Browns Canyon region" in central Colorado, about 140 miles southwest of Denver.

Illinois' two senators, Democrat Richard Durbin and Republican Mark Kirk, hailed the Pullman designation.

"As Chicago's first national park, Pullman's 135 years of civil rights and industrial history will be protected and enjoyed for generations to come," Kirk said in a statement. "This new national park will breathe new economic life into this community, bringing up to 30,000 visitors and more than \$40 million each year."

Outdoors and wildlife groups hailed the Browns Canyon designation, which they said would allow future generations to enjoy its spectacular landscapes, world-class whitewater rafting, hunting and fishing.

Key Ukraine Town Under Rebel Control, Separatists Celebrate

BY PETER LEONARD AND DALTON BENNETT
Associated Press

DEBALTSEVE, Ukraine — For the rebel fighters who seized control of this strategic town, Thursday was a day of jubilation and bragging of victory. The retreating Ukrainian soldiers were grim, stunned and relieved to have escaped with their lives as the scope of their losses became clearer: at least 13 dead and hundreds missing, captured or wounded.

Rebel fighters roamed the debris-littered streets of Debaltseve, laughing, hugging and posing for photos a day after the fall of the furiously contested railway hub. Associated Press journalists found its neighborhoods destroyed and all under the control of the rebels.

On the road out of town, dozens of Ukrainian military vehicles, many riddled with bullet holes and with their windshields smashed, were

heading to the government-held city of Artemivsk.

The soldiers inside described weeks of harrowing rebel shelling, followed by a hasty retreat.

"We left under heavy fire, driving on back roads," said a soldier who gave only his first name, Andrei. "As we were leaving, we were attacked by artillery and grenade launchers. We came under repeated attack by tanks and assault groups."

As rebels waved separatist flags, Nikolai Kozitsyn, a Russian Cossack leader and prominent warlord in the rebel-controlled east, drove around in a Humvee-like vehicle captured from Ukrainian troops.

All around lay the wrecked remains of Ukrainian armored vehicles. Rebel fighters, many of them Cossacks, searched through the bunkers and tents of an abandoned military encampment, looking to salvage equipment and clothing left behind.

Inside every human being there are treasures to unlock.
—Mike Huckabee

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