

IRS Official Apologizes For Lavish Conference

WASHINGTON (AP) — An Internal Revenue Service official whose division staged a lavish \$4.1 million training conference and who starred as Mr. Spock in a "Star Trek" parody shown at the 2010 California gathering conceded to Congress on Thursday that taxpayer dollars were wasted in the episode.

"We're now in a very different environment" with new IRS spending curbs, Faris Fink, who was a top deputy in the agency's small business division at the time, told the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. Fink, who now heads that 24,000-employee division, said he believes many of the expenditures "should have been more closely scrutinized or not incurred at all and were not the best use of taxpayer dollars."

The mea culpa by Fink was echoed by new acting IRS chief Danny Werfel as the embattled agency struggled to contain public and congressional ire over its targeting of conservative groups seeking tax-exempt status and its spending of \$49 million on 225 employee conferences over the past three years.

Werfel called the 2010 gathering in Anaheim, Calif., "an unfortunate vestige from a prior era" and said IRS spending on travel and training has fallen 80 percent since then.

"Our work in this area is one part of a much larger effort to chart a path forward in the IRS. This is obviously a very challenging time for the agency," Werfel said.

Erdogan Faces Political Balancing Act

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkey's prime minister was walking a political tightrope Thursday as he headed home from a four-day trip abroad to face massive anti-government protests that have mushroomed to dozens of cities across the country.

Speaking before leaving Tunisia to fly back to Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan attempted a balancing act. He appeared to soften his tone in an effort not to inflame protesters who see him as increasingly autocratic, while not conceding enough to appear weak to the base that has helped him win three landslide elections.

Thousands of supporters thronged the airport for his arrival, chanting "We are with you, Erdogan," in the first major public show of backing for the prime minister. Hundreds marched among the cars of traffic-clogged streets towards the airport, waving Turkish flags and chanting "Istanbul don't sleep, defend your leader."

Erdogan's reaction will be decisive in determining whether the demonstrations fizzle out or rage on. So far, a police officer and two protesters have died and thousands have been injured in nearly a week of clashes with the police.

His comments don't appear to have swayed many of the thousands of protesters who thronged central Istanbul's Taksim Square for a sixth day Thursday. More than 10,000 others filled a busy street in a middle class area of Ankara.

Putins Calmly Announce Their Divorce

MOSCOW (AP) — Vladimir Putin pulled off one of his most audacious pieces of stagecraft, attending a ballet with his rarely seen wife and then announcing their marriage is over. But how will it play to his audience of 143 million Russians?

The end of the marriage of the Russian president and Lyudmila Putina less than two months shy of their 30th anniversary came on state television after a Thursday evening that started out like a model of domestic contentment — a devoted husband taking his wife to the ballet.

But after the performance of "Esmeralda" at the Great Kremlin Palace, the two came into a luxurious room to speak to a reporter.

"Excellent. Great music, excellent production," Putin said and Lyudmila echoed his praise.

After about a minute, the reporter asked about rumors that the two didn't live together. Putin smiled slightly, like a boy caught misbehaving, and turned his head toward Lyudmila. "This is so," he said.

Zimmerman Witnesses Must Testify Publicly

SANFORD, Fla. (AP) — A Florida judge denied a defense request Thursday to let a handful of witnesses testify confidentially during George Zimmerman's trial for fatally shooting Trayvon Martin.

Defense attorney Mark O'Mara asked that the witnesses be allowed to testify out of the public eye because of concerns for their safety about testifying at the trial, which starts next week. He said their testimony could impact the jury's decision.

Prosecutors and attorneys for media groups objected to the request.

Circuit Judge Debra Nelson also heard testimony about whether a voice recognition expert will be allowed to testify at the trial. Cries for help can be heard in the background of 911 calls that Zimmerman's neighbors made during a struggle between the neighborhood watch volunteer and Martin before the unarmed teen was shot. Experts have reached mixed conclusions about whose voice is crying for help.

OBITUARIES

Lois Dwyer

Lois D. Dwyer, 93, of Wakonda, SD passed away Tuesday, June 4, 2013 at the Wakonda Heritage Manor.

Lois Darlene Wickett was born to Richard and Grace (Stockton) Wickett on December 20, 1919 in Mitchell. She attended Plano Consolidated School graduating in 1937. She later attended Beadle General College in Mitchell. She taught at rural Ireland School and at Meckling.

She married Merle Dwyer on February 10, 1946 at Mitchell.

Lois was a member of United Church of Christ and Women's Fellowship holding offices in both. She was also a member of Community Club, Star Club, Senior Citizens, American Legion Auxiliary and the Manor Auxiliary. She was a 4H Leader for many years.

Survivors include children; Pamela (Richard) Burnett, Toledo, OH, Jane (Ed) Haltness, Valdez, AK, Richard (Dorothy) Dwyer, Harrisburg, SD, Candyce (Dave) Peitz, Wakefield, NE and Paul (Cyndi) Dwyer, Elmwood, NE, also 13 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Memorial services will be 11 a.m. Monday, June 10, 2013 at the Hansen Funeral Home in Irene with Pastor Elaine Miller officiating. Burial will follow in Union Cemetery rural Wakonda.



Dwyer

Visitation will be from 5-7 p.m., Sunday, June 9, 2013 at the Hansen Funeral Home in Irene.

For obituary and online condolences visit hansenfuneralhome.com.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
June 7, 2013

Vicki Arens

Vicki Arens, 59, of Crofton, NE died early Thursday, June 6, 2013 at the Avera Yankton Care Center, Yankton, after a courageous battle with cancer. Mass of Christian Burial will be 10:30 a.m., Monday, June 10, 2013 at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Crofton, NE with Rev. Michael Schmitz officiating. Burial will be in the parish cemetery.

Visitations will be from 5-8 p.m., Sunday, at St. Rose with a wake service at 7 p.m. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the church. The Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton, is caring for the details of the service.

Elmer Domina

Elmer Rodney Domina, 76, of Atwood, Kansas died on Thursday, June 6, 2013 at a nursing home in Atwood, Kansas.

Funeral Services will be on Saturday, June 8, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. at the Wintz Funeral Home in Hartington, Neb. with the Rev. Katherine Russell officiating. Burial will be at the Hartington City Cemetery. Visitation will be from 9 a.m. until service time at the Wintz Funeral Home.

As a reminder, all Memorial Day decorations in the Garden of Memories Cemetery will be removed three weeks after Memorial Day on June 17 and immediately discarded. Only flowers in a permanent vase and one iron decoration may remain. Vases will then be turned down for the winter on November 1st. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

WINTZ & RAY FUNERAL HOME and Cremation Service, Inc. 605-665-3644 www.wintzrayfuneralhome.com

WINTZ FUNERAL HOME INC. Hartington, Coleridge, Crofton 402-254-6547

Monumental Phone-Records Monitoring Is Laid Bare

BY DONNA CASSATA AND NANCY BENAC
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A leaked document has laid bare the monumental scope of the government's surveillance of Americans' phone records — hundreds of millions of calls — in the first hard evidence of a massive data collection program aimed at combating terrorism under powers granted by Congress after the 9/11 attacks.

At issue is a court order, first disclosed Thursday by *The Guardian* newspaper in Britain, that requires the communications company Verizon to turn over on an "ongoing, daily basis" the records of all landline and mobile telephone calls of its customers, both within the U.S. and between the U.S. and other countries. Intelligence experts said the government, though not listening in on calls, would be looking for patterns that could lead to terrorists — and that there was every reason to believe similar orders were in place for other phone companies.

Some critics in Congress, as well as civil liberties advocates, declared that the sweeping nature of the National Security Agency program disclosed Thursday represented an unwarranted intrusion into Americans' private lives. But a number of lawmakers, including some Republicans who normally jump at the chance to criticize the Obama administration, lauded the program's effectiveness. Leaders of the House

Intelligence Committee said the program had helped thwart at least one attempted terrorist attack in the United States, "possibly saving American lives."

Separately, *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* reported late Thursday the existence of another program used by the NSA and FBI that scours the nation's main Internet companies, extracting audio, video, photographs, emails, documents and connection logs to help analysts track a person's movements and contacts. It was not clear whether the program, called PRISM, targets known suspects or broadly collects data from other Americans.

The companies include Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube and Apple. *The Post* said PalTalk has had numerous posts about the Arab Spring and the Syrian civil war. It also said Dropbox would soon be included.

One outraged senator, Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said of the phone-records collecting: "When law-abiding Americans make phone calls, who they call, when they call and where they call is private information. As a result of the discussion that came to light today, now we're going to have a real debate."

But Republican Lindsay Graham of South Carolina said Americans have no cause for concern. "If you're not getting a call from a terrorist organization, you've got nothing to worry about," he said.

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairwoman

Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., said the order was a three-month renewal of an ongoing practice that is supervised by federal judges who balance efforts to protect the country from terror attacks against the need to safeguard Americans' privacy. The surveillance powers are granted under the post-9/11 Patriot Act, which was renewed in 2006 and again in 2011.

While the scale of the program might not have been news to some congressional leaders, the disclosure offered a public glimpse into a program whose breadth is not widely understood. Sen. Mark Udall, a Colorado Democrat who serves on the Intelligence Committee, said it was the type of surveillance that "I have long said would shock the public if they knew about it."

The government has hardly been forthcoming.

Wyden released a video of himself pressing Director of National Intelligence James Clapper on the matter during a Senate hearing in March.

"Does the NSA collect any type of data at all on millions or hundreds of millions of Americans?" Wyden asked.

"No, sir," Clapper answered.

"It does not?" Wyden pressed.

Clapper quickly softened his answer. "Not wittingly," he said. "There are cases where they could, inadvertently perhaps, collect — but not wittingly."

There was no immediate comment from Clapper's office Thursday on his testimony in March.



ALEJANDRO A. ALVAREZ/PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS/MCT
Demolition crews stand behind the Salvation Army store to start working Thursday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A downtown Philadelphia building that was undergoing demolition toppled onto a busy Salvation Army thrift shop Wednesday, killing at least six people and injuring 14, the last of whom was pulled from the debris just before midnight.

Philadelphia Officials Look For Cause Of Deadly Collapse

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The search for victims of a building collapse that killed six people wound down Thursday amid mounting questions about whether the demolition company that was tearing down the structure caused the tragedy by cutting corners.

The four-story building along Philadelphia's busy Market Street collapsed Wednesday onto a Salvation Army thrift shop next door with a loud boom and a huge cloud of dust, trapping employees and others, including a woman on her first day on the job at the store.

"Buildings get demolished all the time in the city of Philadelphia with active buildings right next to them. ... They're done safely in this city all the time," Mayor Michael Nutter said. "Something obviously went wrong here yesterday and possibly in the days leading up to it. That's what the investigation is for."

Despite Nutter's reassurances, Philadelphia began inspecting hundreds of demolition sites in the wake of the collapse. The Department of Licenses and Inspections said it had 300 open demolition permits throughout the city; inspectors had visited about 30 of the sites by Thursday afternoon and planned to get to the rest by next week.

The spot inspections included all four construction and demolition sites connected to Griffin Campbell Construction, the demolition contractor involved in Wednesday's deadly collapse. The city found violations at two sites and ordered a halt to the work.

As details of Campbell's checked legal and financial past came to light, a city councilman charged that dangerous, under-the-radar tear-downs are taking place throughout the city and demanded a stricter application and inspection process for demolition companies.

More than 24 hours after the collapse, the search for the dead and injured was nearly complete, with no one else believed to be in the rubble. Firefighters hosed down piles of bricks to reduce the dust, and heavy machinery scooped up debris.

Rescue efforts were buoyed early Thursday when a woman was pulled out alive and conscious after 13 hours under the rubble. Nyra Plekam was hospitalized in critical condition and was said to be floating in and out of consciousness. At least 12 others were hurt, many with minor injuries, and five remained hospitalized.

"That's why we stay the course," fire Commissioner Lloyd Ayers said. "This person being pulled out alive is what this rescue operation is all about."

Syrian Rebel Offensive In Golan Jolts Israel

QUNEITRA, Golan Heights (AP) — Syrian rebels briefly seized control of a border crossing along the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights on Thursday, prompting the withdrawal of a major Austrian peacekeeping contingent and heightening fears in Israel that it could soon be dragged into the neighboring country's civil war.

From the Israeli side of the Golan, Syrian tanks and armored vehicles could be seen across the border. Large explosions could be heard throughout the day, and thick smoke and flames rose from the area. Israeli TV stations showed images of Israeli tourists flocking to the Golan to look across the frontier and gawk at the fighting.

Israeli troops along the border were on high alert, although the military said no special actions had been taken in response to the escalation.

By nightfall, the situation appeared to be quieting down. Israel's deputy defense minister, Danny Danon, said forces remained on high alert, but no special actions had been taken.

"We are following very carefully what's happening in Syria," Danon told *The Associated Press*. "We will do whatever is necessary to protect the interests of Israel."

Israel fears that Islamic militants who have joined the rebel ranks in trying to oust President Bashar Assad will turn their guns toward Israel if they topple the Syrian leader. Islamic groups are believed to be active in the fighting in the Golan area. Israel has also expressed concerns that Assad's sophisticated weapons, could slip into the hands of hostile groups, including Assad's ally, Hezbollah.

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