

## Obama: AG To Review Media Records Policy

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama said Thursday that the Justice Department will review the policy under which it obtains journalists' records in investigations of the leak of government secrets.

Obama acknowledged he is "troubled by the possibility that leaks investigations may chill the investigative journalism" that he says holds government accountable and said he has expressed his concerns to Attorney General Eric Holder. But he said his administration would continue to try to find the government employees who are responsible for leaks.

In recent weeks, the administration has acknowledged secretly seizing portions of two months of phone records from The Associated Press and reading the e-mails of Fox News reporter James Rosen in separate investigations about the publication of government secrets.

The president said the government has to strike the right balance between security and an open society. He said Holder will meet with representatives of media organizations and report back to him by July 12.

Obama re-stated his support for a media shield law that he said would "guard against government overreach." Such a law would require a federal judge to sign off before investigators could have a look at the records of journalists.

## Muslim Hard-Liners ID Man In Soldier Killing

LONDON (AP) — A man seen with bloody hands wielding a butcher knife after the killing of a British soldier on the streets of London was described as a convert to Islam who took part in demonstrations with a banned radical group, two Muslim hard-liners said Thursday.

Police raided houses in connection with the brazen slaying of the off-duty soldier, identified as Lee Rigby, of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, who served in Afghanistan. In addition to the two suspects who were hospitalized after being shot by police, authorities said they had arrested a man and a woman, both 29, on suspicion of conspiracy to murder.

Police would not say whether it appeared Rigby had been targeted specifically because of his military service. Although he was not in uniform at the time he was killed, he was said by witnesses to be wearing a T-shirt for a British veterans' charity.

Authorities have not identified either of the two wounded suspects and have not said when they would do so. Officials in Britain usually wait to name suspects until charges have been filed.

Anjem Choudary, the former head of the radical group al-Muhajiroun, told The Associated Press that the man depicted in startling video that emerged after Rigby's death was named Michael Adebolajo, a Christian who converted to Islam around 2003 and took part in several demonstrations by the group in London.

## Fighting Feeds Fears Of Syrian War Spreading

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanese supporters and opponents of Syrian President Bashar Assad fired heavy machine guns and lobbed mortar shells at each other Thursday in some of the worst fighting in the port city of Tripoli in years.

The battles raised the five-day death toll to 16 and fed fears of the Syrian civil war spreading to Lebanon and other neighboring countries.

The violence also added to the urgency to U.S.-Russian efforts to bring both sides of the Syrian conflict to a peace conference in Geneva. Members of the Syrian opposition began three day meetings in Istanbul to hash out a unified position on whether to attend, while maintaining that Assad's departure from power should be the goals of the negotiations.

Lebanon has been on edge since the uprising in Syria began in March 2011. The country, which is still struggling to recover from its own 15-year civil war, is sharply divided along sectarian lines and into pro and anti-Assad camps. The overt involvement by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah Shiite militant group alongside Assad's regime has sparked outrage among many Sunnis in Lebanon who identify with the overwhelmingly Sunni rebels fighting to topple Assad.

Deadly sectarian street fighting has erupted on several occasions, mostly in Tripoli, Lebanon's largest city and a hotbed for Sunni Islamists. This week's fighting there has been linked to a Syrian regime offensive against the rebel-held city of Qusair in western Syria that has included Hezbollah fighters supporting Syrian troops against the rebels.

## Scientists Learn How Some Roaches Evolve

NEW YORK (AP) — For decades, people have been getting rid of cockroaches by setting out bait mixed with poison. But in the late 1980s, in an apartment test kitchen in Florida, something went very wrong.

A killer product stopped working. Cockroach populations there kept rising. Mystified researchers tested and discarded theory after theory until they finally hit on the explanation: In a remarkably rapid display of evolution at work, many of the cockroaches had lost their sweet tooth, rejecting the corn syrup meant to attract them.

In as little as five years, the sugar-rejecting trait had become so widespread that the bait had been rendered useless.

"Cockroaches are highly adaptive, and they're doing pretty well in the arms race with us," said North Carolina State University entomologist Jules Silverman, discoverer of the glucose aversion in that Florida kitchen during a bait test.

The findings illustrate the evolutionary prowess that has helped make cockroaches so hard to stamp out that it is jokingly suggested they could survive nuclear war.

## McDonald's Offers Kidnap Case Hero Free Food

CLEVELAND (AP) — The man who famously put down his Big Mac to help rescue three women held captive for years in a Cleveland house will get free McDonald's for the next year, a company spokeswoman confirmed Thursday.

Local franchisees in Charles Ramsey's neighborhood have offered him free food at their restaurants, said Heidi Barker, a spokeswoman for Oak Brook, Ill.-based McDonald's Corp.

Ramsey was called a hero after helping Amanda Berry, Gina DeJesus and Michelle Knight break out of the house May 6. Homeowner Ariel Castro faces charges. His defense team has said he will plead not guilty.

Ramsey had noted in an interview with a local TV station that he was eating McDonald's when the scene unfolded. He also spoke of it in a 911 call. Both the interview and the call quickly became popular online, and McDonald's caught wind of Ramsey's mentions.

The world's biggest hamburger company had said a day after the rescue on Twitter: "We salute the courage of Ohio kidnap victims & respect their privacy. Way to go Charles Ramsey — we'll be in touch."

# Obama Sees Narrower Terror Threat

BY JULIE PACE AND LARA JAKES  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama sought Thursday to advance the U.S. beyond the unrelenting war effort of the past dozen years, defining a narrower terror threat from smaller networks and homegrown extremists rather than the grandiose plots of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida.

In a lengthy address at the National Defense University, Obama defended his controversial drone-strikes program as a linchpin of the U.S. response to the evolving dangers. He also argued that changing threats require changes to the nation's counterterrorism policies.

Obama implored Congress to close the much-maligned Guantanamo Bay detention center in Cuba and pledged to allow greater oversight of the drone program. But he plans to keep the most lethal efforts with the unmanned aircraft under the control of the CIA.

He offered his most vigorous public defense yet of drone strikes as legal, effective and necessary as terror threats progress.

"Neither I, nor any president, can promise the total defeat of terror," Obama told his audience of students, national security and human rights experts and counterterror officials. "What we can do — what we must do — is dismantle networks that pose a direct danger, and make it less likely for new groups to gain a foothold, all while maintaining the freedoms and ideals that we defend."

Obama's address came amid increased pressure from Congress on both the drone program and the status of the Guantanamo prison. A rare coalition of bipartisan lawmakers has pressed for more openness and more oversight of the highly secretive targeted strikes, while liberal lawmakers have pointed to a hunger strike at Guantanamo in pressing Obama to renew his stalled efforts to close the detention center.

The president cast the drone program as crucial in a counterterror effort that will rely less on the widespread deployment of U.S. troops as the war in Afghanistan winds down. But he acknowledged the targeted strikes are no "cure-all" and



POOL PHOTO BY KRISTOFFER TRIPPLAAR/SIPA VIA ABACA PRESS/MCT  
**President Barack Obama delivers a speech on his administration's counterterrorism policy at the National Defense University located on Fort McNair in Washington, D.C., on Thursday.**

said he is deeply troubled by the civilians unintentionally killed.

"For me, and those in my chain of command, these deaths will haunt us as long as we live," he said. Before any strike, he said, "there must be near-certainty that no civilians will be killed or injured — the highest standard we can set."

In Pakistan alone, up to 3,336 people have been killed by the unmanned aircraft since 2003, according to the New America Foundation which maintains a database of the strikes. However, the secrecy surrounding the drone program makes it impossible for the public to know for sure how many people have been killed in strikes, and of those, how many were intended targets.

In an attempt to lift the veil somewhat, the Justice Department revealed for the first time Wednesday that four Americans had been killed in U.S. drone strikes abroad. Just one was an in-

tended target — Anwar al-Awlaki, who officials say had ties to at least three attacks planned or carried out on U.S. soil. The other three Americans, including al-Awlaki's 16-year-old son, were unintended victims.

Drones aside, some Republicans criticized Obama as underestimating the strength of al-Qaida in his speech and for proposing to repeal the president's broad authorization to use military force against the nation's enemies — powers granted to George W. Bush after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

"I believe we are still in a long, drawn-out conflict with al-Qaida," Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., told reporters after the speech. "To somehow argue that al-Qaida is on the run comes from a degree of unreality that to me is really incredible. Al-Qaida is expanding all over the Middle East, from Mali to Yemen and all places in between."

# Boy Scouts Approve Plan To Accept Openly Gay Boys

BY DAVID CRARY  
AND NOMAAN MERCHANT  
Associated Press

GRAPEVINE, Texas — The Boy Scouts of America threw open its ranks Thursday to gay Scouts but not gay Scout leaders — a fiercely contested compromise that some warned could fracture the organization and lead to mass defections of members and donors.

Of the roughly 1,400 voting members of the BSA's National Council who cast ballots, 61 percent supported the proposal drafted by the governing Executive Committee. The policy change takes effect Jan. 1.

"While people have different opinions about this policy, we can all agree that kids are better off when they are in Scouting," the BSA said after announcing the results at the council's annual meeting near Dallas.

However, the outcome will not end the bitter debate over the Scouts' membership policy. Liberal Scout leaders — while supporting the proposal to accept gay youth — have made clear they want the ban on gay adults lifted as well.

In contrast, conservatives with the Scouts — including some churches that sponsor Scout units — wanted to continue excluding gay youths, in some cases threatening to defect if the ban were lifted.

"We are deeply saddened," said Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's executive committee after learning of the result. "Homosexual behavior is incompatible with the principles enshrined in the Scout oath and Scout law."

The Assemblies of God, another conservative denomination, said the policy change "will lead to a mass exodus from the Boy Scout program."

The result was welcomed by many gay-rights groups, which

joined in the call for an end to the ban on gay adults.

"I'm so proud of how far we've come, but until there's a place for everyone in Scouting, my work will continue," said Jennifer Tyrrell, who's ouster as a Cub Scout den leader in Ohio because she is lesbian launched a national protest movement.

The vote followed what the BSA described as "the most comprehensive listening exercise in Scouting's history" to gauge opinions within the community.

The BSA could also take a hit financially. Many Scout units in conservative areas fear their local donors will stop giving if the ban on gay youth is lifted.

The BSA executive committee suggested a plan in January to give sponsors of local Scout units the option of admitting gays as both youth members and adult leaders or continuing to exclude them. However, the plan won little praise, and the BSA changed course after assessing responses to surveys sent out starting in February to members of the Scouting community.

Of the more than 200,000 leaders, parents and youth members who responded, 61 percent supported the current policy of excluding gays, while 34 percent opposed it. However, most parents of young Scouts, as while as youth members themselves, opposed the ban.

The proposal approved Thursday was seen as a compromise, and the Scouts stressed that they would not condone sexual conduct by any Scout — gay or straight.

## IRS Replaces Official In Tea Party Controversy

BY STEPHEN OHLEMACHER  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Moving quickly to stem a raging controversy, the new acting head of the Internal Revenue Service started cleaning house Thursday by replacing the supervisor who oversaw agents involved in targeting tea party groups.

A day after she refused to answer questions at a congressional hearing, Lois Lerner was placed on administrative leave, according to congressional sources.

Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa, a senior Republican on the Senate Finance Committee, said Lerner was asked to resign but refused, so she was placed on leave. An IRS spokeswoman said the agency could not comment on Lerner's status because it was a private personnel matter.

Danny Werfel, the agency's new acting commissioner, told IRS employees in an email that he had selected a new acting head of the division, staying within the IRS to find new leadership.

Ken Corbin, a 27-year IRS veteran, will be the new acting director of the agency's exempt organizations division. Corbin currently is a deputy director in the wage and investment divi-

sion, where he oversees 17,000 workers responsible for processing 172 million individual and business tax returns, Werfel said.

Werfel's email Thursday made no mention of Lerner. But congressional aides who were briefed on the matter confirmed that Lerner was placed on paid administrative leave. The aides spoke on condition of anonymity because a personnel matter was involved.

"From all accounts so far, the IRS acting commissioner was on solid ground to ask for her resignation," Grassley said in a statement. "The IRS owes it to taxpayers to resolve her situation quickly. The agency needs to move on to fix the conditions that led to the targeting debacle. She shouldn't be in limbo indefinitely on the taxpayers' dime."

Lerner's lawyer, William W. Taylor III, did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Lerner is the IRS official who first publicly disclosed on May 10 that IRS agents had been targeting tea party and other conservative groups for additional scrutiny when they applied for tax-exempt status. At the time she apologized on behalf of the IRS, but it wasn't enough to stop a firestorm of criticism from the White House and Congress.



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