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The Homeland Security News Briefing

TO: THE SECRETARY AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 2016 7:00 AM EDT

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Leading DHS News:

CONSULTANTS CRITICIZED PROPOSED DHS COLOR-CODED BORDER SECURITY INDEX. The [AP](#) (4/22, Spagat) reports Department of Homeland Security staff developed a color-coded index to measure border security five years after the agency dropped the similar terror threat index that produced “widespread confusion and ridicule.” In a 53-page, \$90,000 review of the proposal, the Institute for Defense Analyses consulting firm “found the index simplistic and misleading, noting that colors were a ‘disaster’ for communicating terror threats.” The consultants said, “DHS should learn from its own history and avoid repeating this error.” The AP adds DHS never publicized the proposal and spokeswoman Gillian Christensen said, “Currently, there are no color-coded border security indexes or metrics being considered by the Department of Homeland Security.”

MEDIA: OBAMA DELIVERS “BLOW” TO BRITONS FAVORING BREXIT WITH COMMENTS IN LONDON. President Obama on Friday, standing alongside British Prime Minister David Cameron in London, urged Britons to choose to remain in the EU, arguing the country has more influence as a member of the bloc and making what media characterizes as a threat that the trade relationship with the US would suffer as the result of an exit. Media coverage universally highlights Obama saying Britain would go to the “back of the queue” for a trade deal with the US – behind the EU – and the criticism the President received for taking a position in the politics of another country.

On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (4/22, story 8, 1:45, Llamas, 14.63M), Terry Moran reported Obama entered “a ferocious political battle” by urging Britain to remain in the European Union. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Jaffe, Adam, 8.98M) similarly says Obama “weighed in on one of the United Kingdom’s most contentious political issues Friday, urging Britain to remain part of the European Union and warning that a withdrawal would diminish British influence on the world stage.” The Post says Obama “sounded dire warnings about the consequences of a British exit from the EU that to many may have sounded like threats.” In “other moments,” according to the Post, Obama “tried appeals to Britons’ better angels, saying he understood the instinct at a time of worries about terrorism and massive refugee flows to want to ‘pull up the drawbridge’ on the rest of the world’s problems.” The [Daily Mirror \(UK\)](#) (4/22, Bloom, 753K) reports Obama “has crashed headlong into the Brexit debate” with his “passionate plea.”

The [AP](#) (4/22, Hennessey) reports “lending political backup to a struggling friend,” Obama made the case for Britain remaining in the EU. Obama said, “Let me be clear, ultimately, this is something the British voters have to decide for themselves. But as part of our special relationship, part of being friends, is to be honest and to let you know what I think.” Obama added “the outcome of that decision is a matter of deep interest to the United States, because it affects our prospects as well. The United States wants a strong United Kingdom as a partner, and the United Kingdom is at its best when it’s helping to lead a strong Europe.”

Obama also said, according to [Reuters](#) (4/22, Rampton, Maclellan), “If one of our best friends is in an organization that enhances their influence and enhances their power and enhances their economy, then I want them to stay in it,” adding, “Or at least I want to be able to tell them: ‘I think this makes you guys bigger players.”’ [USA Today](#) (4/22, Onyanga-Omara, Korte, 5.45M) reports Obama argued that he does

not believe the EU “moderates British influence in the world,” but rather “magnifies it.” [TIME](#) (4/22, Rhodan, 18.01M) reports Obama said, “I think there’s a British poet who once said no man’s an island. Even an island as beautiful as this. We’re stronger together.” In a [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Young, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) op-ed, author Toby Young says Britons who favor leaving the EU do so because of the strong values shared with the US. Young says the belief in democracy, limited government, freedom of speech, religious tolerance, and the rule of law is what fuels the skepticism about additional integration within Europe. According to Young, leaving the EU will strengthen Britain and the relationship with the US.

[CNN](#) (4/22, Liptak, Collinson, 3.96M) reports on its website that Obama delivered “a serious blow to the ‘Leave’ campaign” when he “warned Britain not to bank on a free trade deal with Washington if it quits the EU.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Nelson, Gross, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) reports Obama warned Britons their country’s exit from the EU could greatly delay bilateral trade deals with Washington, as the US would first focus on negotiations for a larger, multi-nation deal with the EU members. Obama said a trade deal with Britain, under those circumstances, “might happen someday.” However, the [CBS Evening News](#) (4/22, story 4, 2:10, Pelley, 11.17M) showed Obama saying, “It’s not going to happen any time soon because our focus is in negotiating with a big bloc, the European Union, to get a trade agreement done and UK is going to be in the back of the queue.” [Breitbart](#) (4/22, Spiering, 2.1M) reports Obama explained that Washington “negotiation with a ‘big market’ of the European Union would help trade negotiations go smoother.”

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Shear, Erlanger, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports Obama was “taking an unusually direct position on another country’s internal politics,” but was also “stating his view of American national interests.” However, the Times says “the arguments here are fierce and increasingly bitter, and Mr. Obama was attacked as a hypocrite and worse by those who favor a British exit, or Brexit.” [NBC Nightly News](#) (4/22, story 3, 2:00, Holt, 16.61M) reported, “Many in Britain aren’t so happy with the President for diving into the bitterly divisive debate over whether their country should leave the European Union.”

[Politico](#) (4/22, Gass, 1.07M) reports Obama said he did not arrive in Britain “to fix any votes” and he is “not casting a ballot myself.” Obama said he is “offering my opinion, and in democracies, everybody should want more information not less.” The [Daily Mail](#) (4/22, Dathan, Correspondent, 4.92M) also reports Obama “insisted his remarks, which have been long planned by Mr. Cameron’s In campaign, were not a ‘threat’ to Britain.” However, the Daily Mail says “the speech enraged campaigners who support Brexit, with Tory MPs immediately warning that drumming up support from foreign presidents was ‘not a good look’ for Mr. Cameron.” The Daily Mail adds that Justice Minister and Vote Leave spokesman Dominic Raab “immediately hit back” at Obama, saying, “The President made clear that uncontrolled immigration into the EU is a threat to national security. I agree – that is why it is safer to take back control so that we can stop terror suspects from Europe coming into the UK.” Raab added, “The US would not dream of opening its border with Mexico, so it is hypocritical for President Obama to insist that we do the same with Europe.” [Voice of America](#) (4/22, Ramirez, 60K) reports UK Independence Party leader Nigel Farage “had strong words” for Obama, saying the President should “butt out.”

[US News & World Report](#) (4/22, Risen, 853K) reports on its website that Cameron “defended Obama’s stance in favor of EU membership and said ‘I have not found a country that wishes Britain well that wishes us to leave the European Union.’” Cameron said, “I want Britain to be as strong as possible” adding, “We draw strength and project strength ... and make our people wealthier... by being in the EU.” However, the [Telegraph \(UK\)](#) (4/22, Hughes, 898K) reports a YouGov poll “showed British voters disapproved of Mr. Obama intervening.” According to the Telegraph, about 53 percent of respondents indicated it was “inappropriate” for Obama to indicate a preference on the referendum, with 35 percent stating it was “appropriate.” In a [Telegraph \(UK\)](#) (4/22, Stanley, 898K) opinion piece, columnist Tim Stanley says that Obama’s speech “made me angry, then it made me sad.” Stanley says, “All our pretensions to power and independence and it comes down to this: America telling Britain it can’t do what it wants to do. And the Prime Minister nodding along – just so very happy to be standing next to a real life president. Pathetic. Embarrassing. Humiliating.” Highlighting that Obama’s “killer line” was that a trade deal with Britain would not be a priority if the country left the EU, Stanley says, “We are supposed to enjoy a special relationship with the United States – a relationship forged in war and united by a shared

commitment to democratic capitalism.”

The [AP](#) (4/22, Lawless) reports the strongest worded criticism came from London Mayor Boris Johnson, who faced condemnation “for suggesting” Obama “may have an ‘ancestral dislike of the British Empire’ because of his Kenyan roots.” Writing in The Sun newspaper, Johnson “recounted a claim that a bust of former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was removed from the Oval Office after Obama was elected and returned to the British Embassy.” Johnson wrote “that some said removing the bust ‘was a symbol of the part-Kenyan president’s ancestral dislike of the British Empire, of which Churchill had been such a fervent defender.”

[Reuters](#) (4/22, Shirbon, Milliken) reports when asked about Johnson’s comments on Friday, Obama said, “I love Winston Churchill, I love the guy.” Obama added, “Right outside the door of the Treaty Room, so that I see it every day, including on weekends when I’m going into that office to watch a basketball game, the primary image I see is a bust of Winston Churchill.” Obama said, according to [Politico](#) (4/22, Gass, 1.07M), “It’s there voluntarily, ‘cause I can do anything on the second floor.” [The Hill](#) (4/22, Hattem, 862K) reports Obama said his decision to remove the Churchill bust, saying, “As the first African-American president, I thought it might be appropriate to have a bust of Dr. Martin Luther King in my office to remind me of all the hard work of a lot of people who would, somehow, allow me to have the privilege of somehow holding this office.” Obama added, “There are only so many tables where you can put busts. Otherwise, it looks a little bit cluttered.”

[USA Today](#) (4/22, Onyanga-Omara, 5.45M) reports British parliamentarian John McDonnell also criticized Johnson’s comments, tweeting, “Mask slips again. Boris part-Kenyan Obama comment is yet another example of dog whistle racism from senior Tories (Conservative Party members). He should withdraw it.” Another Labour MP, Chuka Umunna, tweeted, “These Tory Mayoral types are beyond the pale... Boris plays on @BarackObama’s Kenyan ancestry.”

[BBC News \(UK\)](#) (4/22, 2.09M) suggests on its website that Obama’s position does not represent the settled view of Americans. The article indicates BBC political editor Laura Kuenssberg “said a Brexit-supporting cabinet minister had stressed that Obama’s view ‘was not the settled view in the USA. The Republicans don’t agree and there is disquiet at his blatant meddling in UK politics.’” The minister, according to Kuenssberg, “suggested [Sen.] Ted Cruz supported Brexit.” The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Ehrenfreund, 8.98M) reports, however, that “American business and the American president seem to be in agreement about European politics.” The Post says that prior to Obama’s visit, BritishAmerican Business – a group representing transatlantic corporations – “released a survey showing that its members are worried about the chances that voters will want out.” The potential losses for the British economy, according to the Post, “are a concern for US firms that do business” there.

Obama Meets With Queen, Royal Family. The [AP](#) (4/22, Superville) reports Obama “plunged into a whirlwind of socializing Friday that began over a birthday lunch with Queen Elizabeth II and was ending at a dinner hosted by the trio of young royals who represent the future of the British monarchy.” During his press conference, Obama said the queen has “been a source of inspiration for me,” adding, “She is truly one of my favorite people ... an astonishing person.” [NBC Nightly News](#) (4/22, story 9, 0:20, Holt, 16.61M) reported Obama also met Britain’s future king, Prince George.

Immigration:

WPOST HIGHLIGHTS STAKES OF SCOTUS IMMIGRATION CASE FOR UNDOCUMENTED MOTHER. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Constable, 8.98M) profiles Catia Paz, an undocumented immigrant who would benefit from President Obama’s executive action, Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents. Paz attended the Supreme Court hearing on the action, which would offer the Woodbridge mother of two “her last remaining chance to become legal in America.” The Post notes Paz had “no time to savor the moment,” heading to an interview and her job.

Secret Service:

SECRET SERVICE PLANS SECURITY MEASURES FOR GOP CONVENTION. [Politico](#) (4/22, Cheney, 1.07M) reports the Secret Service has been preparing for more than year to undertake safety precautions at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland in July. Concerns have been raised by party leaders and delegates about safety in “what may be the first contested Republican national convention in 40 years.” Secret Service spokeswoman Nicole Mainor, however, emphasized “We don’t want the focus of the [convention] to be security. We want it to be the event itself.” The Secret Service’s safety measures include “massive pre-planning,” with multiple subcommittees and working with “Multiple security agencies,” as well as working out a mass communication system, placing restrictions on demonstrations and instituting “multi-level ID checks.”

Office of Health Affairs:

ZIKA VIRUS SPURS NEW CONCERNS FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS, NEIGHBORHOODS. [Reuters](#) (4/22, Steenhuisen) reports the CDC and OSHA issued new rules on Friday for the protection of healthcare workers against the Zika virus. The measures call for employers to provide insect repellent to workers and to encourage them to wear protective clothing that covers exposed areas, such as hands, arms and legs. Additionally, employers are being required to remove standing water from work sites and to move pregnant employees or those who may become pregnant to indoor positions.

Terrorism Investigations:

FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY OFFICIALS’ SUPPORTING APPLE IN ENCRYPTION FIGHT. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Lichtblau, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports a roster of over a half-dozen former top national security officials, including former NSA Director Michael Hayden and former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, who now work with tech firms in the private sector, are “backing Apple – and not the FBI, with which they once worked – in its fight to keep its iPhones encrypted and private.” While their “former jobs in the government are always featured prominently in their public appearances, their current business affiliations often go unmentioned.” However, some law enforcement officials are “surprised and angered” by their “barrage of support” for Apple, who “question whether the business relationships that some of the former officials now have with Apple and other Silicon Valley companies – jobs that usually pay far above their former government salaries – are behind their enthusiastic advocacy of privacy and encryption.”

PARIS ATTACK SUSPECTS ENTERED EUROPE THROUGH GREECE. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Faiola, Mekhennet, 8.98M) reports American, French, and German investigators discovered – through facial recognition systems and databases – that two of the November Paris attackers, originally from Iraq and recruited by ISIL, entered Greece on Oct. 3 with about 47 other Syrian asylum seekers. Only 20 percent of migrants entering through Greece are fully processed, according to Athens-based security analyst Ioannis Michaletos, which increases the security risk in both Greece and in Europe.

FORMER ISIL HOSTAGES CONFIRM BRUSSELS SUICIDE BOMBER WAS CAPTOR IN SYRIA. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Breeden, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports Nicolas Hénin and Pierre Torres, French journalists formerly held hostage in Syria by ISIL forces, identified one of their captors as Najim Laachraoui, according to the journalists’ lawyer, Marie-Laure Ingouf. Laachraoui was one of the two Brussels Airport suicide bombers.

Cyber News:

LAWMAKERS ASK CLAPPER FOR NUMBER OF AMERICANS CAUGHT UP IN INTERNET SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM. [Reuters](#) (4/22, Volz) reports a bipartisan group of House Judiciary Committee members sent a letter to Director of National Intelligence James Clapper asking for an estimate of the number of Americans ensnared in Internet surveillance of foreign targets under Section 702, which authorizes the Prism program disclosed by National Security Agency leaker Edward Snowden. The lawmakers say, “You have willingly shared information with us about the important and actionable intelligence obtained under these surveillance programs. ... Now we require your assistance in

making a determination that the privacy protections in place are functioning as designed.”

Countering Violent Extremism:

CIVIL LIBERTIES GROUPS SEEK REASSURANCE THAT CVE PROGRAMS WILL NOT TARGET MUSLIMS. [The Hill](#) (4/22, Hattem, 862K) reports that in a letter to White House counterterrorism adviser Jen Easterly, a coalition of 27 civil liberties and human rights groups asked the Administration to ensure that countering violent extremism (CVE) programs are not infringing on the free exercise of religion, citing presidential campaign rhetoric about Muslims. The groups say, “It is all too easy to imagine a subsequent administration seizing on CVE programs that are now in development as vehicles for systematic and large-scale profiling, patrolling and surveillance of American Muslim and communities presumed to be Muslim.”

National Security News:

OBAMA: RESOLVING SYRIAN CONFLICT REQUIRES POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS. [Reuters](#) (4/22, Rampton, MacLellan) reports President Obama on Friday said the Syrian conflict cannot be resolved without political negotiations with people he holds significant disagreements with. Speaking while in Britain, Obama said, “We are not going to solve the overall problem unless we can get this political track moving.” Obama added that he has is skeptical of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s actions and motives in Syria and Moscow will realize the conflict will not be solved by military action.

KERRY QUESTIONS PUTIN’S MOTIVES IN SYRIA. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Goodman, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports Secretary of State Kerry expressed doubts on Friday as to whether Russian President Vladimir Putin’s motive for increasing his country’s military presence in Syria was centered on combating terrorism in the region. Kerry said, “We are not going to sit there and let him do his thing supporting the regime and hammer at the opposition and say, ‘This is working.’” Kerry added, “Obviously, we’re not stupid about it.” According to Kerry, “We have challenged them very directly by this to show in effect that they are serious about this. And if they’re not serious about it then it becomes very, very difficult to hold on to a cessation of hostilities.”

DE MISTURA: ESCALATING VIOLENCE PLACES SYRIAN PEACE TALKS IN “GREAT TROUBLE.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Dagher, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) reports UN envoy Staffan de Mistura on Friday indicated the Syrian peace talks are in “great trouble.” De Mistura said, “It can definitely get back on track but it will require urgent effort because of what we have been witnessing over the past few days.” [Reuters](#) (4/22, Davison, Nebehay) reports de Mistura said efforts will continue despite escalating violence and the opposition High Negotiations Committee delegates walking out of talks this week. De Mistura said, “I plan to continue the proximity talks, but at the formal level and at the technical level until next week, probably Wednesday as originally planned.” The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Cumming-Bruce, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports de Mistura on Friday urged the US and Russian-led International Syria Support Group to host a meeting.

Syrian Airstrikes Kill At Least 19. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Cunningham, 8.98M) reports airstrikes against rebel-held areas of Aleppo killed at least 19 people on Friday, according to the Syrian Civil Defense force. Additionally, in the northern Syrian town of Qamishi, Kurdish forces from the People’s Protection Units (YPG) clashed with Syrian regime forces for the third day. The [AP](#) (4/22) reports the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Friday’s airstrikes constituted the most intense attack on Aleppo since the onset of the ceasefire.

US CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISIL KILLED 20 CIVILIANS FROM SEPT. 10-FEB. 2. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Lamothe, 8.98M) reports CENTCOM said in a statement that 20 civilians have been killed and 11 more injured in the US-led military effort against ISIL in Syria and Iraq from Sep. 10 to Feb. 2. The casualties resulted from three airstrikes in Syria and six in Iraq, with the most significant occurring on Oct. 5 in Iraq during a targeted attack against a known ISIL position.

DUNFORD VISITS IRAQI BASE WHERE MARINE DIED. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Ryan, 8.98M)

reports Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford visited the isolated Fire Base Bell, located south of Mosul, to present Purple Hearts to “four service members wounded in a recent rocket attack that also killed an American marine.” Dunford, on a three-day visit to Iraqi Kurdistan, spent 90 minutes at the base and said it “was an emotional moment as he thanked the Marines, who operate four M777 Howitzers, providing protection not just to Iraqi troops massing for an eventual offensive to reclaim Mosul, but to nearly American advisers helping them prepare for it.”

NYTIMES: IRAQ’S POLITICAL DYSFUNCTION NOW “POSES A REGIONAL THREAT.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (4/22, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) outlines the political dysfunction that has snarled Iraqi politics, noting Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has “been unable to repair the social divisions and sectarian tensions that former Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki fed by alienating Sunnis and Kurds.” The political chaos has “been the one constant in Iraq since the American invasion in 2003,” but with ISIL now “holding significant territory in Iraq, including Mosul, the second-largest city, the government’s incompetence poses a regional threat.”

US JOINS 174 OTHERS SIGNING PARIS CLIMATE DEAL, VOWS FORMAL ADOPTION BY END OF YEAR. The [CBS Evening News](#) (4/22, story 3, 0:25, Pelley, 11.17M) reported Secretary of State Kerry and representatives from 174 other countries arrived at the UN on Earth Day to sign the non-binding Paris climate agreement. The [AP](#) (4/22) reports the Paris climate deal “marked a major milestone on Friday with a record 175 countries signing on to it on opening day.” However, according to the AP, “world leaders made clear more action is needed, and quickly, to fight a relentless rise in global temperatures.” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his opening statement, “The world is in a race against time. The era of consumption without consequences is over.” The AP notes “the agreement will enter into force once 55 countries representing at least 55 percent of global emissions have formally joined it, a process initially expected to take until 2020.”

[USA Today](#) (4/22, Rice, 5.45M) reports Kerry “signed the document while holding his young granddaughter,” who was “one of 197 children at the event to represent the parties that adopted the agreement.” Kerry said, according to [The Hill](#) (4/22, Henry, 862K), “Today is a day to mark and to celebrate the hard work done by so many to win the battle of securing the Paris agreement. But knowing what we know, this is also a day to recommit ourselves to actually win this war.” Kerry added, “The power of this agreement is the opportunity it creates, the power is the message it sends to the marketplace.” The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Fears, 8.98M) reports Kerry said, “This is a day to commit ourselves to actually winning this war.” Kerry added, “Nature is changing due to our choices.”

[Reuters](#) (4/22, Nichols, Volcovici) reports both the US and China, the top producers of greenhouse gas emissions, vowed on Friday to formally adopt the agreement by the end of the year. Reuters says the statements increased the possibility of the agreement’s enforcement much quicker than originally expected. Kerry said the US “looks forward to formally joining this agreement this year” and Reuters indicates President Obama will adopt the deal through executive authority. Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli said his country “will finalize domestic legal procedures on its accession before the G20 Hangzhou summit in September this year.”

[Christian Science Monitor](#) (4/22, Trumbull, 442K) says the signing of the agreement “marks more than just the symbolic launch of new policies,” as “what’s perhaps most significant is the changed mind-set that made the accord possible.” The Monitor says the deal came about when “the attitude seemed to be: Let’s stop talking and start acting.” According to the Monitor, that approach “helped make the difference.”

Many Experts View Carbon Pricing As Key To Climate Change Agreement Success. A [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Harvey, 8.98M) analysis says a small group of world leaders on leaders who have formed the Carbon Pricing Panel gathered in New York on Thursday to call for a doubling of “the extent of global emissions covered under the carbon pricing schemes by the year 2020 – and quadruple it within the next decade.” The Post indicates that many experts are increasingly viewing carbon pricing as “the key” to achieving the goals set in the climate change agreement, although it is controversial and “has been slow to catch on with many political leaders.”

US PURCHASING HEAVY WATER FROM IRANIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM. [Reuters](#) (4/22, Gardner,

Zengerle, Mohammed, Wroughton, Knolle) reports the Energy Department will purchase 32 metric tonnes of heavy water from Iran's nuclear program for \$8.6 million and the delivery is expected to occur within weeks. Reuters notes the Iran nuclear deal require Tehran to reduce its stockpile of heavy water, which it can choose to sell, dilute, or dispose of. A DOE spokeswoman said the US "will not be Iran's customer forever" and Reuters indicates US officials hope the deal will lead to other countries also purchasing the heavy water. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Solomon, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) reports on its front page that Energy Secretary Moniz said during an interview with the newspaper that the heavy water's quality was tested and the US purchase will show the rest of the world that buying the material from Iran is acceptable.

[Reuters](#) (4/22, Zengerle) reports House Speaker Ryan condemned the purchase as "another unprecedented concession to the world's leading state-sponsor of terrorism." In a statement, Ryan added the purchase appears to be part of the Administration's efforts to improve the nuclear deal for Iran and would "directly subsidize Iran's nuclear program."

WPost Analysis: House GOP "Doubling Down" In Effort To Block Iran From US Financial System.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Demirjian, 8.98M) reports House Republicans "are doubling down against the White House in campaign to prevent Iran from doing business in US dollars." House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce this week introduced a bill "to make denying Iran access to dollars a hard-and-fast law, while GOP leaders have issued near-daily condemnations of the administration for not promising more forcefully that Iran won't find a backdoor to the US-based financial system." Royce said, "If President Obama won't rule out new concessions to the Iranian regime, Congress should," adding, "Iran's supreme leader must not be allowed to seek 'death to America' with US dollars in his pocket."

OBAMA: EUROPEAN UNITY "UNDER STRAIN" FROM REFUGEE CRISIS, WHICH COULD HURT

US. [Reuters](#) (4/22, Rampton, MacLellan) reports President Obama on Friday said European unity is being threatened by the refugee crisis, which could negatively impact the US economically and strategically. While speaking in London, Obama said, "I wouldn't describe European unity as in a crisis but I would say it is under strain." Obama added the US "consider[s] a major national security issue that you have uncontrolled migration into Europe, not because these folks are coming to the United States but because if it destabilizes Europe, our largest...trading partner, it's going to be bad for our economy." Obama further explained, "If you start seeing divisions in Europe, that weakens NATO, that will have an impact on our collective security."

WPost: Europe Failing To Address Root Causes Of Migrant Crisis. In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 8.98M) cites the report that 500 migrants from Africa drowned in the Mediterranean Sea. The Post says that "predictably, some European leaders are calling for more aggressive measures to stop the flow of boats, including stationing European warships in Libyan waters. While some measures of force may be appropriate, what's missing is a more humanitarian commitment to provide for those seeking refuge and to tackle the conflicts driving them from their homes."

WSJOURNAL ANALYSIS: OBAMA'S GERMANY VISIT SHOWS GROWTH OF RELATIONSHIP WITH

MERKEL. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Lee, Troianovski, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) reports President Obama's upcoming visit to Germany, which begins Sunday and includes a visit to the country's annual industrial trade fair, shows the progress in the relationship between the President and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The Journal adds the visit highlights how the US-Germany relationship has evolved, overcome difficulties to become one of the world's most important strategic partnerships. Obama told the Journal that throughout his presidency, Merkel has been a key partner. According to the Journal, Merkel asked Obama to appear with her at the trade fair and the visit was arranged after the President realized the level of importance Merkel placed on it.

OBAMA DOES NOT USE "GENOCIDE" TERM IN FINAL ARMENIAN REMEMBRANCE DAY

PROCLAMATION. [McClatchy](#) (4/22, Doyle, 22K) reports President Obama on Friday "soothed a key foreign ally but antagonized some Americans with long memories" when he "issu[ed] an annual proclamation commemorating the 1915 expulsion of Armenians from present-day Turkey that studiously avoids the term 'genocide.'" McClatchy says Obama "followed his past practice and that of previous presidents by finding synonyms for the word, which Armenian-Americans say is essential to an accurate

description of what took place but that the Turkish government finds objectionable.” Obama said as part of a five-paragraph statement in advance of Armenian Remembrance Day, “Today we solemnly reflect on the first mass atrocity of the 20th century – the Armenian Meds Yeghern – when one and a half million Armenian people were deported, massacred and marched to their deaths in the final days of the Ottoman Empire.”

[The Hill](#) (4/22, Fabian, 862K) reports Obama’s final presidential statement regarding Armenian Remembrance Day statement “breaks a 2008 campaign promise, when he said the ‘the Armenian genocide is not an allegation...but rather a widely documented fact.’” Obama, according to the Hill, “noted the debate over the use of the term genocide and urged the Turks to make a full accounting of the mass killings.” The President said, “We continue to underscore the importance of historical remembrance as a tool of prevention, as we call for a full, frank, and just acknowledgment of the facts, which would serve the interests of all concerned.”

OBAMA: NO PLANS TO DEPLOY GROUND TROOPS TO LIBYA. [Reuters](#) (4/22) reports President Obama on Friday said the US has no plans to deploy ground forces to Libya, but Washington will not wait to see if ISIL begins to gain a stronger presence there. While speaking in London, Obama said it would be a challenge to support Libya’s nascent government.

OBAMA DECLINES TO ANSWER QUESTION ABOUT POSSIBLE HIROSHIMA VISIT. The [AP](#) (4/22) reports President Obama “is sidestepping a question about whether he’ll become the first president to visit Hiroshima” when he travels to Japan next month. [Politico](#) (4/22, Gass, 1.07M) reports that when asked about the issue in London, Obama “declined to answer a reporter’s question seeking to confirm a report” from Japanese newspaper Nikkei that cited anonymous US officials. Obama said, “I think you have to wait until I get to Asia to start asking me Asia questions.” [Reuters](#) (4/22, Kaneko) reports the Japanese report indicated the White House would propose to Tokyo a visit to Hiroshima by Obama at the end of the G7 summit. According to Reuters, a White House official said no decision has been made and Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga denied the visit was being arranged.

CUBA EASES RESTRICTIONS ON CUBAN-BORN PEOPLE ARRIVING, LEAVING ISLAND BY SEA. The [AP](#) (4/22, Anderson) reports Cuba “has loosened a policy banning Cuban-born people from arriving by sea.” The AP says Cuban state media “said the change is part of a broader shift in policy that removes many of the prohibitions on Cubans traveling by ship.” According to the AP, “Those prohibitions were put in place in response to Cuban exiles launching attacks from the water” in the years after the Cuban revolution. The AP indicates that Havana “said people born in Cuba will now be able to travel as passengers and crew on merchant ships and cruise ships, and will eventually be allowed to board yachts as passengers and crew.”

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Alvarez, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports the further “softening of Cuba’s Cold War stance toward the United States” comes after Carnival Cruise Line indicated “it would delay its inaugural cruise to Cuba from Miami, scheduled for May 1, because the government would not relax” the measures. Carnival responded to the Cuban government’s announcement by saying the cruise will now take place as scheduled, “making it the first American cruise ship to visit Cuba in 50 years.” [Reuters](#) (4/22, Frank) reports Carnival Chief Executive Arnold Donald said in a statement, “We are extremely pleased. We want to extend our sincere appreciation to Cuba and to our team who worked so hard to help make this happen.”

US COMPANIES FINDING CUBAN GOVERNMENT’S OBSTACLES “TRICKY” TO “NAVIGATE.” The [Miami Herald](#) (4/22, Whitefield, 803K) reports “there’s been a flurry of interest from American companies eager” to do business in Cuba, but “as many are finding, navigating Cuban law, policy, priorities and the multiple agencies necessary to win approvals can be tricky.” According to the Herald, gaining Washington’s “approval for a project that’s an exception to the embargo or falls within a series of new rules on trade...is just beginning of what can be a long, winding road.”

CHINA PLANS DEVELOPMENT OF FLOATING NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Forsythe, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports state-owned China Shipbuilding Corporation is planning to construct a fleet of floating nuclear power plants “to provide electricity to remote locations

including offshore oil platforms and the contentious man-made islands.” The state-run newspaper Global Times quoted Liu Zhengguo, an executive at the company, as saying that “demand is pretty strong” for the floating power stations.

EMAIL SPARKS CONTROVERSY OVER CHINESE-OWNED LENOVO’S STATUS AS DOD

SUPPLIER. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Tsukayama, Lamothe, 8.98M) reports an Air Force email indicating that Chinese-owned Lenovo computer products were no longer on the Approved Products List circulated last week amid calls from lawmakers to “stop using the company’s equipment out of concerns over Chinese spying.” Air Force spokeswoman Ann Stefanek, however, indicated the email was a mistake, “‘not properly coordinated’ and should not have been sent.” Pentagon spokeswoman Lt. Col. Valerie Henderson similarly indicated “Lenovo has never been on that list.” According to the Post, the news did not sit well with Rep. Robert Pittenger, who said, “My office received verifiable evidence that the Air Force intended on removing Lenovo as a supplier.”

CHINA BLOCKS ACCESS TO APPLE’S FILM, BOOK SERVICES. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Carsten, 8.98M) reports China’s State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television – the country’s media-regulating agency – in March canceled Apple’s online film and book services to citizens through its broader censoring regulations that month. The tightened regulations stemmed from China’s President Xi Jinping’s attempts to shape public opinion and enhance security through the implementation of Internet and media controls, a move that both Apple and the US asserted is damaging to American businesses.

POWER VISITS REFUGEE CAMP FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN DISPLACED BY BOKO HARAM. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Cooper, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports UN Ambassador Power on Friday toured a UN refugee camp in the Nigerian village of Wuba, populated by hundreds of women and children forced from their homes by Boko Haram militants. In Yola, Nigeria, women and children constitute the majority of the 1.5 million displaced by Boko Haram.

PORTUGAL TO EXTRADITE FORMER CIA AGENT TO ITALY. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Povoledo, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports Portugal will extradite former CIA agent Sabrina De Sousa to Italy, “where she was convicted of taking part in the 2003 kidnapping of an Egyptian cleric in one of the renditions ordered by the George W. Bush administration.” Portuguese appellate courts, according to the Times, “turned down her appeal” of a lower court decision this week. De Sousa, a dual US and Portuguese citizen, is living in Portugal. Italian prosecutor Armando Spataro “said he saw no legal grounds for a new trial” and De Sousa “would be sent straight to prison, ‘and that’s that.’”

SOUTH SUDAN, OPPOSITION AGREE TO REINSTATE MACHAR AS VICE PRESIDENT. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Fortin, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports the South Sudanese government and opposition leaders ended four days of negotiations and reached an agreement on Friday to reinstate former Vice President Riek Machar, South Sudan’s opposition leader, as deputy to President Salva Kiir. Though Machar’s reinstatement signifies a step forward in the 2015 peace deal calling for a transitional government, critics from both parties remain skeptical about the peace deal and Machar’s safe arrival to the capital city of Juba.

NATO DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL: BLOC COULD EXPAND MARITIME ACTIVITY IN BLACK SEA. [Reuters](#) (4/22, Tsolova) reports NATO Deputy Secretary-General Alexander Vershbow on Friday said Turkey, Bulgaria, and Romania may expand the bloc’s maritime activity in the Black Sea as part of efforts to deter Russian aggression. Vershbow said, “There are some very valuable discussions under way among the allies who live on the Black Sea...of more closely integrating their naval forces and operations.” Vershbow added, “We need to consider a more persistent NATO military presence in the region, with a particular focus on our maritime capabilities.”

ARGENTINA PAYS CREDITORS, ALLOWING IT TO RETURN TO INTERNATIONAL CREDIT MARKETS. The [AP](#) (4/22, Neumeister, Henao) reports Argentina on Friday paid creditors who had refused to restructure its debt, “ending a long-standing legal dispute that returns the South American country to international credit markets after nearly 15 years.” US District Judge Thomas Griesa, “whose orders have blocked Argentina from operating normally in financial markets,” “vacated his rulings Friday

after the country paid billions of dollars to foreign creditors.” Argentine Economy Minister Alfonso Prat-Gay wrote on Twitter, “Injunction lifted. No more chains. No more clamps. #CiaoDefault.” Prat-Gay added, “A new era is beginning. Argentines are ready to start growing.”

GREECE, CREDITORS DISCUSSING CONTINGENCY MEASURES. [Reuters](#) (4/22, Strupczewski) reports Eurozone finance minister chairman Jeroen Dijsselbloem presided over a meeting on Friday between Greek officials and creditors from the IMF and Eurozone to resolve disagreements between the parties on the country’s third bailout program proposal. Dijsselbloem stated, “If we make progress on the content of the program and the next steps then we need to start the discussion on debt. We’re only at the beginning of that discussion, so don’t expect any deals today.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Steinhauser, Dendrinou, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) reports the European Commission and the European Central Bank, both of which are overseeing Greece’s bailout, proposed a “contingency mechanism” consisting of added austerity measures in an effort to resolve differences between the International Monetary Fund and Eurozone member nations. The IMF has expressed doubts about Greece’s ability to generate a budget surplus of 3.5 percent, but Eurozone members have urged the IMF to participate in future loans.

FRENCH MOVEMENT AGAINST PROPOSED LABOR REFORM EXPANDS SCOPE. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Mcauley, 8.98M) reports protesters in the growing French social movement “Nuit Debout,” or “Stand Up at Night,” are demonstrating not only against proposed labor reforms, but also against “an unacceptable status quo” in the nation. The movement launched on Mar. 31 in Paris and has since spread throughout France.

US MILITARY AIDING JAPAN IN AFTERMATH OF EARTHQUAKES. [USA Today](#) (4/22, Spitzer, 5.45M) reports hundreds of US military personnel are “responding to the two powerful quakes that struck southwestern Japan” last week as the Japanese government, despite “a well-developed culture of preparedness,” have “struggled to cope with the disaster.” According to USA Today, US Marines are delivering food, water, and other supplies to the region.

INVESTIGATORS CLAIM MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IMPEDING CASE OF STUDENTS’ DISAPPEARANCE. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Ahmend, Villegas, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports an international panel of expert investigators, analyzing the September disappearance of 43 college students visiting Mexico, claimed their ability to conduct an investigation has been hindered by media harassment, lack of cooperation from the Mexican government, and the threat of a retaliatory criminal investigation. The investigators and others have alleged that the government’s interference evidences its potential role in covering up the students’ disappearances.

AMERICAS LEADING LEGISLATIVE SHIFT TOWARD MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Partlow, 8.98M) reports countries in the Americas “have emerged as a leader” in “the shift toward legalization of marijuana,” with Mexico, Canada, and the US all introducing legislation loosening marijuana cultivation, use, and sales. Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto proposed federal legislation this week that would allow Mexican citizens to legally possess under an ounce of marijuana.

DAALDER, KAGAN: US NEEDS RENEWED CONSENSUS ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ROLE. In a [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Daalder, 8.98M) op-ed, former US Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder and Brookings Institution Fellow Robert Kagan say the American public needs to disregard the “irresponsible counsel of demagogues” and “restore a bipartisan foreign policy consensus around renewing US global leadership.” Daalder and Kagan cite free trade, particularly the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the “revolution in energy,” tapping the US’ “education, creativity and innovation” resources, and increased investments in defense. Daalder and Kagan conclude that these “efforts are interrelated, and, indeed, a key task for responsible political leaders will be to show how the pieces fit together: how trade enhances security, how military power undergirds prosperity and how providing access to American education strengthens the forces dedicated to a more open and freer world.”

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