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Cummings Concerned House Gun-Tracking Probe Could Jeopardize Prosecutions. The Hill (6/14, Yager, 21K) reports that Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD), the ranking Democrat on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, "is worried that Republican tactics in investigating a controversial gun-tracking program may jeopardize federal prosecutions." Cummings "wrote to Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) on Monday to ask for assurances that he would consult with the Justice Department before he considered releasing any of the highly sensitive information on the "Fast and Furious" operation, including potentially damning documents, transcribed interviews with government witnesses, and a secret audio recording." The Hill adds, "Cummings's concerns stem from a publicly released letter that Issa wrote to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) acting Director Kenneth Melson in April, in which he attached nearly a dozen documents, including internal emails and reports pertaining to the 'Fast and Furious' operation," one of which "was under federal seal according to the DOJ, said Cummings in his letter."

CBS News (6/14) reports that the committee on Monday "held a hearing to explore whether Congress has the right to hold the Justice Department in contempt in the so-called ATF 'gunwalker' investigation. Experts indicated the Justice Department should probably be more forthcoming when responding to the document requests from Congress. They said Congress has the right to resort to contempt proceedings, but that the document tug-of-war between the co-equal branches of government is not unusual."

Main Justice (6/14, Turner) reports, "House investigators have the right to subpoena documents relating to a controversial gun smuggling probe, but must be careful to ensure that their oversight role does not interfere with an ongoing criminal probe, experts on congressional investigations and constitutional law told" the committee on Monday. "Law and history require the Justice Department to respond to lawfully issued and valid subpoenas," said Morton Rosenberg, a former specialist in American public law at the Congressional Research Service. "But Todd Tatelman, a legislative attorney with the Congressional Research Service who also testified, distinguished between the legal right to subpoena DOJ officials and the committee's political considerations. 'The question really is whether any of those constraints are legally based or politically based,' Tatelman said. 'Whether or not this is a responsible course of action or whether or not the committee has any sort of interest in seeing the prosecution successfully completed ... are ultimately for this committee to determine.'"

Fox News (6/14) reports, "In the past two months, the Department of Justice, on behalf of ATF, has ignored subpoenas and seven letters demanding details of the program. It has refused to provide a single document to the oversight committee, according to" Issa. "Now the question is will DOJ give us the documents or will law enforcement officials, little by little, as whistleblowers give us what we want to show this problem goes to the highest levels," Issa said. "What we would like to do is get the truth out quickly, that it's the judgment of the people involved that Congress needs to question."

Report Finds 70 Percent Of Arms Seized, Traced In Mexico Came From US. The AP (6/14) reports from Mexico City, "About 70 percent of the guns seized in Mexico and submitted to a US gun-tracing program came from the United States, according to a report released by three US senators Monday." The AP continues, "Of the 29,284 firearms recovered by authorities in Mexico in 2009 and 2010, 20,504 came from the United States, according to figures provided to the senators by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Most of those weapons - 15,131 - were US made, while another 5,373 were of foreign manufacture but had moved through the United States into Mexico. The ATF said the remainder of the weapons total -- 8,780 arms -- were of 'undetermined origin due to insufficient information provided.'"

BBC News (6/14) reports, "The report by Democratic Senators Dianne Feinstein (California), Charles Schumer (New York) and Sheldon Whitehouse (Rhode Island) says US guns have contributed to 'Mexico's dangerous levels of violence.' It quotes Acting Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Kenneth Melson stating that of the 29,284 firearms recovered in Mexico in 2009 and 2010 and submitted for tracing, 20,504 came from the United States."

CNN (6/14, Payne) reports, "In a letter this month to Feinstein, the ATF acknowledged that the United States keeps no record of criminal firearms seized in Mexico and that "the Mexican government does not submit every recovered firearm to ATF for tracing." As a result, the ATF-provided figures may not be representative of all firearms recovered by Mexican officials. 'This report confirms what many of us already know to be true ... it is still too easy for Mexican drug lords to get their hands on deadly military-grade weapons within our borders,' said Sen. Charles Schumer of New York. 'We need to redouble our efforts to keep violent firearms out of the hands of these traffickers.'"

GOP Lawmaker: Gun Laws Should Not Change In Wake Of Al Qaeda Threat. The Hill (6/13, Lillis, 21K) reports, "A top Republican has rejected the notion that Congress should re-examine the nation's gun laws after al Qaeda urged Muslims to attack America by exploiting loose firearm rules." Judiciary Committee Chairman Lamar Smith "said tightening gun laws to address the threat would be to surrender to terrorists at the expense of Americans' rights." Said Smith, "Simply because terrorists abuse our liberties doesn't mean that we should limit the rights of law-abiding Americans. On the contrary, to limit our rights is to give in to terrorists and the fear they try to spread."

LulzSec Hacks Senate Website. AFP (6/14) reports that, via Twitter, LulzSec has claimed responsibility for "a string of recent cyberattacks" that "have breached the US Senate website and taken internal data. The Senate Sergeant at Arms, which is responsible for congressional security, confirmed there had been an intrusion into the server hosting the public website, Senate.gov, but said no sensitive information was compromised." In a statement announcing the breach, LulzSec taunted: "This is a small, just-for-kicks release of some internal data from Senate.gov -- is this an act of war, gentlemen?"

Roll Call (6/14, Newhauser, Subscription Publication, 19K) reports, "Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms Martina Bradford wrote in an email to reporters that the hackers did not gain access to the Senate's computer network." Bradford added: "Although this intrusion is inconvenient, it does not compromise the security of the Senate's network, its members or staff. Specifically, there is no individual user account information on the server supporting senate.gov that could have been compromised."

IGD News (6/14, McMillan) reports that "because the server was locked down by Senate staff, it doesn't look like Lulzsec was able to do much on the server. 'Because each Senate member and committee maintains its own presence on Senate.gov and may not always incorporate recommended security protocols, Sergeant at Arms staff has configured the server to minimize the damage that can be caused by a vulnerability in any portion of the site,' Bradford said via e-mail."

CNN (6/14) reports on its website, "The Senate sergeant at arms has ordered a review of all websites associated with the chamber. ... The Department of Homeland Security's Computer Emergency Readiness team is working with the Senate and other law enforcement authorities to investigate and analyze the incident, DHS spokesman Chris Ortman said."

The AP (6/14) reports that LulzSec "said the release was a 'just for kicks' attempt to help the government 'fix their issues.'" PC Magazine (6/14, Albanesi, 608K) notes, "Under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act this hack could earn someone five to 20 years in prison, if convicted, [Sophos analyst Chester] Wisniewski said."

Also reporting on the breach are the Wall Street Journal (6/14, Morse, Sherr, Subscription Publication, 2.02M), Reuters (6/14, Bartz, Ferraro), Politico (6/14, Martinez, 25K), FOX News (6/14), and Bloomberg News (6/14, Riley).

LulzSec Also Levies DDoS Attack Against Bethesda Softworks. On its "Bits" blog, the New York Times (6/14, Bilton, 950K) reports that, in addition to breaching the Senate website, LulzSec also hacked Bethesda Softworks, a gaming company. According to the Times, "The hackers claim that they breached Bethesda Softwork's servers over two months ago, but just released server data Monday. The group also said it has over 200,000 gamer usernames and passwords that it took from the site."

CNET News (6/14, Ogg) notes that Bethesda Softworks is a subsidiary of gaming company ZeniMax Media, which "owns several studios besides Bethesda and is the company behind popular games like Fallout 3, Doom, Quake, and Brink. LulzSec says in its statement that it initially launched a distributed denial-of-service attack on Bethesda and then found a weakness that provided administrator access to the Web server, and eventually other servers in the network."

Concerning motive, the Los Angeles Times (6/14, Li, 657K) reports, "It wasn't anger or justice driving the Bethesda

hack, LulzSec said, but rather admiration. The group loves the company's games and wants to help 'speed up the production' of The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim, a role-playing game currently under development. But the group might release user data if the game developer is not open about how Skyrim is doing, LulzSec said."

FBI, Secret Service Embed Agents Overseas To Fight Cybercrime. The New York Times (6/14, Schwartz, Dash, Subscription Publication, 950K) reports, "Using the Citigroup customer Web site as a gateway to bypass traditional safeguards and impersonate actual credit card holders, a team of sophisticated thieves cracked into the bank's vast reservoir of personal financial data, until they were detected in a routine check in early May. ... Underscoring the multinational nature of these rings, American law-enforcement agencies have also been putting more investigators overseas." According to FBI Cyber Division Assistant Director Gordon M. Snow, "the only way to address a global issue is to address it globally with your partners." The Times notes that last month the Secret Service placed agents in Tallinn, Estonia. Similarly, the FBI has established a cyber-presence in the Netherlands, Estonia, Ukraine and Romania.

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