
From: Weinstein, Jason
To: Spencer, Lashawna
Sent: 3/16/2011 9:41:40 PM
Subject: RE: AG News Brief Summary Wednesday March 16

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Administration Considering Executive Action To Change Gun Laws. The [Huffington Post's](#) (3/16) Sam Stein reports that "faced with a Congress hostile to even slight restrictions of Second Amendment rights," the Obama Administration "is exploring potential changes to gun laws that can be secured strictly through executive action, administration officials say." The Department of Justice "held the first in what is expected to be a series of meetings on Tuesday afternoon with a group of stakeholders in the ongoing gun-policy debates." Administration officials "said talk of executive orders or agency action are among a host of options that President Barack Obama and his advisers are considering."

White House Pushing For Crackdown On Copyright Laws. [CNET News](#) (3/16, McCullagh) reports, "The White House today proposed sweeping revisions to US copyright law, including making 'illegal streaming' of audio or video a federal felony and allowing FBI agents to wiretap suspected infringers." CNET continues, "In a 20-page white paper, the Obama administration called on the US Congress to fix 'deficiencies that could hinder enforcement' of intellectual property laws. The report was prepared by Victoria Espinel, the first Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator who received Senate confirmation in December 2009, and represents a broad tightening of many forms of intellectual property law including ones that deal with counterfeit pharmaceuticals and overseas royalties for copyright holders. (See CNET's report last month previewing today's white paper.)"

White House Intellectual Property Official Calls For Tougher Penalties. [Politico](#) (3/16, Martinez, 25K) reports Victoria Espinel, "the White House's top intellectual property official," wants "stiffer prison sentences for those found guilty of crimes such as selling counterfeit goods for military or law enforcement use, and she also wants illegal streaming of online content to be made a felony level crime when appropriate." The recommendations "were among a set of 20 suggestions" Espinel "made to Congress on Tuesday." Espinel "called on lawmakers to pass legislation requiring tougher sentences for organized crime groups and gangs that deal in counterfeit goods or commit other IP crimes, as well as for repeat offenders."

DOJ Memo Forbids "Gun-Walking." [CBS News](#) (3/16) reports, "CBS News has obtained an internal message sent from the Justice Department to Southwest Border US Attorneys last week. It reads, in part: 'We should not design or conduct undercover operations which include guns crossing the border. If we have knowledge that guns are about to cross the border, we must take immediate action to stop the firearms from crossing the border, even if that prematurely terminates or otherwise jeopardizes an investigation.'" The proclamation "is important because agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms claim that in recent years, they were ordered to do exactly what the message says should not be done: let thousands of guns 'walk' across the border into the hands of Mexican drug cartels in an attempt to gain future intelligence."

More Commentary. The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (3/16, 245K) editorializes, "'Fast and Furious' is the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' sting operation that allowed hundreds of weapons to get into the hands of Mexican drug cartels," and it "is also a pretty fair description of the reaction in Mexico to the possibility that a US government operation contributed to the lethal mayhem south of the border." Attorney General Holder "has said he is taking the allegations 'very seriously' and has asked the inspector general to 'get to the bottom of it.'" The Chronicle adds, "This nation should be doing what it can to halt, not abet, the flow of weapons into Mexico," and a "good starting point would be to accelerate the approval of a long-stalled rule to require border-state gun dealers to report multiple sales of long guns."

South Carolina Raid Nets Guns, Drugs. The Aiken (SC) Standard (3/16, Daily, 17K) reports, "An undercover drug investigation dubbed 'Operation Fox Hunt' netted a cache of firearms and illegal drugs for Richmond County, Georgia and federal agents working across the state line." The Standard continues, "Fifty-one defendants have been charged with federal firearm, drug trafficking or other federal offenses, according to federal prosecutors," and an "additional 20 defendants have been charged by Richmond County authorities on related state firearm and drug charges, said First Assistant United States Attorney James D. Durham with the United States Attorney's Office in Georgia. The federal and state charges follow an 18-month undercover investigation in the Augusta area launched by the Richmond County Sheriff's Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) in August of 2009."

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