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Illinois factory gunman killed five victims after being fired



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Trump declares emergency for border wall, House panel launches probe

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump on Friday declared a national emergency in a bid to fund his promised wall at the U.S.-Mexico border without congressional approval, an action Democrats vowed to challenge as a violation of the U.S. Constitution.

The Republican president’s move, circumventing Congress, seeks to make good on a 2016 presidential campaign pledge to build a border wall that Trump insists is necessary to curtail illegal immigration he blames for bringing crime and drugs into the United States.

Within hours, the action was challenged in a lawsuit filed on behalf of three Texas landowners, saying that Trump’s declaration violates the U.S. Constitution and that the planned wall would infringe on their property rights.

Both California and New York said that they, too, planned to file lawsuits.

Hours after Trump’s announcement, the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives’ Judiciary Committee said it had launched an investigation into the emergency declaration.

In a letter to Trump, committee Democrats asked him to make available for a hearing White House and Justice Department officials involved in the action. They also requested legal documents on the decision that led to the declaration, setting a deadline of next Friday.

“We believe your declaration of an emergency shows a reckless disregard for the separation of powers and your own responsibilities under our constitutional system,” said the letter, signed by Chairman Jerrold Nadler and other top Democrats on the panel.

Trump on Friday also signed a bipartisan government spending bill that would prevent another partial government shutdown by funding several agencies that otherwise would have closed on Saturday.

The funding bill represented a legislative defeat for him since it contains no money for his proposed wall - the focus of weeks of conflict between Trump and Democrats in Congress.

Trump made no mention of the bill in rambling comments to reporters in the White House’s Rose Garden.

He had demanded that Congress provide him with \$5.7 billion in wall funding as part of legislation to fund the agencies. That triggered a historic, 35-day government shutdown in December and January that hurt the U.S. economy and his opinion poll numbers.

By reorienting his quest for wall funding toward a legally uncertain strategy based on declaring a national emergency, Trump risks plunging into a lengthy legislative and legal battle with Democrats and dividing his fellow Republicans - many of whom expressed grave reservations on Friday about the president’s action.



Automakers brace for U.S. government report on import tariffs

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A confidential Commerce Department report due to be sent to Donald Trump on Sunday is widely expected to clear the way for the U.S. president to threaten tariffs on imported autos and auto parts by designating the imports a national security threat, auto industry officials said on Friday.

The report’s recommendations may bring the global auto industry a step closer to its worst trade nightmare - U.S. tariffs on millions of imported cars and parts of up to 25 percent that many in the industry fear would add thousands of dollars to the cost of vehicles and potentially cost hundreds of thousands of jobs throughout the U.S. economy.

The contents of the report are expected to remain classified while Trump considers its recommendations, leaving the industry and major car exporters Japan, the European Union and South Korea in the dark about its consequences.

Auto industry officials said they expect the report to recommend at least some tariffs so that the administration can use the findings of the probe as negotiating leverage during negotiations this year with Japan and the EU.

The report is the result of an investigation started by the Commerce Department in May 2018 at Trump’s

request. Known as a Section 232 investigation, the probe’s purpose is to determine the effects of imports on national security.

The final version will be sent to the White House on Sunday to meet a statutory deadline, a Trump administration source told Reuters.

Confidential draft versions of the recommendations have circulated to the White House and other government agencies for review since last November. Automakers and parts suppliers are anticipating its recommendation options will include broad tariffs of up to 20-25 percent on assembled cars and parts, or narrower tariffs targeting components and technologies related to new energy cars, autonomous, internet-connected and shared vehicles.

“Nobody I’ve talked to in the industry thinks the report won’t recommend tariffs” in view of the Trump administration’s stated trade priorities, said an automotive official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

“And there’s not much chance that Trump decides not to impose them.”

Administration officials have said tariff threats on autos are a way to win concessions from Japan and the EU. Last year, Trump agreed not to impose tariffs as long as talks with the two trading partners were proceeding in a productive manner.



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Illinois factory gunman killed five victims after being fired

AURORA, Ill. (Reuters) - The gunman who killed five co-workers and wounded five police officers at an Illinois factory was a violent felon who had just been fired, and the plant manager and a young intern were among his victims, authorities said on Saturday.

Gary Martin, 45, armed himself with a handgun, which he owned illegally, before reporting for a meeting on Friday at the Henry Pratt Company where his employment was terminated, Aurora Police Chief Kristen Ziman told reporters.

RELATED COVERAGE

College intern on first day among Illinois factory shooting victims
He was later killed in a shootout with SWAT-team officers who stormed the sprawling plant 40 miles (65 km) west of Chicago.

Martin had bought the gun he used, a .40 caliber Smith & Wesson handgun with a laser sight, in 2014 before authorities realized he had a prior felony conviction, Ziman said.

"The fact remains that some disgruntled person walked in and had access to a firearm that he shouldn't have had access to," Ziman said at the news conference.

Investigators were seeking to determine why Martin was not forced to relinquish his gun before the shooting, Ziman said. He should have been barred from owning a handgun because he had a 1995 conviction for aggravated assault in Mississippi.

He also had several prior arrests in Illinois, Ziman said, including for suspicion of domestic violence and criminal damage to property.

The exterior of the Henry Pratt valve assembly plant -- where police say Gary Martin shot fellow employees and wounded police officers -- is

pictured in Aurora, Illinois February 15, 2019. Picture taken February 15, 2019. REUTERS/Robert Chiarito

The bloodshed marked the latest spasm of gun violence in a nation where mass shootings have become almost commonplace, and came a day after the first anniversary of the massacre of 17 people by a gunman at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

The violence unfolded over an hour and a half, although Martin's victims, including the wounded policemen, were struck by gunfire in the first several minutes, police said.

Police breached a door at the plant with an armored rescue vehicle called a BearCat, allowing SWAT officers to enter and search for the gunman and injured victims, Aurora Deputy Police Chief Keefe Jackson told reporters. Heavily armed SWAT officers combed through the nearly 30,000-square foot (2,800-square meter) facility, their sight-lines obscured by racks with valves and machinery, Aurora police Lieutenant Rick Robertson told reporters.

Martin was holed up in a machine shop at the back, apparently waiting for police, Robertson said, and exchanged gunfire with them. It was not immediately clear if Martin died from a self-inflicted wound or police gunfire.

"It was a very short gunfight and it was over," Robertson said.

The plant, which manufactures water distribution products and operates as a factory and warehouse, employs about 200 workers in a working-class district of Aurora, the second-largest city in Illinois.



The exterior of the Henry Pratt valve assembly plant -- where police say Gary Martin shot fellow employees and wounded police officers -- is pictured in Aurora

Among the victims were Trevor Wehner, a human resources intern who was spending his first day at the company when he was fatally shot, police and a family friend said.

Man who fought off mountain lion speaks out
Authorities identified the other plant workers who were killed as Josh Pinkard, the plant manager; Clayton Parks, the human resources manager; Russell Beyer, a mold operator; and Vicente Juarez, a stock room attendant and fork lift operator. Police did not give the ages of the victims.

A sixth employee wounded in the shooting was treated for non-life-threatening injuries.

At least two of the five police officers

wounded by gunfire remained in hospital on Saturday in stable condition, Ziman said.

Another officer was injured in the incident, but not by gunfire, police said.

Neighbors of Martin, who lived in an apartment in Aurora, described him as a quiet man whom they often saw operating a remote control car and a drone.

"He looked very normal," said neighbor Gildardo Bravo, a 43-year-old cleaning company supervisor.

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Editor’s Choice



People attend the official swearing-in ceremony of U.S. Rep. Ocasio-Cortez in the borough of Bronx, New York



Nora Fingscheidt poses with Silver Bear Alfred Bauer Prize for a feature film for System Chrasher, after the awards ceremony at the 69th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin, Germany, February 16, 2019. Christoph Soeder/Pool via Reuters



Protesters wearing yellow vests take part in a demonstration of the “yellow vests” movement in Paris



Actors Yong Mei and Wang Jingchun pose with Silver Bears for Best Actor and Actress for Di jiu tian chang (So Long, My Son), after the awards ceremony at the 69th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin, Germany, February 16, 2019. Christoph Soeder/Pool via Reuters



U.S. Rep. Ocasio-Cortez poses for pictures at the end of her official swearing-in ceremony in the borough of Bronx, New York



People attend the official swearing-in ceremony of U.S. Rep. Ocasio-Cortez in the borough of Bronx, New York



Actors Yong Mei and Wang Jingchun pose with Silver Bears for Best Actor and Actress for Di jiu tian chang (So Long, My Son) , after the news conferene at the 69th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin, Germany, February 16, 2019. REUTERS/Hannibal Hanschke



A model presents a creation during the Mary Katrantzou catwalk show at London Fashion Week Women’s A/W19 in London, Britain February 16, 2019. REUTERS/ Henry Nicholls

The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) – Making A Difference In The Community

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



ministration on Aging in 1968, and before being legislated and signed into law under President Richard Nixon.



The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) began as an outgrowth by private groups and government agencies to create opportunities of engagement, activity, and growth for older Americans following the work of the Community Service Society of New York on Staten Island beginning in 1965; the Society's success led the Older Americans Act being amended to create RSVP as a nationwide program in 1969



History
Senior Corps was formed from a merge of its constituent programs: Foster Grandparents, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and Senior Companions. The three were originally mandated under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 with similar aims. The three programs have unique histories, and each was developed to meet a specific need, but all were crafted on the same belief that older adults are valuable resources to their communi-

ties. When the Corporation for National and Community Service was formed by then-president Bill Clinton in 1993, the three organizations were reformed into the single agency Senior Corps. The Foster Grandparent Program was piloted on August 28, 1965, to entice low income people over 60 in community service. The program quickly revealed the positive impact these thriving older Americans have on exceptional and special needs children and grew in scope. In the 1980s, the Foster Grandparent Program was championed by First Lady Nancy Reagan. She drew attention to the program and helped it grow as one of her pet projects.

In 1968, the Senior Companion Program began as part of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and Administration on Aging. Five years later, President Richard Nixon asked Congress to expand the role of low-income older volunteers who provide personal services to others. Seven months later, the Senior Companion Program was signed into law.

RSVP began as an outgrowth by private groups and government agencies to create opportunities of engagement, activity, and growth for older Americans. One of the earliest programs, the Community Service Society of New York, began in 1965 on Staten Island. The project involved a small group of volunteers who were dedicated to serving their communities in a variety of ways. It was due to the success of their efforts that led to an amendment to the Older Americans Act, creating RSVP as a nationwide program in 1969.

Foster Grandparents
First operational on August 28, 1965, the Foster Grandparents program enables se-

of these children, receive pre-service and monthly training sessions, transportation reimbursement, an annual physical, and accident and liability insurance while working with the child/children. Some Foster Grandparents also receive small tax-free stipends to offset costs incurred while participating in the program; eligibility for these stipends is based on income criteria.

Programs
Senior Corps is for people age 55+ who want to share their experiences with others who are most in need of mentors, coaches, or a companion.

Related



The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) Is Part of the Senior Corps

Senior Corps is a United States government agency under the authority of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Its stated mission is to provide aid to senior citizens in communities while promoting a sense of community. There are about 400,000 members nationwide. Senior Corps was formed when its constituent programs—Foster Grandparents, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and Senior Companions—were merged when the Corporation for National and Community Service was formed by then-president Bill Clinton in 1993.

The three programs have unique histories, and each was developed to meet a specific need. The Foster Grandparent Program was piloted on August 28, 1965, to entice low income people over 60 in community service. The Senior Companion Program began as part of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and Ad-

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Newspaper Closings Raise
Fears About Industry

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



tion is, certainly not all of it.”

Business models

Almost everyone agrees that newspapers must reinvent their business models. Experiments include The New York Times’ plan to enlist journalism students to help cover some neighborhoods in Brooklyn and New Jersey. The East Valley Tribune in Mesa, Ariz., recently began to offer free home delivery four days a week to neighborhoods with families that appeal to advertisers. Some experts say that it’s time to consider extraordinary measures, including government bailouts, to ensure that no community has its newsrooms go dark. “We need to view journalism in the same way that we view libraries and public schools, as absolutely essential to any prospering community,” says Theodore Glasser, professor of communications at Stanford University. “A lot of good stuff is published by newspapers so that public officials see it and act accordingly. That’s the power of the press. And that’s the first thing being cut.” Others say not to worry: The Internet and the market will empower professional journalists, bloggers and interest groups to independently provide all the local news anyone could want.

“There’s going to be an ecosystem, a network of different players involved in news for different reasons,” says Jeff Jarvis, who runs the City University of New York’s interactive journalism program.

Traditional newspapers won’t be part of the mix, though: They “aren’t willing to cannibalize and disrupt themselves,”

Jarvis says. “It’s too late. ... It’s going to be a post-Armageddon rebuilding.”

Over the past few months:

- The Detroit Free Press and The Detroit News announced plans to cut home delivery to three days a week beginning March 30 and urged readers to go online to follow the news on other days.
- Virtually every major newspaper announced staff cuts. McClatchy mini— which owns The Miami Herald, The Kansas City Star and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram— said in February that it would slash 15% of its workforce, on top of a 10% cut late last year. “By the end of 2009, a quarter of all the newsroom jobs that existed in 2001 will be gone,” the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism said this week in its annual “The State of the News Media” report.
- Those keeping their jobs have seen salaries cut. Gannett required virtually all employees to take a one-week unpaid furlough in the first quarter.
- Publicly traded publishers collectively lost about 39% of their market value since Jan. 1, underperforming the benchmark Standard & Poor’s 500 index, which is down 16.5%. Looked at another way, the \$5.4 billion that Rupert Murdoch paid in 2007 for Wall Street Journal parent Dow Jones nwsa could buy Gannett, McClatchy, New York Times Co. nyt, Washington Post Co. wpo, A.H. Belo abc and E.W. Scripps with about \$750 million to spare, based on current values.
- Publishers in Philadelphia and Minneapolis as well as the Journal Register, a chain in the northeast and

Michigan, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. That followed a similar filing in December by Tribune Co., publisher of Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times and The Sun in Baltimore.

Double-digit profit margins

Tough times? You bet. But one has to imagine an epic social and economic transformation to conclude that the newspaper industry is at death’s door.

Nearly half of all adults read a newspaper every day and spent \$10.5 billion last year to do so. The average newspaper generates about a 10% profit margin.

“It’s not the 20% to 30% they were enjoying several years ago,” Bennett says. “But it’s still an enviable profit margin for many businesses.”

That’s overlooked with all of the attention on large local papers that are especially vulnerable to the soft economy.

Advertisers in big cities have plenty of options to reach consumers, and newspapers are one of the most expensive. They typically charge about \$25 for every 1,000 people who might see an ad covering one-third of a page. That’s a lot more than the cost to reach a similar audience via radio, magazines, billboards and websites. Advertisers outside of big cities have far fewer alternatives. As a result, “Smaller-market newspapers are in better financial shape,” Bennett says. Most large publishers also are straining to pay off heavy debt they took on before the economy fell into a tailspin.



Although large local newspapers have the biggest problems, everyone is struggling to keep ad sales and readers. That includes national dailies led by USA TODAY, The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times, although they benefit from economies of scale and strong brand identities.

Nearly 67% of homes have an Internet connection. That opens them to sites offering almost everything found in newspapers, including national and global news, business, opinion, entertainment, sports, comics and horoscopes.

That’s why some experts say local newspapers should concentrate on local news and events and become less stuffy.

“This was a much more fun business years ago when people didn’t hold themselves to such high standards,” says former Merrill

Lynch analyst Lauren Rich Fine, now at Kent State University. “There are different ways to (report the news) and not be so hard on yourself if you get it wrong.”

It’s hard to predict how many people want local news enough to pay a price that, as ad sales shrink, could be much higher than now — or to pay any fee to read stories online, where most papers now offer them free. “If you look at public radio and the troubles their outlets have raising money for public affairs journalism, it might give you pause,” says James Hamilton, who runs Duke University’s DeWitt Wallace Center for Media and Democracy.

Before about 1840, when the Penny Press turned newspapers into an inexpensive mass medium, 15% of the population spent the equivalent in today’s dollars of as much as \$4 a day for a newspaper, Picard says.



Digital media evangelists say the future will be much different. About 85% of a newspaper’s costs go to things such as presses, paper, ink and trucks. Without those costs, even modest ad sales could support lots of people to provide local news and information without charge.

“There’s a market demand for quality journalism and reporting,” Jarvis says. What’s the evidence? “Based on democracy. Based on the intelligence of the audience. Based on the fact that my son reads more news than even. Based on the fact that we need it.”

Some journalists agree, working with non-profit online publications including Voiceofsanidiego.org, the St. Louis Beacon and Minneapolis’ MinnPost.com1’.

Several former Rocky Mountain News employees plan to start InDenverTimes.com in May if they can persuade 50,000 people to pay \$4.99 a month for a year.

Glasser doubts that such ventures can compensate for the loss of newspaper newsrooms. “I’ve seen nothing in the blogosphere that provides the sustained, systematic coverage that a good newsroom provides. Not even close,” he says.

If he’s right, then the consequences from current trends could be ugly.

“We’ll know if things don’t work out if there’s an increase in corruption,” Hamilton says. “When the watchdog goes away, what happens? That’s the experiment we’re starting to run.” (Courtesy abcnews.go.com)



Are these symptoms of a miserable economy that’s pulverizing a handful of high-profile papers, including some owned by companies with unusually crushing debt loads? Or have we reached a tipping point where advertisers and readers are flocking so quickly to digital media that most of the nation’s 1,400 dailies may end up in the morgue? Industry watchers aren’t sure, although some say it’s too early to start hanging crepe. “Publishers and journalists have become their own worst enemy,” says Robert Picard, a media economics scholar who edits the Journal of Media Business Studies. “They are running around arguing that the sky is falling. And they’re making the situation appear far worse than it is.” About 80% of newspaper revenue comes from advertising, and the Newspaper Association of America expects those sales to drop 9.7% in 2009 to \$34.2 billion, after falling 16.5% in 2008. “Advertising has fallen off a cliff,” says Randy Bennett, senior vice president of business development at the NAA. “The question is how much of that will come back when things pick up again. And the expecta-

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