

## U.S. and China Will Hold Talks About Hacking

### First Diplomatic Effort Over U.S. Concerns

By DAVID E. SANGER and MARK LANDLER

WASHINGTON — The United States and China have agreed to hold regular, high-level talks on how to set standards of behavior for cybersecurity and commercial espionage, the first diplomatic effort to defuse the tensions over what the United States says is a daily barrage of computer break-ins and theft of corporate and government secrets.

The talks will begin in July. Next Friday, President Obama and President Xi Jinping of China, who took office this spring, are scheduled to hold an unusual, informal summit meeting in Rancho Mirage, Calif., that could set the tone for their relationship and help them confront chronic tensions like the nuclear threat from North Korea.

American officials say they do not expect the process to immediately yield a significant reduction in the daily intrusions from China. The head of the United States Cyber Command and director of the National Security Agency, Gen. Keith B. Alexander, has said the attacks have resulted in the “greatest transfer of wealth in history.” Hackers have stolen a variety of secrets, including negotiating strategies and schematics for next-generation fighter jets and gas pipeline control systems.

Nonetheless, a senior American official involved in the negotiations to hold regular meetings said in an interview on Friday that “we need to get some norms and rules.”

“It is a serious issue that cannot simply be swatted away with talking points,” said the official, who noted that the meetings would focus primarily on the theft of intellectual property from

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## For Bloomberg, Gun Law Push Shifts to States

By JAVIER C. HERNÁNDEZ

CARSON CITY, Nev. — John W. Griffin is a fast-talking, whiskey-loving, fifth-generation Nevadan who spends his days as a lobbyist courting lawmakers in Stetsons. He advocates for luxury casinos, once brokered a dispute between a brothel and a nightclub, and has helped feuding families resolve tussles over cattle crossings.

Now he is representing the ultimate city slicker, Michael R. Bloomberg, the mayor of New York, who, undaunted by defeat in Congress, is taking his campaign for stricter gun laws to the nation's state capitals, including here, where a bill to expand the use of criminal background checks is before the State Legislature.

“I thought, ‘Heck, that’s going to be a tough battle,’” Mr. Griffin said. “But for a man with unmatched resources, there’s good reason to be hopeful.”

Fortified by several million dollars in contributions that have come in since the Newtown school massacre in December, Mayors Against Illegal Guns, the national coalition Mr. Bloomberg co-founded and finances, says it

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Iraqi Shiites at the shrine of Sayida Zeinab in Damascus, where the Prophet Muhammad’s granddaughter is said to be buried.

# The \$2.7 Trillion Medical Bill

## Colonoscopies Explain Why U.S. Leads the World in Health Expenditures

By ELISABETH ROSENTHAL

MERRICK, N.Y. — Deirdre Yapalater’s recent colonoscopy at a surgical center near her home here on Long Island went smoothly: she was whisked from pre-op to an operating room where a gastroenterologist, assisted by an anesthesiologist and a nurse, performed the routine cancer screening procedure in less than an hour. The test, which found nothing worrisome, racked up what is likely her most expensive medical bill of the year: \$6,385.

That is fairly typical: in Keene, N.H., Matt Meyer’s colonoscopy was billed at \$7,563.56. Maggie Christ of Chappaqua, N.Y., received \$9,142.84 in bills for the procedure. In Durham, N.C., the charges for Curtiss Devereux came to \$19,438, which included a polyp removal. While their insurers negotiated down the price, the final tab for each test was more than \$3,500.

“Could that be right?” said

Ms. Yapalater, stunned by charges on the statement on her dining room table. Although her insurer covered the procedure and she paid nothing, her health care costs still bite: Her premium payments jumped 10 percent last year, and rising co-payments and deductibles are straining the finances of her middle-class family, with its mission-style house in the suburbs and two S.U.V.’s parked outside. “You keep

### PAYING TILL IT HURTS

A Case Study in High Costs

thinking it’s free,” she said. “We call it free, but of course it’s not.”

In many other developed countries, a basic colonoscopy costs just a few hundred dollars and certainly well under \$1,000. That chasm in price helps explain why the United States is

far and away the world leader in medical spending, even though numerous studies have concluded that Americans do not get better care.

Whether directly from their wallets or through insurance policies, Americans pay more for almost every interaction with the medical system. They are typically prescribed more expensive procedures and tests than people in other countries, no matter if those nations operate a private or national health system. A list of drug, scan and procedure prices compiled by the International Federation of Health Plans, a global network of health insurers, found that the United States came out the most costly in all 21 categories — and often by a huge margin.

Americans pay, on average, about four times as much for a hip replacement as patients in Switzerland or France and more than three times as much for a Caesarean section as

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|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| Angiogram   | Colonoscopy   | Hip replacement  | M.R.I. scan   |
| \$914   | \$1,185   | \$40,364   | \$1,121   |
| AVG. U.S. PRICE   | AVG. U.S. PRICE   | AVG. U.S. PRICE  | AVG. U.S. PRICE   |
| \$35  | \$655   | \$7,731  | \$319   |
| CANADA  | SWITZERLAND   | SPAIN  | NETHERLANDS   |

Source: 2012 Comparative Price Report by the International Federation of Health Plans

## Seeking a Fresh Start, Holder Finds a Fresh Set of Troubles

This article is by Peter Baker, Charlie Savage and Jonathan Weisman.

WASHINGTON — At the end of last year, with the election decided and the Obama administration in office for four more years, Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. considered stepping down. He decided against it, in part because before he left he wanted to move beyond the disputes that had characterized his tenure, accomplish some of the goals he had set for the job and leave on his own terms.

If Mr. Holder really thought he could escape controversy, the last



Eric H. Holder Jr.

few weeks have reinforced how inescapable controversy has become for the nation’s chief law enforcement officer. A furor over tactics in leak investigations, including secretly obtaining phone logs for reporters at The Associated Press and Fox News, has again engulfed the attorney general in allegations, investigations and calls for resignation.

Over the course of four and a half years, no other member of President Obama’s cabinet has been at the center of so many polarizing episodes or the target of so much criticism. While the White House publicly backed Mr. Holder as he tried to smooth over the latest uproar amid new speculation about his future, some in the West Wing privately tell associates they wish he would step

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## Coming Soon: A Breakout Year for Black Films

By MICHAEL CIEPLY

LOS ANGELES — Musical. Romance. Epic history. Social drama. Christmas comedy.

After years of complaint and self-criticism about the shortage of prominent movies by and about black Americans, film companies are poised to release an extraordinary cluster of them across an array of genres in the last five months of 2013.

At least 10 new films will be released, including several awards contenders, from both independent and major distributors, like the Weinstein Company, Fox Searchlight and Universal Pictures.

Even some of those who made this year’s movies have been caught by surprise.

“You tell me!” said the director and screenwriter Lee Daniels, when asked how so many black-driven films had materialized at

once. His historical drama “The Butler” — based on a real-life White House butler who served eight presidents — is to be released by Weinstein on Aug. 16.

“I’m working in my own bubble, I come up for air, and there

they are,” Mr. Daniels said.

Black filmmakers say the wave of 2013 releases was built in large part on the creativity that has flourished on the independent-film circuit, which has become a

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Ariana Neal and Michael B. Jordan in “Fruitvale Station,” based on the 2009 killing of a young man in Oakland, Calif.

### INTERNATIONAL 6-10

#### Protests Rage in Turkey

Large protests against a plan to remake a park in Istanbul have become a broad rebuke to the government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

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### NATIONAL 11-19

#### Deadly Weather in Oklahoma

A storm in the Oklahoma City region on Friday brought tornadoes and severe flooding, just 11 days after the devastating tornado in Moore.

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#### New Teacher Rating System

The New York State education commissioner imposed a new evaluation system in New York City, ending a long and acrimonious impasse.

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### OBITUARIES 22-23

#### Jean Stapleton Is Dead

The veteran musical comedy actress, who rose to stardom as the cheerfully daffy Queens housewife Edith Bunker on “All in the Family,” was 90.

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### SUNDAY REVIEW

#### Maureen Dowd

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