

TOP LINE

As we close out this dreadful year, and say good riddance to 2020, hope is in the air for much brighter days ahead. With multiple vaccines being administered around the world, stimulus checks in the mail, there is light at the end of the tunnel.

However, we must also be mindful of today's reality, [UNPEACE](#) and the opportunities for hackers continues to alter and inhibit US interests. All organizations and businesses have points of vulnerability concerning remote and static data access points, moveable data (laptops, phones, etc.), points of targeted ingress and egress, and a lack of due diligence on employees with high-level access while working from home during the pandemic that continues to surge at peak levels.

Multiple countries are being blamed for cyberattacks, with U.S. officials pointing at Russia and [China](#) for key data breaches, citing Equifax as an example. Companies should take note that poorly planned security precautions could lead to catastrophic losses. Although not on U.S. soil, allegedly Chinese hackers have also [accessed](#) cameras within the African Union headquarters. Norway has sounded the alarm on foreign state actors [targeting the energy sector](#). Individuals working for Texas fracking companies were targeted when they [traveled abroad](#).

Question to Consider:

Have business leaders tested & refined crisis management plans in the event of a major cyber-breach and are enterprise security risk mitigation efforts in place that adequately safeguard employees and proprietary assets?

COVID-19: THE HIGHLIGHTS

The 900-billion dollar COVID relief bill was approved by Congress and Senate, and signed by President Trump on 12/27/2020. [Unsolved murders](#) are being attributed to COVID and the inability to conduct face-to-face investigations. [New mutations](#) of COVID are emerging with unknown residual effects. State actors are actively trying to [steal vaccine development data](#).

WORLD EVENTS: MIDDLE EAST

Current circumstances help, not inhibit, international terror threats within the U.S. borders. A diverged focus on politics, federal turnover, domestic threats, and new restrictions have conversely reduced legal and casual observers.

Al Qaeda is seeing a renewed urge to attack U.S. targets, including handing out “[poisoned](#)” face masks during the [holiday season](#). Lebanese politician, Dr. Muath Shaaban, called on people to violently oppose nations with peaceful relations with Israel, referencing the [Ras Burqa massacre](#). The Egyptian army claimed to kill 40 “[takfiris](#)” (extremists). Groups, and [media](#), are utilizing Trump’s [pardon](#) of former Blackwater contractors to stir anti-American sentiment. A prominent leader of Kara’ib Hezbollah had a warrant issued by Iraq (This is a very important declaration as this is the “[most powerful Iraqi Shiite faction loyal to Iran.](#)”). [Homemade](#) and commercial drones are now being weaponized and used (None have been used within U.S. borders, but this is likely to change.). Iran has requested that its allies [refrain](#) from attacking US targets while Trump is in office, but has stayed quiet on what will happen after the transition.

BEYOND THE NOISE: US EVENTS - A SURGE IN CONSPIRACY-LINKED CRIMES COULD ESCALATE AS THE ECONOMY CORRECTS.

As we have previously mentioned in Top Line, conspiracists are moving into a more consistent threat category. The suspect in the Nashville RV bombing, Anthony Warner, targeted AT&T due to [conspiracy](#) theories tied to 5G. Infowars has published an article titled, “[The ‘New Confederacy’? Yes, It’s Time For Conservatives to Unite Against the Globalist Reset](#)”. A search for this article on Google found 5,230 links; including links to [glocktalk.com](#), Patriot News, newsbreak.com, [sigforum.com](#), etc. The white nationalist group Patriot Boys is planning protests next week in Washington as conspiracies fester among those that believe the US Presidential election in November was rigged and stolen from Donald Trump. Dangerous conspiracy theories are those that cause fear, racism, bigotry, sexism, emotions, mob mentality, and specious logic.

TRUSTED RESOURCES: for numbers & guidance

[Johns Hopkins University](#) – Coronavirus Resource Center

[World Health Organization](#) – COVID-19 Pandemic

[Center for Disease Control](#) – Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Please contact Secure Source International at info@securesource.com should you have any ‘special project’ need that arises or to schedule a leadership roundtable with our intelligence and security experts to discuss risk mitigation and safety related best-practices.

Note that starting in 2021, Top Line will be provided on a monthly basis. Happy New Year!