



# NSA Contractor Charged Under Espionage Act in "Leak Case"

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### NSA Contractor Charged in Leak Case

An employee of a National Security Agency contractor in Augusta, Ga., was [charged under the Espionage Act \(NYT\)](#) in the first criminal case the Trump administration has brought for leaking classified information to the press. A criminal complaint says Reality Leigh Winner, 25, unlawfully removed and transmitted "[classified national defense information](#)" ([Justice.gov PDF](#)) to an online news outlet and says Winner confessed her actions. News of her Saturday arrest came on the same day the online news outlet [Intercept published a leaked NSA document](#) charging that Russian military intelligence carried out an August 2016 cyberattack in an apparent effort to access voting technology. An [unnamed U.S. official said the Intercept's source was Winner \(WSJ\)](#), whose mother said she had [been a linguist for the Air Force \(Guardian\)](#) before taking a job with the defense contractor Pluribus International Corporation.

## ANALYSIS

"[The Trump White House has been plagued by leaks](#) on everything from the president's private conversations with other world leaders to his reference to former FBI director James Comey as a 'nut job.' Trump has urged prosecutors to find and bring charges against those disclosing secret information, tweeting on May 16 that he has been 'asking Director Comey & others, from the beginning of my administration, to find the LEAKERS in the intelligence community'," Patricia Hurtado writes for Bloomberg.

"Once rare, [leak cases have become far more common in the 21st century](#), in part because of electronic trails that make it easier for investigators to determine who both had access to a leaked document and was in contact with a reporter. Depending on how they are counted, the Obama administration brought nine or 10 leak-related prosecutions—about twice as many as were brought under all previous presidencies combined," Charlie Savage writes for the *New York Times*.

"The hacking of senior Democrats' email accounts during the campaign has been well chronicled, but [vote-counting was thought to have been unaffected](#), despite concerted Russian efforts to penetrate it. Russian military intelligence carried out a cyber-attack on at least one US voting software supplier and sent spear-phishing emails to more than a hundred local election officials days before the poll, the Intercept reported on Monday," David Smith and Jon Swaine write for the *Guardian*.