

U.S. Leak Investigation Stalls Over Fears of Revealing U.S.-Israel Anti-Iran Operation



Washington, March 13 (RHC)-- An investigation into a top U.S. military general accused of leaking sensitive information has been halted over fears it could confirm a joint U.S.-Israeli covert operation against Iran's nuclear program, according to U.S. officials.

Federal prosecutors had been investigating whether former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine General James E. Hoss Cartwright, leaked highly classified information to a New York Times reporter, current and former U.S. officials say.

The leaked information was about a highly-classified operation to hinder Iran's nuclear enrichment capability through cyber-sabotage, an operation not acknowledged by Israel or the United States.

Federal prosecutors will have to overcome considerable national security and diplomatic considerations if they want to move forward, including setting the White House against Israel if Tel Aviv is opposed to any information being exposed in court about the cyber-sabotage program. Such an action may harm relations even further between two, which are already tense due to disagreements over Washington's efforts to reach a nuclear accord with Iran.

The Washington Post said the investigation has generated a tension between national security concerns and federal prosecutor's desire to hold high-ranking officials accountable for disclosing classified information.

The U.S. Department of Justice has not said if it will proceed with a case against Cartwright, who retired in 2011. He helped design the cyber-campaign against Iran under former President George W. Bush and escalated the program under President Barack Obama.

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