

Teen arrested in Britain linked to hack of US spy chiefs

12 February 2016

British police said Friday they had arrested a teenager on hacking charges, as media reports said the youth was suspected of cracking the personal accounts of top US intelligence officials.

The news followed a series of bold hacking attacks for which credit was claimed by someone with the screen name "Cracka" who targeted top officials at the CIA, FBI, Homeland Security, the White House and other federal agencies.

A British police spokesman told AFP Friday that authorities had arrested a 16-year-old boy in the East Midlands on Tuesday on charges including suspicion of "conspiracy to commit unauthorized access to computer material" and "conspiracy to commit unauthorized acts with intent to impair."

The spokesman did not link the arrest with the hacking, but news outlets including CNN and Vice Media's Motherboard website said the suspect was linked to the probe into the hacking of US officials.

FBI officials declined to comment on the reports.

Last month, officials disclosed that US national intelligence chief James Clapper's personal online accounts have been hacked, a few months after CIA director John Brennan suffered a similar attack.

In October, Brennan said he was "outraged" that hackers accessed his personal AOL email account. WikiLeaks released information obtained from the account, which included policy recommendations on Afghanistan and Pakistan and family addresses and phone numbers.

Although embarrassing, the document dump did not expose national security secrets and Brennan appeared to have stopped using the account in 2008.

Motherboard published a claim from a hacker who

called himself "Cracka" and said he had hacked Clapper's home telephone and Internet accounts, his personal email, and his wife's Yahoo email.

"Cracka" told Motherboard that he changed the settings on the home phone so that calls were rerouted to the California-based Free Palestine Movement.

The website said the teen was part of a "hactivist" group known as "Crackas With Attitude."

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