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To: Craig Quigley
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Ladies & Gentlemen, below please find this week's edition of *Executive Insight Brief* from The Roosevelt Group.

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THE
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GROUP

EXECUTIVE INSIGHT BRIEF | MAY 10, 2019

TOP STORIES

Iran

The U.S. is sending an [aircraft carrier group](#) to the Middle East ahead of schedule and warning that Iran and its proxy forces are showing “troubling and

escalatory” indications of a possible attack on American forces in the region.

In a written statement released by the White House, National Security Advisor John Bolton said the U.S. was deploying the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group to the U.S. Central Command region in the Middle East "to send a clear and unmistakable message to the Iranian regime that any attack on United States interests or on those of our allies will be met with unrelenting force."

In addition to the Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, the Pentagon has dispatched four B-52 [heavy bombers](#) to the Middle East. Although six decades old, the B-52's heavy weapons load and long legs ensure that when a crisis erupts, it is Air Force's go-to heavy bomber. The B-52H [Stratofortress](#) bombers took off from Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana and are expected to land at Al Udeid air base in Qatar later today.

A U.S. official with direct knowledge of the situation told [CNN](#) the threats were against both U.S. maritime and land-based forces in the region. The deployments are aimed specifically at deterring any Iranian military actions, the official added.

President Hassan Rouhani said he would [keep enriched uranium](#) stocks in the country rather than sell them abroad. He also threatened to resume production of more-highly-enriched uranium in 60 days if other signatories did not act to protect Iran from U.S. sanctions.

Trump has introduced some of the most robust economic sanctions that have ever been placed on Iran and last month labeled the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps a terrorist organization, the first time the U.S. has so designated

part of another country's government. [Click here for a hot take on why this hard line stance seems to actually be working.](#)

Military Technology Updates

F-35 Price Drop

Lockheed Martin is offering to come down more than 10% on the price of the least-expensive F-35 as it negotiates the largest sale yet of Joint Strike Fighters.

The company is offering to sell the Pentagon about 100 F-35As—the version flown by the U.S. Air Force and most allies—for less than \$80 million each, down from \$89.5 million apiece in the deal signed last September. That price point suggests the company will meet its 2020 price targets for the warplane, whose lengthy development and higher-than-expected initial costs have drawn much criticism.

The 100 F-35As are part of a block buy of three production lots of the jets—in all, roughly 450 jets. The order will include F-35Bs for the Marine Corps, F-35Cs for the U.S. Navy, and a variety of the jets for allies. [Full story here.](#)

Jets with Lasers in Near Future?

A laser weapon, called the Self-Protect High-Energy Laser Demonstrator (SHIELD), passed a crucial test last month. Designed to defend U.S. Air Force aircraft from inbound air-to-air missiles, [SHIELD](#) torched several missiles in flight. Defensive lasers could revolutionize aerial warfare and lead to a second revolution with even more profound implications for air warfare—offensive lasers.

“The final SHiELD system will be much smaller and lighter, as well as ruggedized for an [airborne environment](#),” an AFRL statement said. Flight tests are planned for fiscal year 2020. The Air Force contracted weapons maker Lockheed Martin to build the laser in 2017.

Navy’s Unmanned Boat

The [Navy and Textron](#) showed off for the first time Monday, a weaponized prototype of a small unmanned surface vessel (USV) designed to revolutionize sea warfare.

Textron principal systems engineer Gary Hartman said the display of the 40-foot Common Unmanned Surface Vehicle, docked at the annual Sea-Air-Space Exposition at National Harbor, Maryland, is the first of the boat mounted with a .50-caliber machine gun and a housing for Hellfire missiles.

Navy’s Plans for 6th Generation Jet

The U.S. Navy’s next fighter will be designed exclusively for naval service and without cooperation that will result in variants for other services. The unnamed fighter, tentatively named F/A-XX, will replace the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighter on the decks of Navy carriers sometime in the 2030s.

[Flightglobal](#), reporting from the Navy League Sea-Air-Space conference in National Harbor, Maryland, states the Navy has decided it has different priorities than the Air Force. Angie Knappenberger, USN deputy director of air warfare, told reporters that the Navy does not plan on using the fighter to penetrate enemy airspace, a key requirement for the U.S. Air Force’s Next Generation Air Dominance (NGAD) jet.

NGAD will replace the F-22 Raptor, the first fifth generation fighter in U.S. military service. In addition to stealth, sensors and lethality, the aircraft's design will emphasize long range, potentially accompanying bombers such as the upcoming B-21 Raider on deep penetration missions far into enemy territory.

[Click here for more.](#)

Precision Naval Projectile

The Navy quietly conducted a ground test of a precision-guided projectile the Army fires from cannons, manufacturer Raytheon revealed this week.

The test of the N5 naval variant of the Excalibur projectile took place in September at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona, John Hobday, senior manager for advanced programs with Raytheon's Land Warfare Systems division, told Military.com on Monday.

The Excalibur projectile offers double the effective range of the conventional shell currently used with the MK-45 5-inch gun aboard Navy destroyers and cruisers. It can fire out to 40 kilometers, or almost 22 nautical miles, compared with the current range of just over 20 kilometers. The projectile also offers accuracy inside two meters. [Click here for full story.](#)

Light Attack

The U.S. Air Force on Wednesday stated its intent to sole source [A-29 Super Tucanos](#) from Sierra Nevada Corp. and Embraer. But a similar solicitation for Textron's AT-6 Wolverine will be forthcoming, an Air Force spokeswoman confirmed. The Air Force intends to put out a final solicitation to the SNC-Embraer team this month and will award a contract by the end of the fiscal

year, according to a May 8 notice on FedBizOpps.

As the Air Force faces the mounting challenge of available capacity vs. demand, they must effectively address the threat posed by non-state entities while avoiding the disruption of crucial modernization for high-end war fighting.

Light-attack aircraft, or LAA, with low-procurement cost and operating expenses, provide a solution.

At a time where Russia and China are affirming themselves on the high end of the war-fighting spectrum, North Korea continues to test nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, and Iran continues to prove an unstable actor—the main goal of the National Defense Strategy has been to focus on modernization aspects to better address these developments, following decades of military doctrine directed at fighting non-peer adversaries. However, non-state actors such as the Islamic State, al-Shabab and al-Qaida continue to pose threats. [Read why Light Attack Aircraft can be a viable solution here.](#)

Quick Hits

North Korean Ship Seized

The U.S. has seized a North Korean freighter that was caught shipping coal in violation of U.N. sanctions, the Justice Department revealed Thursday.

The 17,000-ton cargo ship, called the Wise Honest, was stopped in Indonesia last year after it was found to be carrying coal. The ship's captain was charged with violating Indonesian law, and last July, the U.S. filed an action to seize the ship, according to court papers. Federal prosecutors said the seizure marks the first time the U.S. has taken possession of a North Korean ship for violating

international sanctions. [Click for more.](#)

While on the Topic of North Korea...

North Korea launched [two projectiles](#) Thursday that are believed to have been short-range missiles, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, in what would be the second test of such missiles in the past five days.

The apparent missiles were launched from northwestern North Korea, far from the border that divides the Korean Peninsula, and they landed in the Sea of Japan/East Sea, according to South Korea's Yonhap News Agency.

Israel/Hamas

The [Israeli military](#) said Monday that it had lifted restrictions allowing residents in southern Israel to resume daily activity after two days of intense and deadly fighting. According to officials, the ceasefire deal was brokered by the Egyptians.

The Israel Defense Forces published the following statistics about Saturday's strikes: 690 rockets were fired toward Israel. 410, almost two-thirds of the total, hit uninhabited areas and were not engaged by the Iron Dome. 279 rockets were engaged by the Iron Dome. 240 of these—86%—were successfully intercepted. 39—about 14%—made it through and caused the four deaths.

[Click here for more.](#)

Barr vs. House Round 2

On Wednesday, the [House Judiciary Committee voted](#) to hold William Barr in contempt, which will now move to the full house for a vote. Earlier, President Trump asserted executive privilege over special counsel Robert Mueller's report and its underlying evidence.

The contempt vote followed a spirited and lengthy debate in the committee, where Democrats warned of a constitutional crisis amid the administration's blockade and Republicans slammed their Democratic colleagues for abusing their power by going after the attorney general.

The Mueller report released publicly had approximately 8% of the material redacted, according to a CNN analysis, and the Justice Department offered congressional leaders the opportunity to see a less-redacted version--with only grand jury material removed, an even smaller percentage. Barr has argued he's not legally allowed to provide grand jury material to Congress.

This Day in History

1285

[Philip III](#) is succeeded by [Philip IV](#) ("the Fair") for the French crown.

1503

Christopher Columbus discovers the [Cayman](#) Islands on his [fourth](#) and final voyage.

1676

The Virginia Rebellion of 1676, commonly known as [Bacon's Rebellion](#), begins in the New World.

1773

To keep the troubled East India Company afloat, Parliament passes the [Tea Act](#), taxing all tea in the American colonies.

1774

[Louis XVI](#) succeeds his grandfather Louis XV as King of France.

1775

American troops [capture](#) Fort Ticonderoga from the British.

1794

[Elizabeth](#), the sister of King Louis XVI, is beheaded.

1796

Napoleon Bonaparte wins a brilliant victory against the Austrians at [Lodi Bridge](#) in Italy.

1840

Mormon leader Joseph Smith moves his band of followers to Illinois to escape the hostilities they experienced in Missouri.

1857

The Bengal Army in India [revolts](#) against the British.

1859

French emperor Napoleon III leaves Paris to join his troops preparing to battle the Austrian army in [Northern Italy](#).

1863

General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson [succumbs](#) to illness and wounds received as a result of accidental friendly fire, during the Battle of Chancellorsville.

1865

Union cavalry troops [capture](#) Confederate President Jefferson Davis near Irvinville, Georgia.

1869

The Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads meet in Promontory, Utah—completing the [transcontinental](#) railroad.

1872

[Victoria Woodhull](#) becomes first the woman nominated for U.S. president.

1877

Hayes has [first phone](#) installed in White House

1917

Allied ships get destroyer escorts to fend off German attacks in the Atlantic.

1924

[J. Edgar Hoover](#) is appointed head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

1928

WGY-TV in Schenectady, New York, begins regular television programming.

1933

Nazis begin burning books by "unGerman" writers such as Heinrich Mann and Erich Maria Remarque, author of All Quiet on the Western Front.

1940

Winston Churchill [succeeds](#) Neville Chamberlain as British Prime Minister.

1940

German forces begin a [blitzkrieg](#) of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, skirting France's "impenetrable" Maginot Line.

1941

England's House of Commons is [destroyed](#) during the worst of the London Blitz: 550 German bombers drop 100,000 incendiary bombs.

1969

Operation [Apache Snow](#) is launched by U.S. forces in Vietnam.

1994

Nelson Mandela is sworn in as South Africa's first black president.

See more at historynet.com and history.com

Look Ahead

Monday, May 13

8:50 AM EDT

Summit: The Institute for Defense and Government Advancement

Topic: Health

Location: Gaylord National Harbor, 201 Waterfront St., National Harbor, Md.

9:00 AM EDT

Discussion: The Center for Strategic and International Studies

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Location: CSIS, 1616 Rhode Island Avenue NW

4:00 PM EDT

Book Discussion: The Woodrow Wilson Center's History and Public Policy
Program

Topic: Social Issues

Location: WWC, One Woodrow Wilson Plaza, Ronald Reagan Building, 1300
Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Sixth Floor

Tuesday, May 14

8:00 AM EDT

Symposium: The Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association

Topic: Technology

Location: Baltimore Convention Center, One West Pratt St., Baltimore, Md.

8:00 AM EDT

Meeting: Defense Department; office of the Secretary

Topic: Military Science Programs

Location: Executive Conference Center, 4075 Wilson Boulevard, Third Floor,
Arlington, Va.

8:45 AM EDT

Summit: The Institute for Defense and Government Advancement

Topic: Health

Location: Gaylord National Harbor, 201 Waterfront St., National Harbor, Md.

9:00 AM EDT

Discussion: The Atlantic Council

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Location: Atlantic Council, 1030 15th St. NW, 12th Floor

9:00 AM EDT

Briefing: The Business Council for International Understanding

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Location: TBA

11:30 AM EDT

Discussion: The Hudson Institute

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Location: Hudson Institute, 1201 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 400

2:00 PM EDT

Book Discussion: The Henry L. Stimson Center

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Location: Stimson Center, 1211 Connecticut Avenue NW, Eighth Floor

2:00 PM EDT

Meeting: State Department

Topic: State Department Property Management

Location: State Department, 2201 C St. NW, Loy Henderson Conference Room

5:30 PM EDT

Hearing: House (Select) Intelligence Committee

Topic: Compartmented Budget Request

Location: HVC-304 U.S. Capitol

6:30 PM EDT

Book Discussion: The International Spy Museum

Topic: Defense

Location: International Spy Museum, 700 L'Enfant Plaza SW

Wednesday, May 15

8:00 AM EDT

Symposium: The Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association

Topic: Technology

Location: Baltimore Convention Center, One West Pratt St., Baltimore, Md.

8:00 AM EDT

Meeting: Defense Department; office of the Secretary

Topic: Military Science Programs

Location: Executive Conference Center, 4075 Wilson Boulevard, Third Floor,
Arlington, Va.

8:30 AM EDT

Conference: The Brookings Institution

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Location: Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Saul/Zilkha
Auditorium

8:50 AM EDT

Summit: The Institute for Defense and Government Advancement

Topic: Health

Location: Gaylord National Harbor, 201 Waterfront St., National Harbor, Md.

10:00 AM EDT

Hearing: House Science, Space, and Technology Committee

Topic: Solar/Wind Energy Technology

Location: 2318 Rayburn House Office Building

2:00 PM EDT

Hearing: House Financial Services Committee

Topic: Use of Sanctions

Location: 2128 Rayburn House Office Building

2:00 PM EDT

Summit: Government Matters

Topic: Defense

Location: Howard Theatre, 620 T St. NW

Time TBD

Hearing: National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service

Topic: Public Service

Location: Partnership for Public Service, 1100 New York Avenue NW, Suite
200 East

Thursday, May 16

8:00 AM EDT

Symposium: The Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association

Topic: Technology

Location: Baltimore Convention Center, One West Pratt St., Baltimore, Md.

8:30 AM EDT

Forum: The National Defense Industrial Association, the Mitchell Institute for
Aerospace Studies, the Air Force Association and the Reserve Officers
Association

Topic: Defense

Location: Capitol Hill Club, 300 First St. SE

9:30 AM EDT

Discussion: The Air Force Association's Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies

Topic: Defense

Location: AFA, 1501 Lee Highway, Fourth Floor Boardroom, Arlington, Va.

10:00 AM EDT

Hearing: House Science, Space, and Technology Committee

Topic: Event Horizon Telescope

Location: 2318 Rayburn House Office Building

2:00 PM EDT

Hearing: House Science, Space, and Technology Committee

Topic: U.S. Weather Enterprise

Location: 2318 Rayburn House Office Building

Time TBD

Hearing: National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service

Topic: Military Service

Location: Partnership for Public Service, 1100 New York Avenue NW, Suite
200 East

Friday, May 17

8:30 AM EDT

Forum: The National Defense Industrial Association, the Mitchell Institute for
Aerospace Studies, the Air Force Association and the Reserve Officers
Association

Topic: Defense

Location: Capitol Hill Club, 300 First St. SE

Have a great weekend!