

From: Craig Quigley <cquigley@hrmffa.org>
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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.

Craig R. Quigley
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
Executive Director
Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance
757-644-6324 (Office)
757-419-1164 (Mobile)



EXECUTIVE INSIGHT BRIEF | MARCH 1, 2019

TOP STORIES

Trump-Kim Summit

President Trump arrived in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, eager to make more progress in this highly anticipated meeting with North Korea's dictator, Kim Jong Un, than what came to be of the preliminary talks that were held in Singapore last summer.

However, the [nuclear summit](#) between Trump and Kim buckled Thursday, after the two sides failed to reach an agreement due to a standoff over U.S. sanctions—a disheartening [end](#) to high-stakes meetings meant to disarm a global nuclear threat.

Trump, in a news conference after the summit abruptly shut down early, placed blame for the [breakdown](#) on the DPRK's insistence for lifting all U.S. sanctions on the communist nation—without the country committing to eliminate its nuclear arsenal. By conceding to this demand, America would stand to lose its “trump” card, the imposed sanctions--while standing to gain little.

The parents of [Otto Warmbier](#), the American college student who died in 2017 after being returned from his detention in North Korea, spoke out on Friday following President Trump's apparent defense of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un over their son's death.

“We have been respectful during this summit process,” Fred and Cindy

Warmbier said in a statement to NBC News. “Now we must speak out.”

“Kim and his evil regime are responsible for the death of our son Otto. Kim and his evil regime are responsible for unimaginable cruelty and inhumanity. No excuses or lavish praise can change that,” they said.

Cohen Hearing

This past week Michael Cohen testified before congress, offering a damning depiction of Donald Trump. The president’s former lawyer on Wednesday cast him as a racist and a con man who used his inner circle to cover up politically damaging allegations about sex, and who lied throughout the 2016 election campaign about his business interests in Russia.

Michael Cohen, who previously pleaded guilty to lying to Congress, told lawmakers that Trump had advance knowledge and embraced the news that emails damaging to Hillary Clinton would be released during the campaign.

However, he also said he had no “direct evidence” that Trump or his aides colluded with Russia to get him elected, the primary question of special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation. [Read more.](#)

Military Technology Updates

Evasive Satellites?

As China and Russia move to weaponize space, the U.S. military is working to give its constellations a “fighting chance.” In the event of a shootout in space, the Defense Department is working to create satellite constellations that can

dodge missiles or even satellite-based weapons, according to U.S. Air Force officials.

This news comes on the heels of a newly released [DIA report](#) warning that China and Russia are developing space-based lasers and other weapons that could potentially cause malfunctions or even destroy American satellites. [Read the full story here.](#)

Boeing Wingman Drone

Boeing introduced its unmanned Airpower Teaming System at the Australian International Airshow at Avalon on Wednesday. The concept is designed to perform the role of a loyal [wingman](#) to manned platforms and is being developed in partnership with the Royal Australian Air Force. A prototype is expected to fly in 2020.

Boeing says it will be 38 feet long, about two-thirds as long as the F/A-18 Super Hornet fighter, with a range of 2,000 nautical miles (2,301 miles.) Other details such as onboard propulsion, avionics and sensors are unknown. *Defense News*, quoting Boeing, claims the aircraft will be capable of “fighter-like” performance.

The new aircraft will have the primary mission set of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and Boeing claims it can be rapidly reconfigured to suit itself to the mission at hand. It is unknown whether or not the aircraft could eventually carry weapons and if Boeing Australia is planning for such an eventuality. [Loyal Wingman](#) will be capable of flying semi-autonomously and also being controlled either from a nearby aircraft or a ground control station.

Robots to Dismantle Aging Rockets

The U.S. Army is using a team of nine [robots](#) developed by a nuclear weapons lab to dismantle aging artillery rockets. The robots accomplish the job without endangering humans in the potentially hazardous process. In operation since May 2018, the team has already processed 700,000 of the small, baseball-sized submunitions, hundreds of which are encased in a typical rocket warhead.

The robots themselves are standard commercial models that have been modified for their particular tasks. This involves going through [nine steps](#) where the warheads are cut into their separate foam-packed sections, then moved on to the next steps or cells, where the grenades are removed from the foam. After that, each grenade is defused, rendering it harmless. To do this, the robots need to be able to move and rotate the packs and munitions precisely.

High Tensions

Pakistan's Civil Aviation Authority on Wednesday said it had closed the country's airspace to all commercial flights after the military said it [shot down](#) two Indian jets amid mounting tensions between the two nuclear rivals. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that the Indian pilot, whose jet was downed during a dogfight between Pakistani and Indian warplanes on Wednesday, would be released Friday as a "gesture for peace."

Despite the good will gesture, inflated [tensions](#) in the region continued Thursday. Indian Army Major General Surinder Singh Bahal told a joint news conference of India's Army, Navy and Air Force in New Delhi on Thursday that despite Pakistan's promise, India remains on "high alert."

Pakistan said four civilians were killed by Indian fire across the Line of Control, which separates Indian-controlled Kashmir from Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. India's army accused Pakistan of initiating the exchange of fire on Thursday.

As tensions have been enflamed this past week, since June, India has been building more than 14,000 bunkers suitable for families living along its border with Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir state, hoping to keep them safe near their homes instead of evacuating them as artillery shells scream over. [Read more about that here.](#)

A regional conflict is worrisome enough, but climate scientists warn that if either country launches just a portion of its nuclear arsenal, the situation might escalate into a global environmental and humanitarian catastrophe. The fact that these two rival countries both possess nuclear weapons has not been lost on the rest of the world.

One Bold Broadcast

Russian [state television](#) has listed U.S. military facilities that Moscow would target in the event of a nuclear strike, and said that a hypersonic missile Russia is developing would be able to hit them in less than five minutes.

With [tensions](#) rising over Russian fears that the United States might deploy intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe as a Cold War-era arms-control treaty unravels, Putin has said Russia would be forced to respond by placing hypersonic nuclear missiles on submarines near U.S. waters.

The United States says it has [no immediate plans](#) to deploy such missiles in

Europe and has dismissed Putin's warnings as disingenuous propaganda. It does not currently have ground-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles that it could place in Europe.

Air Force Gen. John Hyten, who leads U.S. Strategic Command, testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday. He said that while Russia isn't technically in violation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, also called New START, he says that Russia is building new nuclear weapons that should be included, but aren't. That's a "concern" and he has little hope of the situation turning around by 2021 when the treaty expires. Read why a top nuke General says Russia is exploiting gaps in a key arms-control treaty [here](#).

Quick Hits

Navy's New Threads

The Navy is a step closer to issuing [new lightweight flame-resistant coveralls](#) to sailors on ships, replacing the unpopular, heavier version currently worn in the fleet. One hundred sailors and officers will test the two-piece flame-resistant organizational clothing later this year, officials announced Monday. The uniform has a similar design to the Type III working uniform worn now, but the fabric is not as heavy.

Backed by [popular demand](#), the Navy will be switching the colors back to traditional ones, getting away from the apparently unpopular woodland camouflage they currently wear. Those in grades E-6 and below favored dark blue fabric because it better hid the smears and smudges hard-working sailors pick up on board a ship. But they didn't want it to look like the Coast Guard's blue uniform—so it's darker than the almost royal blue worn by the USCG.

Chiefs and Officers will be in khaki.

Gulf War Veterans' Memorial

The dedication of a first-of-its kind national [memorial](#) to veterans of the First Gulf War Tuesday in Washington, D.C. drew dignitaries including former Vice President Dick Cheney, who oversaw Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield in his role as defense secretary.

In his remarks at the [ceremony](#), Cheney, 78, said the site on the National Mall, off Constitution Avenue and by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, is a fitting tribute to veterans of the war, who were "welcomed home with the gratitude and respect they earned," in contrast to Vietnam veterans.

Not So Fast Buddy

The foreign minister of Iran, Mohammad Javad Zarif, [resigned](#) Monday without explanation in a brief message on Instagram.

His resignation however, was blocked by the Iranian president and has many speculating whether or not this was simply a ploy at political brinkmanship.

A precipitous decline in Iran's stock exchange, rumors of a walkout within the ranks of the Foreign Ministry, and an impromptu public defense from Iran's president underscored that the theocracy could ill afford a public rupture within the regime at a time of epic U.S. economic pressure. Zarif's letter of resignation was rejected by President Hassan Rouhani on Wednesday. And that may have been Zarif's goal all along. [Read full story here.](#)

This Day in History

1642: York, Maine becomes the first *incorporated* American city.

1692: The [Salem](#) Witch-Hunt begins as Sarah Goode, Sarah Osborne and Tituba are arrested for the supposed practice of witchcraft in Salem, Mass.

1776: French minister Charles Gravier advises his Spanish counterpart to support the American rebels against the English.

1780: Pennsylvania becomes the first U.S. state to [abolish](#) slavery.

1803: Ohio becomes the 17th [state](#) to join the Union.

1815: Napoleon lands at Cannes, France, [returning](#) from exile on Elba, with a force of 1,500 men and marches on Paris.

1871: German troops enter Paris, during the [Franco-Prussian](#) War.

1875: Congress passes the [Civil Rights Act of 1875](#), which is invalidated by the Supreme Court in 1883.

1912: Albert Berry completes the [first in-flight parachute jump](#), from a Benoist plane over Kinlock Field in St. Louis, Missouri.

1932: The Lindbergh baby is [kidnapped](#) from the Lindbergh home near Princeton, New Jersey.

1941: [Bulgaria](#) joins the Axis as the Nazis occupy Sofia.

1942: Japanese troops land on [Java](#) in the Pacific after defeating ABDA forces in the Battle of the Java Sea several days earlier.

1961: The Peace Corps is [established](#).

1968: Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara is replaced by Clark Clifford.

1969: Mickey Mantle announces his retirement from baseball.

1974: A grand jury indicts seven of President Nixon's aides for the conspiracy on Watergate.

See more at [history.net](#)

Look Ahead

Monday, March 4

11:00 AM EST

Meeting: State Department

Topic: Historical Diplomatic Documentation

State Department, 2300 E St. NW, SA-4D Conference Room

12:00 PM EST

Discussion: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Topic: Foreign Affairs

CEIP, 1779 Massachusetts Avenue NW

12:00 PM EST

Discussion: The George Washington University Elliott School of International
Affairs

Topic: Foreign Affairs

GWU Elliott School, 1957 E St. NW, Lindner Family Commons, Room 602

1:30 PM EST

Discussion: Center for a New American Security
1152 15th St., NW, Suite 950

2:15 PM EST

Discussion: The Hudson Institute

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Hudson Institute, 1201 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 400

3:00 PM EST

Discussion: The United States Institute of Peace

Topic: Foreign Affairs

USIP, 2301 Constitution Avenue NW

Tuesday, March 5

7:00 AM EST

Discussion: The Association of the United States Army

Topic: Defense

AUSA, 2425 Wilson Boulevard, Sullivan Conference and Event Center,
Arlington, Va.

7:30 AM EST

Discussion: The George Washington University Elliott School of International
Affairs

Topic: Foreign Affairs

GWU Elliott School, 1957 E St. NW, Room B12

8:00 AM EST

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department; Health Services Research and
Development Service; Scientific Merit Review Board

Topic: Veterans Health Services Research

9:00 AM EST

Meeting: Energy Department

Topic: Energy Policies

DOE, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Room 8E-089

9:00 AM EST

Symposium: The National Defense Industrial Association

Topic: Defense

Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, 11100 Johns Hopkins
Road, Laurel, Md.

9:30 AM EST

Hearing: Senate Armed Services Committee

Topic: U.S. European Command/U.S. Transportation Command

Senate Armed Services Committee

G-50 Dirksen Senate Office Building

10:00 AM EST

Discussion: Information Technology & Innovation Foundation

Topic: Energy

1101 K Street NW Suite 610A

10:00 AM EST

Hearing: Senate Environment and Public Works Committee

Topic: Role of States in Protecting Air Quality

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Clean Air and Nuclear

Safety Subcommittee

406 Dirksen Senate Office Building

10:00 AM EST

Meeting: Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Topic: International Nuclear Regulatory Activities

NRC, 11555 Rockville Pike, Commissioners' Conference Room, Rockville, Md.

11:00 AM EST

News Conference: Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

Topic: Foreign Affairs

418 Russell Senate Office Building

1:00 PM EST

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department

Topic: Treating Veterans Mental Health Conditions

2:30 PM EST

Briefing: Senate Armed Services Committee

Topic: U.S. European Command/U.S. Transportation Command

Senate Armed Services Committee

SVC-217 U.S. Capitol

2:30 PM EST

Hearing: Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

Topic: Cuffari Nomination

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

342 Dirksen Senate Office Building

6:00 PM EST

Discussion: The Johns Hopkins University Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced

International Studies

Topic: Foreign Affairs

SAIS, Nitze Building, 1740 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Kenney Herter

Auditorium

Wednesday, March 6

12:00 AM EST

Hearing: House Homeland Security Committee

House Homeland Security Committee

8:00 AM EST

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department; Health Services Research and

Development Service; Scientific Merit Review Board

Topic: Veterans Health Services Research

8:55 AM EST

Meeting: Defense Department; Office of the Secretary; Defense Undersecretary

for Personnel and Readiness

Topic: Reserve Forces Policy

The Pentagon, Room 3E863

9:00 AM EST

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department

Topic: Veterans Research

1100 First St. NE, Room 104

9:00 AM EST

Symposium: The National Defense Industrial Association

Topic: Defense

Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, 11100 Johns Hopkins
Road, Laurel, Md.

9:30 AM EST

Discussion: The Brookings Institution Center for East Asia Policy Studies

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Falk Auditorium

9:30 AM EST

Hearing: Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

Topic: Federal Program Waste-Fraud-Mismanagement

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

342 Dirksen Senate Office Building

10:00 AM EST

Discussion: The Henry L. Stimson Center and the International Crisis Group

Topic: Foreign Affairs
Stimson Center, 1211 Connecticut Avenue NW, Eighth Floor

10:00 AM EST
Hearing: House Homeland Security Committee
Topic: Border Security
House Homeland Security Committee
310 Cannon House Office Building

10:00 AM EST
Hearing: Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and House Veterans' Affairs
Committee

Topic: Veterans of Foreign Wars Legislative Presentation

House Veterans' Affairs Committee | Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee
G-50 Dirksen Senate Office Building

12:00 PM EST
News Conference: Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
Topic: Foreign Affairs
2060 Rayburn House Office Building

1:00 PM EST
Meeting: Small Business Administration
Topic: Service-disabled Veteran-owned Small Businesses
SBA, 409 Third St. SW, Eisenhower Conference Room B

Thursday, March 7

8:00 AM EST

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department; Health Services Research and
Development Service; Scientific Merit Review Board
Topic: Veterans Health Services Research

9:00 AM EST

Meeting: Small Business Administration
Topic: Veteran-owned Small Businesses
SBA, 409 Third St. SW, Eisenhower Conference Room B

12:00 PM EST

Discussion: The Heritage Foundation
Topic: Foreign Affairs
Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Lehrman Auditorium

2:00 PM EST

Hearing: Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and House Veterans' Affairs
Committee
Topic: Veteran Service Organizations Legislative Presentation
Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee | House Veterans' Affairs Committee
G-50 Dirksen Senate Office Building

8:00 PM EST

Briefing: The Global Campaign on Military Spending
Topic: Budget

Friday, March 8

8:00 AM EST

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department; Health Services Research and
Development Service; Scientific Merit Review Board

Topic: Veterans Health Services Research

1:00 PM EST

Meeting: Federal Communications Commission

Topic: Communications Security/Reliability

FCC, 445 12th St. SW, Room TW-C305

Have a great weekend!