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To: Craig Quigley
Subject: EXECUTIVE INSIGHT BRIEF | MAY 31, 2019

Ladies & Gentlemen, below please find this week's edition of *Executive Insight Brief* from The Roosevelt Group. Please keep the families of the victims of the terrible Virginia Beach shootings in your thoughts and prayers during this most difficult time.

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**EXECUTIVE INSIGHT BRIEF | MAY 31, 2019
TOP STORIES**

Iran

Last week it was reported that the U.S. was sending anywhere from [5,000 to 10,000 additional troops](#) to the Middle East as a result of increased aggression and the hints of potential attacks on Americans already stationed there, at the hands of Iranian-backed forces. Those reports appear to be exaggerated, as now, only 900 additional troops will be deployed (plus 600 already on their

way).

U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton, in a briefing with reporters in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday, said the U.S. is “very concerned” that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps would use allied Shiite militia groups in Iraq to attack U.S. targets such as the American Embassy in Baghdad. Iran also has surrogates in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and the Gaza Strip.

While speaking at the Brookings Institution on Wednesday, Joint Chiefs Chairman Joseph Dunford stated that U.S. intelligence has seen a constant stream of Iranian threats starting to come together to appear to be a [campaign](#). "In the last week of April, I began to see more clearly things I'd been picking up over a period of months....It was multiple threat streams that were, perhaps, all coming together in time," he said.

"What's not new is threat streams [from Iran]...What was new was a pattern of threat streams" extending from Yemen through the Gulf region and into Iraq. "Something that looked more like a campaign than an individual threat" raised the alarm, Dunford said. "It was a "more widespread, almost campaign-like perspective for the Iranians." [Click here for full story](#).

Military Technology Updates

Trump and EMALS

EMALS, or the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, is a new technology currently being deployed on the state-of-the art Ford class carriers. The system is designed to put less stress on aircraft by using electromagnetic catapults and is meant to be more reliable and accurate, while requiring less maintenance

than the older steam-based system.

However, it appears President Trump has a [vendetta](#) against the new technology. He claims after speaking with sailors, there are many issues with the new system. Steam has worked "perfectly" for 65 years. No one knows how the newer technology will hold up in combat, Trump said. He also stated he would issue an order to return to steam.

The issue: the next two Ford-class carriers are already being built with electromagnetic catapults, at costs of \$11-13 billion per ship. It could be 15 years before the Navy would even be able to launch a new steam-equipped carrier—even if Congress were to approve the change. It is important to note that these ships were designed to be completely reliant on [electromagnetic technology](#), which will power even more aspects of the ship including future laser weapons systems and more. To switch back to steam would require a complete redesign of the ship.

Speaking of the USS Ford

Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer appears to be in the hot seat. This comes as a result of the Navy pushing back the date for the USS Gerald Ford, again. The Ford is the first of a new class of aircraft carrier, which is already billions over budget and months overdue. Spencer is in a perilous situation because he previously told the President that if the weapons elevators were not fixed by the time the ship leaves dock, the president can fire him.

Only two of the eleven weapons elevators, which are powered by magnets instead of cables, are currently functional. They can haul thousands of pounds of munitions to the deck far faster than the older version on the Nimitz-class carriers. The Nimitz-class elevators move 10,500 pounds at 100 feet per

minute. The Ford class elevators lift 20,000 pounds of munitions at a rate of 150 feet per minute. [Read the full story here.](#)

New Sub Class

A U.S. shipyard has cut first steel for the first in a new class of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines. Huntington Ingalls Industries has begun construction of USS Columbia, lead ship of the class set to enter service in 2031. The Columbia class is to phase out the Ohio class subs, built in the late 80s and 90s.

The Columbias will each have 16 launch tubes for Trident D-5 missiles, eight less than the Ohio-class was originally built with. Four tubes per ship were permanently sealed in order to comply with arms control agreements. The ships will have 42-year service lives, meaning many will serve to 2070 and beyond, and will not require refueling of the nuclear reactor for the life of the boat. [Read more here.](#)

Railgun Progress

The U.S. Navy is finally planning to test the new [electromagnetic railgun](#) it has been developing for more than a decade at a cost of around \$500 million. Unlike conventional guns, a railgun uses electromagnetic energy rather than explosive charges to fire rounds farther and at six or seven times the speed of sound. China has reportedly tested their railgun at sea in January.

Yet, not all experts seem to think this will actually turn out to be a very useful weapons system. According to a *Business Insider* [article](#) from January, Bryan Clark, with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments and a former naval officer, several factors vitiate the argument for the railgun. For one thing, the rounds lack the destructive power of missiles, making them less effective in

strike missions. Missiles are also able to chase down targets. Two, its limited rate of fire means it has little use for air and missile defense against fast-moving targets.

Furthermore, maintenance and electricity generation are huge problems. The gun requires an enormous amount of power to fire and the sheer force of firing hypervelocity projectiles tends to wear out the barrel quickly. The barrel would likely need to be replaced after every few dozen shots, a problem that likely limits the gun to one short battle.

Clark does note, however, the hypervelocity projectile that has been developed at the hands of this program certainly is a momentous step in the right direction.

[Read more here.](#)

Quick Hits

U.S.-Estonia Agreement

On Tuesday of last week, Estonia signed a new defense cooperation agreement with the United States—becoming the third and final Baltic nation to reach an agreement with the Pentagon on future defense planning. This agreement will include cooperation in the areas of training, exercises, cyber defense, defense-related aid, and more. [Click here for full story.](#)

Hill AFB Deployment

F-35As from Hill Air Force Base in Utah have just [deployed](#) to Aviano Air Base in Italy. A statement released by Hill officials said the squadron arrived Friday and will participate in exercises and conduct training with other Europe-based aircraft during a deployment expected to last several weeks.

Though, at 7:45am on Wednesday, the jets were forced to make an [unplanned](#) landing at the Burlington International Airport due to weather and refueling issues.

Saudi Arms Deal

The Trump administration has declared an emergency to bypass Congress and expedite billions of dollars in arms sales to various countries—including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates—citing the need to deter what it called "the malign influence" of Iran throughout the Middle East.

This comes following a [decision](#) by Congress to block \$2 Billion in arms sales to Saudi Arabia as a result of the Khashoggi killing and the Saudi war in Yemen.

Section 36 of the Arms Control Act allows the White House to forgo the traditional 30-day congressional notification period for arms sales if the President declares an emergency, thereby preventing Congress from being able to put a hold on any arms deals. Congress has condemned this action, although it has been used by 4 other administrations since 1979. [Read more here.](#)

This Day in History

1859

Big Ben goes into [operation](#) in London.

1862

At the Battle of Fair Oaks or Seven Pines, Union General George B. McClellan [defeats](#) Confederates outside of Richmond.

1889

Johnstown, Pennsylvania is destroyed by a [massive flood](#).

1900

U.S. troops arrive in Peking to help put down the [Boxer Rebellion](#).

1902

The [Boer War](#) ends with the Treaty of Vereeniging.

1909

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) holds its first conference.

1913

The [17th amendment](#) to the U.S. Constitution, providing for direct election of senators, is ratified.

1915

A German zeppelin makes an air raid on London.

1916

The British Grand Fleet and the German High Seas fleet slug it out in the [Battle of Jutland](#).

1928

The first flight over the Pacific takes off from Oakland.

1941

Vastly outnumbered, Nazi Fallschirmjäger forces [conquer](#) Crete.

1962

Former SS commander [Adolf Eichmann](#) is hanged near Tel Aviv, Israel, after being hunted down by the Mossad and captured in Argentina.

1965

Operation Rolling Thunder [continues](#).

1969

John Lennon and Yoko Ono record "Give Peace a Chance."

1974

Israel and Syria sign an [agreement](#) on the Golan Heights.

1988

President Ronald Reagan arrives in Moscow, the first American president to do so in 14 years.

1996

Netanyahu elected prime minister of Israel.

See more at [Historynet.com](#) and [History.com](#)

Look Ahead

Monday, June 3

10:00 AM EDT

Discussion: The Brookings Institution

Topic: Foreign Affairs

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

10:00 AM EDT

Event: The Housing and Urban Affairs Department and the National
Association of Homebuilders

Topic: Social Issues

Location: National Mall between Fourth and Seventh Streets and Jefferson
Drive and Madison Avenue

12:30 PM EDT

Forum: The National Defense Industrial Association

Topic: Defense

Location: Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center, 2371 Carl D. Silver
Parkway, Fredericksburg, Va.

Tuesday, June 4

7:45 AM EDT

Summit: The Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association

Topic: Defense

Location: National Press Club, 14th and F Streets NW

8:00 AM EDT

Forum: The National Defense Industrial Association

Topic: Defense

Location: Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center, 2371 Carl D. Silver
Parkway, Fredericksburg, Va.

8:00 AM EDT

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

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Location: Capitol Hill Club, 300 First St. SE

8:30 AM EDT

Discussion: The Council on Foreign Relations

Topic: Defense

Location: CFR, 1777 F St. NW

10:00 AM EDT

Hearing: House Science, Space, and Technology Committee

Topic: Biodiversity Loss and its Causes

Location: 2318 Rayburn House Office Building

10:00 AM EDT

Hearing: House Veterans' Affairs Committee

Topic: VA Vocational Rehabilitation/Employment Programs.

Location: HVC-210 U.S. Capitol

10:00 AM EDT

Discussion: The Brookings Institution

Topic: Foreign Affairs

Location: Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Falk
Auditorium

11:00 AM EDT

Markup: House Armed Services Committee

Topic: National Defense Authorization Act

Location: 2118 Rayburn House Office Building

12:00 PM EDT

Markup: House Armed Services Committee

Topic: National Defense Authorization Act

Location: 2212 Rayburn House Office Building

1:00 PM EDT

Markup: House Armed Services Committee

Topic: National Defense Authorization Act

Location: 2118 Rayburn House Office Building

2:00 PM EDT

Hearing: House Veterans' Affairs Committee

Topic: Health Record Modernization

Location: HVC-210 U.S. Capitol

2:30 PM EDT

Hearing: Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

Topic: Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards

Location: 106 Dirksen Senate Office Building

2:30 PM EDT

Markup: House Armed Services Committee

Topic: National Defense Authorization Act

Location: 2212 Rayburn House Office Building

3:30 PM EDT

Markup: House Armed Services Committee

Topic: National Defense Authorization Act

Location: 2118 Rayburn House Office Building

Wednesday, June 5

7:30 AM EDT

Forum: The National Defense Industrial Association

Topic: Defense

Location: Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center, 2371 Carl D. Silver
Parkway, Fredericksburg, Va.

8:45 AM EDT

Conference: The American Bar Association

Topic: Transportation

Location: Baker & McKenzie LLP, 815 Connecticut Avenue NW

8:55 AM EDT

Meeting: Defense Department; office of the Secretary

Topic: Reserve Forces Briefings

Location: Room 3E863, The Pentagon

9:00 AM EDT

Hearing: House Science, Space, and Technology Committee

Topic: Ocean Exploration

Location: 2318 Rayburn House Office Building

9:00 AM EDT

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department

Topic: Veterans Health Research

Location: Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Room 730

9:00 AM EDT

Markup: House Armed Services Committee

Topic: National Defense Authorization Act

Location: 2212 Rayburn House Office Building

10:00 AM EDT

Markup: House Armed Services Committee

Topic: National Defense Authorization Act

Location: 2118 Rayburn House Office Building

10:15 AM EDT

Hearing: Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Topic: Tiananmen Square 30 Years Later

Location: 419 Dirksen Senate Office Building

1:00 PM EDT

Meeting: Small Business Administration

Topic: SBA Veterans Business Development
Location: SBA, 409 Third St. SW, Eisenhower Conference Room B

Thursday, June 6

7:30 AM EDT

Meeting: Defense Department; Office of the Secretary
Topic: National Intelligence University Issues
Location: DIA, 7400 Pentagon

7:30 AM EDT

Forum: The National Defense Industrial Association
Topic: Defense
Location: Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center, 2371 Carl D. Silver
Parkway, Fredericksburg, Va.

8:30 AM EDT

Meeting: National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Topic: NASA GPS Satellite System Updates
Location: The Westin Hotel, Alexandria Old Town, 400 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Va.

8:30 AM EDT

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department
Topic: Veterans Compensation Benefits
Location: AMO, 1722 Eye St. NW, Third Floor Training Complex

9:00 AM EDT

Conference: The American Foreign Policy Council; the University of Texas at Austin Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs; and the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law
Topic: Foreign Affairs
Location: 216 Hart Senate Office Building

9:00 AM EDT

Discussion: The Center for Strategic and International Studies
Topic: Foreign Affairs
Location: CSIS, 1616 Rhode Island Avenue NW

9:00 AM EDT

Meeting: Small Business Administration
Topic: SBA Veteran-Owned Business Updates and Objectives
Location: SBA, 409 Third St. SW, Eisenhower Conference Room B

9:30 AM EDT

Discussion: The Air Force Association's Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Power
Topic: Defense
Location: AFA, 1501 Lee Highway, Fourth Floor Boardroom, Arlington, Va.

Friday, June 7

7:30 AM EDT

Meeting: Defense Department; Office of the Secretary
Topic: National Intelligence University Issues
Location: DIA, 7400 Pentagon

8:30 AM EDT

Meeting: Veterans Affairs Department

Topic: Veterans Compensation Benefits

Location: AMO, 1722 Eye St. NW, Third Floor Training Complex

9:00 AM EDT

Meeting: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Topic: NASA GPS Satellite System Updates

Location: The Westin Hotel, Alexandria Old Town, 400 Courthouse Square,
Alexandria, Va.

9:30 AM EDT

Meeting: U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission

Topic: Chinese Defense and Technology Modernization

Location: TBA

Next Thursday marks the 75th anniversary of [Operation Overlord](#), the largest amphibious invasion in history—with roughly 7,000 ships, 2,400 aircraft, 870 gliders delivering paratroopers, and more than 156,000 Allied troops storming the heavily fortified beaches of Normandy, part of Hitler’s Atlantic Wall. D-Day, as it became known, forever changed the course of history and was a critical turning point in the war. The battle for Normandy would drag on until August, as once inland, the Allies had to deal with Nazi troops and armor, deeply entrenched in the ancient [hedgerows](#) of the French bocage.