Weekly Report

National Security Division

Week ending 20 March 2020

National Security Strategy:

1. **Protect the homeland, the American people, and the American way of life**
2. **Promote American prosperity**
3. **Preserve peace through strength**
4. **Advance American influence**

Click here to read more.

National Defense Strategy:

1. **Rebuilding military readiness as we build a more lethal Joint Force**
2. **Strengthening alliances as we attract new partners**
3. **Reforming the Department's business practices for greater performance and affordability**

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U.S. Navy Hospital Ships To Deploy To New York, West Coast

A pair of U.S. Navy hospital ships will be deployed to New York and on the West Coast, where medical workers are anxiously expecting a major influx of patients as the coronavirus spreads.

He said the ship's presence will help take pressure off facilities and staff in New York state, which is expecting to need more than 50,000 new hospital beds and more than 30,000 new intensive care units as the coronavirus spreads. New York has reported more than 2,300 confirmed cases across the state and expects that number to spike significantly in the coming days.

"The Comfort and Mercy will not deploy to treat COVID patients, but will be made available to assist with treatment of other patients in coastal locations where local health professionals are necessarily focused on a large number of COVID cases."

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Head Of National Guard Says Tens Of Thousands Could Be Called Up

"This could quickly blossom," Gen. Joseph Lengyel told Pentagon reporters Thursday.

At the moment, just over 2,000 members of the National Guard are assisting governors in 27 states, doing things such as helping with testing and transportation. Lengyel said that number could double by this weekend.

On Thursday, President Trump appeared to agree. At a meeting with a group of governors, Gov. Brian Kemp of Georgia told Trump to "leave the directives for the National Guard with the governors."

"That's done. I like it," Trump responded.

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As The War On Terror Winds Down, The Pentagon Cuts Social Science

The fragile peace deal taking shape in Afghanistan could spell the end of an era for the U.S. military, one marked by efforts at nation-building and winning hearts and minds.

It appears that the Pentagon is also intent on ending a research program from that era — to fund social science for the military.

"The idea that you would need to eliminate a small program because you need to buy some small fraction of a new missile is short-sighted," says Joshua Pollack, a scholar at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Washington, D.C. "It's penny wise and pound foolish."

"Counterinsurgency theory requires that you have some knowledge of the culture that you're trying to occupy or control in some way," says David Price, a professor of anthropology at St. Martin's University in Washington State. Price, who studies the history of social science's involvement with the defense establishment, describes that relationship as "mixed" over the years. During World War II, anthropologists did everything from translation to espionage. Anthropologists also participated in counterinsurgency operations in Vietnam, generating a great deal of controversy within the field.

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U.S. Launches Retaliatory Airstrikes In Iraq After Missile Attack

The United States on Thursday evening launched a series of airstrikes in Iraq against an Iranian-backed militia group suspected of firing an earlier rocket attack that killed and wounded American and British troops.

"You don't get to shoot at our bases and kill and wound Americans and get away with it," Secretary of Defense Mark Esper said.

The strikes were "defensive, proportional and in direct response to the threat posed by Iranian-backed Shia militia groups," the statement added.

The latest round of shellings raise concerns of renewed tensions between the two nations, which became increasingly strained after the Trump administration withdrew from a landmark nuclear agreement with Tehran and reinstituted debilitating sanctions.

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POW/MIA Update

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. Click on the links to read more:

News Releases

March 11, 2020

Marine Accounted For From World War II (Cole, D.)

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Whitson, A.)

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Roach, R.)

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Blaylock, C.)

Soldier Accounted For From Korean War (Walker, K.)

March 12, 2020

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Chess, P.)

Soldier Accounted For From World War II (McCurley, B.)

March 16, 2020

Marine Accounted for from World War II (Morris, J.)

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Jacobson, H.)

March 18, 2020

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Tranbarger, O.)

Pilot Accounted For From World War II (Johnson, G.)

March 19, 2020

Pilot Accounted For From World War II (Roth, E.)

Staff Activity:

Wednesday, staff participated in a conference call with senior defense officials from the Defense Health Agency to discuss progress on the integration of the new agency and the changes being implemented to military treatment facilities and the impacts on servicemembers and their families.

Thursday, staff held a conference call with Booz Allen Hamilton's Real Warrior Campaign staff to discuss the potential for future collaboration on a cross-platform social media agreement.

Friday, staff participated in a conference call with the Department of the Army to discuss an array of topics. An update from this meeting will be included in next week's weekly report.

Rhonda Powell, Director, National Security Division