

A. Lincoln's

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TUESDAY MAY 7, 2019

IN GOD WE TRUST

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Ready On Arrival: U.S. Sends ABESG to Persian Gulf

USS Abraham Lincoln transits the Mediterranean Sea. Photo by MC3 Jeff Sherman.

Story by Kate Sullivan, Barbara Starr and Brad Lendon, CNN

The United States is deploying the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group and a bomber task force to the Middle East in response to a “number of troubling and escalatory indications and warnings” from Iran, U.S. national security adviser John Bolton said Sunday.

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.

In a written statement released by the White House, Bolton said the U.S. was deploying the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group and a bomber task force 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.”

“The United States is not seeking war with the Iranian regime, but we are fully prepared to respond to any attack, whether by proxy, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or regular Iranian forces,” the statement continued.

Two U.S. officials told CNN that the very public statements are aimed at deterring Iran. There is no indication any action by Iran is imminent.

In comments made Sunday night, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the deployments have been in the works for “a little while.”

“We will hold the Iranians accountable for attacks on American interests. And the fact that ... if those actions take place, if they do by some third-party proxy, a Shiite militia group, the Houthis or Hezbollah, we will hold the Iranian leadership directly accountable for that,” said Pompeo.

The U.S. announcement comes on the heels several recent events that have increased U.S.-Iran tensions, said Nishank Motwani, a visiting fellow at the Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy in Australia.

Those include the U.S. designating Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary

Guard Corps, Tehran’s most powerful military institution, a terrorist organization, and Iran responding with the same designation for the U.S. military’s Central Command, which oversees the Middle East region; and the U.S. eliminating waivers for some countries to buy Iranian oil and avoid U.S. sanctions, Motwani said.

On the oil issue, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said two weeks ago that Iran would continue to sell its oil on world markets and the U.S. should not try to stop it.

“If the United States takes the crazy measure of trying to prevent us from doing that,” Zarif said, “then it should be prepared for the consequences.”

U.S. security officials at that time expressed concern that Tehran could respond asymmetrically by targeting U.S. facilities and personnel around the Middle East.

But Motwani said that would be a bad idea for Tehran.

“I don’t think it’s in Iran’s interest to escalate tensions. It would give the U.S. a reason to take on Iran,” he said.

And that might cause Iran to lose support its trying to maintain among European countries who have stuck to the Iran nuclear deal that U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned.

Zarif, the Iranian foreign minister, said two weeks ago that he believes some members of the Trump administration, but not Trump himself, and some U.S. allies seek a confrontation with Tehran.

Zarif pointed to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Bolton, the crown prince of the United Arab Emirates, Mohamed bin Zayed, and the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman -- dubbing them “the B Team.”

“The B Team is pushing U.S. policy toward a disaster,” Zarif said

“It is not a crisis yet, but it is a dangerous situation. Accidents, plotted accidents, are possible. I wouldn’t discount the B team plotting an accident anywhere in the region particularly as we get closer to the election,” Zarif said.

Motwani noted that Monday’s announcement of the U.S. carrier and bomber deployments came first from Bolton, who has pushed

a hardline policy toward Iran.

“The language is stronger, and part of it has to do with the hawkish stance of this administration,” Motwani said.

A U.S. official said acting Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan approved the deployments on Sunday because of “clear indications that Iranian and Iranian proxy forces are making preparations to possibly attack U.S. forces in the region (Middle East).”

However, it is routine for the Pentagon to move forces in and out of the Middle East region.

For instance, the U.S. Air Force pulled B-1 bombers from an airbase in Qatar in March after six-month deployment, according to the website of Dyess Air Force Base in Texas, to which the bombers returned.

And the U.S. Navy has been without an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf since early April, when the USS John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group departed to head to the Mediterranean for exercises with the Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, according to the U.S. Naval Institute’s Fleet and Marine Tracker.

But a future carrier movement to the Persian Gulf was likely, and the Lincoln’s move may just be that accelerated.

When the Lincoln and Stennis were in the Mediterranean, it was the first time two carriers operated in that body of water since 2016, and U.S. officials portrayed it at the time as a show of U.S. resolve toward Russia.

Also in the Lincoln strike group are the cruiser USS Leyte Gulf and the guided-missile destroyers USS Bainbridge, USS Mason and USS Nitze, according to a Navy release from early April, which also said a Spanish destroyer would be operating with the strike group for its entire deployment.

Other U.S. deployments in the region include the amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge and its escorts, which were in the Persian Gulf as of April 29, according to the USNI tracker.

And the Air Force has sent two squadrons of F-35A stealth fighters to the United Arab Emirates in the past month. In late April, those planes saw their first combat, striking ISIS targets in Iraq.

Two U.S. Warships Sail In South China Sea

Story by Idrees Ali, Reuters

The U.S. military said two of its warships sailed near islands claimed by China in the South China Sea on Monday, a move that could anger Beijing at a time of tense relations between the world’s two biggest economies.

The South China Sea is one of a growing number of flashpoints in the U.S.-China relationship, which also include a trade war, U.S. sanctions and Taiwan.

President Donald Trump dramatically increased pressure on China to reach a trade deal by announcing on Sunday he would hike U.S. tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods this week and target hundreds of billions more soon.

The U.S. guided-missile destroyers Preble and Chung Hoon traveled within 12 nautical miles of Gaven and Johnson Reefs in the Spratly Islands, a U.S. military spokesman said.

Commander Clay Doss, a spokesman for the Seventh Fleet, said that the “innocent passage” was “to challenge excessive maritime claims and preserve access to the waterways as governed by international law.”

The operation was first reported by Reuters.

The U.S. military has a long-standing position that its operations are carried out throughout the world, including in

areas claimed by allies, and that they are separate from political considerations.

The operation was the latest attempt to counter what Washington sees as Beijing’s efforts to limit freedom of navigation in the strategic waters, where Chinese, Japanese and some Southeast Asian navies operate.

China claims almost all of the strategic South China Sea and frequently lambastes the United States and its allies over naval operations near Chinese-occupied islands.

Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia and Taiwan have competing claims in the region.

China and the United States have repeatedly traded barbs in the past over what Washington says is Beijing’s militarization of the South China Sea by building military installations on artificial islands and reefs.

China defends its construction as necessary for self-defense and says it is the United States that is responsible for ratcheting up tensions in the region by sending warships and military planes close to islands Beijing claims.

Last month, China’s navy chief said freedom of navigation should not be used to infringe upon the rights of other countries.

Turkey: Not Bow to U.S. Sanctions Over S-400 Deal

Story from Reuters

Turkey will never bow to U.S. sanctions over its agreement to purchase Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile defense systems, Vice President Fuat Oktay said regarding a deal that has strained ties between the NATO allies.

Washington says the systems are not compatible with NATO equipment and may compromise its Lockheed Martin F-35 fighter jets. It has warned of possible U.S. sanctions if Ankara pushes on with the Russian deal.

Turkey, a prospective buyer and a partner in the production of the F-35s, has said the S-400s and jets would not impact each other and that it will not abandon its deal with Russia.

It has proposed forming a working group with Washington to assess the impact of the S-400s, but says it has not received a response yet.

“When Turkey signs an agreement, Turkey keeps its promise. We signed this agreement and certain payments were made,” Oktay said. “I don’t think the arguments and concerns here have a lot to lean on,” he said.

The United States has also offered to sell Turkey its rival Raytheon Co. Patriot defense systems, which Turkey’s Defence Minister Hulusi Akar said Ankara was still evaluating.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who will visit Turkey next week, told Turkey’s state-run Anadolu news agency on Sunday that decisions about defense procurement were up to individual countries.

CHANNEL LIST

- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 2 MUSIC CHANNEL | 6 AFN PRIME PACF | 11 MOVIES | 15 COMMAND INFO |
| 3 AFN PRIME ATLN | 7 SPECTRUM | 12 MOVIES | 16 MOVIES |
| 4 AFN NEWS | 8 AFN SPORTS 2 | 13 MOVIES | 17 GBS |
| 5 AFN SPORTS | 9 AFN MOVIE | 14 ILARTS | 19 ABE MAP |

EVENTS

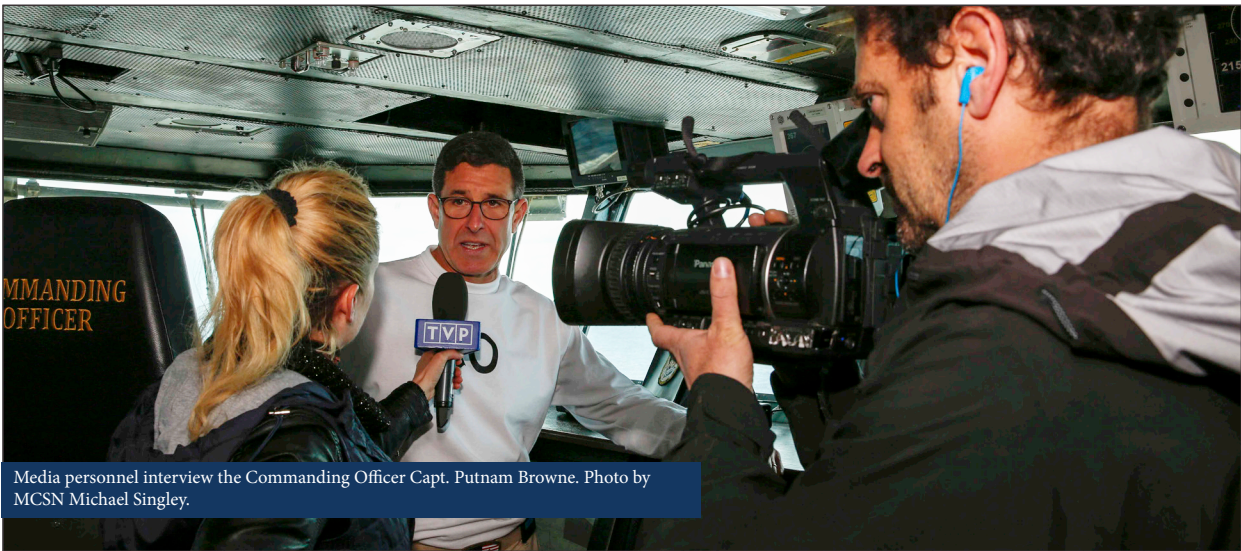
- MAY 9: FIFA TOURNAMENT
MAY 10: POETRY NIGHT
MAY 11: TEXAS HOLD’EM



“Shall Not Perish”



An F/A-18F Super Hornet from the "Jolly Rogers" of VFA-103 launches off the flight deck. Photo by MC3 Garrett LaBarge.



Media personnel interview the Commanding Officer Capt. Putnam Browne. Photo by MCSN Michael Singley.



An F/A-18F Super Hornet from the "Jolly Rogers" of VFA-103 launches from the flight deck. Photo by MC3 Garrett LaBarge.



Sailors exercise in the hangar bay. Photo by MC3 Jeff Sherman.

SAILOR OF THE DAY



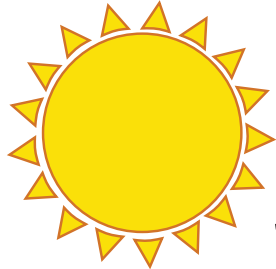
AM2 Edward Florescamacho
"Fist of the Fleet" of VFA-25
Puerto Rico
Onboard for 2 Years

As a workcenter collateral duty inspector, Aviation Structural Mechanic 2nd Class Edward Florescamacho's efforts were key in VFA-25's execution of a demanding and ever-changing flight schedule. He personally changed four sets of nose tires, nine main mounts, two servo-cylinders and 12 ten-trap inspections. Additionally, he was key in the design of the new tactical paint scheme on fist 400, which he spent over 100 hours handcrafting and applying the design to the aircraft. Florescamacho is a knowledgeable and highly skilled technician who always sets the example for his peers and subordinates alike, and is therefore deserving as Sailor of the Day.

Today in Naval History

- 1779** - The Continental Navy sloop Providence captures the British brig Diligent off Sandy Hook and is later acquired for service in the Continental Navy.
- 1942** - The Battle of Coral Sea resumes as Task Force seventeen intercepts the Japanese intending to invade Port Moresby, New Guinea marking the first naval battle where aircraft carriers engage each other while out of sight.
- 1945** - Marine Pfc. Albert E. Schwab scales a cliff, alone and under fire, to the enemy position skillfully uses his flame thrower to destroy two hostile gun emplacements. He is mortally wounded and posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.
- 1945** - Gen. Alfred Jodl, Chief of the German General Staff, signs the unconditional surrender of the Third Reich at Reims, France at Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF).

WEATHER REPORT



66°/58°

Clear Skies

Showers in the Morning

MOVIE SCHEDULE

CH 13	CH 12	CH 16
Hereditary (127m)	In Harm's Way (165m)	Jerry Maguire (139m)
Hidden Figures (126m)	Independence Day: Resurgence (120m)	Jurassic World (124m)
Hitman: Agent 47 (96m)	Inferno (120m)	Kong: Skull Island (118m)
Holmes and Watson (90m)	Insidious (103m)	Last Flag Flying (125m)
How to be a Latin Lover (115m)	IT (135m)	Live By Night (130m)
SECOND SHOWING		
Hereditary (127m)	In Harm's Way (165m)	Jerry Maguire (139m)
Hidden Figures (126m)	Independence Day: Resurgence (120m)	Jurassic World (124m)
Hitman: Agent 47 (96m)	Inferno (120m)	Kong: Skull Island (118m)
Holmes and Watson (90m)	Insidious (103m)	Last Flag Flying (125m)
How to be a Latin Lover (115m)	IT (135m)	Live By Night (130m)
Movies will begin playing at 0845		
*Movies will be paused as directed.		
Channel 15: The Boat Show		

GAMES

			7		4	
4			8	1	7	5
	8			9		
		5		3	9	
6			4	1		7
		4		2	8	6
1						5
				5	8	
	7		2		1	