

## WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

## Embattled White House lurches from crisis to crisis

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump personally appealed to FBI Director James Comey to abandon the bureau's investigation into National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, according to notes Comey wrote after the meeting.

The White House issued a furious denial after the notes were disclosed late Tuesday, near the end of a tumultuous day spent beating back potentially disastrous news reports from dawn to dusk.

The bombshell Comey news came as the beleaguered administration was still struggling mightily to explain Monday's revelation that the president had disclosed highly classified information to the Russian foreign minister and the country's ambassador to the United States.

Defending Trump's actions, officials played down the importance and secrecy of the information, which had been supplied by Israel under an intelligence-sharing agreement, and Trump himself said he had "an absolute right" as president to share "facts pertaining to terrorism" and airline safety with Russia. Yet U.S. allies and some members of Congress expressed concern bordering on alarm.

As for Comey, whom Trump fired last week, the FBI director wrote in a memo after a February meeting at the White House that the new president had asked him to shut down the FBI's investigation of Flynn and his Russian contacts, said a person who had read the memo. The Flynn investigation was part of a broader probe into Russian interference in last year's presidential election.

## Trump lashes out at critics, 'naysayers,' unfair treatment

NEW LONDON, Conn. — President Donald Trump lashed out today at his "critics and naysayers" following more than a week of negative news coverage beginning with his sudden decision to fire James Comey as FBI director.

In an address to the newest group of U.S. Coast Guard officers, Trump urged the 195 graduates in the Class of 2017 to "put your head down and fight, fight, fight" when life presents them with challenges and adversity.

Trump's appearance at the academy came the day after reports that he had personally appealed to Comey to abandon the FBI's investigation into former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn. Trump fired Flynn earlier this year for misleading top White House officials about his contacts with Russian officials.

The White House has denied the latest report, which landed amid a furor over the president's recent Oval Office meeting with Russian diplomats in which Trump is said to have disclosed classified information. The White House has said it was "wholly appropriate" for Trump to share the information.

"Look at the way I've been treated lately, especially by the media," Trump said. "No politician in history, and I say this with great surety, has been treated worse or more unfairly. You can't let them get you down. You can't let the critics and the naysayers get in the way of your dreams."

"I guess that's why we won," he said, before continuing to offer the graduates his advice.

"Adversity makes you stronger. Don't give in, don't back down and never stop doing what you know is right," Trump said. "Nothing worth doing ever, ever, ever came easy and the more righteous your fight, the more opposition that you will face."

## US, Europe discuss new laptop ban on flights

BRUSSELS — U.S. and European officials will discuss today plans to broaden a U.S. ban on in-flight laptops and tablets to include planes from Europe.

The move would create logistical chaos on the world's busiest corridor of air travel — as many as 65 million people a year travel between Europe and North America on over 400 daily flights, many of them business travelers who rely on their electronics to work during the flight.

The ban would dwarf in size the current one, which was put in place in March and affects about 50 flights per day from 10 cities, mostly in the Middle East.

Airlines have said it is merely a matter of time before the ban is put in place, but the prospect has alarmed officials in the European Union, who want to know more about any new threats and the disruption such a move would create.

There is also the question of the relative safety of keeping in the cargo area a large number of electronics with lithium batteries, which have been known to catch fire.

## No more holding of phones under new law in Washington

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Texting or holding a phone to your ear is already against the law in Washington state, but soon Washington drivers will be prohibited from doing all the other stuff some do while driving or sitting in traffic: checking Facebook, reading emails or anything else that requires them to hold their electronic devices while behind the wheel.

The measure, signed by Gov. Jay Inslee on Tuesday in Tacoma, prohibits holding an electronic device — including phones, tablets and other electronic gadgets — while driving, including while in traffic or waiting for a traffic light to change.

Inslee vetoed a section that had the measure take effect in 2019. He said it was too important to wait for the provisions to take effect, so the law will now take effect in mid-July.

Under the measure, "the minimal use of a finger" to activate, deactivate, or initiate a function of a personal electronic device while driving will still be allowed.

## Voices of Iranians ahead of presidential election

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's presidential election is seen as a referendum on Hassan Rouhani's outreach to Western nations and the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, which lifted crippling international sanctions.

The average Iranian has yet to see benefits from the deal, making Rouhani vulnerable in his bid for another four-year term.

Many Iranians believe Friday's election will not bring any major change regardless of who wins. Reformist candidates and women were again excluded from the ballot by a clerical vetting committee. Of more than 1,600 hopefuls who registered to run, only six were allowed in the race. Ultimate power remains with the supreme leader, who is chosen by a clerical body.

Hard-liners are backing Ebrahim Raisi, considered close to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Authorities blocked a bid by former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a Holocaust-questioning hard-liner who had championed the country's disputed nuclear program.

Rouhani remains the favorite. Every Iranian president since 1981, when Khamenei himself took the presidency, has won re-election.



New Orleans Police Mounted Patrol stand by the Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard Confederate monument in City Park after moving the public back in New Orleans on Tuesday. Workers in New Orleans took down a Confederate monument to Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard early today.

Matthew Hinton  
The Advocate

## New Orleans takes down third Confederate-era monument

NEW ORLEANS — Workers in New Orleans took down a Confederate monument to Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard early today as onlookers watched from lawn chairs, while defiant statue supporters waved Confederate battle flags and opponents celebrated.

It was the third of four such monuments to come down under a plan proposed by Mayor Mitch Landrieu and approved by the City Council more than a year ago. As with two earlier removals, it happened under cover of darkness. Work began soon after sundown and news outlets showed the statue being lifted off its base shortly after 3 a.m.

The statue of Gen. Robert E. Lee will be the last to come down. The city already had taken one the Confederacy's only president and a memorial to a white rebellion against a biracial Reconstruction-era government in the city.

"Today we take another step in defining our City not by our past but by our bright future," New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu said in a news release. "While we must honor our history, we will not allow the Confederacy to be put on a pedestal in the heart of New Orleans."

Landrieu called for the monuments' removal in the lingering emotional aftermath of the 2015 massacre of nine black parishioners at a South Carolina church. The killer, Dylann Roof, was an avowed racist who brandished Confederate battle flags in photos, recharging the debate over whether Confederate emblems represent racism or an honorable heritage.

## Dubai firm dreams of harvesting icebergs for water

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — A Dubai firm's dream of towing icebergs from the Antarctic to the Arabian Peninsula could face some titanic obstacles.

Where many see the crumbling polar ice caps as a distressing sign of global warming, the National Advisor Bureau Limited sees it as a source of profit, and a way of offsetting the effects of climate change in the increasingly sweltering Gulf.

The firm has drawn up plans to harvest icebergs in the southern Indian Ocean and tow them 9,200 kilometers away to the Gulf, where they could be melted down for freshwater and marketed as a tourist attraction.

"The icebergs are just floating in the Indian Ocean. They are up for grabs to whoever can take them," managing director Abdullah al-Shehi told The Associated Press in his Dubai office. He hopes to begin harvesting them by 2019.

It is perhaps no surprise that the idea would originate in Dubai, which is already famous for its indoor ski slope, artificial islands and the world's tallest building. But the plan to harvest icebergs faces a wide array of legal, financial and logistical hurdles — and environmentalists are less than thrilled.

## Pvt. Manning set for release after seven years in prison

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Pvt. Chelsea Manning, the transgender soldier convicted of giving classified government materials to WikiLeaks, is due to be released from a Kansas military prison today after serving seven years of her 35-year sentence.

President Barack Obama granted Manning clemency in his final days in office in January. Though she's set to be released from Fort Leavenworth, Manning's lawyers and the Army have refused to say when and how she'll be freed due to potential security concerns.

Manning, who was known as Bradley Manning before transitioning in prison, was convicted in 2013 of 20 counts, including six Espionage Act violations, theft and computer fraud. She was acquitted of the most serious charge of aiding the enemy.

The Crescent, Oklahoma, native tweeted after being granted clemency that she plans to move to Maryland. Neither she nor her attorneys explained why, but she has an aunt who lives there.

Manning, a former intelligence analyst in Iraq, has acknowledged leaking the materials, which included battlefield video. She said she wanted to expose what she considered to be the U.S. military's disregard of the effects of war on civilians and that she released information that she didn't believe would harm the U.S.

## Georgia carries out first execution of the year

JACKSON, Ga. — Today, Georgia carried out its first execution this year, putting to death a man convicted of killing his 73-year-old neighbor 25 years ago.

J.W. Ledford's time of death was 1:17 a.m., after an injection of compounded barbiturate pentobarbital at the state prison in Jackson, Warden Eric Sellers told witnesses. Ledford, 45, was convicted of murder in the January 1992 stabbing death of Dr. Harry Johnston in Murray County, northwest Georgia.

Ledford smiled broadly as witnesses entered the execution viewing area. When given a chance to make a final statement, he appeared to quote from the movie "Cool Hand Luke."

"What we have here is a failure to communicate. Some men you just can't reach," he said, later adding, "I am not the failure. You are the failure to communicate."

"You can kiss my white trash ass," he added, continuing to smile.

## Tornadoes in Wisconsin, Oklahoma leave two dead

CHICAGO — Two people died and dozens were injured when tornadoes flattened a mobile home park in Wisconsin and a housing subdivision in Oklahoma during powerful spring storms that battered an area from the South Plains of Texas to the Great Lakes.

The storms hit late in the afternoon Tuesday and into the evening, leveling the Prairie Lake Estate Mobile Park near Chetek, Wisconsin, about 110 miles northeast of Minneapolis. When first responders arrived at the scene, they could hear the people crying for help in the rubble, Barron County Sheriff Chris Fitzgerald told KMSP-TV.

One person died at the mobile home park, the Wisconsin Emergency Operations Center said in a statement late Tuesday. More than 25 people were injured, the state said.

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## Q: Can you be allergic to a toothpaste?

**A:** Although not very common, yes this is possible. Usually, the allergy is related to one of the components in the toothpaste, most commonly a dye or flavoring agent. Several natural toothpaste products are available to try.



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## Q: How can I protect myself from ransomware?

**A:** 1. Avoid attachments from unknown sources.  
2. Install updates from Microsoft and other software publishers.  
3. Use two hard drives for backups. Only leave one plugged in at a time. Alternate them on a daily or weekly basis.  
4. Sign up for Carbonite online backup. It keeps a secure backup of your information on their servers.  
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## Q: My garden is infested with moles. How do I get rid of them?

**A:** You are in good company! Moles are best controlled with traps and baits. We can show you how they work. Castor oil in spray or pellet form is a very good deterrent. Smoke bombs are also available with varying degrees of effectiveness as are various breeds of canines. Since moles are primarily carnivores, they do the most damage to the roots of plants by undermining them as they dig. On the brighter side, moles do a lot of good in the garden by eating crane fly larvae and aerating the soil.



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