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Business leaders rebuke Trump

JOINT CHIEFS DECRY RACIAL BIGOTRY

Military brass' tweets on Charlottesville further isolate Trump.

By W.J. Hennigan and Noah Bierman

WASHINGTON — The nation's top military officers issued public statements condemning racial bigotry and extremism, a rare foray into domestic politics that indicated deep unease Wednesday in the Pentagon with President Trump's views on race and underscored his growing isolation.

The social media posts from the Joint Chiefs of Staff — the commanders of the Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Air Force — came amid a torrent of criticism of Trump as business executives abandoned his advisory councils, Republican elected officials distanced themselves from him and previously friendly foreign leaders criticized his comments suggesting an equivalence between neo-Nazi groups and their opponents.

In a further sign of an administration in crisis, Vice President Mike Pence announced he was cutting short a visit to South America to return to Washington a day early for meetings with Trump.

But it was the statements from the country's top uniformed military leaders that broke most dramatically with precedent.

Each used his official Twitter account to denounce the far-right protesters behind Saturday's deadly violence in Charlottesville, Va. — and not those who had confronted them.

They did not mention

[See **Chiefs,** A5]

Chip Somodevilla Getty Images

REMEMBRANCE

Mourners in Charlottesville, Va., observe a moment of silence during a memorial service for Heather Heyer, who was killed when a car rammed into a crowd protesting a white supremacist rally. **NATION, A2**

California confronts its Confederate past

By Esmeralda Bermudez, Corina Knoll and Anh Do

The backhoe crept into the graveyard as the city lay still.

It had come for the six-foot granite monument with the bronze plaque, a salute to the Confederate Army veterans interred below.

Hollywood Forever Cemetery had housed the marker since 1925, but the recent events in Charlottesville, Va., had sparked phone calls, emails and social media rants calling for its removal. An online petition circulated. Vandalism threats were made. By Tuesday, the word "No" had been written in black across the monument. The staff of a generally beloved institution was overwhelmed, the monument owners uneasy.

And so at 3 a.m. Wednesday, the monument, aged with a green patina, was excavated, covered with a blue tarp and carted away in a pickup, a patch of fresh sod patted into its place.

Sitting far from the battlefields of the Civil War, California is often viewed as a region far removed from that era. But historians say racism ran rampant through the state and that the emancipation proclamation was widely unpopular. There also were high-profile legislators who spoke in support of slavery or slipped off to fight for the Confederacy and found a significant number of supporters.

California remained a Union state during the war. But Southern California was a "hotbed" of Confederate

[See **Symbols,** A12]

Kevin Waite Special to The Times

A TRIBUTE to Confederate soldiers had sat in Hollywood Forever Cemetery since 1925, until it was removed Wednesday.

Just what is the 'alt-left'?

Trump's term for the anti-racist counter-protesters isn't accurate or appropriate, activists say. **NATION, A9**

Leading executives flee in droves

Trump's failure to decry outspoken racism may taint any CEO who remains in his orbit. **BUSINESS, C1**

White House advisory panels are dissolved amid exodus over the president's remarks on race.

By Paresh Dave, Jim Puzzanghera and Tracey Lien

America's top business executives may have bristled over President Trump's ban on refugees, his withdrawal from the Paris climate accord and his decision to bar transgender Americans from the military.

But it wasn't until the embattled president all but defended white supremacists in the aftermath of the deadly clashes over the weekend in Charlottesville, Va., that the country's corporate elite decided they had had enough.

By Wednesday, so many executives had resigned from Trump's economic advisory and manufacturing councils, including the heads of General Electric Co., Intel Corp. and Campbell Soup Co., that the president announced on Twitter that he was disbanding the panels.

"Rather than putting pressure on the businesspeople of the Manufacturing Council & Strategy & Policy Forum, I am ending both. Thank you all!" Trump tweeted.

Some members pushed back on Trump's suggestion that the disbandment was the president's decision. JPMorgan Chase & Co. chief Jamie Dimon said the economic advisory council, known formally as the Strategic and Policy Forum, had already decided to end on its own.

Members began discussing dissolving the group after watching Trump's news conference Tuesday, according to a source familiar with the matter speaking on condition of anonymity.

Forum members organized a call for 11:30 a.m. Eastern time Wednesday to survey who wanted to stay in or out. The group overwhelmingly sought to shut the forum down, according to the source.

[See **CEOs,** A12]

Luis Sinco Los Angeles Times

MONDAY'S ECLIPSE has already shaded nearly every aspect of life in Idaho Falls, population 50,000.

Prayers in path of totality

Small town braces for a surge of solar eclipse chasers

By David Montero

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho — The soft orange light of the Sunday early morning sun filtered through the old church's stained glass windows while the Rev. Ruth Marsh stepped down from the altar and asked her congregants if they had any special prayer requests.

"For sanity. For safety," a voice called out. "It's kind of scary to think that many people are coming."

Marsh smiled and nodded. Another worshiper added, "And prayers for their safe return home."

Soft chuckles rippled through the pews at Trinity United Methodist Church. Somebody near the front asked for prayers that the infrastructure of Idaho Falls would survive. And, dear God, no fires please.

With the nation riveted by the pending arrival of an extremely rare coast-to-coast solar eclipse, prime viewing spots such as Idaho Falls are bracing for traffic congestion, strains on infrastructure, an economic boost and some inflation — and hoping for clear skies.

The sun, moon and Earth won't come into alignment until Monday, but the eclipse has already shaded nearly ever aspect of life in this town of about 50,000 that straddles a tree-lined section of the Snake River and counts fishing and kayaking as its biggest tourist attractions.

The largest event each year is the Fourth of July celebration that draws about 100,000. If estimates are to be be-

[See **Eclipse,** A8]

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/eclipse

Look! Up in the sky!

Our interactive graphic shows what you can expect to see of the solar eclipse from Los Angeles or anywhere else in the Lower 48 states.

U.S. leans on risky drone strikes in urban Syrian fight

By W.J. Hennigan

CREECH AIR FORCE BASE, Nev. — The Air Force pilot carefully throttled the controls of a missile-firing MQ-1 Predator drone flying half a world away in northern Syria. Suddenly his headset crackled to life.

Militants firing from bombed-out buildings had ambushed a U.S.-backed militia on a rubble-strewn street in Raqqah, Islamic State's self-declared capital and one of its last urban strongholds. The militia was pinned down, and its commander wanted the drone to take out the gunmen.

The pilot studied the surveillance video streaming onto his screen. A captain, he instructed the staff sergeant at his side to set the drone's target sights and powered up a Hellfire missile under its wing.

"Rifle," the pilot said, and the missile soared away.

"Splash," he said seconds later as a fireball swelled across the screen.

The July 18 airstrike was delivered within 160 feet of the pinned-down troops from the Syrian Democratic Forces, according to Air Force officials. It thus marks an evolution in warfare.

American drone pilots now routinely launch missiles at what the Pentagon

[See **Drones,** A4]

Fire dancer

Stephen Colbert is burning hot. We sit down with the host of late-night's top show and also this year's Emmys to talk about comedy and morality in the age of Donald Trump. **THE ENVELOPE**

Weather
Clouds early.
L.A. Basin: 80/64. **B6**

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