

National security adviser Michael Flynn resigns

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Associated Press



FILE- In this Feb. 1 photo, National Security Adviser Michael Flynn speaks during the daily news briefing at the White House, in Washington. Flynn resigned as President Trump's national security adviser Monday.

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's embattled national security adviser Michael Flynn resigned late Monday night, following reports that he had misled Vice President Mike Pence and other officials about his contacts with Russia. His departure upends Trump's senior team after less than one month in office.

In a resignation letter, Flynn said he gave Vice President Mike Pence and others "incomplete information" about his calls with Russia's ambassador to the U.S. The vice president, apparently relying on information from Flynn, initially said the national security adviser had not discussed sanctions with the Russian envoy, though Flynn later conceded the issue may have come up.

Trump named retired Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg as the acting national security adviser. Kellogg had previously been appointed the National Security Council chief of staff and advised Trump during the campaign.

Trump is also considering former CIA Director David Petraeus and Vice Admiral Robert Harward, a U.S. Navy SEAL, for the post, according to a senior administration official.

The Trump team's account of Flynn's discussions with the Russian envoy changed repeatedly over several weeks, including the number of contacts, the dates of those contacts and ultimately, the content of the conversations. Late last month, the Justice Department warned the White House that Flynn could be in a compromised position as a result of the contradictions between the public depictions of the calls and what intelligence officials knew to be true based on recordings of the conversations, which were picked up as part of routine monitoring of foreign officials communications in the U.S.

A U.S. official told The Associated Press that Flynn was in frequent contact with Ambassador Sergey Kislyak on the day the Obama administration slapped sanctions on Russia for election-related hacking, as well as at other times during the transition.

An administration official and two people with knowledge of the situation confirmed the Justice Department warnings on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly. It was unclear when Trump and Pence learned about the Justice Department outreach.

The *Washington Post* was the first to report the communication between former acting attorney general Sally Yates, a holdover from the Obama administration, and the Trump White House. The *Post* also first reported last week that Flynn had indeed spoken about sanctions with the Russian ambassador.

Trump never voiced public support for Flynn after that initial report, but continued to keep his national security adviser close. Flynn spent the weekend at Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate and was in the president's daily briefing and calls with foreign leaders Monday. He sat in the front row of Trump's news conference with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau Monday afternoon.

White House officials sent contradictory messages about Flynn's status throughout the day. Counselor Kellyanne Conway said Trump had "full confidence" in Flynn, while spokesman Sean Spicer said the president was "evaluating the situation" and consulting with Pence about his conversations with the national security adviser.

Asked whether the president had been aware that Flynn might have planned to discuss sanctions with the Russian envoy, Spicer said, "No, absolutely not." Flynn's discussions with the Russian raised questions about whether he offered assurances about the incoming administration's

new approach. Such conversations would breach diplomatic protocol and possibly violate the Logan Act, a law aimed at keeping citizens from conducting diplomacy. Administration officials said misleading Pence was ultimately Flynn's downfall, though they insisted he resigned and was not fired by Trump.

Flynn was spotted near the Oval Office just after 10 p.m. Monday. As uncertainty about his future swirled, several of the president's top advisers, including chief of staff Reince Priebus and counsel Don McGahn, ducked in and out of late-night meetings in the West Wing.

California Rep. Adam Schiff, the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, said Flynn's resignation "does not end questions over his contacts with the Russians." He said the White House has yet to be forthcoming about whether Flynn was acting at the behest of the president or others.

from a wide range of business associates, friends and colleagues, has been asking people their opinions on his senior team, including Spicer and chief of staff Reince Priebus.

Advisers have privately conceded that the White House spit out too many disparate messages in the first few weeks, though they also note that the president's own tweets sometimes muddy the day's plans before most of the White House staff has arrived for work.

Trump voiced support for Priebus Monday, saying the chief of staff was doing, "not a good job, a great job." But he did not make a similar show of support for his national security adviser.

Over the weekend, Trump told associates he was troubled by Flynn's situation, but did not say whether he planned to ask him to step down, according to a person who spoke with him recently. Flynn was a loyal Trump supporter during the campaign, but he was viewed skeptically by some in the administration's national security circles, in part because of his ties to Russia.

Senate confirms former banker Mnuchin as Treasury secretary

WASHINGTON (AP) — A bitterly divided Senate on Monday confirmed Steven Mnuchin as treasury secretary despite strong objections by Democrats that the former banker ran a "foreclosure machine" when he headed OneWest Bank.

Republicans said Mnuchin's long tenure in finance makes him qualified to run the department, which will play a major role in developing economic policy under President Donald Trump.

"He has experience managing large and complicated private-sector enterprises and in negotiating difficult compromises and making tough decisions — and being accountable for those decisions," said Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, chairman of the Finance Committee.

Votes on President Donald



Mnuchin

Trump's Cabinet picks have exposed deep partisan divisions in the Republican-controlled Senate, with many of the nominees approved by mostly party-line votes.

The vote on Mnuchin followed the same pattern. He was confirmed by a mostly party-line vote of 53-47. Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia

joined the Republicans. The Senate also confirmed a less divisive nominee Monday evening, physician David Shulkin, to be secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The vote was unanimous.

Like others in Trump's Cabinet, Mnuchin is a wealthy businessman. He is a former top executive at Goldman Sachs and served as finance chairman for Trump's presidential campaign.

As Treasury secretary, Mnuchin is expected to play a key role in Republican efforts to overhaul the nation's tax code for the first time in three decades. Trump has promised to unveil a proposal in the coming weeks.

Mnuchin will also be in charge of imposing economic sanctions on foreign governments and individuals, including Russia.

Canada's Trudeau talks trade with Trump

WASHINGTON (AP) — A political odd couple, President Donald Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau resolutely played up their similarities at their first meeting Monday, even as obvious differences lurked behind their public smiles.

After their White House meeting, the North American neighbors emerged to hail their close ties, with Trump promising to "build upon our very historic friendship" and Trudeau noting the "special" bond between the countries.

But it was hard to escape their contrasting worldviews.

Speaking to reporters, Trump defended his restrictive refugee and immigration orders, saying that "we cannot let the wrong people in." Trudeau, on the

other hand, said Canada continues to "pursue our policies of openness."

Trudeau later acknowledged that there are times when the two countries differ. But he said, "The last thing Canadians expect is for me to come down and lecture another country on how they chose to govern themselves."

During their post-meeting news conference, the reporters Trump called on did not ask about two pressing issues of the day — the future of embattled National Security Adviser Michael Flynn and North Korea's reported ballistic missile launch.

The stakes for Trudeau in his Washington visit are high: He is seeking to ensure Canada is not crippled as Trump re-negotiates the North American

Free Trade Agreement. And he got much of what he was looking for. Trump praised the "outstanding" trade relationship between the United States and Canada and said he would only be "tweaking" it going forward.

"We'll be doing certain things that are going to benefit both of our countries. It's a much less severe situation than what's taking place on the southern border," said Trump, who has been strongly critical of America's trade situation with Mexico.

Trade relations with the U.S. are crucial to Canada as more than 75 percent of Canada's exports and 98 percent of its oil exports go to the U.S., while 18 percent of American exports go to Canada.

EASTERN OREGON FORUM *Presents*

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BLUE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE (BMCC), 2411 NW CARDEN, PENDLETON, OR,
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CASCADIA AFTERMATH FEATURING: PHILIP SCHMITZ, JOSEPH FRANELL, THOMAS ROBERTS

Philip Schmitz has been a full-time faculty member at BMCC since 2008. He has a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Notre Dame, and a Master's Degree from the University of Utah. He has done research on the Juneau Icefields in Alaska, the geochemistry of Carlin (Nevada) trend gold ores, and he has worked as a geo-technical consultant in the upper Midwest. Philip lives in Pendleton, volunteers with the youth hockey program and referees high school and middle school soccer.



Joseph Franell is the Chief Executive Officer of Eastern Oregon Telecom (EOT), a rural competitive telephone company and Internet service provider serving residents and businesses in Umatilla and Morrow Counties, in Northeastern Oregon. EOT is currently providing residential and commercial Gigabit services in four of the communities in its service area.

Prior to coming to work at EOT, Franell was the Director of Information Technology for the city of Ashland, Oregon, where he was responsible for the Ashland Fiber Network, a municipally-owned and operated broadband telecommunications company. During his tenure there, Ashland was selected as one of the Intelligent Communities Forum Smart 21 Communities for 2007 and 2008, because of its innovative and visionary use of broadband technologies.

In 2009, Franell was appointed by the Governor of Oregon to the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council (OBAC) on which he has served as the chairman for the past six years. The OBAC's mandate is to advise the legislature and Governor's office on matters pertaining to broadband in the State, and to specifically promote the adoption and utilization of broadband for economic development, e-government, tele-health/tele-medicine, education, public safety, and tribal lands. In this role, Franell assisted in developing the communications portion of the Cascadia Playbook, the document that details roles and responsibilities immediately following a major Cascadia Subduction Zone event (earthquake).

Franell is a ten-year veteran of the US Army, is happily married, and has one daughter.

Thomas Roberts has been the Emergency Manager for Umatilla County since June, 2016. He has an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Emergency Management from Clackamas Community College and is a graduate of Hermiston Senior High School. He is a FEMA Trained Master Exercise Practitioner and Advanced Public Information Officer.

His prior positions include: Emergency Management for US Army at three Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) Sites including the Umatilla Chemical Depot in Hermiston, Oregon, the Pueblo Chemical Depot in Pueblo, Colorado, and the Bluegrass Chemical Depot in Richmond, Kentucky.

He has also served as a Volunteer Firefighter/EMT for 20 combined years with the Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services, the Pendleton Fire Department and as a Lieutenant with the Irrigon Fire Protection District.



For more information about the EO Forum, please contact: Karen Parker at 541-966-3177.

The EO Forum is a collaborative effort among leaders from Blue Mountain Community College, InterMountain Education Service District; the East Oregonian; American Association of University Women; and Harriet Isom; a former United States ambassador who also serves on the committee. This EO Forum program is offered as part of Blue Mountain Community College's annual Arts and Culture Festival. For more information on the festival go to www.bluecc.edu.