

Trump threatens NKorea with 'trouble,' escalating tensions

BEDMINSTER, N.J. (AP) — Not backing down, President Donald Trump warned Kim Jong Un's government on Thursday to "get their act together" or face extraordinary trouble, and suggested his earlier threat to unleash "fire and fury" on North Korea was too mild.

"Maybe that statement wasn't tough enough," Trump said, in the latest U.S. salvo in an escalating exchange of threats between the nuclear-armed nations.

A day after North Korea laid out plans to strike near Guam with unsettlingly specificity, there was no observable march toward combat, despite the angry rhetoric from both sides. U.S. officials said there was no major movement of U.S. military assets to the region, nor were there signs Pyongyang was actively preparing for war.

Trump declined to say whether the U.S. is considering a pre-emptive military strike as he spoke to reporters before a briefing with his top national security advisers at his New Jersey golf resort.

The president insisted the North had been "getting away with a tragedy that can't be allowed."

"North Korea better get their act together, or they are going to be in trouble like few nations have ever been in trouble," Trump said, flanked by Vice President Mike Pence. Accusing his predecessors of insufficient action, Trump said it was time somebody stood up to the pariah nation.

Though tensions have been building for months amid new missile tests by the North, the pace has intensified since the U.N. Security Council on Saturday passed sweeping new sanctions Trump had requested. The sanctions prompted the new heated volley of rhetoric.

Trump suggests Senate GOP leader must deliver or step aside

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump escalated a stunning feud against his top Senate partner Thursday, suggesting Majority Leader Mitch McConnell might have to think about stepping aside if he doesn't deliver on the president's



A man watches a television screen showing President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during a news program at the Seoul Train Station in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday.

agenda of health care, taxes and infrastructure.

Trump called McConnell's failure to pass an "Obamacare" repeal last month "a disgrace." Asked if McConnell should consider stepping aside or retiring, an outcome some conservatives are openly clamoring for, the president's response was far from a vote of confidence.

"Well I tell you what, if he doesn't get repeal and replace done and if he doesn't get taxes done, meaning cuts and reform, and if he doesn't get a very easy one to get done, infrastructure, if he doesn't get them done, then you can ask me that question," the president told reporters in Bedminster, New Jersey, where he is in the midst of a 17-day break from Washington.

Trump later added that he is "very disappointed in Mitch" but would be the first to praise him if legislation begins moving, once again presenting himself as a passive observer in the process rather than a dealmaker with the presidential pulpit.

There was no immediate response from McConnell's office.

A sitting president openly turning on a Senate majority leader of his own party in such a fashion is practically unheard of — yet another norm destroyed since Trump's rise on the political scene. And while the fighting words might elate Trump's core supporters, they can only hurt broader Republican efforts to move major legislation this fall on taxes and spending while preparing for congressional elections next year where energized Democrats are rallying to retake the House.

Republicans control both chambers, but the Trump factor in many races remains a mystery.

Trump's comments came after he spent two days slamming McConnell on Twitter, writing Thursday morning that after "screaming" about repealing and replacing "Obamacare" for seven years, McConnell "couldn't get it done." Several hours later, the president's tone took a motivational turn as he exhorted McConnell to "get back to work" and pass bills. "You can do it!"

The presidential megaphone amplified the McConnell-bashing that's been snaking through conservative media: Breitbart News, Fox News' Sean Hannity and radio host Rush Limbaugh are among those who have vilified the leader after the Senate's failure on health care late last month. They represent a segment of the Republican electorate, including some major donors, who are out to punish what they see as a "do-nothing Congress" that has hampered the president's goals.

Study says Trump moves trigger health premium jumps

WASHINGTON (AP) — Actions by the Trump administration are triggering double-digit premium increases on individual health insurance policies purchased by many people, according to a nonpartisan study.

The analysis released Thursday by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that mixed signals from President Donald Trump have

created uncertainty "far outside the norm" and led insurers to seek higher premium increases for 2018 than would otherwise have been the case.

Republicans in Congress have not delivered on their promise to repeal and replace the Obama-era Affordable Care Act. Trump is insisting that lawmakers try again and that the health overhaul is collapsing. At the same time, he's threatened to stop billions of dollars in payments to insurers. Some Republicans are considering fallback measures to stabilize markets.

Kaiser researchers looked at proposed premiums for a benchmark silver plan across major metropolitan areas in 20 states and Washington, D.C. Overall, they found that 15 of those cities will see increases of 10 percent or more next year.

The highest is a 49 percent jump in Wilmington, Delaware.

The only decline: a 5 percent reduction in Providence, Rhode Island.

About 10 million people who buy policies through HealthCare.gov and state-run markets are potentially affected, as are 5 million to 7 million more who purchase individual policies on their own.

Those in the government-sponsored markets can dodge the hit with the help of tax credits that most of them qualify for to help pay premiums. But off-marketplace customers pay full freight, and they face a second consecutive year of steep increases. Many are self-employed business owners.

Emergency declared in New Orleans as flood threat looms

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Louisiana's governor declared a state of emergency in New Orleans on Thursday as the city's malfunctioning water-pumping system and the threat of more rain left some neighborhoods at greater risk of flooding.

The city scrambled to repair fire-damaged equipment at a power plant and shore up its drainage system, less than a week after a flash flood from torrential rain overwhelmed the city's pumping system and inundated many neighborhoods.

Gov. John Bel Edwards described his emergency declaration as a precautionary

measure. He and Mayor Mitch Landrieu tried to calm the jangled nerves of residents still angry about the city's response to last weekend's flooding.

"Obviously this is a serious situation, but it's not something to be panicked about," Edwards said at a City Hall news conference.

Landrieu urged residents of some waterlogged neighborhoods to prepare for another possible round of flooding by moving vehicles to higher ground. All of the city's public schools were closed Thursday and were scheduled to be closed again on Friday.

Jamie Hill, a resident of the Mid-City neighborhood that has flooded twice in the past month, was clearing mud, sand, grass and other debris from the storm drain near her home. Her car flooded in an earlier downpour a few weeks ago. She said she's learned her lesson and now moves her car anytime it rains.

"I'm doing what I can, not that it will really matter if the pumps aren't working," she said.

The city's infrastructure was crumbling for years before the devastation unleashed in 2005 by levee breaches in Hurricane Katrina's aftermath.

Ex-Fox News star Bill O'Reilly launches daily online show

NEW YORK (AP) — Ousted Fox News Channel star Bill O'Reilly has launched an experimental video comeback with a daily online show.

The initial half-hour was posted on his website Wednesday for premium subscribers, originating from what he called a "new prototype studio." He requested input from viewers for what he characterized as a "sneak preview."

He said it would be made available to a non-paying audience on Thursday.

Among other topics, O'Reilly discussed President Trump's "fire and fury" comments about North Korea and a movement that calls for California to secede from the union. He spoke by Skype with political commentator Michael Smerconish.

O'Reilly has produced a daily podcast, which this video startup apparently builds upon, since he was fired from Fox News in April in the wake of allegations of sexual harassment.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON & EVENING

Table with 24 columns (12 PM to 11:30 PM) and rows for FOX, CBS, NBC, ABC, PBS, and CABLE channels.

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Table with 24 columns (12 PM to 11:30 PM) and rows for CABLE channels including AMC, ANPL, CMT, CNBC, CNN, DISC, DISN, ESPN, ESPN2, FNC, FOOD, FREE, FX, GOLF, GSN, HALL, HGTV, HIST, LIFE, NICK, ROOT, SPIKE, SYFY, TBS, TCM, TLC, TNT, UNI, UNT, USA, WE, WGN, HBO, HBO2, HBO3, MAX, STARZ, and STZENC.

FRIDAY LATE NIGHT & SATURDAY MORNING

Table with 24 columns (12 AM to 11:30 PM) and rows for FOX, CBS, NBC, ABC, and PBS channels.