



A worker loads steel products onto a vehicle at a steel market in Fuyang in central China's Anhui province Friday. China has expressed "grave concern" about a U.S. trade policy report that pledges to pressure Beijing but had no immediate response to President Donald Trump's plan to hike tariffs on steel and aluminum.

World bracing for risk of Trump's trade war

By JOSH BOAK
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's plan to slap taxes on steel and aluminum imports was branded Friday as "absolutely unacceptable" by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada, the United States' biggest foreign source of both metals.

Trump hasn't sparked a trade war — yet. But his provocative action has raised the risk of an all-out conflict that could pit the United States against its friends and the entire global financial system that it helped create after World War II. When Trump announced Thursday he was imposing a 25 percent tariff on steel and 10 percent tariff on aluminum on national security grounds, he set into motion the possibility that trading partners would fight back with tariffs of their own.

The rebukes delivered on Friday suggested that some countries were prepared to retaliate if necessary.

Trudeau stressed in his comments he was prepared to "defend Canadian industry" and that the tariffs would also hurt U.S. consumers and businesses because prices could rise.

The 28 countries in the European Union could respond by taxing goods that are core to the American identity such as Bourbon whiskey, blue jeans and Harley Davidson motorcycles, said Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission.

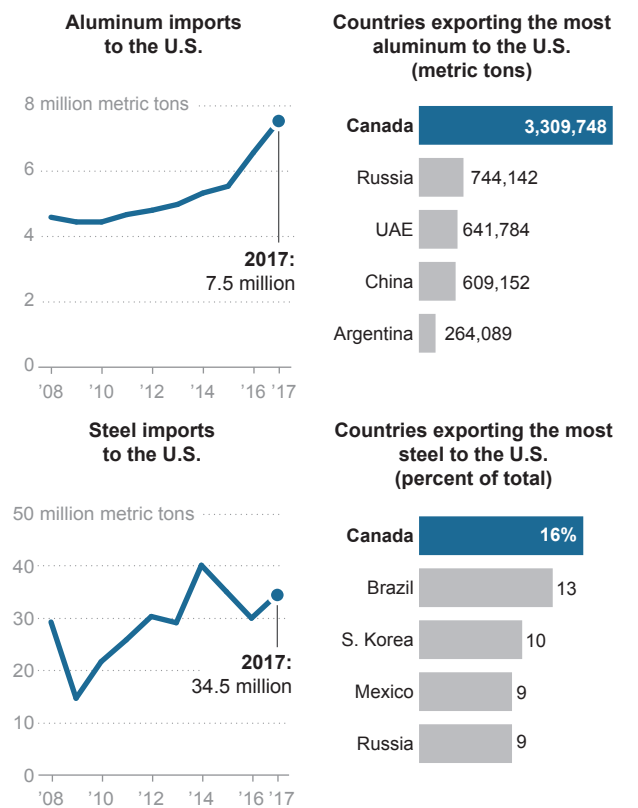
"I don't like using the word trade war, but I can't see how this isn't part of warlike behavior," Juncker told German media.

Roberto Azevedo, the director-general of the World Trade Organization, warned that a "trade war is in no one's interests."

China — the world's

Aluminum, steel in Trump's sights

President Donald Trump wants to slap steep tariffs on imports of aluminum and steel, raising the risk of a trade war.



SOURCES: The Aluminum Association; Census Bureau; Commerce Department

largest steel producer and Trump's primary target — stayed quiet about how it would respond.

Trump's fellow Republicans urged caution. Doug Andres, an aide for House Speaker Paul Ryan, said that Ryan "is hoping the president will consider the unintended consequences of this idea."

But the U.S. president appears to be in battle mode. He views the tariffs as a way to pressure trading partners into submission and wipe away the trade deficit.

"Trade wars are good, and easy to win," he said on Twitter.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross downplayed the risk of rising prices from the steel and aluminum tariffs.

He held up cans of Campbell's soup and Coca-Cola during a CNBC interview, noting that each would go up by less than a penny under the new taxes.

Even if Trump is itching for a trade war, it's not clear if one will materialize.

"It's too soon to tell for a whole host of reasons," said Scott Lincicome, a trade lawyer and adjunct scholar at the libertarian Cato Institute.

Because there are no formal declarations, Lincicome said the "imaginary threshold" for this kind of showdown would involve countries imposing a broad set of tariffs that choked off trade, rather than taxes on the two basic categories of steel and aluminum.

On guns, companies are getting out ahead of the politicians

NEW YORK (AP) — In 1960, black students staged sit-ins that forced Woolworth's to desegregate its lunch counters, and other stores and restaurants followed suit. In 1986, General Motors, Coca-Cola and dozens of other U.S. corporations pulled out of apartheid-era South Africa after years of pressure from activists, college students and investors.

This week, four major retailers slapped restrictions on gun sales that are stronger than federal law.

Those are all rare examples of American companies getting out ahead of the politicians and the law on socially explosive issues. Such decisions are almost always made reluctantly, under pressure and with an eye toward minimizing the effect on the bottom line.

Major corporations, including MetLife, Hertz and Delta Air Lines, have cut ties to the National Rifle Association. Walmart, Kroger, L.L. Bean and Dick's Sporting Goods announced they will no longer sell guns to anyone under 21. Dick's also banned the sale of assault-style rifles, a step Walmart took in 2015. And Dick's CEO went even further by calling for tougher gun laws.

Those actions amounted to an act of defiance against the NRA and its allies in



FILE- In this Oct. 13, 2016, file photo, passengers unload in front of a Delta Air Lines sign at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

Washington who have vehemently opposed any ban on AR-15s and other semi-automatic weapons or a higher age limit for gun purchases.

"What we are seeing is a real shift," said Mimi Chakravorti, executive director of strategy at the brand consulting firm Landor. "I think right now, companies are acting ahead of the government because they are seeing that the changes are too slow."

Still, business leaders are not exactly leading the charge for the stricter guns laws. Their actions came in response to protests by the students who survived the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and to growing calls by consumers for boycotts

against companies that do business with the NRA or gun manufacturers.

It is rare for a company to drop products out of social concern. When it happens, the calculation is that any loss of revenue will be offset by increased customer loyalty in the long term, Beahm said.

He cited the example of CVS Health, which stopped selling cigarettes and other tobacco products in 2014, a decision that cost \$2 billion in revenue but was well received by its customers.

That move was a rare example of a company taking a socially conscious step under no public pressure. Most of the time, corporations act when it becomes untenable for them to ignore the pressure.

Boardman SAGE Center hosts job fair March 7

BOARDMAN — Agriculture, energy, processing and technology industries, educational institutions and government agencies will be on hand for a job fair in Boardman.

In its fifth year, the Agriculture, Energy and Processing Job Fair is Wednesday, March 7 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. Open to the public, attendees can visit with area food processors, utilities, farms, local government agencies, data centers and educational institutions about careers, education and job-seeking help.

Also, local high school students and

college students are encouraged to attend to learn about careers available in the local communities and find out what kind of education is needed to work in local industries.

Representatives from the Perry Technical Institute, Blue Mountain Community College, Treasure Valley Community College, Oregon State University and Eastern Oregon University are among those planning to provide information about educational opportunities.

For more information, including a list of organizations attending, visit www.visitsage.com or call 541-481-7243.

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