Trump orders huge tariffs on China, raises trade war worries

By KEN THOMAS AND PAUL WISEMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Primed for economic combat, President Donald Trump set in motion tariffs on as much as \$60 billion in Chinese imports to the U.S. on Thursday and accused the Chinese of high-tech thievery, picking a fight that could push the global heavyweights into a

China threatened retaliation, and Wall Street cringed, recording one of the biggest drops of Trump's presidency. But he declared the U.S. would emerge "much stronger, much richer."

It was the boldest example to date of Trump's "America first" agenda, the culmination of his longstanding view that weak U.S. trade policies and enforcement have hollowed out the nation's workforce and ballooned the federal deficit. Two weeks ago, with fanfare, he announced major penalty tariffs on steel and aluminum imports that he said threatened national security.

However, even as Trump was talking tough at the White House, his administration moved to soften the sting of the metal tariffs, telling Congress on Thursday that the European Union, Australia, South Korea and other nations would join Canada and Mexico in gaining an initial exemption. And that raised questions about whether his actions will match his rhetoric.

China responded early Friday by announcing a list of U.S. goods, including pork, apples and steel pipe, it said may be hit with higher import duties.

The Commerce Ministry said the higher U.S. tariffs "seriously undermine" the global trading system. The ministry urged the U.S. "to resolve the concerns of the Chinese side as soon as possible," and appealed for dialogue "to avoid damage to overall Chinese-U.S. cooperation."

At home, investors on Wall Street showed their rising concern about retaliation and business-stifling cost increases for companies and consumers. The Dow Jones industrials plunged 724 points.

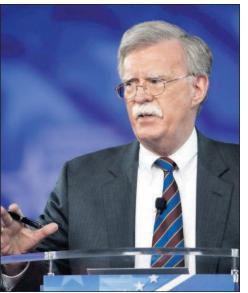
Trump himself, joined by supportive business executives, complained bitterly about the nation's trade deficit and accused China of stealing America's prized tech-

"Any way you look at it, it is the largest deficit of any country in the history of our world. It's out of control," Trump said of the U.S-China imbalance.

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President Donald Trump announced via Twitter on Thursday that national security adviser H.R. McMaster (left) is being replaced by former U.N. Ambassador John

Trump is replacing national security adviser in shakeup

H.R. McMaster out, John Bolton in

By CATHERINE LUCEY, ZEKE MILLER **AND KEN THOMAS**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Charging ahead with the dramatic remaking of his White House, President Donald Trump said Thursday he would replace national security adviser H.R. McMaster with the former U.N. Ambassador John Bolton, a foreign policy hawk entering a White House facing key decisions on Iran and North Korea.

After weeks of speculation about McMaster's future, Trump and the respected three-star general put a positive face on the departure, making no reference to the growing public friction between them. Trump tweeted Thursday that McMaster had done "an outstanding job & will always remain my friend." He said Bolton will take over April 9 as his third national security adviser in just over a year.

The national security shakeup comes as the president is increasingly shedding advisers who once eased the Republican establishment's concerns about the foreign policy and political novice in the White House. McMaster is the sixth close adviser or aide to announce a departure in a turbulent six weeks, joining ally Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who was unceremoniously fired

The White House has said the president

is seeking to put new foreign policy leaders in place ahead of not-yet-scheduled meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jung Un. Bolton is likely to add a hard-line influence to those talks, as well as deliberations over whether to pull out of the Iran nuclear deal.

The White House said Thursday that McMaster's exit had been under discussion for some time and stressed it was not due to any one incident, including this week's stunning leak about Trump's recent phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

McMaster had briefed Trump before the Putin call — and his team drafted all-caps instructions telling Trump not to congratulate the Russian leader on his re-election victory. Trump did it anyway.

An internal investigation into the leak is underway, said a White House official who — like others interviewed about the announcement and the White House shakeup - demanded anonymity to discuss internal

In a statement released by the White House, McMaster said he would be requesting retirement from the U.S. Army effective this summer, adding that afterward he "will leave public service.

McMaster had told confidants he would leave the post if at any point he lost credibility on the international stage, according to three White House officials. The feverish speculation about an impending exit sped up the decision for him to depart, the officials said, in part because McMaster believed foreign partners were beginning to doubt his influence.

BRIEFLY

House OKs \$1.3 trillion budget bill, Senate stalls

WASHINGTON — Congress was poised to pass a giant \$1.3 trillion spending bill that would end the budget battles for now, but not without risking another shutdown as conservatives objected to big outlays on Democratic priorities at a time when Republicans control the House, Senate and White

This would be the third federal shutdown this year, an outcome both parties want to avoid. But in crafting a sweeping deal that busts budget caps, they've stirred conservative opposition and set the contours for the next funding fight ahead of the midterm election.

The House easily approved the measure Thursday, 256-167, a bipartisan tally that underscored the popularity of the compromise, which funds the government through September. It beefs up military and domestic programs, delivering federal funds to every corner of

But action stalled in the Senate, as conservatives ran the clock in protest. They can't stop the bill indefinitely. But without agreement, voting would spill into the weekend, past the midnight Friday deadline to fund the government.

Playboy model says Trump tried to pay her after sex

LOS ANGELES — A former Playboy model apologized to First Lady Melania Trump for a 10-month affair she claims she had with President Donald Trump that started with him offering her money after the first time they had sex.

Karen McDougal said Thursday in an interview with CNN she refused to take the money in 2006 and told him, "I'm not that kind of girl."

McDougal detailed the relationship and said she traveled to Trump properties in New York, California and New Jersey. Asked what she would say to Melania

Trump, McDougal said: "What can you say except, I'm sorry?

Legal shake-up on Trump team may suggest shift

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's lead lawyer in the special counsel's Russia investigation resigned Thursday, shaking up the legal team just as Trump intensifies attacks on an inquiry he calls nothing more than a witch hunt.

The departure of attorney John Dowd removes the primary negotiator and legal strategist who had been molding Trump's

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— Associated Press

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