

# Border states pledge 1,600 troops for Trump's border fight

By **BOB CHRISTIE** and **NOMAAN MERCHANT**  
*Associated Press*

HOUSTON — Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas pledged on Monday to send about 1,600 National Guard members to the U.S.-Mexico border, responding to President Donald Trump's plan to use the military to help fight illegal immigration and drug trafficking.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said he would add about 300 troops a week to the 250 members of the National Guard whose deployment was announced Friday until the total number reaches at least 1,000 troops. Arizona officials announced they were sending 225 National Guard members to the border Monday and would deploy another 113 on Tuesday.

And New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez's office said that more than 80 troops would deploy later this week. They will be the first of an expected 250 Guard members from New Mexico to serve on the border.

Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico are all led by Repub-

lican governors. The other southwestern border state, California, is led by Democratic Gov. Jerry Brown and has not made a public commitment to sending troops from his state's National Guard. Under the federal law Trump invoked in his proclamation calling for National Guard troops, governors retain command and control over their state's Guard members.

Trump said last week he wants to send 2,000 to 4,000 National Guard members to the southwestern border.

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey told a group of soldiers preparing to deploy from a Phoenix military base that their "mission is about providing manpower and resources to support federal, state, county, tribal and local law enforcement agencies in stopping the flow of criminals, narcotics, weapons and ammunition that is being trafficked into our state."

Ducey initially said Arizona would send more troops on Tuesday but did not specify how many. The state's National Guard in a statement later that 113 members would follow the initial deployment of 225.



AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin  
**Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey speaks to Arizona National Guard soldiers prior to deployment to the Mexico border at the Papago Park Military Reservation Monday in Phoenix.**



AP Photo/Susan Walsh  
**President Donald Trump speaks in the Cabinet Room of the White House in Washington Monday at the start of a meeting with military leaders.**

# Trump blasts Mueller probe as an 'attack on our country'

By **ZEKE MILLER**  
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The special counsel's Russia investigation is not only a political witch hunt but "an attack on our country," President Donald Trump complained Monday, exhibiting mounting concern about the yearlong probe after federal authorities raided the offices of his personal attorney. "We'll see," he said, when asked if he might fire special counsel Robert Mueller.

Trump let loose after federal agents pierced the protective bubble around him, seizing records from the offices of longtime Trump attorney Michael Cohen, on topics including a \$130,000 payment made to a porn actress who says she had sex with Trump more than a decade ago.

Cohen has been an ardent defender in Trump's business, personal and political affairs for more than a decade — Cohen claims to have used a personal home equity loan to pay the adult film actress,

known as Stormy Daniels — and the probe's expansion into the president's inner circle left Trump fuming.

He unleashed his sharpest invective to date against the sweeping investigation, calling the Monday search "a disgrace."

"It's an attack on our country in a true sense," he said, flanked by the nation's top military brass, who watched the scene stone-faced. "It's an attack on what we all stand for."

The president didn't bat away the idea of firing Mueller, saying people have advised him to take that action: "Why don't I just fire Mueller? Well, I think it's a disgrace what's going on — we'll see what happens."

He said the raid in New York marked a "whole new level of unfairness" by Mueller and his team.

Trump called the probe a "witch hunt," as he has many times in the past, complaining that it distracts from serious issues such as consideration of a military response to the

apparent use of a chemical weapon on Syrian civilians over the weekend. That was the intended subject of his Monday evening meeting with the defense secretary, the joint chiefs of staff and U.S. combat commanders.

Instead, with reporters in the room and cameras rolling, Trump opened the meeting with an unprompted four-minute critique of Mueller's investigation. "I just heard that they broke into the office of one of my personal attorneys, a good man," Trump began, referring to agents who had obtained search warrants from a federal judge.

The raid on Cohen's office was conducted by the U.S. Attorney's office in Manhattan and was based at least partly on a referral from Mueller, according to Cohen's lawyer, Stephen Ryan.

Trump blasted the Mueller team as "the most conflicted group of people I've ever seen," labeling most of them Democrats and saying the few Republicans had worked for President Barack Obama.

# Trump threatens strike on Syria

Suggests Russia shares blame

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Promising a decision within hours, President Donald Trump threatened a military strike against Syria and declared on Monday that Russia or any other nation found to share responsibility for Saturday's apparent chemical weapons attack on civilians will "pay a price."

The White House sharply rejected any suggestion that Trump's own words about pulling U.S. troops out of Syria had opened the door for the attack, which killed more than 40 people, including children.

Trump, asked whether Russian President Vladimir Putin bore any responsibility, responded, "He may, yeah, he may. And if he does it's going to be very tough, very tough." He added, "Everybody's gonna pay a price. He will. Everybody will."

Amid the tough talk from the White House, the U.S. military appeared to be in position to carry out any attack order. A Navy destroyer, the USS Donald Cook, was underway in the eastern Mediterranean after completing a port call in Cyprus. The guided missile destroyer is armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles, the weapon of choice in a U.S. attack one year ago on an airfield in Syria following an alleged sarin gas attack on civilians.

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