

BRIEFLY

U.S. in Syria grows more complex with Trump claim to oil

WASHINGTON — By claiming a right to Syria’s oil, President Donald Trump has added more complexity — as well as additional U.S. forces and time — to an American military mission he has twice declared he was ending so troops could come home.

Extending the mission to secure eastern Syria’s oilfields happens to fit neatly with the Pentagon’s view that a full withdrawal now could hasten a revival of the Islamic State group.

The military acknowledged on Thursday that an Army unit with armored vehicles is now operating in Syria’s oil region.

It did not say how many soldiers are being added there, but officials have said the eventual force there likely will be about 500.

On Oct. 28, Trump said: “We’re keeping the oil — remember that.”

Thousands in Chile march in protest after canceled summit

SANTIAGO, Chile — Thousands of young Chileans are marching to demand improved social services as government and opposition leaders debate the response to nearly two weeks of protests that have paralyzed much of the capital and forced the cancellation of two major international summits.

The march on the presidential palace was peaceful Thursday afternoon on the first day of a four-day holiday weekend in Chile. Some observers said the massive waves of protests of the last two weeks appear to be at least temporarily losing momentum.

In a meeting earlier in the day, President Sebastián Piñera’s finance and interior ministers proposed changes to business tax breaks, which opposition leaders called insufficient.

A proposed hike in subway has spawned 14 days of protests calling for deep-rooted changes.

Boy Scouts to boost annual youth fees by more than 80%

NEW YORK — The Boy Scouts of America is increasing its annual youth membership fee by

more than 80% as it faces a potentially ruinous wave of new sex-abuse lawsuits.

The organization says the move is needed to meet rising operating costs, notably for the liability insurance. As of January, fees for the Scouts’ 2.2 million youth members will rise from \$33 to \$60. Fees for adult leaders will rise by \$3.

Many of the adult leaders have expressed dismay at the increase.

For years, the Boy Scouts have been entangled in costly litigation with plaintiffs who said they were abused by scout leaders in their youth. Hundreds of lawsuits may lie ahead with the recent enactment of laws in several states making it easier for victims of long-ago abuse to seek damages.

California endures more wildfires, 1 sparked by a hot car

JURUPA VALLEY, Calif. — A stolen car sparked a wildfire in a bone-dry field Thursday as two of Southern California’s quintessential themes — car chases and gusty Santa Ana winds — collided with potentially devastating consequences.

The hot car ignited dry grass in a field in the city of Jurupa Valley east of Los Angeles and strong winds that have menaced the region quickly spread the flames, burning homes and forcing residents to flee.

The frightening scenario was among the latest to erupt as exceptionally dry conditions and vicious gusts have contributed to destructive fires that forced tens of thousands of evacuations across the state while other Californians endured dayslong deliberate power outages aimed at preventing electric lines from sparking fires.

Several blazes broke out in the heavily populated inland region east of Los Angeles as the strong, seasonal Santa Ana winds continued to gust up to 60 mph and were predicted to last until the evening before they fade away.

Riverside police were chasing suspected car thieves after midnight when the driver tried to shake them by plowing through fields and lots, Riverside Police Officer Ryan Railsback said. The damaged vehicle pulled to a stop in a field in Jurupa Valley, where the driver and passenger bolted.

— Associated Press

Democrats push impeachment rules package through House

By ALAN FRAM AND MATTHEW DALY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats pushed a package of ground rules for their impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump through a sharply divided House on Thursday, the chamber’s first formal vote in a fight that could stretch into the 2020 election year.

The tally was 232-196, with all Republicans who voted opposing the resolution. Just two Democratic defectors joined them: freshman Rep. Jeff Van Drew of New Jersey and 15-term veteran Rep. Colin Peterson of Minnesota, one of his party’s most conservative members. Both represent GOP-leaning districts.

Though the vote was technically over the rules that will govern the process, each side used it to accuse the other of having already decided whether Congress should wrench Trump from office.

It also underscored how — for now — lawmakers on each side are comfortable with their approaches to next year’s presidential and congressional elections. Democrats have been buoyed by polls showing growing public sentiment toward investigating and even removing Trump from office, while the same surveys have shown GOP voters standing fast by him.

Thursday’s measure defined the procedures lawmakers will follow as they transition from weeks of closed-door interviews with witnesses to public hearings and ultimately to possible votes on whether to recommend Trump’s impeachment.

The vote, which occurred on Halloween, drew a familiar Twitter retort from Trump: “The greatest Witch Hunt in American History!”

And White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham accused House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the Democrats of an “unhinged obsession with this illegitimate impeachment proceeding.”

During the debate, Democrats spoke of lawmakers’ duty to defend the Constitution, while Republicans cast the process as a skewed attempt to railroad a president whom Democrats have detested since before he took office.

“What is at stake in all this is nothing less than our democracy,” said Pelosi, D-Calif. Underscoring her point, she addressed the House with a poster of the American flag beside her and began her remarks by reading the opening lines of the preamble to the Constitution.

She also said the procedures would let lawmakers decide whether to impeach Trump “based on the truth. I don’t know why the Republicans are afraid of the truth.”

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., contended the Democrats are trying to remove Trump simply “because they are scared they cannot defeat him at the ballot box.”

No. 3 House GOP leader Steve Scalise, R-La., accused them of imposing “Soviet-style rules,” speaking in front of a bright red poster depicting St. Basil’s Cathedral on Red Square in Moscow.

Independent Rep. Justin Amash of Michigan, who left the Republican Party earlier this year after saying he was open to considering whether Trump should be impeached, also backed the measure.

The investigation is focused on Trump’s efforts to push Ukraine to investigate his Democratic political opponents by withholding military aid and an Oval Office meeting craved by the



AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite
Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., talks to reporters in Washington on Thursday just before the House vote on a resolution to formalize the impeachment investigation of President Donald Trump.

HOW THEY VOTED

The U.S. House voted mostly along party lines to approve rules for the impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump. Here’s how the members of the Oregon and Washington delegation voted.

NO VOTES:

Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, R-Wash.
Rep. Dan Newhouse, R-Wash.
Rep. Cathy McMorris Rogers, R-Wash.
Rep. Greg Walden, R-Ore.

YES VOTES:

Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore.
Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore.
Rep. Suzan DelBene, D-Wash.
Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore.
Rep. Denny Heck, D-Wash.
Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash.
Rep. Derek Kilmer, D-Wash.
Rep. Rick Larsen, D-Wash.
Rep. Kurt Schrader, D-Ore.
Rep. Kim Schrier, D-Wash.
Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash.

country’s new president.

Democrats said the procedures, which give them the ability to curb the president’s lawyers from calling witnesses, are similar to rules used during the impeachment proceedings of Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton. Republicans complained they were skewed against Trump.

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