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## **China responds to Trump tariffs with proposed list of 128 US products to target**

*March 22, 2018* cnc.com reported: "China is 'firing back' after US announces tariffs on steel and aluminum. The world's second-largest economy has responded to President Donald Trump's controversial trade tariffs. China's commerce ministry proposed a list of 128 U.S. products as potential retaliation targets, according to a statement on its website posted Friday morning.

The U.S. goods, which had an import value of \$3 billion in 2017, include wine, fresh fruit, dried fruit and nuts, steel pipes, modified ethanol, and ginseng, the ministry said. Those products could see a 15 percent duty, while a 25 percent tariff could be imposed on U.S. pork and recycled aluminium goods, according to the statement.

The statement did not go into greater detail. U.S. agricultural products, particularly soybeans, have been flagged as the biggest area of potential retaliation by Chinese President Xi Jinping's administration."..."

## **'Christianity as default is gone': the rise of a non-Christian Europe**

*March 22, 2018* TheGuardian.com reported: "Europe's march towards a post-Christian society has been starkly illustrated by research showing a majority of young people in a dozen countries do not follow a religion.

The survey of 16- to 29-year-olds found the Czech Republic is the least religious country in Europe, with 91% of that age group saying they have no religious affiliation. Between 70% and 80% of young adults in Estonia, Sweden and the Netherlands also categorise themselves as non-religious.

The most religious country is Poland, where 17% of young adults define themselves as non-religious, followed by Lithuania with 25%. In the UK, only 7% of young adults identify as Anglican, fewer than the 10% who categorise themselves as Catholic. Young Muslims, at 6%, are on the brink of overtaking those who consider themselves part of the country's established church..."

## **US: Plans Being Made in Case Iran Nuclear Talks With Europeans Fail**

*March 22, 2018* voanews.com reported: "The U.S. says it had constructive talks with its European partners last week on changes to the Iran nuclear agreement, but it is making contingency plans in case the talks fail and President Donald Trump decides to pull out of the landmark 2015 deal.

Lead negotiator and State Department Policy Planning Director Brian Hook told reporters Wednesday he cannot predict whether U.S. talks with Britain, France and Germany on forging a supplemental agreement to address what Trump sees as deficiencies in the Iran nuclear agreement can meet a May deadline.

May 12 is when the Trump administration is supposed to decide whether to extend sanctions relief on Tehran, as stated in the Iran nuclear agreement. That pact is also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA.

Hook briefed reporters during a conference call about his meetings late last week with European allies in Berlin.

'We have had constructive talks with the Europeans ... but I can't predict whether we will reach an agreement with them or not,' Hook said. 'We always have to prepare for any eventuality, and so we are engaged in contingency planning because it would not be responsible not to.'..."

## **'Europe will be Muslim,' says Turkish leader**

*March 22, 2018* World Net Daily reported: "Is Europe as a continent with a majority of Christians gone? One Muslim says so.

'There is no remedy for it. Europe will be Muslim. We will be effective there, Allah willing. I am sure of that,' said Alparslan Kavaklioglu, a member of the ruling Justice and Development Party in Turkey.

He's also the head of the Turkish parliament's Security and Intelligence Commission.

He recently said: 'The fortune and wealth of the world is moving from the West to the East. Europe is going through a time that is out of the ordinary. Its population is declining and aging. It has a very old population. So, people coming from outside get the jobs there. But Europe has this problem.

All of the newcomers are Muslim. From Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey. Those who come from these places are Muslim. It is now at such a level that the most popular name in Brussels, Belgium is Mohammed. The second most popular name is Melih [Malih] and the third one is Ayse [Aisha].'..."

## **China should prepare for military action over Taiwan: Chinese paper**

*March 22, 2018* Reuters reported: "China should prepare for military action over self-ruled Taiwan and pressure Washington over cooperation on North Korea after the United States passed a law to boost ties with Taiwan, a widely read Chinese state-run newspaper said on Thursday.

Beijing was infuriated when U.S. President Donald Trump signed legislation last week that encourages the United States to send senior officials to Taiwan to meet Taiwanese counterparts and vice versa. Beijing has also been upset by Trump's threats to impose trade restrictions on China over its huge trade surplus with the United States.

U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Alex Wong said in Taipei on Wednesday the United States' commitment to Taiwan has never been stronger.

Trade  
War

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China claims Taiwan as its own and considers the self-ruled island a wayward province, which Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Tuesday would face the "punishment of history" for any attempt at separatism.

The Global Times said in an editorial China had to "strike back" against the U.S. law, for example by pressuring the United States in other areas of bilateral cooperation, like over North Korea and Iran."..."

### **Empowered Xi says China ready to fight 'bloody battle'**

*March 20, 2018* spacedaily.com reported: "President Xi Jinping delivered a blistering nationalist speech Tuesday, warning against any attempts to split China and touting the country's readiness to fight "the bloody battle" to regain its rightful place in the world.

Xi's address capped an annual session of the National People's Congress that paved the way for him to rule for life, as China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong pushes through his vision of guiding the country through a "new era" of unrivalled global military and economic supremacy.

Days after President Donald Trump signed new rules allowing top-level US officials to travel to Taiwan, Xi warned that Beijing would defend its "one China principle", which sees the self-ruling island as its territory awaiting reunification.

"All acts and tricks to separate the country are doomed to fail and will be condemned by the people and punished by history," Xi told nearly 3,000 delegates assembled at the imposing Great Hall of the People facing Tiananmen Square. But he also sought to address concerns about ambitious Chinese development projects abroad, saying they "will not pose a threat to any country."

"Only those who are accustomed to threatening others will see everyone as a threat," he added in an address that drew waves of applause from the legislators.

China is overseeing a massive global trade infrastructure initiative to revive the ancient Silk Road, drawing interest from nations participating in the investment but also criticism from others fearing that it mainly serves Beijing's interests.

The Chinese leader's plan to build a "world-class" military by mid-century has also raised concerns about how it plans to use its increasingly modern forces amid regional frictions over China's territorial claims in the South China Sea. Xi used the speech to espouse his vision of realising the "rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" -- the "greatest dream" of the world's second-largest economy."..."

### **Xi applauds Putin re-election, hails 'best level' ties**

*March 19, 2018* SpaceDaily.com reported: "Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday congratulated Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on his re-election, saying Beijing was willing to work with Moscow to bring ties to a 'higher level'.

Putin won in a landslide on Sunday, one day after China's parliament unanimously re-appointed Xi to a second term. Xi has drawn comparison with Putin as the Chinese leader has consolidated power and gained a path to indefinite rule after the rubber-stamp National People's Congress lifted presidential term limits last week.

'Currently, the China-Russia comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership is at the best level in history, which sets an example for building a new type of international relations,' Xi said in a congratulatory message to Putin, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

'China is willing to work with Russia to keep promoting China-Russia relations to a higher level, provide driving force for respective national development in both countries, and promote regional and global peace and tranquility,' Xi said..."

### **'Army of Islam' would be world's biggest military**

*March 18, 2018* World Net Daily reported: "When Turkey's semi-official newspaper Yeni Safak called for urgent action in forming a 57-nation 'Army of Islam' to besiege and attack Israel, a suggestion undoubtedly approved with at least a wink and nod by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, it would signal the possible intent to create the largest military force on the planet – one nearly as large as the total population of the Jewish state.

The report came just ahead of the summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and was published under the headline, 'What if an Army of Islam was formed against Israel?' It was translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute.

But it wasn't a rhetorical question. It was actually a suggestion to combine the military forces of all Islamic countries to overwhelm the Israeli army in manpower, budget and equipment – even boasting with statistics.

On December 12, 2017, ahead of the summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Istanbul, the Turkish daily Yeni Safak, which is close to Erdogan and his ruling AKP party, published an article titled 'A Call for Urgent Action,' which also appeared on the paper's website under the title 'What If an Army of Islam Was Formed against Israel?' The article called on the 57 member states of the OIC to form a joint 'Army of Islam' to besiege and attack the state of Israel..."

### **North Korean rockets fitted with nuclear weapons 'can reach central Europe'**

*March 18, 2018* SkyNews.com reports: "North Korean rockets fitted with nuclear weapons can now reach Germany and central Europe, a security official has reportedly warned.

Ole Diehl, deputy director at Germany's foreign intelligence agency BND, apparently told lawmakers in a private meeting that he was 'certain' about Kim Jong Un's military capability. But Mr Diehl also insisted the agency saw talks between North and South Korea as a positive sign, according to German newspaper Bild am Sonntag, citing sources. The BND has not commented on the report.



A senior North Korean diplomat left for Finland on Sunday for talks with former US and South Korean officials, South Korean media reported..."