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Trump has discussed firing Fed Chairman Powell



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Senator Graham calls for hearings on troops in Syria, Afghanistan

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Republican Senator Lindsey Graham on Friday called for immediate U.S. Senate hearings on President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw all American troops from Syria, which prompted the resignation of Defense Secretary Jim Mattis. Graham, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, told reporters he wanted to hear directly from Mattis at any hearing. Mattis announced plans on Thursday to depart in a candid resignation letter to Trump that laid bare the growing divide between them. A Senate hearing could also cover Trump administration officials saying on Thursday that there were plans to drawdown about 5,000 U.S. troops from Afghanistan. Graham, who over the past year or so has been a staunch supporter of Trump, has broken with him on the Syria decision. Heading to a meeting of Republican senators, Graham said, "In lunch I'm going to ask for hearings like right now about Syria." Trump said Islamic State had been defeated there so it was time to withdraw U.S. forces. Graham made clear that he also was worried about a possible U.S. troop reduction in Afghanistan, where 14,000 troops are deployed in what is America's longest war at 17 years. "I dare anybody to say that ISIS-K is defeated in Afghanistan," Graham said, referring to Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - Khorasan Province, a branch of Islamic State, active in Afghanistan and Pakistan.



FILE PHOTO: U.S. troops patrol at an Afghan National Army (ANA) Base in Logar province, Afghanistan August 7, 2018. REUTERS/Omar Sobhani/File Photo

Cuban parliament green lights new constitution

HAVANA (Reuters) - Cuban lawmakers on Saturday unanimously approved a revised draft of a new constitution that retains the island's one-party socialist system but reflects its socio-economic opening since the fall of the Soviet Union. The draft new constitution, which has 229 articles and will replace a Cold War era one, will maintain the Communist Party as the country's guiding force and the state's dominance of the economy, according to state-run media. A copy has not yet been distributed to the public. The document however also legitimizes private business that has blossomed over the last decade, acknowledges the importance of foreign investment and opens the door to gay marriage, according to state-run media. It imposes age and term limits on the presidency, after late revolutionary leader Fidel Castro and his younger brother Raul Castro ruled the country for nearly six decades, and introduces the role of a prime minister. The current draft incorporates into an original one published in July hundreds of mainly small changes proposed by citizens during a three-month public consultation at community meetings nationwide. It will go to a referendum next Feb. 24 in a process the government has depicted as participatory democracy at its best.

Critics disagree, arguing the fundamentals of Cuba's system were never up for discussion and the government only included suggestions it wanted to. Some, including opposition groups that typically do not mobilize many citizens, are already campaigning against the constitution online using the hashtag #yovotono ("I vote no"). First Vice President Salvador Mesa said the government hoped the majority of the population would approve the new constitution because "the people also built this text". One of the articles revised regards the accumulation of property. Whereas the first draft originally banned this, the revised constitution simply stipulates that the state must regulate it, according to state-run media. However the latest draft also reinserts the aim of "advancing towards communism" that was taken out



of the first draft. One controversial revision is the elimination of an article that recognized matrimony as the union of two persons as opposed to the union between a man and a woman as in the 1976 constitution.

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Patty Yu
Business Development

Szechuan House has Arrived to Bring Authentic Szechuan-Style Chinese Cuisine to Houston

Dishing out all the heat you can handle, the newly renovated and completely re-vamped Szechuan House is now open for business in Houston's Chinatown. While the name "Szechuan House" may ring a bell, that's about all that remains of the former restaurant, which features new management and a brand new menu, plus an updated Instagram-worthy interior.

Shuai Shao, the owner of Szechuan House, recently moved from New York City with the grand vision of fulfilling his lifelong dream of bringing mouth-watering food to the people of Houston. Shuai and his brother AO Zeng "chose Houston to open [the] restaurant because [he loves] the diversity here."

Here are four reasons why Szechuan House should be at the top of your foodie bucket list:

Bold flavors in every dish.

If you've never had Szechuan food before, you're in for a real treat. The Szechuan peppercorn is different from your average spice as it leaves a tingly, slightly numbing sensation on your tongue, also known as "ma la". Fun fact: it was illegal to import these peppercorns for almost 40 years until 2005—a sad period for Szechuan food in the United States.

Although Szechuan food has a reputation for being spicy, there is so much more to the cuisine. Szechuan peppercorns make up only part of the flavors in the dishes—Szechuan food is cooked with all sorts of aromatics, from garlic to chili peppers, giving dishes from the region a unique flavor.

Afraid you won't be able to handle the spice? There's no cause for alarm. The level of spice can be moderated to your liking.

An inviting and authentic experience.

Shuai's goal is to bring an authentic Szechuan experience to Houston, and he's succeeded in doing so through all parts of his restaurant. The interiors were carefully crafted by Shuai himself, featuring spices, tea, plates, and decor transported from China.

All of this makes for an experience that will transport you to a land 8,000 miles away.

Kung Pao Shrimp

Something for everyone. It would be hard not to be enticed by the flavors and dishes at Szechuan House. Fan favorites include a spin on the classic Kung Pao Shrimp (Szechuan House mixes theirs up with added fried bread sticks) and their Dan Dan Noodles. Warm up with a dry pot, a winter favorite, which has the same



spicy flavors as the hot pot but without the boiling broth.

Szechuan House also brings some unique Szechuan dishes you might not have come across before, such as their signature duck dish, Cold Noodles with Mala Sauce, Fish Slice with Green Pepper, and their Chinese Meatballs, a dish that features pork and lotus root meatballs wrapped in rice

Experience true Szechuan cuisine that's hard to come by outside of China.

In keeping with the tune of wanting an authentic, family-oriented business, the head chef is Shuai Shao's uncle, who studied Szechuan cooking during the last 35 years of his career in restaurants in China. He moved to the US only last year to help start up Szechuan House.

Shuai and his family have a mission to serve the best and most authentic representation of Szechuan cuisine to Houston residents, meaning Szechuan House uses only the highest-quality ingredients.

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Editor's Choice



Riot police stand guard in front of 100% Noticias Channel building after its director Miguel Mora was arrested by national police in Managua



Police officers stand guard in front of 100% Noticias Channel building after its director Miguel Mora was arrested by national police in Managua



A general view of the St. Patrick's Cathedral is seen with an illuminated Christmas star at its entrance in Karachi



U.S. Vice President Mike Pence (C) and Acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney arrive at the U.S. Capitol on the first day of a partial federal government shutdown in Washington



Soccer Football - Club World Cup - Final - Real Madrid v Al Ain - Zayed Sports City Stadium, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates - December 22, 2018 General view of the trophy being lifted by Real Madrid's Sergio Ramos after winning the Club World Cup REUTERS/



A signs rotates between pictures of presidential candidates Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary, former Congolese Interior Minister and Martin Fayulu, Congolese joint opposition in Kinshasa



FILE PHOTO: Brett McGurk, U.S. envoy to the coalition against Islamic State, speaks to during news conference at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad



Anti-government protest in central Belgrade

Social media has created many new issues in the courts and forced judges to ponder the legal import of postmodern concepts like Facebook friends and Instagram followers.

Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Packingham v. North Carolina* that social media platforms are the new “public square,” and access to them is protected by the First Amendment, which guarantees free speech. But that doesn’t necessarily mean there are no limitations on how social media can be used when an ex-convict is on probation. For example, a California state appeals court just found in *AA v. The People* (pdf) that a “narrowly tailored” limit on social media use for a juvenile on probation—in this case for a felony offense—was legal for rehabilitation purposes and to protect a crime victim. (It is common for adults and juveniles serving probation for a felony offense to have many limitations imposed on their conduct and communications as part of the terms of conditional release.)

Probation’s Limits Could Include Social Media Also A California Court Finds Social Media Posts Are Not A First Amendment Right

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

LEGEND

- = Facebook
- = Google
- = Instagram
- = Medium
- = Snapchat
- = Twitter
- = Wordpress



endanger the victim in this case and that there were plenty of other ways AA could communicate, including email, phone, in person, and via written correspondence.



To the extent that AA’s case seems to contradict the conclusions about free speech and social media in *Packingham*, it’s notable that the Supreme Court case involved a North Carolina law that made it a felony for sex offenders to have any social media presence at all, indefinitely. In this juvenile case, however, AA was only barred from posting about his offense and only for the duration of his probation.

AA also argued that his trial court attorney was ineffective for failing to object to the social media prohibition condition when it was initially imposed. This claim was dismissed with barely any discussion. The court said objecting would have been “an exercise in futility” anyway, so counsel couldn’t be considered deficient. (Courtesy <https://www.nextgov.com/>)

Related

Free Expression On Social Media
By Lata Nott, Executive Director, First Amendment Center

The First Amendment protects individuals from government censorship. Social media platforms are private companies, and can censor what people post on their websites as they see fit. But given their growing role in public discourse, it’s important to ask ourselves—what exactly are their censorship policies? How do they compare to each other, and to the First Amendment’s protections?

WHAT CAN AND CAN’T YOU SAY IN THE TOWN SQUARES OF THE INTERNET?

TYPE OF SPEECH	CENSORSHIP	
	LESS	MORE
HATE Hate speech is speech that offends or attacks people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, disease, or other traits.		
MORE		
OBSCENITY Obscenity is famously hard to define, but in general refers to content that strongly offends the prevalent morality of the time.		
MORE		
HARASSMENT Harassment refers to unwanted behavior that makes someone feel degraded, humiliated or offended. We do not define it to include true threats of violence, which are banned by all of the platforms below and are not protected by the First Amendment.		
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The appeals court couldn’t have agreed with AA less, stressing the lowly position of juveniles in the criminal justice system. The opinion summarized the case as follows: One of the goals of the juvenile law is reformation and rehabilitation of the minor’s attitude so that he respects the rights of others. Here, appellant seems to think that his felonious conduct is a springboard for bragadocio on the internet. Appellant has First Amendment freedom of speech rights. But the juvenile court may curtail such rights in an appropriate case by a narrowly tailored condition of probation. This is an appropriate case. Basically, it’s true that AA has the right to speak freely. But his freedom is legally curtailed by probation conditions designed to rehabilitate him and protect the victim. The court noted that his social media posts could

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WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump is considering an executive order in the new year to declare a national emergency that would bar U.S. companies from using telecommunications equipment made by China's Huawei and ZTE, three sources familiar with the situation told Reuters.

Chinese tech firms Huawei and ZTE may soon be the subject of a new executive order penned by President Trump. The order, which could be issued shortly after the new year, would reportedly stop American companies from using telecom equipment from the two Chinese companies as a matter of national security.

It would be the latest step by the Trump administration to cut Huawei Technologies Cos Ltd [HWT.UL] and ZTE Corp, two of China's biggest network equipment companies, out of the U.S. market.

The United States says the companies work at the behest of the Chinese government and that their equipment could be used to spy on Americans.



The U.S. has accused both firms of working for the Chinese government, saying some of the equipment the companies manufacture may have been used to spy on Americans.

China's foreign ministry recently responded to the allegations and reports of impending executive action by President Trump.

"One should better talk about security issues with facts," stated Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying. "Some countries, without any evidence, are abusing the national security and politicizing and putting up all sorts of barriers on the normal scientific and technological exchanges — this is to shut themselves off from the openness, progress and fairness." Huawei and ZTE have denied the allega-

Trump Admin. Considering Executive Order Against Chinese Tech Firms Huawei, ZTE

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



In this Sept. 26, 2018, file photo, visitors look at a display for 5G wireless technology from Chinese technology firm Huawei at the PT Expo in Beijing. While a Huawei executive faces possible U.S. charges over trade with Iran, the Chinese tech giant's ambition to be a leader in next-generation telecoms is colliding with security worries abroad. (Photo/AP)

tions. This executive order follows a recent defense bill passed in August, which prohibits federal agencies from doing business with the two Chinese firms.

Both in the past have denied that their products are used to spy.

Rural operators in the United States are among the biggest customers of Huawei and ZTE, and worry that they may also have to rip out existing Chinese-made equipment without compensation. Industry officials are divided on whether the administration could legally compel operators to do that.

The executive order, which has been under consideration for more than eight months, could be issued as early as January and would direct the Commerce Department to block U.S. companies from buying equipment from foreign telecommunications makers that pose significant national security risks,

sources from the telecoms industry and the administration said.

While the order is unlikely to name Huawei or ZTE, a source said it is expected that Commerce officials would interpret it as authorization to limit the spread of equipment made by the two companies. The sources said the text for the order has not been finalized.

The United States and China are locked in a trade war that has disrupted the flow of hundreds of billions of dollars of goods.

The executive order would invoke the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, a law that gives the president the authority to regulate commerce in response to a national emergency that threatens the United States.



The issue has new urgency as U.S. wireless carriers look for partners as they prepare to adopt next generation 5G wireless networks.

In August, Trump signed a bill that barred the U.S. government itself from using Huawei and ZTE equipment.

A White House official said the United States was "working across government and with our allies and like-minded partners to mitigate risk in the deployment of 5G and other communications infrastructure," but stated that the White House had nothing further to announce.

The Wall Street Journal first reported in May that the order was under consideration, but it was never issued.

China's Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Hua Chunying said on Thursday that she did not want to comment on the order as it had not been officially confirmed.

"It's best to let facts speak for themselves when it comes to security problems," Hua said.



"Some countries have, without any evidence, and making use of national security, tacitly assumed crimes to politicize, and even obstruct and restrict, normal technology exchange activities," she added.

"This in reality is undoubtedly shutting oneself off, rather than being the door to openness, progress and fairness."

HIT TO RURAL NETWORKS

While the big U.S. wireless companies have cut ties with Huawei in particular, small rural carriers have relied on Huawei and ZTE switches and other equipment because they tend to be less expensive. Huawei is so central to small carriers that

William Levy, vice president for sales of Huawei Tech USA, is on the board of directors of the Rural Wireless Association. The RWA represents carriers with fewer than 100,000 subscribers. It estimates that 25 percent of its members had Huawei or ZTE equipment in their networks, it said in a filing to the Federal Communications Commission earlier this month.

The RWA is concerned that an executive order could force its members to remove ZTE and Huawei equipment and also bar future purchases, said Caressa Bennet, RWA general counsel.

It would cost \$800 million to \$1 billion for all RWA members to replace their Huawei and ZTE equipment, Bennet said.



Separately, the FCC in April granted initial approval to a regulation that bars giving federal funding to help pay for telecommunication infrastructure to companies that purchase equipment from firms deemed threats to U.S. national security, which analysts have said is aimed at Huawei and ZTE.

The FCC is also considering whether to require carriers to remove and replace equipment from firms deemed a national security risk.

In March, FCC Chairman Ajit Pai said "hidden 'back doors' to our networks in routers, switches — and virtually any other type of telecommunications equipment - can provide an avenue for hostile governments to inject viruses, launch denial-of-service attacks, steal data, and more."

In the December filing, Pine Belt Communications in Alabama estimated it would cost \$7 million to \$13 million to replace its Chinese-made equipment, while Sagebrush in Montana said replacement would cost \$57 million and take two years.

Sagebrush has noted that Huawei products are significantly cheaper. When looking for bids in 2010 for its network, it found the cost of Ericsson equipment to be nearly four

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