

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Morning Media
Sent: Fri 10/6/2017 9:37:53 AM
Subject: Morning Media: Investigating news orgs? -- Milo's white nationalist ties -- Thrush vs. Abramson -- NYT's Weinstein bombshell -- St. Louis arrests mount

By Michael Calderone | 10/06/2017 05:36 AM EDT

FOR A MOMENT, it looked like the White House was going to knock down President Trump's dangerous suggestion on Twitter that the Senate Intelligence Committee start looking into news networks he dismisses as "fake."

-- **"Should Congress investigate news outlets?"** CNN correspondent Jim Acosta asked Press Secretary Sarah Sanders, just as she pivoted to another reporter in the briefing room and could be heard saying "No." However, Sanders told me she was calling on Los Angeles Times reporter Noah Bierman rather than answering Acosta. Sanders responded to another question about Trump's tweet by reiterating the White House's view that the news media should be held "to a higher standard."

-- **Trump has accused journalists** of spreading "fake news" so frequently that it's no longer news. Even his most incendiary comments -- like calling the media the "enemy of the people" and anti-American -- get eclipsed by more shocking statements. Though Richard Burr, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, told POLITICO that Congress is "not going to investigate news organizations," the notion that an idea so antithetical to the First Amendment is being entertained in the White House and given oxygen on social media remains alarming.

-- **"If Congress were to start investigating news outlets...we are then something less than the United States of America,"** Acosta said after the briefing on CNN. "It is just an appalling suggestion to come from the president of the United States."

Good morning and welcome to Morning Media. I won't be in your inbox again until Tuesday, but you can always find me at mcalderone@politico.com and [@mlcalderone](https://twitter.com/mlcalderone). Morning Media is edited by Alex Weprin ([@alexweprin](https://twitter.com/alexweprin)), with assistance from Daniel Lippman ([@dlippman](https://twitter.com/dlippman)). [Archives](#). [Subscribe](#).

MILO YIANNOPOULOS TELLS BUZZFEED HE'S "NOT A RACIST" and condemns racism, even as reporter Joseph Bernstein revealed through a cache of documents how the former Breitbart technology editor and provocateur has courted white nationalists and helped promote their repellent views through the populist news site. "These new emails and documents, however, clearly show that Breitbart does more than tolerate the most hate-filled, racist voices of the alt-right," Bernstein writes. "It thrives on them, fueling and being fueled by some of the most toxic beliefs on the political spectrum -- and clearing the way for them to enter the American mainstream."

-- **There's so much in this 8,000-word blockbuster,** as Bernstein relies on the documents and additional reporting to shed light on Yiannopoulos's relationships to Breitbart News chief and former White House strategist Steve Bannon, tech billionaire Peter Thiel, leading white

nationalists, mainstream journalists, and Trump and Breitbart backers Robert and Rebekah Mercer. Bernstein also has a video of Yiannopoulos singing "America the Beautiful" as attendees, including white nationalist Richard Spencer, sing in Nazi fashion.

JOURNALIST ARRESTS MOUNT IN ST. LOUIS: Ten journalists have recently been arrested in St. Louis, according to the latest tally from the [U.S. Press Freedom Tracker](#). The arrests have come during coverage of demonstrations in response to the acquittal of white former police officer Jason Stockley in the 2011 shooting death of Anthony Lamar Smith, who is black.

-- **Jordan Chariton**, a political reporter for progressive outlet The Young Turks who was [arrested Tuesday night](#), suggested that the lack of wider media outrage over the press crackdown stems from the demonstrations receiving little national attention -- and those arrested largely being from the independent or local media rather than, say, CNN or the New York Times. "I think police can operate with impunity knowing that there's no name-brand press," he said.

-- **Police arrested legal observers and journalists**, by Chariton's account, as a way to go after the "eyes and ears" on the street before turning to protesters who had blocked a highway. Chariton said he and his cameraman, Ty Bayliss, were fingerprinted, had mugshots taken, and spent 16 hours in jail. They have yet to be charged with a crime.

-- **"Corporate media, independent, right, left**, all of us need to protect each other because at the end of the day you can't normalize the obstruction of the First Amendment," he said.

GLENN THRUSH ALREADY QUIT TWITTER, but his past tweets about President Trump drew criticism from former New York Times executive editor Jill Abramson. She [praised](#) her former employer in the Columbia Journalism Review for its big Trump-related scoops but suggested that the behavior of Times staffers, like Thrush, on Twitter "can be construed by critics as gloating or overkill." In particular, she questioned Thrush tweeting about Trump spreading "demonstrably false information" or having "degraded discourse." Such observations, "while true," she wrote, "are opinions."

-- **"Explain that one to me.** Isn't a 'true' observation by definition a fact?" Thrush [responded](#) on Facebook. "This is boss-speak: It's the aesthetics she doesn't like. It doesn't sound 'right' to say Trump has degraded discourse more than any other president in recent history. But it is undeniably true. Whether it is useful for an institution to have its reporter saying it so bluntly is a matter of editorial discretion and style. It is entirely appropriate for them to constrain my expression should they so choose. But true is true, and observation isn't opinion. That is an alternative fact, Jill."

SPEAKING OF THE PAPER'S WHITE HOUSE COVERAGE: "Is Trump-Whisperer Maggie Haberman Changing The New York Times? -- by [Vanity Fair's Joe Pompeo](#): "With her tabloid pedigree, her Lois Lane mien, her 158,000 thousand tweets to more than 640,000 followers, and her lightning rise to front-page dominance, Haberman is a sui generis creature at the Times, even if she has formidable predecessors."

AND SOME WELCOME NEWS FOR THE NEWS MEDIA: POLITICO's Jason Schwartz

writes that polls indicate the media is increasingly more trusted than Trump. "Confidence in the media has gone up this year while confidence in the executive branch has gone down," said Chris Kahn, Reuters' U.S. political polling editor. Kahn added that when the president weighs in on a subject, he usually heavily influences how people feel."

SOUND BITE: "The whole fake news thing doesn't really carry much weight on Capitol Hill, where lawmakers coexist with reporters who work hard to do a job." [[Jake Sherman](#)]

MUST-READ: The New York Times' Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey reveal decades of allegations of sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct against film mogul Harvey Weinstein -- behavior that many around him were aware of and didn't speak out on. "Dozens of Mr. Weinstein's former and current employees, from assistants to top executives, said they knew of inappropriate conduct while they worked for him," they report. "Only a handful said they ever confronted him."

BEFORE THE TIMES' BOMBHELL DROPPED, Weinstein spoke to a who's who of high-powered lawyers and public relations executives, including former Obama communications director Anita Dunn, according to BuzzFeed. He also consulted Lanny Davis, David Boies, Lisa Bloom, and Charles Harder, who successfully represented Hulk Hogan against Gawker and Melania Trump against The Daily Mail. Harder is now threatening a lawsuit against The Times (though, importantly, he still hasn't filed).

-- "**This is a vendetta,**" Weinstein told Page Six, "and the next time I see [Times executive editor] Dean Baquet it will be across a courtroom."

FACEBOOK VS. "FAKE NEWS" -- per CNBC: "Facebook will start testing fake news warnings, adding context to the traditional news feed and constant sharing on its platform...The new feature will allow Facebook users to tap a button for additional information about the news article and source, including details from the publisher's Wikipedia entry, trending and related content, and information about how the article is being shared."

THE WATERGATE EFFECT: Margaret Sullivan revisits Woodward and Bernstein's influence on a generation of journalists amid today's renewed sense of mission in newsrooms. "Trump coverage may not recruit a new generation of reporters, but it does seem to inspire those who are already in the journalism pipeline," she writes in CJR. "Many of them are fired up by what they see every day."

REVOLVING DOOR:

Washington Post national security reporter **Adam Entous** is joining The New Yorker as a staff writer. I reported yesterday on the expected move, but the news became official following memos from each publication. New Yorker editor David Remnick called Entous "one of the finest and most rigorous investigative journalists in the country," while Post editors touted Entous's "very impressive run" since joining a year earlier from the Wall Street Journal. They also noted Entous will remain at the Post while "he finishes a number of stories."

Maegan Vazquez, most recently a White House reporter for IJR, is joining CNN's politics team as a breaking news reporter. She previously interned at CNN.

Caitlin Huston is the new editor in chief of Broadway News. She was previously a reporter at MarketWatch.

EXTRAS:

-- -- Though Sinclair's controversial merger with Tribune isn't complete, company president Chris Ripley welcomed future colleagues to "the nation's largest broadcast group" in a [memo](#) obtained by FTV Live.

-- Megyn Kelly is getting paid \$69 million over three years, according to The Daily Mail.

-- ProPublica [launches](#) network to support local news.

-- Nicely done [NBC Left Field](#) video on a "fake news firestorm in Twin Falls, Idaho."

To view online:

<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-media/2017/10/06/investigating-news-orgs-milos-white-nationalist-ties-thrush-vs-abramson-nyts-weinstein-bombshell-st-louis-arrests-mount-222672>

To change your alert settings, please go to <https://secure.politico.com/settings>

This email was sent to jackson.ryan@epa.gov by: POLITICO, LLC 1000 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA, 22209, USA

Please click [here](#) and follow the steps to unsubscribe.
