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From: Joe Pompeo - POLITICO Media
Sent: Wed 6/28/2017 10:26:04 AM
Subject: Morning Media: Austin Tice captivity back in the spotlight — Times v. Palin — Playboy's W.H. correspondent: 'I don't like bullies'

By Joe Pompeo | 06/28/2017 06:23 AM EDT

With Cristiano Lima, Hadas Gold and Alex Weprin

TUNE IN THIS MORNING - Matt Lauer has a sit-down on "Today" with the parents of Austin Tice, the American journalist and former Marine who's been missing since he was taken captive in Syria nearly five years ago. Later on, Debra and Marc Tice will appear on "NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt" as well. The interviews come days after The New York Times revealed that in February, "national security officials began exploring ways to free Austin Tice," and that "White House officials ... set up a back channel" with Syria to this effect, only to see it quashed a few months later in the wake of American missile strikes.

TIPS AND COMMENTS: jpompeo@politico.com / [@joepompeo](https://twitter.com/joepompeo). **Morning Media** is edited by **Alex Weprin** (@alexweprin / aweprin@politico.com) and produced with writing/reporting help from **Cristiano Lima**. (clima@politico.com / [@ludacristiano](https://twitter.com/ludacristiano)). **Hadas Gold** contributed to today's newsletter. [Archives](#). [Subscribe](#).

NEW YORK TIMES READY TO RUMBLE WITH SARAH PALIN - A spokeswoman last night told me the company "had not yet seen" the defamation suit Palin filed against the Times yesterday, but that it "will defend against any claim vigorously." Palin's beef: "Mrs. Palin brings this action to hold The Times accountable for defaming her by publishing a statement about her that it knew to be false ... Specifically, on June 14, 2017, The Times Editorial Board ... falsely stated as a matter of fact to millions of people that Mrs. Palin incited Jared Loughner's January 8, 2011, shooting rampage at a political event in Tucson, Arizona." You can read the complaint [here](#).

CNN STAFFERS DOWN IN THE DUMPS - [BuzzFeed's Steven Perlberg reports](#) : "The resignation of three CNN employees in the wake of the news outlet's retracted Russia story is making clear to the newsroom that reporters and editors have little margin for error in the Trump era. On Tuesday, CNN President Jeff Zucker sought to rally news staffers during the morning conference call, hours after President Trump tweeted about the resignations. According to a CNN source, Zucker told staffers to keep fighting the good fight, and that the impassioned response only demonstrated CNN's growing influence. Still, CNN sources described a glum environment in the wake of the resignations, as staffers watched conservative commentators like Fox News' Sean Hannity revel in CNN's pain."

Related from Paul Farhi in The Washington Post: "[T]he ... story was another ill-timed setback for CNN ... The heightened environment may ... explain why CNN went to such extraordinary lengths to address [the] story." More: "[CNN's Russia story debacle came at the worst possible time for the network](#)"

SOME COLOR ON CNN'S VETTING MALFUNCTION - "In CNN's newsroom, it is called the Triad: a three-pronged internal system designed to ensure that sensitive reporting by the network's journalists is unimpeachable before it runs," [Michael Grynbaum reports in the Times](#) . "The Triad system should have kicked into gear, with reviews by lawyers, a standards-and-practices division, and an editorial team known collectively as the Row, which checks facts and approves anonymous sources. (The system is so ingrained that CNN journalists often use the term as a verb: as in, has the story been 'rowed'?) But several network officials were caught off-guard when the story appeared online, the people said, signaling that it had not received the proper approvals."

MUST READS:

-- "The Gay Man Who Fled Chechnya's Purge" [[The New Yorker](#)]

-- "Why the Far Right Wants to Be the New 'Alternative' Culture" [[NYT Mag](#)]

-- "How Donald Trump and Roy Cohn's Ruthless Symbiosis Changed America" [[Vanity Fair](#)]

-- "The Last Shot" [[ProPublica](#)]

PERSONAL REFLECTION - [From the Playboy correspondent whose skewering of the White House press shop yesterday went viral](#) : "The fact is: I like Sarah Sanders. I like Sean Spicer. I like most of the people I've met who work in this administration. They're personable and, as far as I can tell - with a few notable exceptions - decent people. But I don't like bullies and I don't like the entire institution of the press and free speech being castigated for no other reason than we either get stories wrong - which happens, and it should be then responsibly corrected - or because we report news the president doesn't like - which seems to happen even more often than getting stories wrong." More: "[We Stood Up to the Administration Today Because Free Press is Crucial](#)"

MEDIA MYSTERY: TRUMP'S 2009 'TIME COVER' - "The framed copy of Time magazine was hung up in at least five of President Trump's clubs, from South Florida to Scotland. Filling the entire cover was a photo of Donald Trump," [David Fahrenthold writes in The Washington Post](#). "This cover -- dated March 1, 2009 -- looks like an impressive memento from Trump's pre-presidential career. ... Even when he was just a reality TV star, Trump was the kind of star who got a cover story in Time. But that wasn't true. The Time cover is a fake."

SOUND BITES:

-- "There's a video circulating now -- whether it's accurate or not, I don't know -- but I would encourage everyone in this room and, frankly, everybody across the country to take a look at it." [[Sarah Huckabee Sanders](#)]

-- "Does this feel like America? Where the White House takes q's from conservatives, then openly trashes the news media in the briefing room." [[Jim Acosta](#)]

-- "To win, she'd have to prove the Times knew what it said was false or acted in reckless disregard of truth. High bar" [[Brit Hume](#)]

-- "It's vintage NBC to misdirect blame for its own behavior, and its own results." [[a Fox News spokeswoman](#)]

THE GENESIS OF MEGYN KELLY'S ALEX JONES INTERVIEW - "One person familiar with the matter explained that the Jones interview had been partly [NBC News chief Andy] Lack's idea in the first place. Lack had read a profile of him in The New York Times and submitted his name for consideration to Kelly and other executives." [That and more in Sarah Ellison's latest for Vanity Fair](#): "CAN MEGYN KELLY OUTFRAN HER NBC 'NIGHTMARE'? The broadcaster's first month at the network has been full of surprises, and not the kind anyone wants. Can she put it behind her?"

REVOLVING DOOR: MOTHER JONES' TRUMP BUMP = SEVEN NEW JOURNALISTS - The magazine says the hires were made possible by "record support" Mother Jones has seen in recent months, as hordes of news consumers have subscribed or donated to an array of publications following Trump's election. The most notable of the bunch is Ari Berman, a prominent voice on the voting rights beat who joins Mother Jones from The Nation. Additionally: Jamilah King joins from Mic to cover race and justice; former Daily News D.C. correspondent Dan Friedman joins to report on foreign influence and national security out of Washington; Amanda Silverman, formerly of The New Republic, is coming on board as senior news editor and Center for Investigative Reporting alum Julia Chan as audience director. The other two hires are filmmakers Al Kamalizad and Mark Helenowski, the inaugural participants in Mother Jones's new documentary film residency program.

SOUNDTRACK: New York Dolls, "[Personality Crisis](#)"

EXTRAS:

-- You can count News Corp. and Axel Springer among those who are psyched about Google's \$2.7 billion antitrust fine from the European Commission. [[THR](#)]

-- How TMZ "quietly became America's most potent pro-Trump media outlet." [[Think Progress](#)]

-- A Sinclair Broadcasting Group's executive donated to Greg Gianforte's campaign -- a day after Gianforte was charged with body-slammng a reporter for The Guardian. [[POLITICO](#)]

-- The Washington Post's new social media policy appears to make criticizing advertisers a fireable offense. [[Washingtonian](#)]

To view online:

<http://www.politico.com/media/tipsheets/morning-media/2017/06/28/austin-tice-captivity-back-in-the-spotlight-times-v-palin-playboys-wh-correspondent-i-dont-like-bullies-001300>

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To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Morning Transportation
Sent: Wed 6/7/2017 2:06:37 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Transportation, presented by Delta Air Lines: Trump touts waterways, rural infrastructure — Start your engines on an FAA bill — Groups go to the mat on Open Skies

By Lauren Gardner and Tanya Snyder | 06/07/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With help from Stephanie Beasley, Brianna Gurciullo and Annie Snider

SPLISH SPLASH: President Donald Trump heads to the banks of the Ohio River today to give another speech on infrastructure, this time with a focus on rural infrastructure that includes the thousands of miles of waterways industries like coal and agriculture use to move their products (not to put too fine a point on it, Trump will speak with a coal barge floating behind him). We're also hearing he may touch on a tax code overhaul, a topic that likely came up during the president's huddle with GOP congressional leaders Tuesday.

Is there a P3 party going on? Infrastructure fans want to know just how much Trump plans to talk about private financing on this visit, given rural interests' general unease with P3s. National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn said the administration would ensure rural America gets its "more than fair share" of infrastructure funding, and White House officials said spending in rural areas would continue much as it has in the past (i.e. coming from the federal piggy bank). To that point, Trump will outline four categories of federal infrastructure funding in his speech, Bloomberg reported last night - a mix of grants and loans to "transformative" efforts; grants tailored to rural areas for road, bridge and waterway repairs; "enhanced loan programs," with TIFIA held out as an example; and "incentive programs with grants to states and municipalities to create additional funding for infrastructure."

Private practice: Despite Trump's nod to the federal side of his infrastructure equation, his overarching theme of enticing greater private infrastructure investment will be a hard sell to the barge operators in the audience who have for decades been beating back White House proposals to charge tolls or user fees, which industry says would violate the deal they made with Congress when they raised their gas tax in 2014, and wouldn't work anyway. But taxpayer advocates say the barge industry enjoys a massive subsidy since the federal government bears the entire hefty cost of maintenance for the system, and the Trump administration joined every administration since Clinton's in proposing a user fee in its 2018 budget blueprint.

IT'S EARWORM WEDNESDAY: Thanks for tuning in to POLITICO's Morning Transportation, your daily tipsheet on all things trains, planes, automobiles and ports. Enjoy your musical Easter eggs/midweek pick-me-up, loyal readers! Send us tips, feedback and lyrics to tsnyder@politico.com or [@TSnyderDC](https://twitter.com/TSnyderDC) and lgardner@politico.com or [@Gardner_LM](https://twitter.com/Gardner_LM).

"I'm looking out from my window seat/Halfway back, aisle 23/Man I wish that I could fly this thing/Give a little more gas, a little more speed ..." (h/t Savannah Haeger of Hamilton Place Strategies)

Want to keep up with MT's song picks? Follow our [Spotify playlist](#).

START YOUR (PLANE) ENGINES: The first of this week's congressional hearings on the looming need for an FAA reauthorization takes place at Senate Commerce today, and Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao will surely field lots of questions from senators that range from lukewarm to ice cold on the prospect of splitting air traffic control operations away from the FAA and into a nonprofit corporation. Commerce Chairman John Thune will reiterate that plenty of independent parties have studied "the flaws with the current structure," but that he looks forward to a discussion "on the merits of the reform proposals, as well as ways the administration will seek to address concerns of key stakeholders, especially those with a rural perspective."

YOU'RE NEVER GONNA GET IT: Trump's entrance into the air traffic control debate doesn't seem to have changed the dynamics on Capitol Hill. Senate Commerce Aviation Subcommittee Chairman Roy Blunt said he'd "look at" Trump's proposal but stayed far away from an endorsement. Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) said that although "privatization, on first blush, to many Republicans seems like a positive thing," he remains opposed to the idea - and thinks that more Republicans will too as they learn details about the plan. And former EPW Chairman Jim Inhofe said he wants the air traffic control proposal out of the FAA bill, given the Sept. 30 deadline. "We've attempted to take things that are controversial out of the FAA reauthorization," he said. Inhofe twice refused to tell MT exactly what changes he's asking for in Trump's plan, but when MT said she would guess it had "something to do with rural areas and general aviation," Inhofe said: "You're right."

THE TAXMAN: House Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady said Trump's proposal "deserves serious consideration" because the current system isn't yielding results fast enough on infrastructure improvements. "Our role on Ways and Means will be considering in this proposal whether we transfer tax authority in return for user fees to this new organization," he said. "So we're going to be looking carefully at that area." Since Rep. Bill Shuster's ATC plan never made it to the floor last year, Brady never was forced to take a position, but he always appeared skeptical of the idea of taking tax-setting power away from Congress and giving it to a new private entity.

Wyden awake: Top Democratic Senate tax writer Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) said he's "seeing a tidal wave of opposition to selling off assets, privatizing the air traffic system." At a time when "people are angry about baggage charges and no legroom and the like, this just looks like a gift to the private interests and the airlines," he said, adding that it looks like a textbook example of "what powerful people do" without regard for how it affects "the typical people, the working family, the senior citizen."

Meanwhile, back at the House: Shuster told reporters late Tuesday that the Transportation Committee will "possibly" mark up an FAA reauthorization bill "later in the month." When asked if he was weighing any changes to his 2016 effort given the White House's new principles on an air traffic control overhaul, all he'd say is he would "take a look at all of it. Like I said, we just got the announcement yesterday, so we're sifting through it."

CALL ME, MAYBE? Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), the ranking member on the Environment and

Public Works Committee who just wants someone from the Trump administration to call him about infrastructure, said Tuesday that he and Chairman John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) are still talking about their own principles to guide their legislative effort. "For me, one of the principles is that things that are worth having are worth paying for. We have charged entirely too much on the nation's credit card," he said, adding that given Barrasso's conservative bona fides, "hopefully he believes in paying for things, too."

PENCE IN THE HOUSE: In the Senate, actually - Vice President Mike Pence joined Republicans for their weekly luncheon Tuesday, but word is they didn't talk about infrastructure at all. Even during "Infrastructure Week" at the White House, it was all health care all the time.

Transpo groups in the White House: On the sidelines of Trump's meeting with GOP congressional leadership Tuesday, Cohn and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin held a separate listening session on taxes with representatives from a slew of transportation groups and companies, including Airlines for America, the Association of American Railroads, American Trucking Associations, FedEx and UPS.

TRUMP NOT MOVING HIS NOMINEES, UNTIL HE DOES: "Trump is lashing out at Democrats for allegedly stalling his appointments and agenda, but it's his own administration that is frequently sitting on the necessary paperwork for nominees," POLITICO's Seung Min Kim reported Tuesday morning. Trump appears to have gotten the message - he sent 17 nominations to the Senate on Tuesday afternoon, including Steven Bradbury for DOT general counsel and David Pekoske for assistant secretary of Homeland Security at TSA.

**** A message from Delta Air Lines:** Our daily briefing: At Delta we're constantly innovating to make your travel smoother. We tapped RFID technology to keep your bags in check at all times. Giving you more peace of mind from check-in to baggage claim. Learn more: delta.com/dca **

GLOVES OFF: The Air Line Pilots Association threw some elbows Tuesday at the U.S. Travel Association, accusing the group of "essentially lobbying on behalf of the [United Arab Emirates] without having filed appropriate disclosures, and ... asking the Justice Department to probe the matter," our Brianna Gurciullo writes for Pros. Emirates and Etihad - long accused by detractors of taking enormous subsidies from the UAE government - are both members of the travel group, which has promoted the Gulf carriers' position in Open Skies-related kerfuffles. That, according to ALPA, means U.S. Travel should register as a foreign lobbying agent.

Call and response: U.S. Travel's Jonathan Grella said the organization has "been active in support of Open Skies since February 2015 - years before any carriers joined as members," and that those airlines' membership fees amount to a pittance of the \$33 million the group pulls in each year.

KELLY ROLLS WITH THE PUNCHES: Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly told Democrats Tuesday he supports Trump's fiscal 2018 budget request to move resources to the southern border to target the "overwhelming" number of illegal migrants and drugs coming through the southern border - even at the expense of some counterterrorism programs. Democrats have opposed Trump's proposal to reduce the number of VIPR teams and eliminate grants to help

airports hire local officers. Kelly said states and municipalities have the resources to handle terrorism-related emergencies as the agency turns its attention to newer security threats. Our Stephanie Beasley has [more](#) for Pros.

LET IT GO, LET IT GO: At the same hearing, Sen. [Rand Paul](#) (R-Ky.) [told](#) Kelly he wants DHS agents to stop searching people's phones without a warrant, and without publishing any rules for the process. Kelly previously told Paul he was unaware of border agents demanding to search U.S. travelers' phones upon re-entry to the country, but acknowledged Tuesday that agents had confiscated and searched the phones of both U.S. citizens and noncitizens, albeit not routinely. That did little to pacify Paul, who said it shouldn't happen at all since the agency has no clear authority to search electronic devices.

MT MAILBAG: Del. [Eleanor Holmes Norton](#) (D-D.C.) has asked House Transportation Committee leaders Shuster and [Peter DeFazio](#) (D-Ore.) to hold a hearing on the potential dangers of transporting lithium batteries by air and U.S. efforts to ban electronics larger than cellphones in carry-on bags on commercial airplanes. "Experts have pointed out that fires caused by lithium batteries are more easily detected within the cabin of an aircraft as opposed to within the cargo hold," Norton wrote.

And National Association of Manufacturers President Jay Timmons is out with a [letter](#) today to members (and copied to Trump) imploring them to address "long-term challenges" in any infrastructure bill related to "persistent transportation funding uncertainty and regulatory improvements." "This is an ideal opportunity to refresh outdated revenue sources and regulations as well as developing a more reliable, user-based funding stream to keep building roads, bridges, transit systems and highways far into the future," he writes.

THE AUTOBAHN:

- "Elaine Chao: One woman's rise from immigrant roots to the presidential Cabinet." [CNN](#).
- "Feds fight demand for Trump campaign draft of travel ban." [POLITICO Pro](#).
- "Uber fires more than 20 as part of internal investigation." [POLITICO Pro](#).
- "Volkswagen's Electric Effort Charges Up Detractors." [The Wall Street Journal](#).
- "An airline tried to get a musician to check her 17th-century violin. A 'wrestling match' ensued." [The Washington Post](#).
- "Playing Catch-Up to Uber on Self-Driving, Lyft Teams Up With Partners." [The New York Times](#).

THE COUNTDOWN: DOT appropriations run out in 116 days. The FAA reauthorization expires in 116 days. Highway and transit policy is up for renewal in 1,212 days.

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<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-transportation/2017/06/07/trump-touts-waterways-rural-infrastructure-220713>

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