

Dawsey, Darren Samuelsohn and Tara Palmeri: "'It's fair to say a storm is coming,' one administration source said. 'We're boarding up the windows for the impending hurricane.' ... The [RNC] is taking the lead in the response and has prepared a surrogate operation. ... Two former Trump White House officials - former deputy chief of staff Katie Walsh and former communications director Mike Dubke - are helping coordinate the effort. Press secretary Sean Spicer was at the RNC on Wednesday as preparations took place. ... For official comment, the White House has directed all questions to the office of Trump's outside counsel, Marc Kasowitz.

"Kasowitz's office, in turn, has directed inquiries to Emily Thall, the law firm's director of business development and marketing. On Tuesday, Thall declined to comment in a brief conversation with POLITICO about Comey testimony. By Wednesday, inquiries to Thall were met with an automatic response: She would be out of the office on vacation until next week. By Wednesday night, Kasowitz's firm had retained longtime political communications pro Mark Corallo to handle media inquiries." <http://politi.co/2rY3CYY>

QUOTE OF THE DAY - From the quadruple-byline story: "White House aides are trying to keep Trump busy Thursday morning with meetings so he won't watch TV and tweet during the hearing. 'But if he wants to watch it, it's not like we can say, 'oh, the TV doesn't work,'" one official said."

HOW IT'S PLAYING -- HUFFPOST banner, "COMEY BEFORE THE STORM" ... **DRUDGE** as of 6 a.m., "MAY DAY" (about the UK election) ... **N.Y. POST**, "'I EXPECT LOYALTY'" <http://nyp.st/2sGrBtM> ... **N.Y. DAILY NEWS**, "DON'S PLEA: COVERUP" <http://nydn.us/2simZwi> ... **EVEN TMZ IS IN ON THE ACTION** -- They have videos of Sen. Richard Burr (R-N.C.) (<http://bit.ly/2qYOTBX>) and Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.) (<http://bit.ly/2s7kyNv>).

***** **A message from Samsung:** Samsung has announced more than \$10 Billion in US Growth since 2016, including our March 2017 acquisition of HARMAN International, a commitment of \$1.2 Billion in U.S.-based IoT Investment and R&D, and a \$1B expansion of our Austin, TX Semiconductor Manufacturing Facility. Visit Samsung.com/VisionForTomorrow for more. *****

FUN READ -- "'Must-See TV': Free Drinks and Canceled Meetings for Comey's Testimony," by NYT's Mike Grynbaum and Katie Rogers: "By the time details from Mr. Comey's prepared remarks surfaced on Wednesday ... the hearing had leapt from

Beltway curiosity to required viewing, a cliffhanger episode of the nation's real-life reality show. ... At Union Pub in Washington, a sports bar steps from the Hart Senate Office Building, bartenders plan to dole out a free round of Budweisers or bourbon shots every time Mr. Trump blasts out a tweet. For those wondering: No, there will not be a limit. 'We'll give out 20 rounds' if the president tweets 20 times, Ashley Saunders, the bar's general manager, said." <http://nyti.ms/2rXKSc3>

THIS TOWN -- "White-collar lawyers see opportunity in Trump scandals," by Darren Samuelsohn and Andrew Restuccia: "More than a dozen attorneys and crisis communications specialists have already started working for Trump associates touched by the unfolding Russia scandal, according to a POLITICO tally. People close to the probes say that number is only expected to grow as more than 20 other senior campaign aides and White House officials begin receiving subpoenas, grand jury summons and other requests from special counsel Robert Mueller as well as congressional committees." <http://politi.co/2qYR2Wa>

ACROSS THE POND -- BRITISH ELECTION TODAY -- "Polls open in UK election after campaign marred by attacks," by AP's Danica Kirka in London: "Polling stations opened across Britain on Thursday for national elections, amid heightened security worries following a series of terror attacks in what one senior police official described as 'unprecedented times.' The public is being asked to be alert and to report concerns to police as voters choose 650 lawmakers for the House of Commons. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D'Orsi acknowledged concerns about Thursday's general election." <http://apne.ws/2qYLB9t>

ANNIE KARNI: THE FIRST FAMILY -- "Melania Trump set to make her D.C. move next week: Staffers hope the first lady will be a stabilizing presence in a White House that's been consumed by scandal and infighting": "With the school year over, first lady Melania Trump and the couple's son Barron are expected to finally make their official move to Washington on June 14, according to people familiar with the planning. ... Over the past few weeks, the often stiff-in-her-role first lady has been spending more time in the White House, building out her East Wing staff, preparing the residence for the family and slowly increasing her schedule of public events. ... [T]he June 14 date is seen as a major marker on the White House calendar - when the first lady puts away the full matching set of Louis Vuitton luggage that she travels with and settles in for good." ***With cameos by Sam Nunberg, Chris Ruddy and Anita McBride***
<http://politi.co/2simMJL>