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From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
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Subject: Playbook Power Briefing, presented by CTIA: CASSIDY, GRAHAM to meet with MCCONNELL -- MNUCHIN says TRUMP's 15 percent corporate tax rate difficult to achieve -- HOPE HICKS now permanent White House comms director

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Today's Playbook Power Briefing presented by CTIA

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TWO BITES OF NEWS ...

-- **SENS. LINDSEY GRAHAM (R-S.C.)** and **BILL CASSIDY (R-LA.)** are meeting with **SENATE MAJORITY LEADER MITCH MCCONNELL (R-KY.)** this afternoon about their health care proposal.

-- **THE WHITE HOUSE** seems pretty confident that they will be able to release a tax-reform framework from the Big Six at the end of the month. But we're sensing some skepticism from House and Senate sources that they'll be able to meet that deadline.

STEVEN MNUCHIN spoke at CNBC's "Delivering Alpha" conference -- "[M]nuchin insisted that a tax overhaul would happen this year. 'We're going to get this done by the end of the year,' Mnuchin said, adding that the administration is 'super focused' on the goal following the three-month debt limit and government funding extension passed last week. ...

"Mnuchin said that President Donald Trump's goal of chopping the corporate tax rate to 15 percent could be difficult to achieve. 'I don't know if we'll be able to achieve that given the budget issues. But we're going to get this down to a very competitive level,' Mnuchin said." <http://cnb.cx/2wYcUEY>

-- **OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:** Mnuchin said he thought it was "a mistake" to break up the CEO councils. ... Repealing and replacing Obamacare is not the focus at the moment, he said.

Good Tuesday afternoon. STORY OF THE DAY -- MCCONNELL SPEAKS to NYT's **CARL HULSE -- "McConnell Says Democrats' Glee on Debt Limit Deal Was Premature":** "'Let's put it this way,' Mr. McConnell, the Kentucky Republican and majority leader, said Monday in an interview for The New York Times podcast 'The New Washington.' 'The deal is not quite as good as my counterpart thought it was.' The reason? Mr. McConnell said that he insisted the newly passed legislation preserve

Treasury's ability to apply 'extraordinary measures' and shift money within government accounts to pay off debt and extend federal borrowing power. That will delay the need for another increase in the debt limit well beyond the December deadline that Democrats have been trumpeting as their big moment of leverage. And Mr. McConnell said he did so over the objections of Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic leader and aforementioned counterpart. ...

"Clearly irked by the perception that he got rolled by Democrats when President Trump accepted their proposal for a three-month extension of the debt limit and government funding, Mr. McConnell, an avid college football fan, said Democrats 'spiked the ball in the end zone a little too early.' Instead, he said, he used his majority leader's position to make something of an end run. 'One of the advantages of being the majority leader is you control the paper,' Mr. McConnell said, referring to legislation. 'I wrote it in such a way that it does not prevent what is frequently done, which is the use of extraordinary measures. The minority leader and his team were trying to get us not to write it that way, but I did write it that way and that is the way it passed.'"

<http://nyti.ms/2xu0KGT>

-- **LET'S UNPACK THIS A BIT:** McConnell is right. He, along with Speaker Paul Ryan and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, tried to convince Trump that he didn't want another debt ceiling vote this year. What ended up happening didn't really anger Ryan and McConnell, which is why they didn't put up a fight. But now the debt limit will likely be pushed to 2018 -- due to the extraordinary measures we've explained here a few times -- and that could stunt Trump's legislative agenda.

MCCAIN TO CONTINUE TREATMENT -- Statement from his office: "Senator McCain received an MRI at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland yesterday. Following the advice of his doctors, Senator McCain will continue to receive targeted radiation and chemotherapy treatments at the NIH while maintaining a regular work schedule in the United States Senate."

THE FOUR SEASONS BREAKFAST CROWD -- JACK QUINN with George Crowley ... Bill Kennard, former U.S. ambassador to the EU, with Robert Mandell, former U.S. ambassador to Luxembourg ... Don Baer ... former U.S. ambassador to Belgium Howard Gutman with Andrew Smith of McGuire Woods ... former U.S. ambassador to Slovakia Tod Sedgwick

HOPE HICKS IN CHARGE, PERMANENTLY -- Bloomberg's **JEN JACOBS** and **JUSTIN SINK:** "Hicks, who has been serving as interim communications director, will now lead the communications team on a permanent basis, two White House officials said. She's viewed by staff as a strong leader because she is one of the president's most trusted aides and therefore secure in her standing."

STOP US IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE -- BLOOMBERG -- SELLING TAX REFORM: "President Donald Trump plans an aggressive travel schedule, taking him to as many as 13 states over the next seven weeks, to sell the idea of a tax overhaul as

the administration tries to avoid repeating the communications failures of its attempt to repeal Obamacare. ... The strategy was revealed by top advisers to about 40 allies during a closed-door meeting last week. It calls for the president to visit states he won where a Democratic senator is up for re-election next year, including Florida, Indiana, Michigan, Montana, Ohio and Pennsylvania, said three people who attended."

<https://bloom.bg/2h0Gge0>

***** **A message from CTIA and America's wireless industry:** The global race to deploy 5G wireless is on-and America needs to win. Government action on spectrum and infrastructure policy will allow U.S. wireless companies to invest \$275 billion, create more than 3 million jobs, and add \$500 billion to the economy, according to Accenture. Learn more at CTIA.org. *****

ON THE PRESIDENT'S MIND -- @realDonaldTrump at 8:56 a.m.: "Fascinating to watch people writing books and major articles about me and yet they know nothing about me & have zero access. #FAKE NEWS!"

THE LATEST ON THE HURRICANE -- 12:06 p.m. -- MIAMI (AP): "Utility says much of Florida's east coast could have power back by Sunday; other areas could take 10 days or more."

TODAY'S MUST READ -- WAPO'S PAUL KANE speaks to **LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA -- "Lin-Manuel Miranda comes to Washington - with lessons from the era of Hamilton"** <http://wapo.st/2xuEva5>

--HAPPENING TONIGHT -- MIRANDA is getting the 2017 Freedom Award from the U.S. Capitol Historical Society at 6 p.m. in Statuary Hall.

TRUMP INC. -- "Trump Beach Resort Wants More Foreign Guest Workers," by BuzzFeed's Jessica Garrison, Jeremy Singer-Vine and Ken Bensinger: "The Trump International Beach Resort, in Sunny Isles Beach, Florida, has asked the government for permission to hire more temporary foreign workers to labor as housekeepers, according to records posted by the Department of Labor on Monday. The resort, which is near Miami, licenses President Donald Trump's name but is owned by the International Resorts Management Group. It asked for permission to bring in 10 housekeepers, claiming no Americans wanted the jobs. The positions pay \$10.64 an hour." <http://bzfd.it/2ffHke1>

A BANNON UPDATE ...

-- THE BANNON/TRUMP BACKCHANNEL: WSJ's Julie Steinberg and Steven Russolillo, with a Hong Kong dateline: "Mr. Bannon said he talks to Mr. Trump every two to three days, and that the pair last spoke the previous night for an hour, according to two people who attended the closed-door meeting with the former presidential adviser. The gathering, at a Grand Hyatt hotel restaurant, included a group of about 20 money managers. ... Mr. Bannon at the Tuesday lunch described himself as a 'schmendrick'

engineer -- invoking the Yiddish word for 'foolish person' -- while Mr. Trump was the architect of the campaign, the attendee said. Mr. Bannon said while he had influence before in the White House, he now has 'power' at Breitbart." <http://on.wsj.com/2jINVYN>

-- **BANNON'S MEDIA FOOTPRINT: "How Steve Bannon Is Preparing For War,"** by BuzzFeed's Tarini Parti and Adrian Carrasquillo: "What sources close to him say they are most confident about are Bannon's plans to increase his media footprint, with his team discussing how to ramp up the broadcasting of Bannon's economic nationalist ideas through television and radio. A confidante who recently spoke to Bannon said he is working on a book and his three hours of airtime on SiriusXM will now double to six hours with the addition of a nightly show.

"**A separate source close to Bannon** said Bannon has talked with Christopher Ruddy, a Trump friend and the CEO of Newsmax Media, about bringing him on to work on a TV effort. The Sinclair Broadcast Group, a conservative-leaning television company with a growing presence in local markets around the country, also reached out to Bannon about possibly producing content for their networks." <http://bzfd.it/2h1oIP6>

AIR FORCE ONE WATCH -- "Trump is visit U.S. Virgin Islands in wake of Irma," by The Virgin Islands Consortium's Ernice Gilbert: "President Donald Trump will visit the U.S. Virgin Islands 'within the next six or seven days,' Governor Kenneth Mapp said during a press conference at Government House late Monday. Mr. Mapp said he had a conversation with the president today, and Mr. Trump expressed his full support for the territory in providing disaster relief, following the calamitous state Hurricane Irma left St. Thomas and St. John in.

"**Mr. Trump wants 'to see firsthand** the damages of the territory, and to get on-ground reports of the federal operation, to ensure that the people of the Virgin Islands are receiving recovery as fast as humanly possible, and that the assets of the federal government were being appropriately deployed,' the governor said. Mr. Trump said he loves the U.S. Virgin Islands, Mr. Mapp added." <http://bit.ly/2xuwwLR>

OOPS -- "Ted Cruz blames staffer for 'liking' porn tweet," by Louis Nelson and Burgess Everett <http://politi.co/2y2sMXb>

HMM... -- "Billionaire Tom Steyer's PAC donates \$1 million to help Virginia immigrant groups mobilize for November election," by WaPo's Antonio Olivo: "California billionaire Tom Steyer is giving \$1 million to immigrant advocates in Virginia to mobilize voters in November's state elections, part of an effort to fuel a Democratic resurgence in the Trump era by focusing on a swing state that has embodied the nation's polarized political climate. The contribution by Steyer's super PAC, NextGen America, aims to tap into voter resentment over President Trump's immigration policies, in particular the travel ban against immigrants from six Muslim-majority countries and plans to phase out an Obama administration program that protected from deportation 800,000 undocumented immigrants who arrived here illegally as children." <http://wapo.st/2h1MQ44>

JOB OF THE DAY: Fraud analyst for Equifax. "The Fraud Monitoring Analyst is responsible for analysis and controls maintaining review of systems and processes supporting identity and fraud. These analysts are responsible for monitoring; analyzing and investigating interactions to identify fraudulent access or attempted access to Equifax consumer facing systems in near real-time ... This function is a critical line of defense for Equifax and integral to business goals." *District Daybook has the listing* <http://bit.ly/2jkNKgl>

-- "**Ousted NSC Official Takes Job at Oracle,**" by Just Security's Kate Brannen: "Ezra Cohen-Watnick, who was fired from the National Security Council in August, has landed a new job at the Washington, D.C. office of Oracle, the Silicon Valley software giant, according to two sources with knowledge of his move. His new job title is not confirmed and the company declined a request for comment." <http://bit.ly/2w5tZiR>

TOP-ED - "You Won't Like Mexico When It's Angry: President Trump's insults are pushing the Mexican political system into dangerous territory," by Jorge Guajardo, former Mexican ambassador to China, in POLITICO Magazine: "[W]hat would happen if Mexico were to break with the U.S. on NAFTA? ... The first item off the table would likely be cooperation on issues of migration. ... Next up would be cooperation on the drug war. ... The fight against terrorism would suffer. Since 9/11, Mexico has arguably been the biggest obstacle against terrorists trying to reach U.S. soil. ... The list goes on: health, environment, transportation, water, disease control. No two countries in the world cooperate in as many areas as Mexico and the United States." <http://politi.co/2xuSfLP>

TODAY'S BEYOND THE BELTWAY -- Blagojevich gives two interviews -- Florida starts Irma recovery <http://politi.co/2y2cNs1>

FIRST-PERSON -- MARC CAPUTO in POLITICO Magazine, "This Is What It's Like to Ride Out a Hurricane: Why do people stay behind? This is why I didn't evacuate": "Over the years, these storms taught me to respect nature and fear man. I covered them as a reporter; I endured them as a Florida resident. They showed me how wind can wrap steel around a tree and how boats get flung on dry land while cars submerge. ... How desperate people without power, food or gas can be far more dangerous than any storm. And, perhaps most importantly, how something will go wrong if it can-but you're never sure what that something is.

"Hurricane Irma would teach me that lesson, again, like no other. People who have never lived through a hurricane often have a hard time understanding why anyone would stay in the path of one. Are you stupid? Get out of there! But everyone has their reasons, or rationalizations. And when you've survived a few of these things, you figure: What's one more?" <http://politi.co/2y2gEoP>

MEDIAWATCH -- JAMES ASTILL, Washington correspondent for The Economist, has started writing the magazine's Lexington column about American politics. He previously was political editor and Bagehot columnist. **David Rennie** will be moving to Asia for The

Economist next year.

SPOTTED: Former FBI Director James Comey dining at Capital Grille last night ... former Sen. Gordon Smith (R-Ore.), Dennis Wharton, Ted Johnson, and Kim Hart at lunch at Greenhouse at the Jefferson Hotel ... At Bombay Club yesterday: Matt Viser, Rick Klein, James Hohmann, AB Stoddard, Jen Epstein, Jonathan Last, Jen Rubin, Doyle McManus and David Catanese for a media lunch sponsored by the New Center (<http://bit.ly/2eTC7YM>) with speakers Bill Kristol and Bill Galston

TRANSITIONS -- OBAMA ALUMNI -- ERIC FANNING, former Secretary of the Army, has joined the Board of Advisors of the Truman Center for National Policy.

--"RNC Announces First Wave Of State Director Hires" for 17 states:
<http://bit.ly/2f2VYZj>

WELCOME TO THE WORLD - OBAMA ALUMNI -- Michael Pan, special adviser at the Open Society Foundation and former director for strategic planning at the NSC and alum of the U.S. mission to the U.N. under Susan Rice, and **Eva Bonime**, deputy political director at SEIU 32BJ, welcomed Cassie Safir Pan over the weekend, at 6lb. 15oz, 19.5 inches. "Big sister 3-year old Edie came up with the name."

***** **A message from CTIA and America's wireless industry:** Tomorrow's 5G networks will create 3 million jobs, add \$500 billion to the economy, and fuel innovation and entrepreneurialism across every sector. If policymakers move quickly to release more spectrum and modernize infrastructure rules, the wireless industry stands ready to invest \$275 billion to build these next-gen networks, according to Accenture. This will drive breakthrough advancements in remote health care, connected vehicles, energy, education and beyond-making our lives better and safer. But the race to deploy 5G wireless networks is underway-and we're at a critical moment. The EU, China, Japan, South Korea and others are doing everything they can to win. If policymakers act now, the U.S. can continue our global leadership in wireless. Learn how at CTIA.org. *****

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