

**To:** Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]  
**From:** Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman  
**Sent:** Thur 8/3/2017 5:14:54 PM  
**Subject:** Playbook Power Briefing, presented by Morgan Stanley: TRUMP blames Congress, not Russia, for bad relations -- POTUS to Mexican president: 'You cannot say that to the press' -- ZINKE, MURKOWSKI make up -- KENNEDY CENTER honors announced

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Today's Playbook Power Briefing presented by Morgan Stanley

By ANNA PALMER ([anna@politico.com](mailto:anna@politico.com); [@apalmerdc](https://twitter.com/apalmerdc)), JAKE SHERMAN ([sherman@politico.com](mailto:sherman@politico.com); [@JakeSherman](https://twitter.com/JakeSherman)), DANIEL LIPPMAN ([daniel@politico.com](mailto:daniel@politico.com); [@dlippman](https://twitter.com/dlippman)), ZACH MONTELLARO ([zmontellaro@politico.com](mailto:zmontellaro@politico.com); [@ZachMontellaro](https://twitter.com/ZachMontellaro))

**Good Thursday afternoon. PRESIDENT TRUMP** blamed Congress (which his party controls) this morning for America's bad relationship with Russia, the day after he signed a bipartisan sanctions bill. He tweeted: "Our relationship with Russia is at an all-time & very dangerous low. You can thank Congress, the same people that can't even give us HCare!"

**RUSSIA, NOT CONGRESS**, meddled in the 2016 elections, invaded neighboring countries, adopted an aggressive posture towards NATO allies and supported regimes that the U.S. opposes, like Bashar Assad in Syria. Almost eight months into his administration, the president has been reluctant to even publicly acknowledge the fact that Russia interfered with the presidential race.

**MORE FROM THE WHITE HOUSE -- @realDonaldTrump** at 8:08 a.m.: "Business is looking better than ever with business enthusiasm at record levels. Stock Market at an all-time high. That doesn't just happen!" ... **at 8:12 a.m.:** "I am continuing to get rid of costly and unnecessary regulations. Much work left to do but effect will be great! Business & jobs will grow." ***He also retweeted a Fox & Friends tweet on Obamacare and a supporter bashing the media.***

**MUST READ TRANSCRIPTS -- "Trump urged Mexican president to end his public defiance on border wall, transcript reveals,"** by WaPo's Greg Miller: "President Trump made building a wall along the southern U.S. border and forcing Mexico to pay for it core pledges of his campaign. But in his first White House call with Mexico's president, Trump described his vow to charge Mexico as a growing political problem, pressuring the Mexican leader to stop saying publicly that his government would never pay.

**"'You cannot say that to the press,'** Trump said repeatedly, according to a transcript of the Jan. 27 call obtained by The Washington Post. Trump made clear that he realized the funding would have to come from other sources but threatened to cut off contact if Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto continued to make defiant statements.

"The funding 'will work out in the formula somehow,' Trump said, adding later that 'it will come out in the wash, and that is okay.' But 'if you are going to say that Mexico is not going to pay for the wall, then I do not want to meet with you guys anymore because I cannot live with that.' He described the wall as 'the least important thing we are talking about, but politically this might be the most important.'" <http://wapo.st/2hqJRpj>

**MORE FROM THE MUST-READ TRANSCRIPTS** -- Trump, to President Pena Nieto **on the drug trade:** "And we have the drug lords in Mexico that are knocking the hell out of our country. They are sending drugs to Chicago, Los Angeles, and to New York. Up in New Hampshire - I won New Hampshire because New Hampshire is a drug-infested den - is coming from the southern border. So we have a lot of problems with Mexico farther than the economic problem." ...

... **Trump on the wall:** "My people stand up and say, 'Mexico will pay for the wall' and your people probably say something in a similar but slightly different language. But the fact is we are both in a little bit of a political bind because I have to have Mexico pay for the wall - I have to. I have been talking about it for a two year period, and the reason I say they are going to pay for the wall is because Mexico has made a fortune out of the stupidity of U.S. trade representatives."

**TRUMP** also talked to Australian Prime Minister **MALCOLM TURNBULL** on an Australia-U.S. refugee deal and why Australia was not some refugees into their country.

**Turnbull:** "Okay, I will explain why. It is not because they are bad people. It is because in order to stop people smugglers, we had to deprive them of the product. So we said if you try to come to Australia by boat, even if we think you are the best person in the world, even if you are a Noble [sic] Prize winning genius, we will not let you in. ... " ...

**Trump:** "That is a good idea. We should do that too. You are worse than I am." ...

... **Turnbull:** "This is a big deal. It is really, really important to us that we maintain it. It does not oblige you to take one person that you do not want. ..." ... **Trump:** "[W]hy is this so important? I do not understand. This is going to kill me. I am the world's greatest person that does not want to let people into the country. And now I am agreeing to take 2,000 people and I agree I can vet them, but that puts me in a bad position. It makes me look so bad and I have only been here a week."

**TRUMP**, growing frustrated with Turnbull: "It is an embarrassment to the United States of America and you can say it just the way I said it. I will say it just that way. As far as I am concerned that is enough Malcom [sic]. I have had it. I have been making these calls all day and this is the most unpleasant call all day. Putin was a pleasant call. This is ridiculous. ... [inaudible] this is crazy." ***The complete transcripts***

<http://wapo.st/2unzTq9>

--**@Bencjacob:** "This may be my favorite Trump line from the transcripts: 'we do not have to worry about Canada, we do not even think about them'"

\*\*\*\*\* **A message from Morgan Stanley** : Starbucks debuted a sustainability bond in international markets that supports ethically sourced supply chains and financial and educational support for farming communities. Strong investor interest demonstrated the extent to which institutional bond buyers support social and environmentally responsible behavior by corporations. [Read more from Morgan Stanley.](#) \*\*\*\*\*

**LISTEN TO THIS -- "Ryan Lizza Revisits His Phone Call with Anthony Scaramucci,"** on the New Yorker Radio Hour: "In this segment, Ryan Lizza and David Remnick listen to excerpts from the call and discuss what they suggest about the Trump Administration. While Scaramucci's behavior and language were shocking even by Trump's standards, Lizza believes that his appointment followed a familiar pattern. 'So many politicians believe when they're failing, they believe that the real problem is just a communications strategy-that if only the American public heard and saw what the most loyal supporters saw in the President, everything would be solved,' Lizza says."  
<http://bit.ly/2unOSjT>

**THE PRESIDENT** teased a "very big" announcement at tonight's campaign-style rally at a Department of Veterans Affairs event in the Roosevelt Room today. The president is scheduled to leave D.C. at 4:50 p.m. and the rally is set to start just past 7 p.m.

**THE U.S. CHAMBER** and other business groups sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer urging the Senate to speed up the confirmation process for Trump administration nominees. The letter: "The slow pace of confirmations is depriving agencies across the government of critical leadership and in the case of independent agencies, the quorum necessary to conduct critical business." **Full letter** <http://politi.co/2uoyjUQ>

-- **THE SENATE** is expected to come to a deal on nominations before leaving town.

**MAKING UP? -- @SecretaryZinke:** "I say dinner, she says brews. My friends know me well. Thanks @lisamurkowski #Alaska #IPA #MadeInAmerica" <http://bit.ly/2unBw6T>

**AFTERNOON READ -- "How the CIA Came to Doubt the Official Story of JFK's Murder,"** by Philip Shenon and Larry Sabato in POLITICO Magazine: "[T]housands of pages of long-secret, assassination-related documents released by the National Archives last week show that, within a few years of Kennedy's murder, some in the CIA began to worry internally that the official story was wrong-an alarm the agency never sounded publicly.

**"Specifically, key CIA officials were concerned** by the mid-1970s that the agency, the FBI, the Secret Service and the White House commission led by Chief Justice Earl Warren had never followed up on important clues about Oswald's contact with foreign agents, including diplomats and spies for the Communist governments of Cuba and the Soviet Union, who might have been aware of his plans to kill Kennedy and even encouraged the plot. (There is no credible evidence cited in the documents released so far that Cuban leader Fidel Castro or other foreign leaders had any personal role in

ordering Kennedy's murder.)

**"The CIA documents also offer tantalizing speculation** about the chain of events in late 1963 that explained Oswald's motives for killing Kennedy, which have previously never been established with certainty-how he may have become enraged after reading a detailed article in his hometown newspaper in New Orleans in September suggesting that his hero Castro had been targeted for assassination by the Kennedy administration. According to that theory, Oswald, who had rifle training in the Marine Corps, then set out to seek vengeance on Castro's behalf-to kill Kennedy before the American president managed to kill the Cuban leader." <http://politi.co/2unraE0>

**HMM -- @elyratner:** "DPRK policy this week Haley: All options on table ... Tillerson: No regime change; we seek talks ... Pompeo: Regime change on table ... Pence: No talks".

**ABOUT THAT TRANSGENDER BAN --** A new poll from Quinnipiac University found that American voters by a margin of 68 percent to 27 percent believe that transgender people should be allowed to serve in the military. Among military households, it is 55 percent to 39 percent. **Full poll** <http://bit.ly/2u7HjCo>

**THE LATEST ON RUSSIA -- "Top FBI officials could testify against Trump,"** by Murray Waas in Vox: "Shortly after the appointment of special counsel Robert Mueller in May, acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe told several of the highest-ranking managers of the bureau they should consider themselves possible witnesses in any investigation into whether President Donald Trump engaged in obstruction of justice, according to two senior federal law enforcement officials. McCabe has told colleagues that he too is a potential witness in the probe of whether Trump broke the law by trying to thwart the FBI's Russia investigation and the investigation into whether the Trump campaign colluded with the Russian government to defeat Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election." <http://bit.ly/2u7UHGI>

**DESSERT -- "Gloria Estefan, hip-hop artist among Kennedy Center honorees,"** by the AP's Jessica Gresko: "They are: hip-hop artist LL Cool J, singers Gloria Estefan and Lionel Richie, television writer and producer Norman Lear and dancer Carmen de Lavallade. It's the 40th year of the awards, which honor people who have influenced American culture through the arts. The honorees will be celebrated at a gala on Dec. 3, featuring performances and tributes from top entertainers and attended by President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump. The show will be broadcast on Dec. 26 on CBS." <http://bit.ly/2u7JpCm>

**MEDIAWATCH -- "New Fox Harassment Allegations: 'A Contributorship...Was Contingent Upon' Sex,"** by Mother Jones' Andy Kroll: "A former frequent on-air guest at Fox News says that a Fox consultant and top lieutenant to Roger Ailes, the network's late founder and longtime CEO, sexually harassed her repeatedly for more than a year, including dangling the possibility of a paid job at Fox if she would have sex with him. The allegation appears in a written declaration by Caroline Heldman, an associate professor of politics at Occidental College who made numerous guest appearances on

Fox starting in 2008. The Fox consultant, Woody Fraser, is a veteran television producer who helped create shows such as Good Morning America and Nightline and worked closely with Ailes at Fox for nearly a decade." <http://bit.ly/2u7pzav>

--@oliverdarcy: "Wait, @marcorubio - the same Marco Rubio trashed by Breitbart time and time again - wrote an op-ed for...Breitbart?!" <http://bit.ly/2v0Emm3>

--**J. David Ake, Kathleen Hennessey and Elizabeth Kennedy** were all named deputy Washington bureau chiefs for the AP. Ake will be the deputy for visual journalism and presentation, Hennessey a deputy for newsgathering with a focus focus on the White House, Congress and politics and Kennedy will be a deputy for newsgathering, with a focus on national security, the Trump-Russia team, law enforcement and legal beats, and our general beat teams. **Full release** <http://bit.ly/2unBj3N>

-- The Atlantic announced three additions to their global reporting team. **Rachel Donadio**, the European culture correspondent for the New York Times, will be The Atlantic's culture and politics writer based in Paris. **Yasmeen Serhan**, a current Atlantic reporter, joins the London bureau as a reporter. **Krishnadev Calamur**, currently The Atlantic's news editor, will begin this fall as a global diplomacy correspondent covering U.S.-Europe relations, the State Department, and foreign policy. **Full release** <http://theatl.in.tc/2unExnR>

-- @MSNBCPR: ".@MSNBC happily welcomes @WSJ reporter @EliStokols to our roster as a political analyst!"

**HOT JOB -- Director, Executive Office for Immigration Review at Dept. of Justice --**  
From the job description: "Are you interested in a rewarding and challenging career? If yes, then come and join the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), ranked among top Best Places to Work in Federal Government." <http://bit.ly/2unlRnc> (h/t Tom Manatos)

\*\*\*\*\* **A message from Morgan Stanley** : Major global companies like Starbucks are increasingly focused on the sustainability of their supply chain. Why? Because issues like the sourcing of coffee and its environmental footprint are increasingly meaningful to its customers. Starbucks' sustainability bonds (\$500 million in 2016 and ¥85billion this year) create a financial virtual cycle: What's good for coffee growers is good for Starbucks; what's good for Starbucks is good for investors; what's good for investors is good for 1 million people in coffee communities around the world. Innovation in the bond market provides companies with opportunities to identify ways to drive sustainability throughout the business and engage with investors who are interested in supporting those efforts. [Read more from Morgan Stanley.](#) \*\*\*\*\*

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