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From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
Sent: Wed 6/28/2017 5:11:07 PM
Subject: Playbook Power Briefing, presented by the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD): TRUMP said to be postponing filing complaint against COMEY -- POTUS to PARIS -- MCCONNELL wants BCRA revisions to CBO by FRIDAY -- SCHRECKINGER on SPLC

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Today's Playbook Power Briefing presented by the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD)

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INBOX -- SHOCKING TO ABSOLUTELY NO ONE -- "FOX NEWS CHANNEL SIGNS CONGRESSMAN JASON CHAFFETZ (R-UTAH) TO CONTRIBUTOR ROLE"

Good Wednesday afternoon. WHAT SPICER IS DOING THIS WEEKEND -- THE RHODE ISLAND REPUBLICAN PARTY is hosting a reception honoring "RI native" Sean Spicer. The event is Sunday, July 2. The minimum contribution is \$200, and for \$1,000 you get a private VIP reception. *Invite* <http://bit.ly/2tkBwrQ>

SCOOP -- BLOOMBERG'S MARGARET TALEV and SHANNON PETTYPIECE -- "Trump Said to Postpone Filing Complaint About Comey's Conduct": "Donald Trump's lawyers will postpone filing a complaint against former FBI Director James Comey with the Justice Department, according to a person familiar with the decision -- a bid to stop antagonizing the special counsel who's investigating ties between the president's campaign and Russian officials.

"Trump's lawyer, Marc Kasowitz [whose birthday is today], planned to file a complaint with the Justice Department's inspector general about Comey. The ousted FBI director told the Senate on June 8 that he had arranged for memos he wrote documenting conversations with the president to be described to news reporters. ... The president's lawyers still intend to file a complaint at some point, the person familiar with the matter said. ...

"The delay is a professional courtesy to the special counsel, Robert Mueller, and a signal that the White House understands he needs space to do his job, the person said." <https://bloom.bg/2tYgJI4>

HEALTH CARE TIMELINE -- "McConnell is trying to revise the Senate health-care bill by Friday," by WaPo's Paige Winfield Cunningham and Sean Sullivan: "Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is aiming to send a revised version of his health-care bill to the Congressional Budget Office by as soon as Friday, according to Capitol Hill

aides and lobbyists. The effort reflects the tight timeline McConnell faces in his attempt to hold a vote before the August recess - and the pressure he is under to make changes that improve the CBO's measure of the bill's impact on coverage levels and federal spending.

"McConnell is trying to move quickly to produce a new CBO score by the time lawmakers return to Washington in mid-July, giving the Senate about two weeks to fulfill the majority leader's goal of voting before the August recess. McConnell and his aides plan [to] continue negotiations through the end of the week and will be in frequent communication with the CBO, according to McConnell spokesman David Popp.

"It remains unclear exactly what parts of the Better Care Reconciliation Act are being revised - or whether McConnell is trying to move the measure to the right, with greater savings or regulatory adjustments, or to the left, with more coverage protections. McConnell needs to bring on board about nine senators who have said they wouldn't vote for the bill in its current form. Moving to the right would appease conservatives in the Senate - but also in the House, where any Senate bill would also have to pass."
<http://wapo.st/2tpyqw3>

PAUL KANE'S BIG PICTURE -- "McConnell is known as a deal-closer, but he's never done policy this big": "For the last decade, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has forged a reputation as a closer on big deals. There was the Wall Street bailout just before the 2008 elections. There was the pact over the summer of 2011 to slash spending and avoid a federal default. And there was the 2012 New Year's Eve 'fiscal cliff' compromise to avoid massive tax increases. ...

"For weeks, McConnell has privately argued that the more they wait, the less likely they are to repeal the 2010 health-care law that President Barack Obama and Democrats approved on party-line votes. Even President Trump, after he summoned GOP senators to the White House on Tuesday, openly questioned whether Republicans will ever live up to one of the central tenets of their party's orthodoxy by 'repealing' what they deride as Obamacare.

"If they can't, it will be a humbling defeat for a Senate leader who thrives on his ability to play the behind-the-scenes game. It illustrates how, 10 years after taking over as Republican leader, McConnell still struggles to corral his caucus and how this has left something missing in his legacy: a sweeping rewrite of big policy along the lines of revamping the health-care system." <http://wapo.st/2tkJell>

THERE IS SUDDENLY a ton of talk about a bipartisan deal on health care. Democrats have expressed next to zero interest in working with Trump.

TRUMP is going to Paris for Bastille Day on July 14.

******* A message from the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD):** A new study projects pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) will save Medicare Part D \$896

billion over ten years. PBMs drive savings for taxpayers and seniors by negotiating discounts from drug manufacturers; by encouraging the use of lower cost, clinically equivalent drugs; and by providing clinical programs that improve health outcomes. Learn more at affordableprescriptiondrugs.org *****

STATEMENTS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE -- @realDonaldTrump at 6:49 a.m.: "The failing @nytimes writes false story after false story about me. They don't even call to verify the facts of a story. A Fake News Joke!" ... **at 6:58 a.m.:** "Some of the Fake News Media likes to say that I am not totally engaged in healthcare. Wrong, I know the subject well & want victory for U.S." ... **at 9:06 a.m.:** "The #AmazonWashingtonPost, sometimes referred to as the guardian of Amazon not paying internet taxes (which they should) is FAKE NEWS!"

ATTENTION TRAVELERS -- "U.S. announcing enhanced security measures aimed at avoiding laptop ban," by Reuters' David Shepardson: "U.S. Homeland Security officials on Wednesday will unveil enhanced security measures for foreign flights arriving in the United States, in a bid to avoid an expansion of an in-cabin ban on laptops and other large electronic devices because they might carry bombs, sources briefed on the matter said Wednesday. The decision not to impose new restrictions on laptops is a boost to U.S. airlines, which have worried that an expansion of the ban to Europe or other locations could cause significant logistical problems and deter some travel. Airlines that failed to satisfy new security requirements could still face future in-cabin electronics restrictions, sources said." <http://reut.rs/2tYDwDK>

FOGGY BOTTOM WATCH -- MARK PERRY in THE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE -- "Tillerson and Mattis Cleaning Up Kushner's Middle East Mess": "The Qatar intervention [in 2011] has not been forgotten at the Pentagon and is one of the reasons why Defense Secretary James Mattis has worked so diligently to patch up the falling out between them and the coalition of Saudi-led countries (including the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt), that have isolated and blockaded the nation. In fact, Mattis was stunned by the Saudi move. 'His first reaction was shock, but his second was disbelief,' a senior military officer says. 'He thought the Saudis had picked an unnecessary fight' ... At the time of the Saudi announcement, Mattis was in Sydney with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson ... When the burgeoning split between the Saudis and Qataris was mentioned, Tillerson described it as no more than one of 'a growing list or irritants in the region' that would not impair "the unified fight against terrorism' ...

"But while Tillerson's answer was meant to soothe concerns over the crisis, behind the scenes he and Mattis were scrambling to undo the damage caused by Saudi action. The two huddled in Sydney and decided that Tillerson would take the lead in trying to resolve the falling out. Which is why, three days after the Sydney press conference, Tillerson called on Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt to ease their anti-Qatar blockade and announced that the U.S. supported a Kuwaiti-led mediation effort. The problem for Tillerson was that his statement was contradicted by Donald Trump. ...

"A close associate of the secretary of state says that Tillerson was not only 'blind-

sided by the Trump statement,' but 'absolutely enraged that the White House and State Department weren't on the same page.' Tillerson's aides, I was told, were convinced that the true author of Trump's statement was U.A.E. ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba, a close friend of Trump son-in-law Jared Kushner. 'Rex put two-and-two together,' his close associate says, 'and concluded that this absolutely vacuous kid was running a second foreign policy out of the White House family quarters. Otaiba weighed in with Jared and Jared weighed in with Trump. What a mess.'" <http://bit.ly/2uim10m>

THE NEXT MEMBER OF CONGRESS -- "Gomez to be sworn in to House on July 11," by Kyle Cheney <http://politi.co/2tYhscn>

SWAMP DRAINING UPDATE -- "Kushner lawyer seasoned in navigating Washington scandals," by the AP's Eric Tucker and Chad Day: "In selecting [Abbe] Lowell to represent him in Russia-related investigations before Congress and special counsel Robert Mueller, Kushner has turned to one of the best-known trial lawyers in the nation's capital and perhaps the country. Kushner has not been accused of any wrongdoing, and there's no indication he's at risk of being charged. But his pick of Lowell suggests he's bracing for lengthy government probes and wants in his corner someone with decades worth of experience confronting thorny and contentious congressional and Justice Department investigations. It also gives him a lawyer more seasoned in navigating Washington scandals than the members of Trump's own legal team." <http://apne.ws/2sRpK7z>

PIC DU JOUR -- @SenTedCruz: "Great to host Tom Ricketts. Congrats on the World Series. (Should have been the @Astros!)" <http://bit.ly/2tkCDaC>

AFTERNOON READ -- BEN SCHRECKINGER'S latest for **POLITICO MAG -- "Has a Civil Rights Stalwart Lost Its Way?":** "Since 1971, the SPLC has fought racial discrimination in the South and established itself as the nation's most prominent hate-group watchdog, most notably winning legal fights that put some of the last nails in the coffin of the Ku Klux Klan. It has also built itself into a civil rights behemoth with a glossy headquarters and a nine-figure endowment, inviting charges that it oversells the threats posed by Klansmen and neo-Nazis to keep donations flowing in from wealthy liberals.

"Now the election of Donald Trump has vaulted the SPLC back into the center of the national conversation, giving the group the kind of potent foil it hasn't had since the Klan. Trump swept into the Oval Office by disparaging Mexican immigrants, fanning Islamophobia and activating a resurgent strain of racism rebranded as 'alt-right.' Suddenly the SPLC, whose biggest fights seemed to be behind it, is all over the news-warning of an increase in hate crimes, publishing sleek reports about anti-Muslim extremists and taking the leaders of the alt-right to court. The group is in the process of adding 50 staffers, expanding legal services for immigrants facing deportation across the South and bringing a legal hammer down on alt-right trolls. Since the election, the SPLC says it has more than doubled its following on Twitter and jumped from 650,000 Facebook followers to more than a million. ...

"[As Morris Dees, the founder of the SPLC] navigates the era of Trump, there are new questions arising around a charge that has dogged the group for years: that the SPLC is overplaying its hand, becoming more of a partisan progressive hit operation than a civil rights watchdog. Critics say the group abuses its position as an arbiter of hatred by labeling legitimate players 'hate groups' and 'extremists' to keep the attention of its liberal donors and grind a political ax. Which means that just as the SPLC is about to embark on its biggest fight in decades, taking on rising racism and prejudice across the country, its authority to police the boundaries of American political discourse is facing its greatest challenge yet." <http://politi.co/2tkSoyf>

HISTORY DEPT. -- "How Donald Trump and Roy Cohn's ruthless symbiosis changed America," by Marie Brenner in Vanity Fair's August issue: "How to explain the symbiosis that existed between Roy Cohn and Donald Trump? Cohn and Trump were twinned by what drove them. They were both sons of powerful fathers, young men who had started their careers clouded by family scandal. Both had been private-school students from the boroughs who'd grown up with their noses pressed against the glass of dazzling Manhattan. Both squired attractive women around town. (Cohn would describe his close friend Barbara Walters, the TV newswoman, as his fiancée. 'Of course, it was absurd,' Liz Smith said, 'but Barbara put up with it.') Sometime during the 2016 presidential campaign, [lawyer and journalist Steven] Brill noticed that Donald Trump was using Cohn's exact phrases. 'I began to hear, 'If you want to know the truth,' and 'that I can tell you ...' and 'to be absolutely frank'--a sign that the Big Lie was coming,' Brill said.

"Cohn--possessed of a keen intellect, unlike Trump--could keep a jury spellbound. When he was indicted for bribery, in 1969, his lawyer suffered a heart attack near the end of the trial. Cohn deftly stepped in and did a seven-hour closing argument--never once referring to a notepad. He was acquitted. 'I don't want to know what the law is,' he famously said, 'I want to know who the judge is.'" <http://bit.ly/2tYFynw>

TODAY'S BEYOND THE BELTWAY -- Massachusetts incumbents look good in 2018 -- California Democrats push back against 'age tax' <http://politi.co/2tpvHtX>

WHAT MOSHEH OINOUNOU IS UP TO -- MEMO FROM DAVID RHODES: "We are announcing today that CBSN: ON ASSIGNMENT will launch on July 31st and run for four consecutive Mondays at 10pm on the CBS Television Network. This is a big milestone for CBSN as it brings the best of the stream's immersive and dynamic storytelling to a mass broadcast platform.

"CBSN: ON ASSIGNMENT will stream live on CBSN simultaneous with broadcast and will be available on all of our digital platforms including CBS All Access.

"Already a great deal of work has been done in the field to bring serious original reporting to this primetime program. I've seen some of the elements - from colleagues around the news organization on assignments around the world. It's thoughtful, it's thorough - and it's exciting. We'll be able to reveal aspects of these stories as we get

closer to the premier date at the end of next month. CBSN launched long-form documentary style programs a little more than a year ago, and this has become an important part of our digital offering. We're keeping new audiences for longer on devices and over-the-top TV. Tremendous gratitude to Nancy, Mosheh, Christy, and everyone on the digital side for helping pull together this project on a short timeline."

CONGRATS to former VA secretary **Jim Nicholson** and his wife **Suzanne**, who this week celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. They're celebrating with a family reunion at the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs. *Pic* <http://bit.ly/2ui3TUK> ... **Jeff Goldberg** and his wife **Pamela** celebrated their anniversary yesterday.

MEDIAWATCH -- Meredith Bennett has been hired by NBC News to be the editor of THINK, their upcoming platform for "opinion, ideas and conversations," which is set to debut in the fall. Bennett was previously an editor at Quartz and Mic.

TRANSITIONS -- Jamie Kirchick is joining the Brookings foreign policy program as a visiting fellow. Kirchick, author of "The End of Europe: Dictators, Demagogues, and the Coming Dark Age," is also a columnist at Tablet Magazine and a correspondent at the Daily Beast. ... **Kathleen Gasperine** and **Giulia Marchiori Ceresa** have co-founded Paradigm Political Management and Philanthropy with offices in Boston and London. **Julia Leja** is a senior adviser.

WASHINGTON INC. -- TARGETED VICTORY's NEW DIGS - The Republican digital agency, which employs nearly 40 people, has moved into a new office in Rosslyn at 1101 Wilson Blvd; They previously were based in Old Town but said they outgrew their former space. *Pix* <http://bit.ly/2sQkEbs>

***** **A message from the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD):** A new study estimates that Medicare Part D costs would be 58 percent higher without pharmacy benefit managers' (PBMs') clinical tools and price negotiations with drug manufacturers and pharmacies. The study shows PBMs significantly lower premiums and out-of-pocket costs for Medicare beneficiaries. In fact, PBMs are projected to save Medicare Part D \$896 billion over the next decade. Thanks to PBMs, Medicare Part D continues to drive savings and value for taxpayers and beneficiaries, ensuring that more than 39 million American seniors can access the prescription drugs they need. Learn more at affordableprescriptiondrugs.org *****

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