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From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
Sent: Tue 7/25/2017 5:13:41 PM
Subject: Playbook Power Briefing, presented by BP: HEALTH CARE VOTE around 2:30, 'skinny repeal' on the table -- BREITBART slams Trump over Sessions statements -- SCARAMUCCI drops the ax on MICHAEL SHORT -- JON ALLEN and AMIE PARNES' 2020 book deal

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Today's Playbook Power Briefing presented by BP

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Good Tuesday afternoon. SPOTTED at the Trump Hotel Monday night: Rudy Giuliani meeting with David Bossie. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin was also there.

JEN HABERKORN, SEUNG MIN KIM and BURGESS EVERETT: "Senate Republicans neared a dramatic vote Tuesday to start dismantling Obamacare claiming that momentum is on their side - but not sure they actually have the votes. ...

"I'm optimistic right now,' said Sen. Richard Burr (R-N.C.). 'John McCain's coming back. That's positive.' Though McCain's return was being used as motivation for wavering senators, the vote count was unclear as of midday Tuesday. About a half-dozen senators were publicly undecided about whether to allow debate to start on rolling back the Affordable Care Act as President Donald Trump and Majority Leader Mitch McConnell desperately sought their votes." <http://politi.co/2tzE3eK>

RISING: THE SKINNY REPEAL -- It looks like the Senate is going to eventually try to pass what they're calling a "skinny repeal" -- stripping the individual and employer mandate, and the medical-device tax from law. Can they pass it? Who knows. Senior Republicans we talk to in both chambers are not sure anything can get through.

WHAT WILL THE HOUSE DO? If a "skinny repeal" passes, House Republicans are not likely to simply bring it up on its own, according to people we've been speaking to. They'd try to cobble together some sort of replacement element because gutting these two pieces won't be enough for many in the GOP. The other option: go to a conference committee and formally negotiate.

IF THE SENATE IS SUCCESSFUL, THIS COULD SCREW UP AUGUST FOR THE HOUSE. It's feasible the recess will shrink to a week or two.

THE VOTE TO PROCEED: In the 2:30 p.m. neighborhood. **SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-ARIZ.)** is expected to hold a press availability after the vote just off the Senate floor, in front of the Ohio clock.

NEW POLITICO/MORNING CONSULT POLL -- "Poll: Voters oppose straight Obamacare repeal," by Steven Shepard: "Just 36 percent of voters support repealing Obamacare without a replacement, according to a new POLITICO/Morning Consult poll conducted on the eve of planned votes in the Senate to move forward on overhauling the health care system. Half of voters, 50 percent, oppose repealing the 2010 health care law without replacing it, the poll shows. The survey suggests congressional Republicans are squeezed between a base that wants Obamacare repealed, and a broader electorate that is - at best - skeptical of the GOP's plans for health care."
<http://politi.co/2tGR4Hu>

PRESIDENT TRUMP will have a press conference with the Lebanese prime minister at 3 p.m. today.

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PLAYBOOK THOUGHT BUBBLE: Instead of firing Reince Priebus, **PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP** has dispatched Anthony Scaramucci to fire low-level press aides aligned with the embattled chief of staff. Instead of cutting Jeff Sessions loose, he is publicly berating him on Twitter. The only guy he has fired is James Comey, who he didn't hire. For a guy whose motto was "you're fired" ...

-- **@maggieNYT:** "I asked two ppl close to Trump why he is tormenting Sessions instead of firing him. The answer from both, paraphrased: Because he can."

SPEAKER PAUL RYAN this morning on Trump potentially firing Attorney General Jeff Sessions: "Look the president gets to decide what his personnel is. You all know that. He's the executive branch ... He determines who is hired and fired in the executive branch-that's his prerogative. If he has concerns or questions or problems with the attorney general I'm sure he'll bring them up with him."

-- **@RepKinzinger** on Trump tweeting that Sessions is "very week": "Mr. President, maybe just try a meeting? This is beneath the office - of any held office - from city councilman to POTUS."

-- **@LindseyGrahamSC:** "Jeff Sessions is one of the most decent people I've ever met in my political life. ... President Trump's tweet today suggesting Attorney General Sessions pursue prosecution of a former political rival is highly inappropriate." **Full statement** <http://bit.ly/2tW9QWC>

-- **Mike Levine (@MLevineReports):** "I just asked Deputy AG Rosenstein, 'Should Mr. Sessions stick it out?' Rosenstein offered a slight smile, but didn't [say] anything." ...
@ByronYork: "Talking to Sessions allies this AM, all same advice: Do not resign. Too much at stake, for conservative DOJ agenda, also for Russia probe."

TROUBLE IN PARADISE -- BREITBART'S LEAD STORY: "Trump's Attack on Sessions over Clinton Prosecution Highlights His Own 'Weak' Stance"

<http://bit.ly/2tWnrNH>

IF YOU'RE AN ELECTED REPUBLICAN, are you looking at this White House and saying, "Yes, these are the people I'm going to cut legislative deals with?" If you're thinking about joining the administration, how do you feel today?

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DRIVING TODAY -- TARA PALMERI SCOOP: "Scaramucci to oust White House press aide, offers 'amnesty' to others": "Newly appointed White House communications director Anthony Scaramucci said on Tuesday that he plans to dismiss assistant press secretary Michael Short. It would be Scaramucci's first step toward shaking up the communications shop, which has been dominated by former [RNC] staffers loyal to White House chief of staff Reince Priebus, a former RNC chairman. ...

"Scaramucci warned that Short would be the first of many, if he's not able to stop the leaks coming out of the communications and press shop. ... During his first day on the job on Monday, Scaramucci met with current communications staffers and warned about leaks coming from the office. 'I offered amnesty in the meeting, but that decision is above my rank,' Scaramucci said. Short is expected to be the first of a wave of staffers closely aligned with Priebus to be shown the door." <http://politi.co/2tGGRec>
Short later told Jonathan Swan and Zeke Miller he resigned.

-- **@ZekeJMiller:** "Scaramucci just now: 'I'm going to get the leaking to stop' q: how? 'I'm going to fire everybody, that's how I'm going to do it.'"

-- **IF SCARAMUCCI** thinks the leaks are coming from the press shop, boy does he have a lot to learn about his new place of employ.

SCARAMUCCI later decried the disclosure of Short's firing as a leak ... but he provided the information! <http://bit.ly/2uUqYk2>

KUMBAYA? -- "Senate Dems plan to drop nominations blockade after health debate," by Seung Min Kim and Burgess Everett: "Senate Democrats have dragged out confirmations for even the least controversial nominees while the chamber remained mired in the health care debate. But they're pledging to drop their blockade if the GOP's Obamacare repeal effort fails, according to senior Democratic sources. In recent weeks, the Senate has slowed to a crawl, taking days to process nominees such as a federal judge from Idaho and the second-ranking official at the Pentagon as a protest of sorts against the Republicans' secretive health care drafting process. The GOP also claims that Democrats aren't negotiating on a budget deal, veterans' legislation and Food and

Drug Administration fees until the Obamacare debate is over.

"But Democrats plan to work with Republicans for a deal on the dozens of nominations lingering on the floor once the GOP's partisan health push ends, according to Democratic senators and aides. 'Mitch McConnell put reconciliation on the table hours after the session started and it has really tainted all of our efforts,' Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) said in an interview. 'When he is prepared to return to regular order, I think we are going to have a much more cooperative Senate.'"

<http://politi.co/2tWYx0q>

THINGS ARE GETTING REAL -- "Senate panel subpoenas Manafort as campaign aides provide Russia information," by Josh Dawsey and Madeline Conway: "A Senate committee said Tuesday it sent Paul Manafort a subpoena compelling his testimony in its Russia probe, even as he and Jared Kushner were providing information to other congressional investigators about a heavily scrutinized meeting last year with a Russian lawyer. Kushner, President Donald Trump's senior adviser and son-in-law, was scheduled to testify before the House Intelligence Committee in a closed session on Tuesday. ...

"Manafort spoke to investigators after reaching an agreement with the Senate Intelligence Committee to avoid a subpoena, though another committee separately sought to compel his testimony. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley and ranking member Dianne Feinstein said they had been 'unable to reach an agreement for a voluntary transcribed interview with the Judiciary Committee' with Manafort." <http://politi.co/2tGULNj>

-- MEANWHILE... -- "Senate Judiciary backs off plans to force Glenn Simpson to publicly testify," by Josh Gerstein, Josh Dawsey and Kyle Cheney:

<http://politi.co/2h00M1Z>

QUOTE OF THE DAY -- @NivElis: "Hilarious hot mic moment after the hearing ends. Unidentified male senator and Sen. Susan Collins discussing Rep. Blake Farenthold (R-Texas) ... Male Senator assure Collins: 'You could beat the s*** out of him.' Collins remarks: 'He's so unattractive, it's unbelievable.'" **Audio** <http://bit.ly/2tH9ZC7>

JARED'S BACKUP -- "'It's just like God to use a young Jewish couple to help Christians:' Trump's evangelical advisers defend Kushner," by WaPo's Sarah Pulliam Bailey: "Ten evangelical leaders [including Jerry Falwell Jr.] issued statements of support for President Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, many of them lauding his character and dismissing stories of his alleged ties to Russia ... Evangelical leaders often issue statements about policy issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage and religious freedom, but they don't often comment on specific administration officials. ... Falwell and [Florida megachurch pastor Paula] White both openly doubted the Russia stories in the news media. 'Clearly, this Russian story is nonsense and it must end, enough-is-enough,' White wrote." <http://wapo.st/2gZX9ZV> ... **The statements** <http://politi.co/2uy3yP2>

WSJ EDITORIAL BOARD - "The Kushner Statement: The President's son-in-law sets a disclosure example on Russia": "The Beltway media are past the point of no return on their collusion odyssey, so there is little chance that Mr. Kushner has put this issue behind him. ... Lying to Congress is a crime, so this statement and its details involve some risk for Mr. Kushner if some other meetings or Russian connections turn up. But if this is all there is, the collusion narrative will have to find another protagonist. The President and other campaign officials could save themselves and the country much grief with similar disclosures." <http://on.wsj.com/2gZYyj2>

FOR YOUR RADAR -- BENJAMIN NETANYAHU statement on the Israeli-Jordanian crisis that was resolved on Monday: "I thank President Trump for directing Jared Kushner and dispatching Jason Greenblatt to help with our efforts to bring the Israeli embassy staff home quickly. I thank King Abdullah as well for our close cooperation".

-- A WHITE HOUSE AIDE SAYS JARED KUSHNER spoke with the king of Jordan and other officials over the weekend about the Israeli-Jordanian diplomatic situation. Greenblatt went to the region yesterday.

WAR REPORT -- "Videos suggest Russian government may be arming Taliban," by CNN's Nick Paton Walsh and Masoud Popalzai: "The Taliban have received improved weaponry in Afghanistan that appears to have been supplied by the Russian government, according to exclusive videos obtained by CNN, adding weight to accusations by Afghan and American officials that Moscow is arming their one-time foe in the war-torn country." <http://cnn.it/2tGK2CD>

BOOK ALERT -- JONATHAN ALLEN and **AMIE PARNES**, who wrote the NYT bestseller "Shattered" (**\$18.30 on Amazon** <http://amzn.to/2tGhEAE>), will write "the definitive inside account" of the 2020 presidential election. The still-untitled book will be published by Crown in 2021.

COMING ATTRACTIONS -- "Republicans want the CEOs of Facebook, Google, AT&T and Comcast to testify to Congress about solving net neutrality," by Recode's Tony Romm: "House Republicans are asking the chief executives of tech and telecom rivals -- including Facebook, Google, AT&T and Comcast -- to appear before the U.S. Congress in September and help settle the debate over net neutrality once and for all. ... Invitees include Alphabet CEO Larry Page, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, A&T CEO Brian Roberts, Comcast CEO Brian Roberts, and the leaders of Amazon, Netflix, Charter and Verizon, according to the committee." <http://bit.ly/2tWFnHP>

MOVIN' OUT -- "West Wing to Empty Out for August Construction," by RCP's Alexis Simendinger: "President Trump's working vacation away from Washington in August will allow some major maintenance and construction to take place in the West Wing, which will require the president's staff to work elsewhere temporarily, sources familiar with the project told RealClearPolitics. ... It is rare to need to uproot aides and advisers who work in the West Wing, a structure that has the benefit of being a historic

showplace, coupled with the downsides of aging plumbing, wiring, heating and air. ... Current plans call for aides to temporarily work off-site for a brief period, decamped in at least two directions: the Eisenhower Executive Office Building next door, as well as with the president, who is expected to visit his New Jersey home at some point between Aug. 3-20, possibly depending on events in Washington." <http://bit.ly/2tGo6aB>

TODAY'S BEYOND THE BELTWAY -- Adam Schiff trades barbs with Trump administration -- Illinois has another special legislative session

<http://politi.co/2tGODVq>

MEDIAWATCH -- The Washington Examiner hired **Steven Nelson** and **Gabby Morrongiello** for its White House reporting team. Nelson was a reporter for US News & World Report. Morrongiello was the N.Y. Post's Washington bureau chief for the past three months; she was previously at the Examiner. <http://politi.co/2tGxJ9m>

WELCOME TO THE WORLD -- Rep. **Ryan Costello** (R-Pa.) and **Christine Costello**, a finance consultant, on Monday welcomed Caroline Grace Costello, who weighed in at 9 lbs 6 oz. She joins big brother Ryan Jr. in the "overjoyed" Costello household. **Pics -- Rep. Costello with Caroline and Ryan Jr.** <http://politi.co/2tHB8VD> ...

<http://politi.co/2vG55CJ>

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