

year's presidential election. Jones' victory, the first by a Democrat in Alabama in 25 years, exposed the limits of the president's power in a party that is now frequently referred to as 'the party of Trump.' Indeed, though rank-and-file Republicans have resisted, fought, and feared Trump's influence over GOP voters, Tuesday's election results suggested that, whatever the president's power, he is incapable of boosting other anti-establishment candidates to office." <http://politi.co/2BZeOqp>

-- **@realDonaldTrump** at 11:08 p.m.: "Congratulations to Doug Jones on a hard fought victory. The write-in votes played a very big factor, but a win is a win. The people of Alabama are great, and the Republicans will have another shot at this seat in a very short period of time. It never ends!"

\*\*\*\*\* **A message from the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates:** UAE airlines bought \$42 billion in US-made commercial aircraft at the 2017 Dubai Airshow. That's economic growth and jobs for Americans. The UAE-US commercial aviation relationship is a win-win deal. <http://politi.co/2AtLDMj> \*\*\*\*\*

**KNOWING DOUG JONES -- "Doug Jones: A Lawyer in the Thick of Alabama's Big Moments,"** by NYT's Alex Burns and Campbell Robertson: "Before the special election on Tuesday, the largest of Mr. Jones's historical moments, and perhaps still the most consequential, were the successful prosecutions of two of the Klansmen involved in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, nearly 40 years after the crime. Mr. Jones served as lead prosecutor. Though he continued to be involved in some of Alabama's highest-profile legal cases in private practice, the church bombing prosecutions were his last work for the federal government until he starts his new job in Washington.

**"Over the years, Mr. Jones, now 63, has remained a rare combination:** part bourbon-sipping Southerner and part New York Yankees-loving Democrat. He has often called in to discuss legal matters with Paul Finebaum, whose radio talk show is akin to a religious service for college football fans in the Southeast, and he has been a longtime friend of former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., whose 1988 presidential campaign he worked on. Mr. Biden returned the favor with a rally appearance in October." <http://nyti.ms/2Cd7Oab>

**HAPPENING TODAY -- HOUSE REPUBLICAN RUMBLE --** House Republicans meet at 3 p.m. to discuss the end of year. Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) has a messy situation on his hands. Government funding expires in nine days. The leadership faces

resistance from appropriators, who don't like the short-term funding of government, especially after they spent months passing the 12 spending bills; conservatives don't like the uptick in spending; and Texans are angry because the billions they want in disaster spending might be pared back in size, and pushed back to January.

-- **THE CONCERN:** The leadership has been talking about passing a full year of defense funding, paired with a short-term funding measure that funds government through sometime in January -- a move aimed at forcing the Senate to swallow it. It's not a sustainable position, because McConnell does not think he can pass this. So Republicans could be forced to pass a short-term spending measure, and revisit the fight in January. **BUT** Democrats will have much more leverage next year once Jones is sworn in.

-- **CONSIDER THIS:** Republicans might have to swallow an immigration deal they don't like. Congress might boost spending to new levels. They might bolster Obamacare. And they're funding government on a two-week basis. **TRUTH BOMB:** They did better with President Barack Obama in the White House!

**NOT A GOOD LOOK -- "In texts, FBI agents on Russia probe called Trump an 'idiot',"** by Josh Gerstein: "Two FBI agents assigned to the investigation into alleged collusion between President Donald Trump's campaign and Russia exchanged text messages referring to the future president as an 'idiot,' according to copies of messages turned over to Congress Tuesday night by the Justice Department. Special Counsel Robert Mueller removed one of the agents, Peter Strzok, from the Russia probe 'immediately' after learning of the texts in late July, the department said in a letter to lawmakers. The other agent, Lisa Page, had already ended her assignment to Mueller's office. Copies of the messages obtained by POLITICO show the pair reacting to various developments as the presidential race unfolded and that their reaction to Trump was negative from early on." <http://politi.co/2ACoqrm>

**WHERE THINGS STAND -- "White House lawyer: Mueller finished with interviews he's requested,"** by Darren Samuelsohn: "Special counsel Robert Mueller on Tuesday completed interviews with the last in a slate of about two dozen current and former White House witnesses he's initially requested as part of the investigation into Russia's actions in the presidential election, White House attorney Ty Cobb said. It's unclear if Mueller will seek follow-up interviews or seek to question additional people beyond the initial batch of witnesses, but the completion of this round of questioning tracks with the goal Cobb has long stated publicly that President Donald Trump's White House