

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
Sent: Fri 6/16/2017 6:24:03 PM
Subject: Playbook Power Briefing: TRUMP appears to confirm he's under investigation -- Amazon is buying Whole Foods -- German unification leader Helmut Kohl dead at 87

[View online version](#) | Add politicoplaybook@politico.com to your address book.

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

WILD FRIDAY! -- THE BIGGEST NEWS OF THE DAY -- AMAZON IS BUYING WHOLE FOODS! -- WSJ's Austen Hufford and Annie Gasparro: "Amazon Inc. said it would buy Whole Foods Market Inc. for \$13.7 billion as the giant internet retailer makes a deeper push into the grocery space.

"Amazon will pay \$42 a share for Whole Foods, valuing the grocer at a 27% premium to its closing price Thursday. The deal is expected to close in the second half of this year. In recent years, Amazon has expanded its online grocery business, AmazonFresh, after testing it in its hometown Seattle for years. Earlier this year, the company said it would launch a new grocery-store pickup service....

"While grocery accounts for a large component of consumer sales overall, online retailers have largely been unable to fully crack the code. They face hurdles like consumers wanting to pick their own produce and the need to deliver perishable, fresh and frozen food to people's homes. Adding a network of grocery stores could help Amazon tackle those issues. Whole Foods has roughly 450 locations spread out across 42 states. The move could allow Amazon to reach customers closer to their homes and even sell more than just groceries. Amazon's bookstores also sell its electronic products like book readers, tablets and media streaming devices." <http://on.wsj.com/2siRFLt> ...
Check out the stunningly simple SEC report for the nearly \$14 billion deal
<http://bit.ly/2rnufmT>

-- **A well timed profile** on Whole Foods' founder John Mackey from Texas Monthly
<http://bit.ly/2taqucG>

Good Friday afternoon. Two years ago to the day, Donald Trump descended down a golden escalator in Trump Tower to launch his campaign for president. **DRIVING TODAY -- THE PRESIDENT** appeared to confirm he was under investigation.

WHITE HOUSE STATEMENTS -- @realDonaldTrump on Twitter at **7:53 a.m.**: "After 7 months of investigations & committee hearings about my 'collusion with the Russians,' nobody has been able to show any proof. Sad!" ... **at 8:53 a.m.:** "The Fake News Media hates when I use what has turned out to be my very powerful Social Media - over 100 million people! I can go around them" ... **8:54 a.m.:** "Despite the phony Witch Hunt

going on in America, the economic & jobs numbers are great. Regulations way down, jobs and enthusiasm way up!" ... **at 9:07 a.m.:** "I am being investigated for firing the FBI Director by the man who told me to fire the FBI Director! Witch Hunt"

OUTSTANDING ITEMS ALERT -- Tax reform is nowhere close to done. An infrastructure plan hasn't been released. Debt ceiling needs to be lifted. Government needs to be funded.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP largely stuck to the script in his speech announcing his new Cuba policies in Miami. He returned to his election-night victory several times while discussing rolling back much of Obama's efforts to change relations with Cuba. He said, "I am canceling the last administration's one-sided deal with Cuba." Much of Trump's Cuba policy was previously reported by our POLITICO Florida colleagues Marc Caputo and Daniel Ducassi. <http://politi.co/2taVans>

HE DID NOT address any potential investigations or his tweets from this morning.

TRUMP SAID REP. STEVE SCALISE "took a bullet for all of us. And because of him and the tremendous pain and suffering he's now enduring -- he's having a hard time, far worse than anybody thought -- our country will perhaps become closer, more unified. So important. So we all owe Steve a big, big thank you."

THE PRESIDENT ALSO tried to encourage Florida Gov. Rick Scott into running for Senate: "Oh, I hope he runs for the Senate. I know I'm not supposed to say that. I hope he runs for the Senate. Rick, are you running? Huh? Huh? I don't know, Marco, let's go. C'mon we've got to get him to -- I hope he runs for the Senate."

-- **RUBIO** tweets he wrote the policy: "**@marcorubio** : "Picture of the night @MarioDB and I hammered out the new Cuba policy. Thankful for his leadership! #cubancoffee #BetterDealforCuba <http://bit.ly/2ro9sjc>" **With a photo of Rubio and Rep. Mario Diaz Balart (R-Fla.).**

-- **CONTRAST.** When the president went to Saudi Arabia, he said "We are not here to tell other people how to live, what to do, who to be, or how to worship." But a main premise of choking off business to Cuba is that the Castro regime oppresses its people. National Security Council spokesman Michael Anton spoke to the press on the comparison, per pooler S.V. Date of HuffPost: "I dispute that he has a lack of interest in human rights in other countries."

BIG NEWS -- "**Deputy attorney general privately acknowledges he may need to recuse himself from Russia probe,**" by ABC News' Mike Levine and Pierre Thomas: "The senior Justice Department official with ultimate authority over the special counsel's probe of Russia's alleged meddling in the 2016 election has privately acknowledged to colleagues that he may have to recuse himself from the matter, which he took charge of only after Attorney General Jeff Sessions' own recusal, sources tell ABC News."

"Those private remarks from Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein are significant because they reflect the widening nature of the federal probe, which now includes a preliminary inquiry into whether President Donald Trump attempted to obstruct justice when he allegedly tried to curtail the probe and then fired James Comey as FBI director. Rosenstein, who authored an extensive and publicly-released memorandum recommending Comey's firing, raised the possibility of his recusal during a recent meeting with Associate Attorney General Rachel Brand, the Justice Department's new third-in-command, according to sources." <http://abcn.ws/2tadX2a>

'THE MOST IMPORTANT EUROPEAN STATESMAN SINCE WWII' -- "Helmut Kohl, Chancellor Who Reunited a Divided Germany, Dies at 87," by NYT's Craig R. Whitney: "Helmut Kohl, who reunified Germany after 45 years of Cold War division and promoted grand visions of European integration, but ended his political career in disgrace over an opaque party fund-raising scandal, died on Friday at his home in Ludwigshafen, Germany, the Rhine port city where he was born. He was 87. ... A physically imposing man - he stood 6 feet 4 inches and weighed well over 300 pounds in his leadership years - Mr. Kohl pursued his and his country's political interests as Germany's chancellor with persistent, even stubborn, determination. He could be 'an elephant in a china shop,' as he described himself in a memoir, and overcame European opposition to unification the same way he handled political opposition at home: by the force of a jovial yet dominating personality." <http://nyti.ms/2s97gii> ... **Bill Clinton on Kohl in 2011** <http://bit.ly/2sADkNt>

-- Former President George H.W. Bush's statement on Kohl's death: "Working closely with my very good friend to help achieve a peaceful end to the Cold War and the unification of Germany within NATO will remain one of the great joys of my life. Throughout our endeavors, Helmut was a rock -- both steady and strong." **Full statement** <http://bit.ly/2sAMv0G>

TRUMP'S ENTOURAGE -- Trump had a slew of stop aides, cabinet officials and lawmakers in tow for his Miami trip today. H.R. McMaster, Dan Scavino, Stephen Miller, Keith Schiller and the president's physician Ronny Jackson were all along for the trip, according to the pooler. Also accompanying Trump: Sen. Marco Rubio, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and Labor Secretary Alex Acosta. Reps. Carlos Curbelo and Mario Diaz-Balart were also on the flight to Miami.

LAWYER UP -- SCOOP from @KatyTurNBC: "Exclusive: Trump personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, has hired his own counsel: Stephen Ryan, of McDermott, Will & Emery.- source w knowledge ... Cohen will testify in front of House Intel on Sept 5. House intel source says the delay is due to scheduling and logistics. ... Michael Caputo, brought on to Trump campaign by Manafort, has been contacted by the FBI - source with knowledge. ... Caputo has hired Dennis Vacco as counsel. House Intel is trying to schedule him for mid-July. Source says Caputo wants open hearing. ... Source adds FBI wanted to talk to Caputo BEFORE he speaks with House Intel."

COME TOGETHER? -- "Schumer asks for all 100 senators to meet on health care,"

by Seung Min Kim and Jen Haberkorn: "In a new letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), the New York Democrat is asking all 100 senators to gather in the Old Senate Chamber next week to discuss health care - a tactic Democrats hope will pressure Republicans to drop their push to repeal Obamacare and instead work on fixes to the seven-year-old law." <http://politi.co/2sAFrkG>

-- @IsaacDovere: "gov't by stunt"

PUSHBACK -- "White House casts doubt on Russia's claim it killed ISIS leader,"

by Matthew Nussbaum: "The White House is casting doubt on Russia's claim that its forces killed Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in a late May airstrike in Syria. A senior administration official says Russia would have 'various different motives' for making such a claim, and the U.S. is not prepared to risk its credibility by corroborating the statement without independent evidence.

"The official also noted that Russia's claim that the strike killed more than 300 ISIS fighters is raising eyebrows in the national security community. 'That's the type of magnitude that we would think we would've already seen reflections of,' the senior administration official said today." <http://politi.co/2taDmJ9>

AFTERNOON READ -- "From Russia with Blood," by BuzzFeed News' Heidi Blake, Tom Warren, Richard Holmes, Jason Leopold, Jane Bradley and Alex Campbell: "The London square was still and cold when the body fell, dropping silently through the moonlight and landing with a thud. Impaled through the chest on the spikes of a wrought iron fence, it dangled under the streetlamps as blood spilled onto the pavement. Overhead, a fourth-floor window stood open, the lights inside burning.

"The dead man was Scot Young. The one-time multimillionaire and fixer to the world's super-rich had been telling friends, family, and the police for years that he was being targeted by a team of Russian hitmen - ever since his fortune vanished overnight in a mysterious Moscow property deal. He was the ninth in a circle of friends and business associates to die in suspicious circumstances. But when the police entered his penthouse that night, they didn't even dust for fingerprints. They declared his death a suicide on the spot and closed the case.

"A two-year investigation by BuzzFeed News has now uncovered explosive evidence pointing to Russia that the police overlooked. A massive trove of documents, phone records, and secret recordings shows Young was part of a circle of nine men, including the exiled oligarch Boris Berezovsky, who all died suspiciously on British soil after making powerful enemies in Russia. ... British police declared the deaths of all nine men in Berezovsky's circle non-suspicious, but BuzzFeed News can now reveal that MI6, Britain's secret intelligence service, asked its US counterparts for information about each one of them 'in the context of assassinations.'" <http://bzfd.it/2tad5L1>

COMING ATTRACTIONS -- Chicago Mayor **Rahm Emanuel** will speak on June 20 at the National Press Club's headliners luncheon series *Tickets* <http://bit.ly/2sAqzmk>

NEW BOOK -- Mark Penn is penning a sequel to his NYT bestseller Microtrends called Microtrends Squared with **Meredith Fineman**. The book has a March 2018 release date. <http://bit.ly/2sACtMM>

OUT AND ABOUT -- The Monthly, a long running D.C. event for Silicon Valley expats, celebrated their 4 year anniversary yesterday. **SPOTTED:** Gideon Lett, David Mack, Gabe Rivera, Mike Marinello, Sam Grobart, Sarah Heck, Vikrum Aiyer, Jamie Corley, Rebecca Mark, Laura Pinto, Luther Lowe, Angela Martin, Amelia McLearn, Jamil Poonja and Stacy Koo.

-- **Tom Perriello and his campaign team** gathered Thursday at FireFlies in Del Ray for goodbye drinks. **SPOTTED:** Tom Perriello (drink of choice, we've been told: whiskey, neat), Ian Sams, Remi Yamamoto, Brennan Gilmore, Ashwin Manicka, Linh Nguyen, Ernie Britt, Adnan Mohamed, Rachael Klarman, Sam Fulwood, Chris Westefeld, Jessica Aune, Gabi Tudin.

-- **The American University of Afghanistan** had their annual awards dinner last night at the Four Seasons, in which they gave awards to retired Gen. David Petraeus and UAE Amb. Yousef Al-Otaiba. The event, emceed by Michelle Kosinski, was organized by Samantha Vinograd and Morgan Ortagus who met in Baghdad in 2007.
<http://bit.ly/2sxG8dl>

SPOTTED: Afghan Amb. Hamdullah Mohib and his wife Lael, Anthony Scaramucci chatting with Petraeus, Evelyn Farkas, Michael Crowley, Suzanne Kianpour, Adm. Eric Olson, Teri Galvez, Croatian Amb. Josip Park, Steve Glenn, Paula Dobriansky, David Sedney, Gen. Mark Martin, Ret. Gen. John Campbell, Leslie Schweitzer, Akram and Lou Elias, Huda Farouki, Joby Warrick, Ken Holland, David Tafuri, Reg Brown.

SPOTTED: Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) on a 6:59 a.m. flight from DCA to DFW. Also seen in DCA: Sen. David Perdue (R-Ga.) and Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Texas). ... Ivanka Trump waiting in line at Starbucks on Connecticut and R Street -- *pic*
<http://bit.ly/2tacubZ> ... Retiring South Florida GOP Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen at DCA while President Donald Trump had already landed in the sunshine state.

FRIDAY TREAT -- MILEY CYRUS and **JIMMY FALLON** did a surprise concert in a Subway station in New York. What a town! <http://bit.ly/2taf561>

SUBSCRIBE to the Playbook family: **POLITICO Playbook** <http://politi.co/1M75UbX> ... **New York Playbook** <http://politi.co/1ON8bqW> ... **Florida Playbook** <http://politi.co/1OypFe9> ... **New Jersey Playbook** <http://politi.co/1HLKItF> ... **Massachusetts Playbook** <http://politi.co/1Nhtq5v> ... **Illinois Playbook** <http://politi.co/1N7u5sb> ... **California Playbook** <http://politi.co/2bLvcPI> ... **Brussels Playbook** <http://politi.co/1FZeLcw> ... **All our political and policy tipsheets** <http://politi.co/1M75UbX>
[View online](#)

To change your alert settings, please go to <https://secure.politico.com/settings/settings>

This email was sent to jackson.ryan@epa.gov by: POLITICO, LLC 1000 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA, 22209, USA

Please click [here](#) and follow the steps to unsubscribe.
