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From: Hadas Gold - POLITICO Media
Sent: Fri 8/11/2017 10:07:59 AM
Subject: Morning Media: Trump's newsy briefings with the press pool -- CNN fires Jeffrey Lord -- James Benet to testify in Sarah Palin lawsuit

By Hadas Gold | 08/11/2017 06:04 AM EDT

With Cristiano Lima and Alex Weprin

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP SPOKE TWICE WITH THE PRESS YESTERDAY, his most extensive back and forth with the media since his February press conference. Granted, it was with the press pool so it was a limited group that was with the president at his Bedminster golf club. But aside from the interviews he's had with select outlets, it's progress. Maybe a full White House press conference will be coming soon.

It was a newsy few minutes in both instances, where Trump stepped up his rhetoric about North Korea, further slammed House Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, declared an opioid national emergency and perhaps jokingly, thanked Vladimir Putin for kicking out American diplomats. Kellyanne Conway told the [Washington Post](#) that "Trump in recent days has been restless to share his thoughts on what she termed 'one of the juiciest, newsiest periods of his presidency.'"

"Folks, for a president who hasn't done a full press conference since Feb, today's 2 avails were very lengthy, many many questions answered," The Post's Phil Rucker [tweeted](#) shortly after the second pool spray.

Good morning, happy Friday and welcome to Morning Media! Until Aug. 16 you can reach me at hgold@politico.com / and forever more at [@Hadas_Gold](#). Morning Media is edited by Alex Weprin ([@alexweprin](#) / alexweprin@gmail.com) and produced with writing/reporting help from Cristiano Lima. (clima@politico.com / [@ludacristiano](#)). [Archives](#). [Subscribe](#).

BREITBART'S CONTINUED ATTACKS ON H.R. MCMASTER ARE STARTING TO BACKFIRE ON STEVE BANNON , via my colleague Tara Palmeri: "The attacks on McMaster have put Bannon in an especially awkward position with his new boss, retired Marine general John Kelly, who has been increasingly defensive of McMaster, a longtime friend and fellow general, according to interviews with 10 administration officials and people close to the White House. McMaster, who pushed Bannon off the National Security Council principals' committee, hasn't spoken to Bannon in weeks, one senior administration official said In June, Trump started telling aides that he suspected that Bannon was a source of negative stories, according to aides. After a slew of stories about Bannon "winning" policy wars in the White House-like Trump's decision to pull out of the Paris climate accord-the president told Bannon to "knock it off," according to the senior administration official." Read the full piece [here](#).

CNN FIRES JEFFREY LORD AFTER NAZI SALUTE CONTROVERSY via Cristiano Lima: The channel [announced](#) Thursday it was parting ways with one of its original pro-Trump pundits after he tweeted "Sieg Heil!," an oldtime Nazi salute, at Media Matters president Angelo

Carusone, whom Lord had denounced as a "fascist." Lord, whose heated exchanges with other CNN commentators and anchors have repeatedly gone viral, said the tweet was a misunderstanding in a phone call prior to the dismissal. "I love CNN, but I feel they are caving to bullies here," he told the TV news outlet. CNN, however, was swift to respond: "Nazi salutes are indefensible," a CNN spokesperson wrote in a statement. "Jeffrey Lord is no longer with the network." Lord's departure marks the second prominent pro-Trump personality to leave the channel this week, with analyst Kayleigh McEnany announcing she's taking a role at the RNC. McEnany also recently hosted a "Trump TV" video on one of Trump's Facebook pages.

-- Right-wing pundits are standing by Lord, with other avid Trump supporters like Mike Cernovich and Sean Hannity leading the charge. "Media smears Jeffrey Lord for making 'Nazi gesture' when he was clearly satirizing the left," Cernovich tweeted Thursday. Hannity later seemed to chime in as well: "How sad in America that only conservatives get investigated, fired, boycotted and attacked." But don't expect to see Lord joining Hannity over at Fox News. A spokesperson tells POLITICO they "have no plans to hire him." Read more here.

BILL O'REILLY TO MAKE CNN DEBUT, by Alex Weprin: Former Fox News host Bill O'Reilly is joining CNN... well, at least for one interview. O'Reilly will appear on Michael Smerconish's CNN program sometime in September. The appearance will be part of a promotional campaign for O'Reilly's next book in the "Killing" series, "Killing England," which will hit bookshelves next month. O'Reilly has often appeared on other channels while promoting his books, though he has never appeared on CNN before.

N.Y. TIMES EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR JAMES BENNET TO TESTIFY IN SARAH PALIN DEFAMATION SUIT: Big development in the lawsuit the former Alaska governor brought against the Times. If you don't recall the details: Palin brought the suit following an editorial which mistakenly tied an ad from Palin's PAC to the attack on former Arizona Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in 2011, an attack that saw six others killed. The paper later issued a correction to the editorial. According to The Hollywood Reporter, which calls the move "unusual," the judge in the case said he needs to hear from the paper's editorial writer(s) to decide whether the lawsuit should move forward. At issue is whether the editorial writer(s) were aware of previous reports in the New York Times that contradicted the allegedly false statements made in the editorial -- that would help prove "actual malice." A Times spokesperson said "We've seen the order and will be providing the testimony that the judge has ordered," later adding that they have designated editorial page editor James Bennet as the witness who will testify.

THE STORY BEHIND THE SETH RICH STORY, by Alex Weprin: In a detailed story, CNN's Oliver Darcy tries to figure out what happened leading up to the now-retracted story about Seth Rich that ran on Foxnews.com earlier this year. Darcy reports that the reporter who wrote the story for Fox News was blindsided by a report on the case from the D.C. Fox affiliate. Ultimately, her story was not vetted in the process it normally would have been if it had not been rushed to publication. You can read the whole thing here.

-- NPR's David Folkenflik adds some context, arguing that the CNN story "has some significant blind spots." "For one thing, Fox News has no conventional 'standards and practices'

office. Doesn't exist," Folkenflik tweeted. You can read his tweetstorm [here](#).

DRUDGE CHANGES HIS LOOK: For those of us obsessives who follow Matt Drudge's every move (I once climbed over chairs at one of the presidential debates to talk to him, only to have him firmly push my recorder out of the way) the last few days of the Drudge Report's black and white-only look have been... sort of ominous, especially because it started with a photo of Kim Jong Un and a missile. But Drudge himself told [Mike Allen](#) "We have clearly entered a historic era. It's feeling like The Roaring 20's this autumn with tech valuations at such hysterical heights. The socials, like Instagram Live, are alive with the spirit of Warhol. The sound of the atom splitting is looming over Korea. What's old is new. So, black and white and read all over!"

LIVE FROM NEW YORK, IT'S SPICEY! By Alex Weprin: According to [US Weekly](#), former White House press secretary Sean Spicer "is angling" to secure a cameo on NBC's "Saturday Night Live" when it returns from its summer hiatus. Spicer, of course, was immortalized on the program by actress Melissa McCarthy, whose uncanny impression of him earned herself an Emmy nomination.

MORE ON BUZZFEED AND TWITTER'S LIVE MORNING SHOW: A day after Facebook announced their relaunched video content platform, Twitter and BuzzFeed unveiled "AM to DM," their social media spin on the traditional early morning TV show. "BuzzFeed News reporters, editors, and special guests will take viewers through the day's top stories, bringing headlines from BuzzFeed News reporters all over the world," the outlet said in a [release](#). The hosting team will feature books editor Isaac Fitzgerald and executive editor of culture Saeed Jones and be produced by Cindy Vanegas-Gesuale, a CNN, Fox News and HuffPost vet. The show, the concept of which was released in May, will premiere Sept. 25. Read on [here](#).

REVOLVING DOOR:

-- Adam Ostrow, previously chief strategy officer at Mashable, is joining TEGNA as chief digital officer. [[Variety](#)]

-- Alison Smale, a veteran New York Times editor and correspondent, is joining the United Nations as under secretary general for global communications [[New York Times](#)]

-- Morris Publishing Group has been purchased by New York-based New Media Investment Group. The Savannah Morning News, Juneau Empire, the Topeka Capitol-Journal and others will soon be added to subsidiary GateHouse Media's portfolio of daily newspapers. [[AdWeek](#)]

SOUNDBITE: "I want to thank him because we're trying to cut down on payroll, and as far as I'm concerned, I'm very thankful that he let go of a large number of people, because now we have a smaller payroll," [[President Trump, speaking about Vladimir Putin kicking out American diplomats](#)]

TIL: You can be arrested in Turkey just for what your T-shirt says. [[POLITICO Magazine](#)]

EXTRAS:

-- The nonstop focus on Trump by the cable networks has meant stories around the country are getting less airtime. [[Washington Post](#)]

-- Facebook and the James W. Foley Legacy Foundation are partnering to teach journalists and students how to keep themselves safe online and in the field. [[James Foley Legacy Foundation](#)]

-- Mexican journalists, facing threats of violence and forced to flee their homes and jobs, confront their biggest fear: Uncertainty. [[Nieman Lab](#)]

-- An executive at HBO allegedly offered the hackers that broke into its systems \$250,000 as a "bug bounty payment." [[THR](#)]

-- Megyn Kelly threw out the first pitch at a minor league baseball game in Durham, NC. [[The News & Observer](#)]

-- Talk about timing! The next episode of CBSN On Assignment will see correspondent Vladimir Duthiers traveling to Guam, South Korea and Hawaii to talk to troops about responding to North Korea. [[CBS News](#)]

-- Another look at the women of the alt-right. [[Harper's](#)]

-- MSNBC host Joy Reid gave a shoutout to MSNBC exec Yvette Miley for receiving the 2017 Chuck Stone Lifetime Achievement Award at the NABJ Salute To Excellence Awards Gala. [[MSNBC](#)]

-- Education Secretary Betsy DeVos reached a milestone of sorts: She was finally interviewed by reporters. [[Poynter](#)]

Correction: A previous version of Morning Media said, citing a tweet from Esquire's former executive features editor, that Esquire is ending its digital features program. But a Hearst spokesperson told me that "Esquire, nor any of Hearst Magazines Digital Media's properties, have stopped commissioning and publishing feature stories."

To view online:

<http://www.politico.com/media/tipsheets/morning-media/2017/08/11/trumps-newsy-briefings-with-the-press-pool-cnn-fires-jeffrey-lord-james-benet-to-testify-in-sarah-palin-lawsuit-001330>

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