

the President Donald Trump's transition; the way the think tank helped to create a list of potential Supreme Court judges including now-Justice Neil Gorsuch; Heritage's budget blueprint that the administration used as a model; the four new research institutes founded during DeMint's time; and its American Perceptions Initiative that conducts research to help figure out how conservatives should talk to Americans about policy ideas.

**"When I came to Heritage in 2013,** I told our staff and millions of members around the country that over the next four years, we had the opportunity to lead a resurgence of conservative policies and communications to win the hearts and minds of the American people,' DeMint said. 'I'm grateful to have worked with some of the greatest minds and talents in America and believe we've accomplished together what we set out to do.'" <http://politi.co/2p4BkHd>

-- **THOMAS A. SAUNDERS III**, chairman of Heritage's board of trustees, wrote in a blast email: "After a comprehensive and independent review of the entire Heritage organization, the Board determined there were significant and worsening management issues that led to a breakdown of internal communications and cooperation. While the organization has seen many successes, Jim DeMint and a handful of his closest advisers failed to resolve these problems." **The email** <http://politi.co/2p4TVmB>

-- **IT'S WORTH NOTING:** Outside groups often part ways with their leaders when there is a difference of opinion about the way an organization is run, but this public back-and-forth and mudslinging between DeMint and the Heritage board through the press is unusual at best and harmful to the future of the group at worst.

**HAPPENING TODAY** -- Trump meets with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas today at the White House. The meeting will last most of the day. At night, he's dining with religious leaders.

-- **ABBAS MEETING PREVIEW -- AP'S MATTHEW LEE:** "President Donald Trump will press Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas to end payments to families of Palestinians imprisoned in Israeli jails, according to U.S. officials, one of several actions Washington believes could lead to resumed peace talks with Israel. Other actions include a Palestinian end to anti-Israel rhetoric and incitement of violence, said officials familiar with planning for the meeting. It will be Trump and Abbas' first face-to-face discussion. ...

**"[T]rump will also use their meeting to recommit the United States** to helping the

Palestinians improve their economic conditions, said the U.S. officials, who weren't authorized to publicly preview the talks and demanded anonymity. They said Trump will reiterate his belief that Israeli settlement construction on land claimed by the Palestinians does not advance peace prospects. ...

**"[Abbas, in a meeting with Palestinians in D.C.]** blamed the lack of dialogue in recent years on the Israeli government, saying its leaders 'have no political vision,' and reiterated his demands for an independent Palestinian state along pre-1967 lines, with east Jerusalem as its capital. 'Without this we will not accept any solution,' said Abbas, who touted an Arab League peace plan that offers Israel diplomatic relations with the Muslim world for a Palestinian state. 'There is no alternative.'"

<http://apne.ws/2oWLSgn>

**THE MOSCOW-WASHINGTON ALLIANCE -- "Trump, Putin look to work together on Syria,"** by AP's Julie Pace: "President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin signaled improving prospects for cooperation in Syria in what the White House called a 'very good' phone discussion that included a focus on setting up safe zones in the war-torn nation. The Kremlin said the leaders also agreed in Tuesday's call to try to set up their first in-person meeting in July, on the sidelines of an international summit in Germany. The White House later confirmed that information. ...

**"The Kremlin said Trump and Putin agreed to bolster diplomatic efforts** to resolve the Syrian civil war, which has left hundreds of thousands dead and millions more displaced. The White House announced it would send a top State Department official to Russian-led talks on Syria that begin Wednesday in Kazakhstan. 'President Trump and President Putin agreed that the suffering in Syria has gone on for far too long and that all parties must do all they can to end the violence,' the White House said. 'The conversation was a very good one, and included the discussion of safe, or de-escalation, zones to achieve lasting peace for humanitarian and many other reasons.'"

<http://apne.ws/2p4Lwzi>

### THE JUICE ...

-- **FIRST IN PLAYBOOK: SPEAKER PAUL RYAN** was the special guest at a fundraiser on Capitol Hill Tuesday night for Karen Handel's bid for the House. Handel is in a runoff with Democrat Jon Ossoff for HHS Secretary Tom Price's former House seat in Georgia. The event raised \$150,000 for Handel's campaign. **SPOTTED:** House Republican Conference Chairman Cathy McMorris Rodgers (Wash.), NRCC Chairman