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From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
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Subject: Playbook Power Briefing, presented by JPMorgan Chase & Co.: George W. Bush: 'The health of the democratic spirit itself is at issue' -- TRUMP gives P.R. recovery effort a 10 -- JEFF FLAKE says he agrees with CORKER on Trump criticism

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Today's Playbook Power Briefing presented by JPMorgan Chase & Co.

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Good Thursday afternoon. STRONG WORDS FROM FORMER PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH in New York: "The health of the democratic spirit itself is at issue and the renewal of that spirit is the urgent task at hand. ... When we lose sight of our ideals, it is not democracy that has failed. It is the failure of those charged with preserving and protecting democracy ... Bigotry seems emboldened. Our politics seems more vulnerable to conspiracy theories and outright fabrication." **More from Isaac Dove** <http://politi.co/2zm2M8O> ... **Full transcript** <http://politi.co/2zBH0ia>

TRUMP GETS BACKING FROM MOSCOW -- AP at 12:26 p.m.: "MOSCOW (AP) - Russia's Putin: Trump's foes don't allow him to fulfill his election promises."

CONSIDER THIS -- Pat Tiberi, a 17-year veteran of Congress who is one of the top lawmakers on the Ways and Means Committee, is resigning in the middle of a session during which the committee is rewriting the tax code! A full overhaul of the tax code is a career-long goal of most members of the Ways and Means Committee. To leave in the middle of it is basically unconscionable. **Full statement** <http://bit.ly/2zyFHRb>

-- **CORRECTION:** We wrote this morning that six of 24 lawmakers on Ways and Means were leaving Congress. It's actually seven. We forgot that Kristi Noem is running for governor of South Dakota. Other Republicans leaving include: Tiberi, Sam Johnson of Texas, Dave Reichert of Washington State, Lynn Jenkins of Kansas, Diane Black of Tennessee and Jim Renacci of Ohio.

SPOTTED -- EPA Administrator **SCOTT PRUITT** in first class on a Delta flight to Atlanta today.

TRUMP IN THE OVAL WITH P.R.'S GOVERNOR -- "Trump Gives Himself a 10 Out of 10 on Puerto Rico Storm Recovery," by Bloomberg's Justin Sink: "President Donald Trump Thursday said his administration's response to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico deserves a perfect '10' rating as he met at the White House with the U.S. territory's governor, Ricardo Rossello.

"I think we've done a really great job," Trump told reporters during an Oval Office meeting with Rossello, who is in Washington to press for disaster aid for the island. Rating the White House's handling of the storm on a scale of 1 to 10, Trump said, 'I give ourselves a 10,' because 'we have provided so much so fast.'

Rosello sidestepped a question from a reporter on how he would rate the administration's response. When Trump followed up by asking him, 'Did we do a great job?' Rossello answered: 'You responded immediately, sir.'" <https://bloom.bg/2zAg7eL>

-- **@PR_Recovery:** "29 days since landfall on Puerto Rico: Electricity restored: 21.60% Water restored: 71.58% Grocery stores open: 87.47%".

TRUMP also said they had the votes on the budget and "also addressed reports about Russian uranium and said this was the real Russia story while alleged collusion is a hoax," per Yahoo's Hunter Walker, today's pooler.

JEFF FLAKE POKES TRUMP -- Burgess Everett and Seung Min Kim: "If anything, Flake is determined to make his campaign against Trump-aligned candidate Kelli Ward a referendum on the future of the Republican Party. 'You can always eke out an election victory here and there,' he told POLITICO in an interview this week. 'But ... resentment is not a governing philosophy.' The GOP has 'deviated,' Flake added. 'We've taken a banner that is not familiar to us as Republicans. And I don't know how long this will last.'

"Flake chastised Trump's protectionist trade positions and his party's attempt to 'scapegoat' immigrants for the country's economic problems. And unlike other GOP senators, Flake publicly agrees with the sentiments of retiring Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), who recently blasted the president for potentially leading the country toward 'World War III' with his erratic tweets and foreign policy pronouncements.

"How are we going to ever have agreements with our adversaries or with our allies if they think that we're not a reliable partner? And what we've seen lately will make them question whether we're a reliable partner,' Flake said. 'That's what Bob expressed. And a lot of us shared that concern.'" <http://politi.co/2zAeQnO>

***** **A message from JPMorgan Chase & Co.: 30 Years in the Waiting** It's been more than three decades since America reformed its tax system. As the world became more competitive, our tax code remained the same, putting America at a disadvantage when it comes to creating new jobs. Learn how tax reform can jump-start our economy: <http://politi.co/2xE311i> *****

REAL TALK ON NAFTA, from a Republican senator involved in trade, this morning at a media background briefing: "I think we've moved on a little bit beyond [the threat of withdrawing from NAFTA] ... [A]s the president has said, if we can't cut a good deal we're going to withdraw. It's a negotiating posture but I don't think there's an interest in the part of the United States to withdraw and that's good because it would be

devastating to lose those markets to other countries ... [Q: Does the administration understand the severe consequences?]

"I think they do, I think they do and I'm not sure that was true at first but I think if you haven't seen it in terms of the rhetoric, I think you see it in terms of the actions, I think they realize. ... [Q: Do you think if talks collapse, nothing happens?] "Yeah, yeah. But I think something will happen because let's face it, Canada and Mexico have some beefs too that they would like to bring up."

ON THE PRESIDENT'S MIND -- @realDonaldTrump at 6:54 a.m.: "Republicans are going for the big Budget approval today, first step toward massive tax cuts. I think we have the votes, but who knows?" ... **at 7:17 a.m.:** "Uranium deal to Russia, with Clinton help and Obama Administration knowledge, is the biggest story that Fake Media doesn't want to follow!" ... **at 7:56 a.m.:** "Workers of firm involved with the discredited and Fake Dossier take the 5th. Who paid for it, Russia, the FBI or the Dems (or all)?" ... **at 8:21 a.m.:** ".@foxandfriends 'Russia sent millions to Clinton Foundation'". ***The president also retweeted a supporter.***

CLIP AND SAVE -- @burgessev: "Sen. Heller says he will not talk to Politico as long as @RalstonReports is a contributor".

ON THE WORLD STAGE -- "Spain to impose direct rule as Catalonia leader refuses to back down," by The Guardian's Sam Jones: "The Spanish government is to suspend Catalonia's autonomy and impose direct rule after the region's president refused to abandon the push for independence that has led to Spain's biggest political crisis for 40 years.

"The announcement of the unprecedented measure came after the Catalan president, Carles Puigdemont, threatened a unilateral declaration of independence if the Spanish government did not agree to talks on the issue. In a letter to the Spanish prime minister, Mariano Rajoy, sent on Thursday morning - the deadline set by Madrid for the region to abandon its independence plans - Puigdemont said discussions were the only way to resolve the crisis." <http://bit.ly/2zBpfzU>

WAR REPORT -- "Private contractor used to evacuate U.S. forces in Niger ambush," by CNN's Barbara Starr, Greg Wallace and Jamie Crawford "A U.S. private aviation contractor conducted evacuations of US and Nigerien troops after they were ambushed on October 4 in Niger, according to U.S. Africa Command spokesperson Robyn Mack. Mack said that U.S. private contractor Berry Aviation was 'on alert during the incident and conducted casualty evacuation and transport for U.S. and partner forces.' What is unclear at this time is whether the private contractor airlifted the wounded and/or the deceased." <http://cnn.it/2zB2rQr>

TURN OF THE SCREW ON RUSSIA -- "Trump Campaign Staffers Pushed Russian Propaganda Days Before the Election," by The Daily Beast's Betsy Woodruff, Ben Collins, Kevin Poulsen and Spencer Ackerman: "Some of the Trump campaign's most

prominent names and supporters, including Trump's campaign manager, digital director, and son, pushed tweets from professional trolls paid by the Russian government in the heat of the 2016 election campaign. The Twitter account @Ten_GOP, which called itself the 'Unofficial Twitter account of Tennessee Republicans,' was operated from the Kremlin-backed 'Russian troll farm,' or Internet Research Agency, a source familiar with the account confirmed with The Daily Beast. ...

"Two days before election day, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway tweeted a post by @Ten_GOP regarding Hillary Clinton's email. ... Three weeks before the election, Brad Parscale, the Trump campaign's digital director, retweeted a separate post from @Ten_GOP. ... President Trump's son Donald Trump Jr. followed the account until its closure on Aug. 23 of this year. Trump Jr. retweeted the account three times, including an allegation of voter fraud in Florida one week before the election."
<http://thebea.st/2zyUWtz>

RECOVERY UPDATE -- "FEMA Is Spending Billions, and Some Questionable Companies Are Getting Work," by Christopher Flavelle and Paul Murphy in Bloomberg Businessweek: "Since Harvey, FEMA has awarded \$215 million to a company called Composite Analysis Group Inc. to provide bottled water. According to a federal contractor database, Composite Analysis is also called Lipsey Mountain Spring Water Inc., which got \$81 million in 2005 for services that included providing bottled water to areas hit by Hurricane Katrina. Lipsey missed at least 9 of 14 deadlines, failed to document its orders properly, submitted 'improper or inaccurate documentation,' and was paid \$881,000 in unsupported costs, the U.S. Department of Defense's inspector general later concluded. Composite Analysis didn't respond to a request for comment. FEMA declined to answer questions about its vetting of the company.

"On Oct. 2, FEMA awarded \$1.6 million to Inner Parish Security Corp. The U.S. Department of Labor found that Inner Parish committed hundreds of federal wage and labor violations dating back to at least 2002, according to records reviewed by Bloomberg, some on FEMA contracts. Inner Parish didn't return calls seeking comment. FEMA declined to answer questions about whether it knew about the company's legal history when deciding to award or continue the latest contract."
<https://bloom.bg/2zyCvVT>

BUSINESS BURST -- "Alphabet Unit Leads \$1 Billion Investment in Lyft," by Bloomberg's Eric Newcomer: "Alphabet Inc.'s investment arm, CapitalG, led a \$1 billion investment in Lyft Inc. that values it at \$11 billion, the ride-sharing startup said Thursday. The funding marks a major shift in Alphabet's allegiances away from Uber Technologies Inc., and suggests a tighter pairing of its Waymo autonomous vehicle technology with Lyft's transportation network." <https://bloom.bg/2zySOIn>

PORTRAIT OF A PRESIDENT AS A YOUNG MAN-- "Obama Letters From 1980s Are Obtained by Emory University," by NYT's Sopot Deb: "'Your call gave me a boost,' reads a letter from a young Barack Obama. It was April 14, 1984, and Mr. Obama had transferred to Columbia University in New York City as a junior three years

earlier. The letter was addressed to Alexandra McNear, his girlfriend at Occidental College in Los Angeles, where he had transferred from. 'Somehow a clutter of numbers and appointments and bills had grown over your last letter,' wrote Mr. Obama, 22 at the time. 'Hearing your voice was like discovering a passage in a book I had read a while ago.'

"This is one of a series of handwritten notes that have been obtained by Emory University's Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library in Atlanta and will be available to the public for the first time. There are nine letters in total, all from Mr. Obama to Ms. McNear, and they shed some light on Mr. Obama's formative years - the unease in his own identity, his cerebral nature, sense of isolation, and even the mundane aspects of being a college student." <http://nyti.ms/2xSduYl>

-- **CAN YOU IMAGINE** having your letters to your significant other in college released to the public? Jeez.

THE MORE YOU KNOW -- ELAINA PLOTT in GQ, **"Inside the Campaign Merch Graveyard"**: "So what happens with all the stuff that a company like Hammerstone can't sell? Campaign volunteers are usually gifted the T-shirts and other basic apparel: a Republican operative who worked on the Rubio campaign tells me that kind of merch is given out first to volunteers, with the rest donated to someplace like Goodwill. Similarly, Moira Muntz of the Bernie Sanders campaign says they were able to get rid of most stuff by sending it to volunteers.

"As for leftover yard signs, [Jason] Worrrix [director of My Campaign Store] says he encourages campaigns to give them to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts -- 'they do a lot of craft projects,' he says, 'and it's easy just to slap their own posters over campaign signage.' And what of the guacamole bowl, with its 'rustic charcoal coloring' and 'iconic 3-legged design'? A Jeb campaign source--yes, this person actually requested to go on background to discuss a guacamole bowl--says, unfortunately, they 'gave them away to staff.'" <http://bit.ly/2zB9kRN>

MEDIAWATCH - "The Economist starts new TV ad campaign in the U.S.," by Talking Biz News' Chris Roush: "The ad, titled 'The world needs another Economist reader,' was created by Economist Films and marks the first time that this unit has created a commercial to represent The Economist publication. ... The ad will air in October and November on national cable networks and in key target markets including San Francisco and Washington. The media buy also included a national broadcast spot on the 'Late Late Show with James Corden.'" <http://bit.ly/2ySVH3m> ... **The ad, which is running with an initial six figure buy** <http://bit.ly/2x7tK3e>

DESSERT -- "People in Russia are renting out grounded private jets by the hour just to take Instagram photos - here's what it costs," by Business Insider's Rosie Fitzmaurice: "[N]ow even ordinary people can fake a lavish lifestyle by hiring a grounded private jet as a backdrop for their Instagram snaps - well, at least in Russia they can. Moscow-based Private Jet Studio is selling two-hour photo shoots aboard the

Gulfstream G650 private jet for 14,000 roubles (\$244 or £185) with a personal photographer included, or 11,000 roubles (\$191 or £145) without. If you'd prefer a video of your experience, you can pay 25,000 roubles (\$434 or £330) for a two-hour spot. You can also hire a team of hair and makeup professionals to polish your look beforehand." <http://read.bi/2xQV5Gx>

TOP TOONS -- MATT WUERKER talks to New Yorker cover artist **BARRY BLITT** about Trump and his upcoming book "Blitt." <http://politi.co/2zAnGIG> ... **\$29.82 on Amazon** <http://amzn.to/2zAPgiD>

BOOK ALERT -- GEORGE WILL'S next book is scheduled for early 2019 and will be published by Hachette. He says it will focus on the conservative movement and "intellectual vandalism." **The AP story** <http://bit.ly/2zA48xz>

OUT AND ABOUT IN LOS ANGELES -- The Motion Picture Association of America PAC hosted a fundraiser last night for House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, with special guest Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.), at the Los Angeles home of Frank Luntz. The "suggested" donation to be a host was \$20,000, according to the invite. Other hosts were PACs from 21st Century Fox, Comcast-NBC Universal, Disney, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Time Warner and Viacom.

SPOTTED: Rep. Will Hurd (R-Texas), outgoing MPAA chairman and former Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.), Patrick Kilcur, Bill Bailey, Troy Dow, Hollyn Schuemann, Cameron Normand, Kris Jones, Mitch Rose, Melissa Maxfield, and Sam Lancaster.

TRANSITIONS -- Conor Maguire will start at WPA Intelligence as senior client strategist. He spent the last three election cycles at the RNC, most recently as director of external support. ... **Dale Oak** has started Clark Federal Solutions, a government relations and consulting firm; he previously was senior adviser to the chairman of House Appropriations.

... **Dominic Gabello** has left as chief of staff to Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-N.M.) to join the congresswoman's gubernatorial campaign as manager. ... **Deirdre Murphy Ramsey** has been promoted to director of communications at Precision Strategies and **Erin Lindsay** has been promoted to director of digital at the firm.

WEEKEND WEDDING -- Maggie Gage, head of Washington research at Credit Suisse and adjunct professor at Georgetown, married **John Parks**, who is joining the Washington Post digital team. "The late-afternoon ceremony took place outdoors amid Vermont fall foliage at the Shelburne Museum, just south of Burlington. ... The couple met at a local bistro on U Street, while watching the opening game of the 2012 NFL season (Giants v. Cowboys)." **Pic** <http://bit.ly/2I28OJI>

***** **A message from JPMorgan Chase & Co.: Investing in America** The American economy powers the world, but our tax system is holding us back. A 2017 EY report found that reforming the tax system could have brought an additional \$195 billion of

foreign direct investment into the United States, an increase of 14 percent. That investment can help companies expand, explore new strategies and grow. What does that mean for America? It can help jumpstart our economy, make our country stronger in an increasingly competitive world, and can mean more jobs and higher wages for the American workers. Learn more about what tax reform can mean for our country: <http://politi.co/2z6j0D8> *****

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