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From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
Sent: Fri 8/25/2017 5:06:00 PM
Subject: Playbook Power Briefing, presented by Chevron: THE LATEST on Hurricane Harvey -- U.S. imposes sanctions on Venezuela -- COHN drafted resignation letter after Charlottesville

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Today's Playbook Power Briefing presented by Chevron

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UPDATE ON THE HURRICANE BARRELING TOWARD TEXAS, from POLITICO's weather guru Steven Shepard -- The center of Harvey is now within 100 miles of Corpus Christi, with winds of 110 mph. Modest strengthening is possible before the center moves onshore overnight. If the center of the storm makes landfall north of Corpus Christi, that could spare the city of 326,000 the worst of the storm surge. But a wobble south could be devastating.

-- **More bad news** : Unlike most landfalling hurricanes in the U.S., Harvey could be a slow-motion tragedy that dominates the news for the next week. The latest forecast has the center of a tropical storm still near Houston NEXT WEDNESDAY. That's why the National Hurricane Center is calling for "catastrophic" and "life-threatening" flooding from rainfall for much of Texas (including Houston), and parts of Louisiana. They don't throw around words like that lightly; rainfall amounts could be over 30 inches, or about 9 months' worth of rain here in D.C. ... **The latest hurricane track** <http://bit.ly/2gbo9p5> ... **Projected rainfall** <http://bit.ly/2gcd0V2>

-- **@realDonaldTrump**: "I have spoken w/ @GovAbbott of Texas and @LouisianaGov Edwards. Closely monitoring #HurricaneHarvey developments & here to assist as needed." ... **@ChuckGrassley**: "@realDonaldTrump #hurricane keep on top of hurricane Harvey dont mke same mistake Pres Bush made w Katrina"

ZOOM OUT: "Hurricane Harvey packs political perils for Trump," by Steve Shepard: "The stakes are high for Trump and other elected leaders, like Texas Gov. Greg Abbott. It's been nearly 12 years since a major hurricane -- one with maximum sustained winds stronger than 110 mph - made landfall in the United States. It's been nine years since Texas has seen a direct hit from a hurricane. And the storm could have national impacts, too: Much of Texas' oil and gas production is likely to be disrupted, at least in the short term and perhaps longer.

"Landfalling hurricanes have a way of dominating the news cycle . Even a president whose tweets typically send the media scrambling can be blown off cable news by live footage of reporters struggling to remain standing in tropical-storm-force

wind gusts. And after the storm passes, all attention turns to rescue and recovery efforts." <http://politi.co/2w4pWBH>

BREAKING -- "U.S. imposes first economic sanctions against Venezuela," by the Miami Herald's Patricia Mazzei and Franco Ordoñez: "The U.S. imposed its first economic penalties against Venezuela on Friday, hitting the South American country's financial sector in an attempt to starve President Nicolás Maduro's government of cash.

"The Trump administration banned trades of Venezuelan debt, prohibiting Maduro's government and its state-run oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela SA, from selling new bonds to Americans or in U.S. financial institutions. President Donald Trump signed an executive order approving the sanctions Thursday. 'In an effort to preserve itself, the Maduro dictatorship rewards and enriches corrupt officials in the government's security apparatus by burdening future generations of Venezuelans with massively expensive debts,' Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement."
<http://hrlid.us/2vnLdnc>

OH BOY -- "Gary Cohn, Trump's Adviser, Said to Have Drafted Resignation Letter After Charlottesville," by NYT's Eileen Sullivan and Maggie Haberman: "The sharp critique from Mr. Trump's top economic adviser, Gary D. Cohn, came nearly two weeks after deadly violence in Charlottesville, Va., in response to a rally led by white nationalist groups. Mr. Cohn, who is Jewish, seriously considered resigning and even drafted a letter of resignation, according to two people familiar with the draft. ...

"In the days after the Charlottesville violence, Mr. Cohn's family -- including his wife -- told him he needed to think seriously about departing, according to two people briefed on the discussions. Several of his friends in the business community also urged him to step away from the administration. Mr. Cohn is a former executive at Goldman Sachs. Mr. Cohn came close to resigning, according to one of the people briefed on the discussions. He met with Mr. Trump privately at the president's golf club in New Jersey last Friday, scrapping his plans to spend the evening at his second home in the Hamptons." <http://nyti.ms/2wanckR>

Happy Friday. PROGRAMMING NOTE: Playbook Power Briefing will be going on recess until Sept. 5, the day after Labor Day. If the week turns intensely newsy, we'll re-evaluate. Expect your morning Playbook in your inbox every day.

THE FRIDAY CONVERSATION -- On "Washington Week," hosted by Bob Costa: WaPo's Dan Balz, Jake Sherman, AP's Julie Pace and WSJ's Nancy Youssef at 8 p.m. on PBS.

THE PRESIDENT IS BACK on the offensive against Republicans. **@realDonaldTrump** at 8:25 a.m.: "Strange statement by Bob Corker considering that he is constantly asking me whether or not he should run again in '18. Tennessee not happy!"

FROM TARA PALMERI -- "Caroline Wiles, Trump's former scheduler who had issues

with her background check in February, has been back in the White House since July 8. Her old title was deputy assistant to the president and director of scheduling. Now her new title is special assistant to the president and associate director of presidential personnel. She's based in the EEOB."

***** **A message from Chevron:** We're piloting a program that uses drones to keep an eye on Chevron wells, tanks, and pipelines--all to keep DOERS and what they're doin' safer. Watch the video: <http://politi.co/2vLsVyX> *****

IN FOGGY BOTTOM -- "Tillerson's Commitment to Racial Diversity Has History at Exxon," by Bloomberg's Jeff Green: "U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson pledged this month to promote more people of color into leadership roles in his agency. His track record during 11 years at the helm of Exxon Mobil Corp. suggests he means it. At Exxon, people of color make up 30 percent of management and professional staff -- a stark contrast with the State Department's senior foreign service staff, which is 12 percent minority." <https://bloom.bg/2gce0IB>

WADING BACK IN -- "Obama makes rare endorsement in crucial St. Petersburg race," by POLITICO Florida's Marc Caputo: "Former President Barack Obama is intervening in a bellwether Florida election, endorsing St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Kriseman in the hopes of juicing Democratic turnout in Tuesday's multi-candidate race in order to force a November run-off, sources tell POLITICO. Obama's rare endorsement is crucial both for Kriseman -- who has been bleeding support from African-American voters -- and for a demoralized Florida Democratic Party that's still reeling over President Donald Trump's surprise win in November. ...

"**In a draft statement** obtained by POLITICO, Obama said he was endorsing Kriseman because of his policy positions. ... Whether Obama will campaign in St. Petersburg in the coming months is unclear, but Kriseman's campaign is sure to use him in paid media." <http://politi.co/2waKwyR>

SECOND THOUGHTS -- "NRCC chair: 'Clear' mistake by Republicans to push healthcare reform first," by Washington Examiner's Al Weaver: "Rep. Steve Stivers, R-Ohio, says it was a mistake for House Republicans to try to tackle healthcare reform first this year instead of other topics, including tax reform, and cast doubt on the idea that the Senate would be able to pass any Obamacare repeal bill this year. 'Oh, in hindsight, it's clear,' Stivers, the chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, told the Washington Examiner when asked if it was a mistake to attempt healthcare reform first. 'But it is what it is. You had to do them in some order. ... I would argue healthcare is pretty much...' Stivers said before catching himself. 'We're shifting focus,' he added, referring to issues like tax reform and other more achievable goals.'" <http://washex.am/2wbzYQ6>

ANOTHER TRUMP HOTEL STORY -- "Trump Hotel at Night: Lobbyists, Cabinet Members, \$60 Steaks," by NYT's Katie Rogers: "It was nearing midnight at the Trump International Hotel, and the president's son was eating macaroni and cheese.

Enveloped in the smooth tones of jazzy hotel music, soft light from a million tiny chandelier crystals and the scent of candied bacon, Eric Trump, fresh from a rally this month in West Virginia, declined a question from a reporter and instead posed one of his own.

"Is everything perfect?' he asked, much like an attentive concierge. From the Trump family's point of view, how could it not be?" *With cameos by Anthony Scaramucci, Jill Kelley and Brad Parscale* <http://nyti.ms/2wb9Wwu>

MEDIAWATCH -- "Our left-right media divide told through Charlottesville," by Tyler Fisher: "Using analyses from Cortico and the Laboratory for Social Machines at the MIT Media Lab, we looked at what partisan Twitter users shared during and after the events of Charlottesville. We found a clear split in the story as told through partisan sources." <http://politi.co/2ix9fKE>

DESSERT -- "How Late Night With Seth Meyers became the calm in a political comedy storm," by Vox's Caroline Framke: "Just a couple of hours before taping another episode of Late Night, Seth Meyers glanced at the TV muted on his wall, with its endless breaking news scrawl that might as well have been screaming, "DOOM," and sighed. 'I thought the campaign was the World Series, and it turned out it was spring training,' he said. '[On Election Day], it was like, 'Ohh, no, the season's starting now.'" <http://bit.ly/2gc6MUZ>

SPOTTED : Mark Penn, Juleanna Glover and Georgetown basketball coach Patrick Ewing all having breakfast separately at the Four Seasons this morning

TRANSITIONS -- Samantha Bisogno has been hired to be the communications manager for government affairs at the Ocean Conservancy where she will start in September. She most recently was press secretary for Rep. Rick Nolan (D-Minn.).

BONUS BIRTHDAY OF THE DAY: Ronn Torossian, CEO of 5W Public Relations. **How he's celebrating:** "At home with my two daughters. They are the reason why I work so hard and they are the meaning behind everything in my life." **Read his Playbook Plus Q&A:** <http://politi.co/2gcpMTI>

***** **A message from Chevron:** This is a story about energy, safety, and some truly high-flyin' doin'. We're piloting a program that uses drones, HD imaging, and thermal mapping to help keep a close eye on Chevron wells, tanks, and pipelines-all to keep DOERS and what they're doin' safer. Watch the video: <http://politi.co/2vLsVyX> *****

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