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The Daily 202: Rand Paul's short-lived shutdown is ending, but his warning about GOP deficit hypocrisy reverberates

James Hohmann

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THE BIG IDEA: Republicans are all Keynesians now, but not Rand Paul.

As he forced a brief government shutdown overnight to draw attention to his party's hypocrisy on deficit spending, Kentucky's junior senator was the personification of William F. Buckley's definition of conservatism: standing athwart history, yelling stop, at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urge it.

"I ran for office because I was very critical of [Barack] Obama's trillion-dollar deficits. Now we have Republicans hand-in-hand with Democrats offering us trillion-dollar deficits," Paul said during a floor speech, as he predicted that "a day of reckoning" is coming. "I can't in all good honesty, in all good faith, just look the other way because my party is now complicit in the deficits."

The deal's passage was never in doubt: Majority Leader Mitch McConnell knew he had 71 senators ready to vote for it, and Speaker Paul Ryan had the votes locked up in the House by yesterday morning. But Rand wanted the chance to introduce an amendment, and he used the procedural prerogatives of a senator to throw up roadblocks until about 1:30 a.m., when the time allotted for debate expired.

The House passed the bill just after 5:30 a.m. on a 240-186 vote, with 167 Republicans voting yes and 67 voting no. Democrats contributed 73 votes to get it across the finish line. President Trump was at the White House waiting to quickly sign it to reopen the government after what amounted to a partial seven-hour shutdown.

The bill authorizes the U.S. government to spend about \$500 billion more over the next two years and suspends the debt ceiling until 2019. Most of the additional spending is not offset with cuts elsewhere, which means that the \$20 trillion national debt will grow significantly. Sixty percent of the new money goes to the military; the rest goes to domestic programs.

This is the largest increase in federal spending since the stimulus passed during the depths of the Great Recession. Republicans almost universally opposed that bill in 2009, which cost \$787 billion over 10 years, on the grounds that it would increase the debt too much. The only

difference between now and then is that the economy is firing on all cylinders and doesn't need stimulus.

Rand doesn't have a totally clean nose here. He voted in December for the tax bill that will grow the debt by more than \$1 trillion over the next decade — and probably more. His pushback is that overhauling the code will generate economic growth to offset the lost revenue.

Because Republicans slashed taxes and are now jacking up spending, the nonpartisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget forecasts that this bill will ensure permanent trillion-dollar deficits. The projected deficit in 2019 is now \$1.1 trillion, compared to \$439 billion in 2015. (Don't forget, Trump called for an additional \$1.5 trillion infrastructure package during his State of the Union.)

-- GOP leaders are incensed at Paul, and members in both parties were perturbed that they had to burn the midnight oil. If he had fallen in line, they could have gone to bed at a reasonable hour. McConnell, who was visibly irritated when his fellow Kentuckian objected to his motion to end debate last night, might have remembered why he went all-in for Paul's primary opponent back in 2010. John Cornyn, McConnell's No. 2, called what Paul was doing "grossly irresponsible" and said that they wouldn't give in to his demand for amendments: "Why reward bad behavior?" John Thune, the No. 3 in GOP leadership, called it "a colossal waste of everybody's time" and said Paul "never gets a result."

-- But making his fellow Republicans uncomfortable was the whole point of the exercise. "Some will say, 'You're responsible for this, it's all your fault.' Well, if I'm responsible for drawing attention to the debt, so be it," Paul said. "Somebody had to do it. I didn't come here to be a part of someone's club. I didn't come up here to be liked. I didn't come here to just say, 'Hey guys, I'm going to be part of the club, so I'm going to do what you tell me to do.'"

-- To be sure, Paul is not the only Republican lawmaker worried about the debt. Bob Corker, the retiring senator from Tennessee, accused his party of "doubling down on the irresponsible mentality in Congress of spend now, pay later." The House Freedom Caucus, which has about three dozen members, came out strongly against the measure. The Koch political network, Heritage Action and the Club for Growth tried unsuccessfully to mobilize their supporters against the deal.

-- But most GOP lawmakers have stopped caring too much about the issue. A big reason is that their base stopped caring. Polls show that the deficit has dwindled as a concern over the past few years, especially since Obama left office.

-- Trump, who doesn't mind red ink, has helped drive this transformation. He is the self-proclaimed "king of debt." He's driven several businesses into bankruptcy by taking out ill-advised loans on unfavorable terms.

-- In many ways, Rand's brand of Republicanism was rejected during his failed 2016 presidential campaign. The libertarian moment, which saw Paul emerge as a top-tier contender in 2013 and 2014, ended with the rise of Trump. Instead of putting up a libertarian, Republicans

chose to nominate a libertine. The primary voters who backed his dad, Ron Paul, in 2012 moved on to fresher faces.

The senator used his floor speech last night to call for bringing the troops home from Afghanistan, which he framed as a cost-cutting measure. This is a position Trump shared — until he took office. The president tapped into the isolationist sentiments that the Paul family had appealed to for decades with his mantra of America First, but he's come to understand that the GOP remains at heart an internationalist party. That's one area where Trump has moved in the direction of the elites, not the other way around.

Paul worked to befriend Trump last year, but there have been signs that they've drifted apart. And his protest last night caught the administration off guard.

-- Even as he once again finds himself a lonely voice in the wilderness, Paul has proven that any senator can make themselves heard — if they choose to speak up. “Most of the senators will tell you — they say, ‘This is the last one, I’m never voting for this again, these are terrible, this is a rotten way to run your government, I object to doing it this way ... but I’m going to vote for this one because I don’t want the government to shut down,’” Paul said. “And while I don’t want the government to shut down, I also don’t want to keep it open if we’re not going to reform it.”

-- What exactly is in the massive spending deal? Heather Long and Jeff Stein have a list of 12 of the most important things: “It funds the government through March 23. ... Military spending jumps 10 percent. ... A 10 percent increase in domestic spending. ... Federal health programs get much-needed funding. ... Help for Puerto Rico. ... More tax cuts for 2017. ... Extra money to fight the opioid epidemic. ... The debt ceiling is raised until March 2019. ... More money for GOP social priorities such as abstinence education. ... The U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve would be sold down ...”

It gives vulnerable Democratic senators several wins and takes items off the party’s 2018 “Better Deal” agenda: “The new items include \$5.8 billion for the Child Care Development Block Grant program; \$20 billion in infrastructure spending, including rural broadband funds, with no corresponding cuts; and a special joint committee on fulfilling pension obligations, with the results to be voted on by the end of the year,” Dave Weigel reports.

McConnell also tucked in two provisions that will greatly benefit colleges in Kentucky. “One provision would exempt private colleges that do not charge tuition from a new tax on their endowments, an exemption that would protect Berea College,” Danielle Douglas-Gabriel reports. “Another provision ... gives the secretary of education greater authority to waive sanctions imposed on colleges and universities whose students consistently default on federal education loans. The measure would apply to public colleges in economically distressed communities, defined as a county that ranks in the lowest 5 percent of all counties in the country based on a national index ... Based on those narrow parameters, education experts say the provision would most likely benefit Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College.”

-- **Asian markets fell after the Dow's poor performance yesterday.** [Emily Rauhala reports](#): "Markets went down hard across the Asia-Pacific region . . . with China's Shanghai Composite Index at one point dropping more than 5 percent, as Hong Kong dipped more than 4 percent. Shanghai closed down 4.05 percent, Hong Kong's Hang Seng down 3.1 percent and Japan's Nikkei lost 2.3 percent. Korea's Kospi and Australia's ASX closed down 1.9 and 0.9 respectively.

"In Europe, however, the reaction was more measured, with the main stock indexes opening down sharply before slowly inching back up. The Stoxx Europe 600 index was down by 0.25 percent as midday approached while Frankfurt's DAX was even. London's FTSE was down just 0.33 percent after a few hours of trading . . .

-- **"The Dow's 4.1 percent fall means it is now in 'correction' territory,** or 10 percent lower than its all-time high, for the first time in two years," [Thomas Heath reports](#). "The broader Standard & Poor's 500-stock index has experienced a similar slide. Pullbacks of such magnitude are relatively common and usually occur over a two- to three-month period. But the jarring plunges over the past two weeks . . . are beginning to reshape sentiment on Wall Street. Some analysts are predicting darker, more volatile times ahead."

-- **As of yesterday, the Dow has lost [more than 40 percent](#) of its gains during Trump's presidency.**



President Trump applauds during yesterday's National Prayer Breakfast. (Mike Theiler/Bloomberg News)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **The Trump administration secretly offered Iran a direct channel to negotiate the release of prisoners in December.** The move marked the first time the current White House has signaled willingness to engage in a prisoner swap — but Iranians have so far spurned Washington's overture, leaving uncertain the fate of at least four American detainees. ([Wall Street Journal](#))

2. **Syrian Kurdish fighters detained two British Islamic State militants infamous for their role in torturing and killing Western hostages.** The Britons were part of a four-man group known collectively as “The Beatles” because of their British accents, and were the last two members to remain at-large. ([New York Times](#))
3. **A new study analyzing more than 650 human brains has found overlapping patterns of genetic activity in five major psychiatric disorders — autism, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression and anxiety.** Researchers say the results draw a road map to understanding these disorders, offering clues on how to better treat them. ([Amy Ellis Nutt](#))
4. **Meghan McCain said her father, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), has delayed his return to Washington because of the deadly flu season.** The younger McCain noted her father is more susceptible to catching the flu because his “immune system is so down” from treatments for brain cancer. ([Alex Horton](#))
5. **Facebook is now testing a “downvote” button as a potential means of flagging inappropriate comments.** But a Facebook spokesperson said in a statement: “We are not testing a dislike button. We are exploring a feature for people to give us feedback about comments on public page posts. This is running for a small set of people in the U.S. only.” ([TechCrunch](#))
6. **A Miami Beach student says she was forced to flush her pet hamster down an airport toilet after receiving “bad information” from Spirit Airlines.** Spirit representatives had twice told her she could bring the animal on the plane before denying her entry at the gate. “I was scared. ... She was scared. ... It was horrifying trying to put her in the toilet,” said the 21-year-old, who is now considering suing the airline. ([Miami Herald](#))
7. **Cornell’s ZBT fraternity is on probation after its pledges were revealed to be participating in a secret, fat-shaming game known as the “pig roast.”** The “game” involved prospective members earning points for sleeping with overweight women on campus. It was unclear how long the contest was going on or how many people participated. ([Cleve R. Wootson Jr.](#))
8. **The chairman of Graff Diamonds refuted Trump’s claim about getting a \$1 million discount on Melania’s engagement ring.** Laurence Graff said Trump was “a pleasure to do business with” but that he was given “no favours” when buying the ring, which retailed for \$1.5 million. ([Forbes](#))



Rob Porter, center, hands President Trump a confirmation order in the Oval Office. (Evan Vucci/AP)

PERSONNEL IS POLICY:

-- **Senior White House officials, including Chief of Staff John Kelly, knew about abuse allegations against Rob Porter for months before this week's reports surfaced.** [Josh Dawsey and Beth Reinhard report](#): "White House Counsel Donald McGahn knew one year ago that staff secretary Rob Porter's ex-wives were prepared to make damaging accusations about him but allowed him to serve as an influential gatekeeper and aide to President Trump without investigating the accusations, according to people familiar with the matter. [Kelly] learned this fall about the allegations of spousal abuse and that they were delaying Porter's security clearance

amid an ongoing FBI investigation. But Kelly handed Porter more responsibilities to control the flow of information to the president. ...

“In January 2017, when McGahn learned of the allegations, he wanted Porter to stay put because he saw the Harvard Law-trained Capitol Hill veteran as a steady, professional voice in the White House, according to people familiar with the matter. His view didn’t change in June when the FBI flagged some of its findings to the White House. Nor did he act in September when he learned that the domestic violence claims were delaying Porter’s security clearance, or in November when Porter’s former girlfriend contacted him about the allegations[.] ... When McGahn informed Kelly this fall about the reason for the security clearance holdup, he agreed that Porter should remain and said he was surprised to learn that the 40-year-old had ex-wives.”

-- White House spokesman Raj Shah declined to say when top officials first became aware of the allegations, but acknowledged they could have “better handled” them. [John Wagner and Anne Gearan](#) report: “Shah said that [Trump] only learned of the allegations from media reports on Tuesday night and that [Kelly] did not become ‘fully aware’ of the alleged abuse until Wednesday. ... As he was peppered with questions, Shah did not rule out the possibility Kelly and other senior White House officials knew about the allegations [long] before they surfaced in the media. Shah said Porter, whose job included presenting Trump with classified documents, was serving in the White House with a temporary security clearance while law enforcement officials continued to conduct a comprehensive background check.”

-- The current husband of Porter’s first wife, Colbie Holderness, emailed the FBI last January expressing concerns that one of Porter’s close friends was “actively working” to quash possible background check issues. [CNN’s MJ Lee reports](#): “[Skiffington Holderness] said in an email to the FBI ... that he had several conversations with Porter’s friend, Bryan Cunningham. The email details those conversations, including one in which Cunningham allegedly reacted positively when Holderness said his wife was not inclined to talk to the FBI regarding Porter’s background check. Cunningham, according to the email, said ‘that was good,’ she was ‘not obligated’ to speak with the FBI, and that they should ‘bury the past.’”

-- “Taken together, all the grown-ups in the room protected, privileged, and covered for Rob Porter despite everything they knew about his pattern of abuse, because his career was important to them,” [Slate’s Dahlia Lithwick writes](#). “Please stop asking why women don’t come forward. These women did. They believed that once the police, the FBI, the White House, and John Kelly knew what they knew, Porter would stop ascending in their ranks. They were wrong.”



Rob Porter, John Kelly and Jared Kushner walk to Marine One on the South Lawn of the White House. (Alex Brandon/AP)

-- **Dozens of White House employees are working with temporary approvals to handle sensitive information.** [Josh Dawsey, Matt Zapotosky and Devlin Barrett report](#): “People familiar with the security-clearance process said one of those White House officials with an interim approval is Jared Kushner[.] ... National security lawyer Mark Zaid, who represents government employees going through the security-clearance process, said it is not necessarily sinister that dozens of White House employees lack clearance. He said the Trump White House,

in particular, might be going through the clearance process slowly because those working there have not previously been in government and their extensive foreign and business ties take additional time to explore. Zaid said people often operate with interim clearances for months.”

-- The White House wants to remove the No. 2 at the Department of Veterans Affairs as a “warning shot” to Secretary David Shulkin, the only Obama-era holdover in Trump’s Cabinet. [Emily Wax-Thibodeaux, Lisa Rein and Josh Dawsey report](#): “Deputy Secretary Thomas G. Bowman, who was appointed by Trump and confirmed in August, was said to be at odds with the administration’s plan to expand health care access for veterans through private providers[.] ... ‘It’s a move to knock Shulkin down a peg or two,’ said a White House official[.] ... ‘The administration feels like Shulkin has been freewheeling a little too much. Rather than sticking with the administration’s position on the Veterans Choice Act, Shulkin has been working with senators who don’t agree with the White House provisions.’”

-- The Office of Personnel Management issued a report stating understaffing at federal agencies is hampering services to the public. [Eric Yoder reports](#): “The report comes just ahead of a White House budget proposal that is expected to include plans for carrying out a long-term reduction in the federal workforce, as ordered by the Trump administration last April. ... OPM found personnel issues factored in 59 percent of programs on the Government Accountability Office’s ‘high-risk’ list and in 38 percent of reports by inspectors general of ‘management challenges’ within their agencies. Specifically, inadequate staff was cited as a problem in 34 percent of the former and 14 percent of latter.”



White House Chief of Staff John Kelly watches as President Trump speaks during a meeting in the Oval Office. (Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post)

WEST WING INTRIGUE:

-- Kelly may have put his own credibility on the line by coming to Porter's defense this week. [Philip Rucker reports](#): "The perception of Kelly as above politics has been critical to his success in the West Wing. Publicly, he has come to Trump's aid at moments of crisis, while privately he has been used to kill damaging news stories ... **But the irony for Kelly may be that the credibility that makes him a singular asset in this White House may have been irreparably damaged by his work in it ...** and some White House aides worry it may be acutely painful, considering he takes personal pride in his honor as a lifelong public servant. 'This is a man who, across the corps for 40 years, was considered to be the exemplar of moral

principle and integrity,' [said John R. Allen, a retired four-star general and close friend of Kelly's]. 'His values were very powerfully formed, and it's just difficult for me to find in my memory of my service with him a flaw.'"

-- Trump is lashing out at Kelly and even his close confidante Hope Hicks over their handling of the Porter allegations. [Vanity Fair's Gabriel Sherman writes](#): "On Wednesday night, [Trump] vented to advisers that Kelly had not fully briefed him on Porter's issues with women until recently, two sources told me. Trump was also not aware of the severity of the alleged abuse until yesterday, when Ivanka walked into the Oval Office and showed her father a photo published in the Daily Mail of Porter's ex-wife with a black eye. 'He was f---ing pissed,' said one Republican briefed on the conversation. According to a source, Ivanka and Jared Kushner have been discussing possible chief-of-staff replacements. The problem is there's not an obvious candidate waiting in the wings. ...

"The crisis also raises questions about Hope Hicks's decision-making, and whether her romantic relationship with Porter clouded her judgment. According to a source, Hicks did not get a sign off from Trump for the White House's initial statement defending Porter, in which Kelly was quoted calling Porter a 'man of true integrity. ... **There is a sense that the Porter situation may finally push Trump to move against Kelly, according to several Republicans close to the White House.** Last night, a source said, former Trump campaign manager Corey Lewandowski called Trump and urged him to fire Kelly. Hicks's job, meanwhile, seems safe, even if the president is angry with her."

-- Trump called his former chief of staff Reince Priebus to complain about Kelly. [The New York Times's Peter Baker and Maggie Haberman report](#): "The idea that the president would confide grievances over Mr. Kelly with the person he pushed out to hire Mr. Kelly is yet another indication of how upside-down Mr. Trump's world can be. In the West Wing, various characters fall in and out of favor with such rapidity that it is never entirely clear who has the president's ear. ... **Mr. Trump has recently asked advisers what they think of Mick Mulvaney, who currently holds twin posts as director of the White House budget office and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, as a possible chief of staff[.]**"

-- "A lot of [Kelly's] defenders are fading away," [New York Times columnist Gail Collins writes](#). "Former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta always used to be supportive, since Kelly was once his military aide. No more. The best Panetta could do in a phone interview was to suggest the new, bad version of his old friend might be the product of too much time spent with his current boss. **'On the other hand,' he added, 'who the hell knows?'**"

-- Also silent in wake of the Porter allegations is the "family values" crowd, writes [Post columnist Jennifer Rubin](#): "Self-described 'values' champions have ... jettisoned any pretense to be vanguards of the culture for the sake of access to the president and influence in picking judges. The notion that they are there to protect women — 'sacred' women, as Kelly once said — is risible. Needless to say, if anyone in a Democratic administration allowed a character like Porter to remain in the White House after receiving evidence of his alleged violence against women, these groups would be calling for the heads of all concerned and denouncing the

president for creating an atmosphere where women are not respected. Their record in enabling Trump and rationalizing support for him has made them a laughingstock.”

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In her return to reality TV, Omarosa says things at the White House are 'so bad'

Embed

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Former White House aide Omarosa Manigault Newman entered CBS’s “Celebrity Big Brother” house. (Amber Ferguson/The Washington Post)

-- Former Trump aide Omarosa Manigault Newman tearfully dished on her time in the White House on Thursday night’s episode of “Celebrity Big Brother,” telling a fellow contestant that she was “haunted by [Trump’s] tweets every single day.” [CNN’s Jennifer Hansler reports](#): “Manigault-Newman claimed that when she attempted to reason with [Trump] about some of his tweets, she was ‘attacked’ and denied access by ‘all of the people around him,’ including [Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump]. Manigault-Newman described the situation inside the White House as ‘bad.’ **Asked whether the nation should be concerned about the administration, she nodded, adding, ‘it’s not going to be OK.’”**

-- Manigault-Newman also told a fellow contestant who asked whether she’d vote for Trump again, “God no, never. In a million years, never.” ([Helena Andrews-Dyer](#))

-- Raj Shah, filling in for Sarah Huckabee Sanders from the podium yesterday, dismissed Manigault-Newman’s comments, saying the White House is taking the former aide’s comments “not very seriously.” “Omarosa was fired three times on ‘The Apprentice’ and this is the fourth time we let her go,” Shah said. “She had limited contact with the president while here. She has no contact now.” ([John Wagner](#))

-- The Fix’s Philip Bump has a complete list of the 37 administration officials [who have resigned or been fired under Trump](#).



House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) returns to a secure area in the Capitol. (J. Scott Applewhite/AP)

THERE'S A BEAR IN THE WOODS:

-- Steve Bannon spoke to former Trump campaign aide Carter Page about Russia when he was under FBI surveillance in January 2017 — raising the “strong possibility” that agents may have intercepted the conversation. [Politico’s Kyle Cheney reports](#): “Page told Congress in November about the call. But it has been cast into a new light by last week’s release of a Republican memo revealing that the FBI was monitoring Page’s communications at the time. ‘If Page was using one of his standard phones, it was probably picked up,’ said Elizabeth Goitein, a former Justice Department trial attorney ... The significance of a possible FBI recording depends on the exact content of the conversation between Bannon and Page, about which Page has been

vague. **But it means the FBI's surveillance of Page ... may have touched one of the highest-ranking figures in Trump's incoming administration just days before inauguration.**”

-- **GOP members of the House Intelligence Committee are planning to construct a physical wall to separate Republican and Democratic staffers in the committee's secure spaces.** [CBS News's Olivia Victoria Gazis reports](#): “For now, some Republican committee members deny knowing anything about it, while strongly suggesting the division is the brainchild of the committee's chairman, Devin Nunes [R-Calif.]. ‘I'm not part of that decision,’ said Rep. Mike Conaway [R-Tex.] ‘You've got to talk to Devin. I don't know what they're trying to do one way or the other.’ ‘I swear to God I didn't know that,’ said Rep. Tom Rooney [R-Fla.], when asked about the plan. While acknowledging a wall might not be constructive for the committee's work, he said, ‘The level of trust and the level of everything down there is — it's poison. It's absolute poison down there.’”

-- **The Senate Intelligence Committee plans to soon release a report on vulnerabilities within the U.S. election system, the first byproduct of the panel's Russia probe.** [The Wall Street Journal's Byron Tau reports](#): “The leaders of the Senate Intelligence Committee said they hope to have it completed by March. ... The report is aimed at making recommendations to state, county and local governments about how best to protect their election infrastructures in advance of the 2018 midterm elections. ... The report isn't expected to address any of the thorny questions about the extent to which Russia interfered in the 2016 election — including whether associates of [Trump] colluded with Moscow.”

-- **Two more government officials mentioned in the texts exchanged between Peter Strzok and Lisa Page are leaving their posts.** [Politico's Josh Gerstein reports](#): “Mike Kortan, FBI assistant director for public affairs, is set to retire next week, an FBI spokeswoman confirmed. In addition, the chief of the Justice Department's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section, David Laufman, resigned this week, a department spokesman said. Both men are discussed in text messages sent by [Strzok and Page.] ... While the texts contain derogatory mentions of Trump, the messages made public thus far don't attribute that sentiment to Kortan or Laufman, and there's no indication that either departure is related to the recent flap.”

-- **Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) said it may take several weeks to make public transcripts of interviews with Donald Trump Jr. and other key witnesses.** A bipartisan set of aides must review the transcripts, after which the witnesses' lawyers will also be allowed to review them. And a final review for redactions must occur before they're released. ([Politico](#))

-- **“Devin Nunes is investigating me. Here's the truth,”** [by Jonathan M. Winer](#): “[Nunes] announced last week that the next phase of his investigation of the events that led to the appointment of special counsel Robert S. Mueller III will focus on the State Department. His apparent area of interest is my relationship with former British intelligence professional Christopher Steele and my role in material that Steele ultimately shared with the FBI.”

#MeToo lawmaker under investigation for sexual misconduct allegations

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California Democratic Assemblywoman and vocal #MeToo advocate Cristina Garcia is under investigation for allegedly groping a former male staffer. (Amber Ferguson/The Washington Post)

THE #METOO MOMENT:

-- **California Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia (D), who has emerged as a high-profile champion of the #MeToo movement, is currently being investigated for two allegations of sexual misconduct.** [The LA Times's Melanie Mason reports](#): “[Two men] said Garcia made improper advances toward them. One, a former legislative staffer, said Garcia groped his back and buttocks and attempted to grab his crotch during a legislative softball game in 2014. The former staffer, Daniel Fierro, told his former boss, Assemblyman Ian Calderon [D] about the incident several weeks ago, his office said. Calderon then reported the incident to the Assembly Rules Committee. **Fierro told the Times he decided to speak out because he thought Garcia's behavior was at odds with the #MeToo movement, which could harm the cause she was so closely associated with.** [The second accusation was made by a lobbyist, who said] Garcia attempted to grab his genitals and made an explicit sexual proposition at a 2017 event.” Garcia denied wrongdoing and said she will participate “fully” in the investigation.

-- **Three former Cato Institute employees say they were sexually harassed by the think tank's co-founder and former president, Ed Crane.** [Politico's Daniel Lippman and Maggie Severns report](#): “One former employee said Crane asked her to take off her bra. Another said he compared her breasts to pornographic images on his computer. A third said he sent her an email on breast augmentation. Crane also settled an additional sexual harassment claim by a former employee in 2012, her lawyer confirmed . . . Crane retains the title of president emeritus at Cato and was paid more than \$400,000 annually from the powerful think tank in the years after he left, but a Cato spokesperson said his consulting contract has ended and he is no longer employed by the think tank. ‘This is ridiculous,’ Crane said, when confronted with the complaints. He added that he had a stroke last year, which affected his memory.”

-- **Oregon state Sen. Jeff Kruse (R) bowed to pressure to resign over sexual misconduct accusations against him.** [Travis M. Andrews reports](#): “‘I continue to deny these allegations,’ Kruse said in a statement reported by Oregon media. ‘However, today I tender my resignation so my colleagues may focus on serving Oregonians without distraction and my constituents receive the fullest representation they are due.’ His resignation is effective March 15, which will allow him to finish out the legislative session. He is at least the 15th state legislator in the country to be forced from office either through resignation or expulsion in the months since the #MeToo movement got going[.]”

-- **Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens (R) reiterated he has not spoken to authorities about an ongoing investigation into whether he attempted to blackmail a woman with whom he had**

an extramarital affair. “We’ve answered all of those questions, and you know that the answer is ‘no,’” Greitens said at a news conference. “Does anyone have any questions about the business in front of the people of Missouri?” ([St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#))

-- Supermodel Kate Upton detailed her accusations of sexual misconduct against Paul Marciano, co-founder and former CEO of the clothing brand Guess. In [an interview with Time](#), Upton said, “After the first day of shooting the Guess Lingerie campaign [on July 25, 2010], Paul Marciano said he wanted to meet with me. As soon as I walked in with photographer Yu Tsai, Paul came straight up to me, forcibly grabbed my breasts and started feeling them — playing with them actually. After I pushed him away, he said, ‘I’m making sure they’re real.’ Despite doing everything I could physically do to avoid his touch throughout the meeting, he continued to touch me in a very dominating and aggressive way[.] ... At one point he forcibly grabbed the back of my head so that I could not move and started kissing my face and my neck.”

-- Olympic swimmer Ariana Kukors accused her coach of sexual abuse. [Will Hobson reports](#): “Kukors, 28, said in a news release issued late Wednesday evening by her attorneys that her former coach Sean Hutchison, 46, began sexually assaulting her when she was 16. Kukors went public with her accusations the day after officers with Homeland Security searched Hutchison’s Seattle home [for sexually explicit photos of an underage Kukors].”

-- A veteran studio executive caught in the controversy between Harvey Weinstein and actress Rose McGowan, who has accused Weinstein of rape, committed suicide. [Samantha Schmidt reports](#): “[Jill] Messick silently battled her own longtime ‘nemesis’ — depression. ... Messick served as [McGowan’s] manager before taking a job at the Miramax film studio under Weinstein’s leadership. Caught in a bitter feud between McGowan and Weinstein, Messick kept a low radar in recent months. But following her death, her family released a searing statement condemning Weinstein, McGowan and the media for their portrayals of Messick, who ‘became collateral damage in an already horrific story.’”

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Pence arrives in South Korea for the Winter Olympics

Embed

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Vice President Mike Pence landed at the Gangneung Air Base in South Korea on Feb. 8, a day before the Winter Olympics opening ceremony. (Reuters)

THE OLYMPICS ARE NOW UNDERWAY:

-- “The Winter Olympics opened in PyeongChang on Friday night, amid bone-chilling weather but warming relations between North and South Korea,” [Anna Fifield reports](#). “Vice President Pence and a delegation of senior North Korean officials [attended] a VIP reception before the Opening Ceremonies, and then the ceremony itself. **Pence spent about five minutes at the reception, but did not have any direct encounters with North Korean envoys,** led by Kim Yong Nam, North Korea’s constitutional head of state, and Kim Yo Jong,

the sister of leader Kim Jong Un. ... Pence, who entered with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, greeted others at the dinner except for North Korea's Kim Yong Nam[.]”

-- **The U.S. Olympic Team has selected four-time Olympic competitor Erin Hamlin as its flag-bearer for the Opening Ceremonies, making the 31-year-old athlete the fourth luger to ever take on that role.** Hamlin is currently ranked No. 7 in the world and took home silver at last year's world championships. ([Rick Maese](#))

- **There are 102 events in PyeongChang this year — the most in Olympic history. Find out when and where to stream them all [here](#). And sign up for The Washington Post's daily Olympics newsletter [here](#).**

-- **“As the Opening Ceremonies commence Friday with a grand spectacle ... the deepening fissure between the United States and South Korea has cast a shadow over the festivities,”**[David Nakamura reports](#). “[And] foreign policy analysts said the Olympics could mark the start of a new, more complicated chapter for the alliance. On Wednesday, the North announced that Kim's sister, Kim Yo Jong, will participate in the Opening Ceremonies, [a] sign that Pyongyang could be serious about improving ties with Seoul. On the same day, [Vice President Pence] announced that additional, unspecified economic sanctions on the North were on the way.”

-- **“For all the talk of nuclear exchanges and giant buttons, there has been little realistic discussion of what a war on the Korean Peninsula might mean, how it could escalate, what commitments would be required, and what sacrifices would be demanded,”** says [Vox.com's Yochi Dreazen](#), who covered the Iraq War from Baghdad. “So I've spent the past month posing those questions to more than a dozen former Pentagon officials, CIA analysts, US military officers, and think tank experts, as well as to a retired South Korean general ... **They've all said variants of the same thing: There is a genuine risk of a war on the Korean Peninsula that would involve the use of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons.** Several estimated that millions — plural — would die. Even more frightening, most of the people I spoke to said they believed Kim would use nuclear weapons against South Korea in the *initial* stages of the fighting — not just as a desperate last resort. **And if all of this sounds frightening, it should. A new war on the Korean Peninsula wouldn't be as bad as you think. It would be much, much worse.**”

1:27

Trump wanted a parade. He might get one.

Embed

Share

The Pentagon and White House are planning a military parade requested by President Trump, breaking with U.S. tradition. (Elyse Samuels/The Washington Post)

PARADE PROBLEMS:

-- **Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said he was exploring options to present to Trump on his desired military parade.** “I owe him some options,” Mattis said. “We’ll put together options, and we will work everything from size to participation to cost, and when I get clear options, we’ll send those over to the White House, and I’ll go over and talk with them.” ([John Wagner](#))

-- **The Navy SEAL who killed Osama bin Laden described a military parade as “third world bulls--t.”** “We prepare. We deter. We fight. Stop this conversation,” Robert James O’Neill added in his tweet. ([Marwa Eltagouri](#))

-- **[Dan Lamothe explains](#) some of the logistical issues with the parade Trump envisions:** “The United States has not staged anything comparable since 1991, when President George H.W. Bush presided over a national celebration of victory in the Persian Gulf War. About 8,800 U.S. troops marched, tanks and other armored vehicles rolled through Washington, and numerous aircraft flew overhead. It cost between \$8 million and \$12 million[.]”

-- **“America doesn't need to convince the world how powerful we are with a display of our most powerful weapons. That is not who we are. In fact, it makes us look weak,” [former defense secretary Chuck Hagel writes for U.S. News and World Report.](#)** “Would the point [of a parade] be to thank and recognize the men and women who serve in our military? Or would it be entertainment for our president, who told French President Macron that he so enjoyed the French parade that he too wanted a grand military parade like the Bastille Day parade that he attended? Not a good reason.”



Protesters rally in support of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) near the Trump Tower in New York. (Jewel Samad/AFP/Getty Images)

THE REST OF TRUMP'S AGENDA:

-- **The Trump administration is considering making it more difficult for immigrants living in the United States to obtain permanent residency if they — or their American-born children — use food aids or other public benefits.** [Reuters's Yeganeh Torbati reports](#): "The [DHS] has drafted rules ... that would allow immigration officers to scrutinize a potential immigrant's use of certain taxpayer-funded public benefits to determine if they could become a public burden. For example, U.S. officials could look at whether the applicant has enrolled a child in government pre-school programs or received subsidies for utility bills or health insurance premiums. The draft rules are a sharp departure from current guidelines, which have

been in place since 1999 and specifically bar authorities from considering such non-cash benefits in deciding a person's eligibility to immigrate to the United States or stay in the country."

-- A chemistry professor from Bangladesh who has lived in the United States for more than 30 years was granted a temporary stay of deportation. [Amy B Wang and Maria Sacchetti report](#): "The ruling means Syed Ahmed Jamal will be allowed to remain in the country while an immigration court hears his case. The temporary stay came as a surprise to Jamal's friends and family members, who said there had been indications that Jamal could have been deported as soon as Friday."

-- The administration wants to roll back environmental reviews of public lands. [Juliet Eilperin and Michael Laris report](#): "The Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management has finalized a set of recommendations that would overhaul the way it permits energy exploration and other activities on public land by streamlining environmental reviews, according to a document obtained by [The Post]. The Sept. 27 report — which was issued in response to a March 27 memo from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, but never publicly released — amounts to a blueprint for how the Trump administration plans to expedite extractive activities on 245 million acres of public land and 700 million acres of the mineral estate below the surface."

-- A pro-Israel charity scheduled a fundraiser at Mar-a-Lago in hopes that Trump "would be able to stop by," according to the charity's founder. [David Fahrenthold reports](#): "Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, who leads the [International Fellowship of Christians and Jews], said the group decided last fall to hold a gala in Palm Beach, Fla. He said they were choosing between two sites ... for the March 25 event. **Mar-a-Lago, he said, had a deciding advantage: the possibility of a presidential visit.** 'We're not making a political statement ...' [he said]. But, he said, 'If there is a possibility ... that the president might also come to say hello and offer greetings, then that's an advantage. So I think that was kind of what determined it.'"



House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi speaks at a news conference to unveil congressional Democrats' "A Better Deal" economic agenda. (Aaron P. Bernstein/Reuters)

THE ROAD TO NOVEMBER:

-- **House Democrats are planning to target more than 100 GOP-held congressional districts in this year's midterms.** [NBC News's Alex Seitz-Wald reports](#): "The seven new targets push Democrats even deeper into Republican territory in South Carolina, Wisconsin and Texas. And they include the Ohio seat held by the man charged with defending the GOP's majority, Rep. Steve Stivers, chairman of the [NRCC]. . . . Democrats are now fielding candidates in all but 12 of the 238 districts held by Republicans, . . . including in places like Alabama, where Democrats are competing in every single district for the first time in years. The idea is to expand the map as much as possible and hope to ride the potential wave."

-- **House Democratic Caucus Chair Joe Crowley (N.Y.) is traveling across the country to boost Democrats' prospects for the midterms and also boost himself.** [Paul Kane writes](#): "He is raising money for candidates, traveling to their districts. This week Crowley is serving as host for the annual issues retreat[.] ... Crowley is leading a group of 20 trying to forge a policy agenda that would put 'meat on the bones' of a vague sounding pledge from Democrats to deliver a 'better deal' than Trump. ... But all this is part of a campaign without an actual target, at least not a spoken one. A trio of 70-somethings outrank Crowley — [Pelosi,] House Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Rep. James E. Clyburn (D-S.C.) — and none have signaled any intent to exit the stage."

-- **Republicans are making gains on the generic congressional ballot — as I wrote in [yesterday's 202](#) — but district-by-district data is not in their favor.** [The Cook Political Report's David Wasserman writes](#): "In the fourth quarter of 2017, 39 Republican House incumbents were outranked by at least one Democratic challenger, and private polls and special election results suggest Democrats are highly competitive even in some districts President Trump won by wide margins. At first glance, these two data trends might seem at odds with each other. How could Democrats' lead in national polls be shrinking while their odds in individual districts improve? The answer: the 'macro' outlook for the House (national polls) and the 'micro' view (district-by-district) aren't diverging; they're coming into alignment."

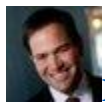
SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Trump highlighted a [Fox News story](#) about Mark Warner, the top Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee, texting with a Russian lobbyist:

Wow! -Senator Mark Warner got caught having extensive contact with a lobbyist for a Russian oligarch. Warner did not want a "paper trail" on a "private" meeting (in London) he requested with Steele of fraudulent Dossier fame. All tied into Crooked Hillary.

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [February 9, 2018](#)

But one of Warner's Republican colleagues had already shot down the story:



[Marco Rubio](#)

✓ [@marcorubio](#)

Sen. Warner fully disclosed this to the committee four months ago. Has had zero impact on our work. <http://fxn.ws/2nXIdM6> [#FoxNews](#)

[8:08 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)



[Democratic Sen. Mark Warner texted with Russian oligarch lobbyist in effort to contact dossier...](#)

[Sen. Mark Warner, the top Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee who has been leading a congressional investigation into President Trump's alleged ties to Russia, had extensive contact last...](#)

[foxnews.com](#)

•

[15.9K](#)

•

[11.6K people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Trump's director of social media captured this shot:

[View image on Twitter](#)



[Dan Scavino Jr.](#)



[✓@Scavino45](#)



Happening Now:
President [@realDonaldTrump](#) meeting with former United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in the Oval Office.

[2:03 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[4,657](#)

•

[2,132 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

As a shutdown neared, a Republican leader said this to a Politico Magazine reporter:



[Tim Alberta](#)

✓ [@TimAlberta](#)

"At my breaking point," one House GOP chief texts me. "Our party is worthless."

[5:36 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

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[13.8K](#)

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[5,039 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Obama's former top economic aide had this to say about the deficit:



[Jason Furman](#)

[✓@jasonfurman](#)

I consider myself a deficit dove. I'm comfortable with 3% GDP deficits--and higher in downturns. I don't think deficit reduction should be our top priority.

But, deliberately sending an essentially full employment economy into deficits of 5% to 7% of GDP is nuts.

[4:24 PM - Feb 7, 2018](#)

•

[2,365](#)

•

[1,116 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

The budget debate made this 2012 tweet newly relevant:



[Donald J. Trump](#)

[✓@realDonaldTrump](#)

No member of Congress should be eligible for re-election if our country's budget is not balanced--deficits not allowed!

[3:31 PM - Jul 31, 2012](#)

•

[955](#)

•

[1,723 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Immigration activists took over Nancy Pelosi's office:

[View image on Twitter](#)





Cristina Jimenez

✓ [@CrisAlexJimenez](#)

HAPPENING NOW: immigrant youth [@NancyPelosi](#) office for an 8 hour undocustory takeover pushing House Dems to include [#DreamAct](#) in spending bill. Vote for spending bill w/out Dream is a vote to deport immigrant youth. [#DreamActNow](#) [#NoDreamNoDeal](#)

[1:51 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[434](#)

•

[266 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

The Onion satirized Pelosi's filibuster-style speech:

[View image on Twitter](#)



 [The Onion](https://www.theonion.com/)

[✓@TheOnion](https://twitter.com/TheOnion)

Woman Speaks For Record-Breaking 8 Hours Without Being Interrupted By Man
<https://trib.al/L4h4sXX>

[1:35 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[14.8K](#)

•

[4,321 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

A Post reporter translated Pelosi's letter to fellow Democrats:

[View image on Twitter](#)



February 8, 2018

Dear Democratic Colleague,

Today, the Senate will send the House a budget caps bill that was negotiated by Democratic and Republican leaders in the House and Senate. Democrats successfully secured hundreds of billions of dollars in new investments.

However, we cannot allow our success in one part of the discussion to diminish our leverage in another. We have always said nothing is agreed to until everything is agreed to. In the Senate, Leader McConnell has respected the will of all Members of the Senate with his public commitment to a fair process to bring a DACA bill to the floor.

Speaker Ryan's refusal to allow a bipartisan process for a DACA proposal demeans the dignity of the House of Representatives. It is also an insult to the American people, who overwhelmingly support the Dreamers.

The Republicans do not have the votes to pass this caps bill on their own. Many House Republicans have opposed adequate funding of our domestic priorities. This proposal adds a quarter of a trillion dollars to the deficit, which is why they don't have the votes to pass the bill. These Democratic investments create jobs and economic growth.

House Democrats have a voice here and we must be heard. These are the reasons I am voting against this bill.

Thank you for your leadership.

best regards,

Nancy



[Mike DeBonis](#)

✓[@mikedebonis](#)

Dear Colleague, writes [@NancyPelosi...](#)

"These are the reasons I am voting against this bill," which is full of Democratic wins.
Unsaid: You do your own thing.

[2:07 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[147](#)

•

[94 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Another Post reporter noted this about the stock market losses:



[Damian Paletta](#)

✓[@damianpaletta](#)

The Dow Jones Industrial Average just erased all of its gains since November 28, a month BEFORE the tax law passed.

[4:13 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[2,798](#)

•

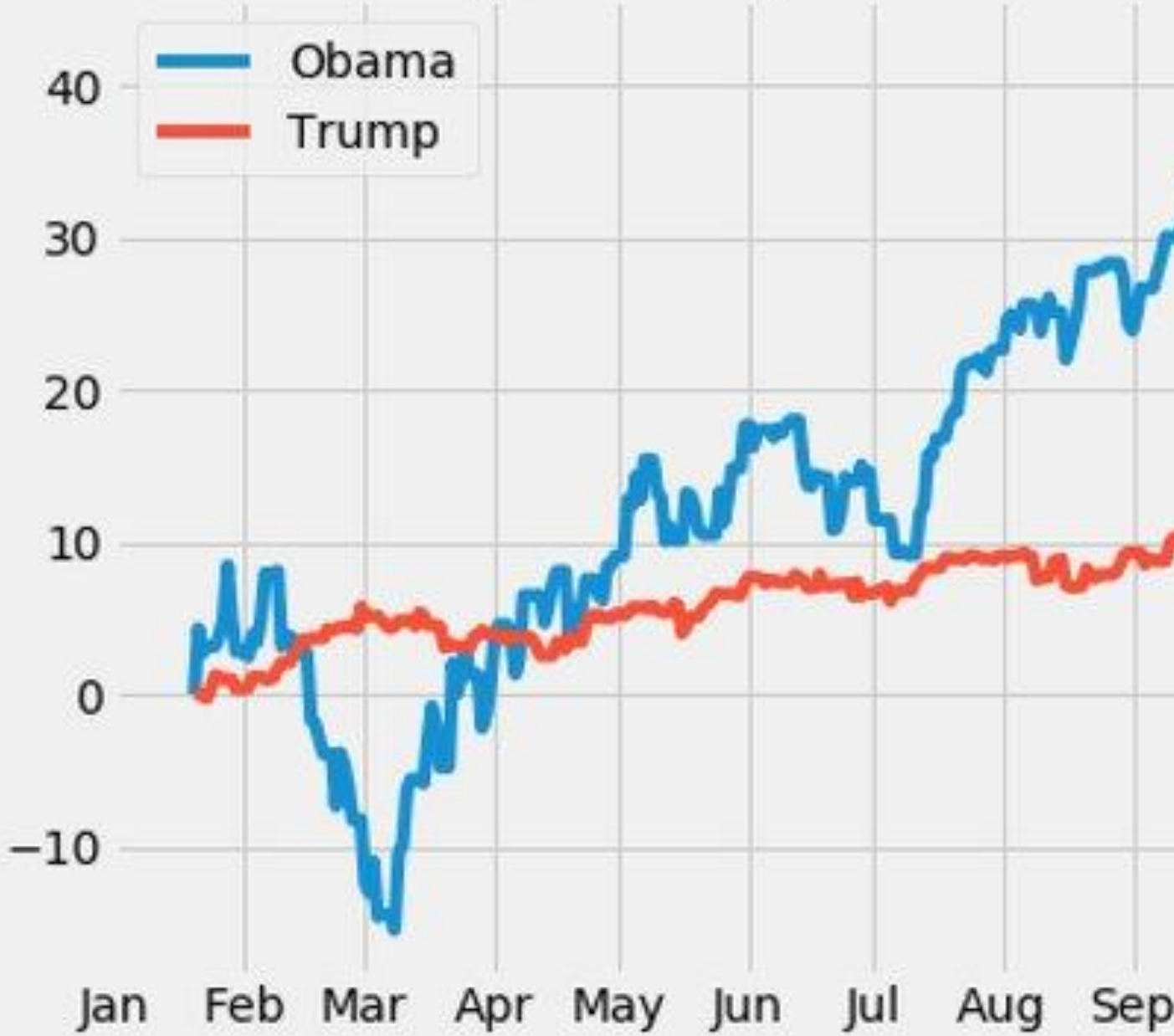
[1,794 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

From a Post columnist:

[View image on Twitter](#)

Percentage Change in SPY: Ina



[Catherine Rampell](#)

✓@crampell

Presidents don't control stock markets. But since Trump has been so fond of touting his stock market record, here's what markets have done since inauguration for him vs. during same period in Obama's presidency. Net gains was more than double at this point under Obama.

[5:37 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[3,789](#)

•

[2,348 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

The Boston Globe's deputy Washington bureau chief analyzed the White House's handling of Rob Porter:



[Matt Viser](#)

✓@mviser

People who don't get the benefit of the doubt:

- Those from Haiti and African nations
- Family members of legal immigrants
- Muslims
- Dreamers too "lazy" to apply for DACA

People who do get the benefit of the doubt:

- A staffer accused of abusing his two ex-wives.

[4:46 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[1,219](#)

•

[555 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

From another of the Globe's correspondents:



[Annie Linskey](#)

✓ [@AnnieLinskey](#)

The WH takes allegations of violence against women particularly seriously if there's a picture.

[4:07 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[287](#)

•

[81 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

From Obama's former communications director:



[Jen Psaki](#)

✓ [@jrpsaki](#)

It is simply not believable that no one in [@WhiteHouse](#) knew given 1. FBI would have flagged for DOJ who would flag for counsel's office 2. Having an interim clearance for that long is a flag on its own. They would have asked why

[7:33 PM - Feb 8, 2018 · Washington, DC](#)

•

[216](#)

•

[96 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

From a #NeverTrump GOp:



[Ana Navarro](#)

✓ [@ananavarro](#)

In the Trump White House, Scaramucci was forced to leave faster and more abruptly for talking smack, than Rob Porter was for violently smacking women.

[https://twitter.com/jdawsey1/status/961700536226648066 ...](https://twitter.com/jdawsey1/status/961700536226648066...)

[4:56 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[14.9K](#)

•

[5,459 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

An MSNBC anchor replied to Navarro:



[Stephanie Ruhle](#)

✓ [@SRuhle](#)

Excellent point - After Scaramucci's swearing incident, John Kelly wanted him OUT of a WH job & OFF the premises immediately. But General Kelly defended the integrity & honor of Rob Porter who allegedly physically abused 2 wives

[https://twitter.com/anavarro/status/961720425960030208 ...](https://twitter.com/anavarro/status/961720425960030208...)

[7:19 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[7,315](#)

•

[2,979 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Feminist writer Jessica Valenti lambasted the White House's initial inaction:



[Jessica Valenti](#)

✓ [@JessicaValenti](#)

It's simple: The White House kept Rob Porter on, despite knowing he was an abuser, because in this administration there is nothing out of the ordinary about men hurting women

[4:11 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[3,948](#)

•

[1,159 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

A Post reporter summed up 2018 so far:



[Josh Dawsey](#)

✓ [@jdawsey1](#)

This week: spousal abuse

One week ago: the memo.

two weeks ago: Trump moved to fire Mueller, against lawyer's wishes

three weeks ago: shutdown!

four weeks ago: "shithole" and porn star payoff

five weeks ago: "Fire and Fury" and Bannon excommunication

six weeks ago: New Year's Day

[2:23 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[19.7K](#)

-

[9,524 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

An NBC correspondent marked this political anniversary:



[Steve Kornacki@SteveKornacki](#)

30 years ago tonight, from NBC News: Dole wins Iowa, Bush stunned by televangelist Pat Robertson for 2nd

[1:33 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

-

[45](#)

-

[35 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

This job posting caught journalists' attention:



[Sarah Seltzer](#)

✓ [@sarahmseltzer](#)

OMG. There is an open spot for literally the most influential job in America. Quick, apply!

[https://www.mediabistro.com/jobs/description/367627/head-writer-fox-and-friends/ ...](https://www.mediabistro.com/jobs/description/367627/head-writer-fox-and-friends/)

[1:09 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)



[Head Writer, Fox & Friends](#)

[Fox & Friends is looking for a Head Writer who will supervise a team of Writers and work with Senior Producers to craft the tone of a fast-paced show.](#)

[mediabistro.com](#)

•

[1,563](#)

•

[635 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- The Atlantic, "[White Women in the Rustbelt Are Turning on Trump](#)," by Ronald Brownstein: "Support from majorities of white, working-class women powered Trump's midwestern wins, but those voters are souring on him in office — providing Democrats with a complicated opportunity in 2018."

-- New York Times Magazine, "[When You're a 'Digital Nomad,' the World Is Your Office](#)," by Kyle Chayka: "Telecommuting has been feasible since the days of dial-up, but the early digital nomads were pioneers, planning solo trips around the world [in] the name of escaping drudgery back home. Roam aims to make dislocation easy and glamorous, transforming digital nomadism into a mainstream, off-the-rack proposition. ... **Can you imagine a pair of noise-canceling headphones for geography? That's how I started to think of Roam. When you want to, you can block out your sense of place entirely and exist in a hazy, calm, featureless space that could be anywhere.** This nomadic bubble goes beyond a hotel in that it stretches around the world and is built to encompass your entire life; it promises to become your post-geographical home. Yet I found there to also be an anxiety to this hermetic placelessness, no matter how beautifully unburdened or minimalist it appears. ... **Living anywhere is a lot like living nowhere.**"

-- The Atlantic, "[Why China Loves Trump](#)," by Benjamin Carlson: "From the very beginning, the Communist Party seems to have understood that Trump's threats were, for the most part, merely for show. By refusing to be rattled, China has enjoyed a series of rhetorical and strategic triumphs that have enhanced its global image and increased its international influence. ... **China also appears to have assessed that Trump, the self-proclaimed master deal maker, would rather have a bad deal than no deal at all, and could be persuaded to compromise on almost anything in order to declare a 'win.'** Beijing seems to have concluded that the former casino mogul, like a high-rolling gambler, can be made to keep playing the house by showering him with VIP perks. In this respect he is less shocking or threatening than commonplace: He's simply what Chinese call a *tuhao*, another bumptious billionaire."

-- Politico Magazine, "[From Expensing Yachts to Chasing The Onion: I Watched the Newsweekly Die From the Inside](#)," by Matthew Cooper: "Newsweek is in shambles. Time moved to Des Moines. Is it my fault?"

HOT ON THE LEFT:

"In Tampa visit, Attorney General Jeff Sessions recommends aspirin over opioids for pain relief," from [the Tampa Bay Times](#): "U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has drawn jeers for suggesting that people in pain should consider over-the-counter Bufferin instead of opioids. On Wednesday, Sessions was in Tampa, touting the Trump administration's efforts to combat drug abuse and trafficking. This time, he broadened his suggestion to aspirin. 'I am operating on the assumption that this country prescribes too many opioids,' Sessions said. 'People need to take some aspirin sometimes.' ... Sessions, veering away from his prepared remarks, also made an

HOT ON THE RIGHT

"Bermuda becomes first jurisdiction to legalize same-sex marriage," from [the Guardian](#): "Bermuda has introduced into law a bill reversing the right of the British Overseas Territory's supreme court ruling last year authorizing same-sex marriage. The bill, introduced by Governor John Rankin, would ban same-sex marriage by law. The move by Bermuda would be a significant step by the territory, which has been a haven for same-sex marriage on the socially conservative island. The bill would reverse European court rulings that ensure same-sex couples in the territory. Bermuda

example of Gen. John Kelly, the president's chief of staff, whom he said refused opioids after a minor surgery. ... 'But, I mean, a lot of people — you can get through these things.'"

passed the legislation by wide margin. ... But, I mean, a lot of voters opposed same-sex marriage.

DAYBOOK:

Trump has two meetings with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.

Pence is in South Korea, where he attended the Olympic Opening Ceremonies.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis was asked whether he had any "misgivings" about Trump's military parade. "I have some misgivings about the president's feelings. I save those for my girlfriend." (John Wagner)

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- **It will be dry and mild in D.C. today before this weekend's precipitation.** [The Capital Weather Gang forecasts](#): "Cloudier-than-not skies could feature a few breaks from time to time, especially in the morning, but it should remain dry. Despite grayness more often than not, temperatures do rise into comfortable, seasonably average low-to-mid-40s."

-- **The Wizards lost to the Celtics in overtime 110-104.** ([Candace Buckner](#))

-- **Capital One Arena will undergo a \$40 million renovation, which will include redesigned concession stands and modernized concourses.** "The renovations will begin after the Capitals' and Wizards' current seasons and are expected to be completed by the fall," [Scott Allen notes](#).

-- **The Washington region's three bids for Amazon's second headquarters actually represent nine different proposals.** [Jonathan O'Connell reports](#): "Amazon's preference will likely say a lot about the company it wants to be, and signal which locations have the upper hand. ... All nine proposals technically meet the criteria Amazon has laid out. They all provide access to Washington's top-notch talent pool, Metro and airports. But all carry their own challenges. Urban sites tend to be more expensive and laborious to build on, a potential drag for a company known for its impatience. Suburban or exurban locations, however, bring commuting worries about navigating the region's notorious traffic."

-- **Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) walked back comments from his transportation chief claiming Amazon would have a "blank check" for transportation incentives.** "Obviously Secretary [Pete K.] Rahn misspoke," Hogan's communications director said. "The transportation portion of the Amazon incentive package will include targeted investments in both transit and roads that will be financed over at least 10 years. It will be funded fully and appropriately." ([Robert McCartney and Katherine Shaver](#))

-- **Metro officials anticipate further decreases in ridership and revenue next year.** [Martine Powers report](#): “Budget staff members anticipate a 2.6 percent reduction — \$20 million — in revenue from passenger trips in the fiscal year that begins July 1. ... The projected revenue decline puts more pressure on local jurisdictions to come up with the 3 percent increase in operating subsidies that General Manager Paul J. Wiedefeld has requested, and for D.C., Maryland and Virginia to identify a source of long-term funding for the transit agency.”

-- **A Virginia House panel killed four bills meant to protect LGBT citizens from discrimination.** The vote prompted jeers of “Shame!” from activists who packed the hearing room. ([Laura Vozzella](#))

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Stephen Colbert attacked the White House for its handling of the Rob Porter allegations:

Seth Meyers summed up another long news week:

The Post fact-checked Devin Nunes's claim that Hillary Clinton colluded with the Russians to get "dirt" on Trump:

2:30

Did Hillary Clinton collude with the Russians to get ‘dirt’ on Trump to feed it to the FBI?

Embed

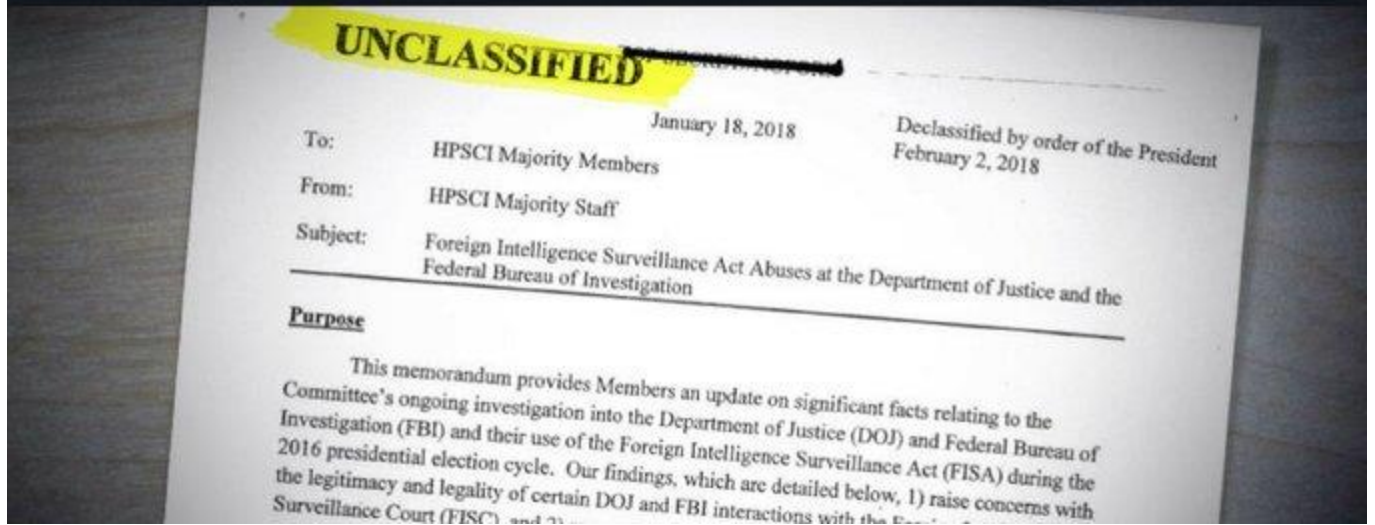
Share

Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) makes a startling claim about the Russian investigation. But there's no evidence to back it up. (Meg Kelly/The Washington Post)

House Republicans pushed a video offering their explanation for "why the FISA memo matters":

FISA MEMO

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW



[Kevin McCarthy](#)

✓ [@GOPLeader](#)

You deserve the truth. Here is why the FISA memo matters ↓

[1:15 PM - Feb 8, 2018](#)

•

[5,083](#)

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[3,869 people are talking about this](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Canada's Parliament sang the country's new gender-neutral national anthem:

1:07

Canada's Parliament sings new gender-neutral national anthem

Embed

Share

Canadian members of Parliament sang the new, gender-neutral lyrics to the country's national anthem on Feb. 7. (Reuters)

And Philadelphia celebrated the Eagles' Super Bowl victory with a parade: