

Sent: Sat, 04 Feb 2012 12:00:00 -0500
From: Mike Allen <politicoplaybook@politico.com>
To: [REDACTED]

P6/b(6)

Subject: POLITICO Playbook, presented by the American Petroleum Institute – Brunch Edition – OBAMA: ASSAD MUST STEP ASIDE – Robert Draper book on House out April 24: Kevin McCarthy is a central player – Lance Armstrong cleared – Hunter Biden, Matt McDonald b'day

BULLETIN - "Statement by the President on Syria :": "Thirty years after his father massacred tens of thousands of innocent Syrian men, women, and children in Hama, Bashar al-Assad has demonstrated a similar disdain for human life and dignity. Yesterday the Syrian government murdered hundreds of Syrian citizens, including women and children, in Homs through shelling and other indiscriminate violence ... I strongly condemn the Syrian government's unspeakable assault against the people of Homs ... Assad must halt his campaign of killing and crimes against his own people now. He must step aside and allow a democratic transition to proceed immediately. ... The suffering citizens of Syria must know: we are with you, and the Assad regime must come to an end."

--AFP/Damascus: "Syrian forces shell the city of Homs, killing more than 200 people in a 'horrific massacre,' activists say, as Russia says it will press President Bashar al-Assad for a political solution to the nearly 11-month-old crisis."

BREAKING - L.A. Times, "Catholic Church vows a battle: Angry U.S. bishops say they'll challenge the White House edict on contraceptives," by Mitchell Landsberg: "The Catholic Church reacted strongly Friday to a White House defense of new rules that will force many religious employers to provide contraception to their workers in government-mandated health insurance plans. 'The White House information about this is a combination of misleading and wrong,' said Anthony Picarello, general counsel of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He said the bishops would 'pursue every legal mandate available to them to bring an end to this mandate. That means legislation, litigation and public advocacy.'" <http://lat.ms/Ai4Mxl>
<<http://go.politicoemail.com/?qs=28958ccaa7390a0f807fc1867a954fca63cc871ee7b87949feef4ebde3f06836>>

FIRST LOOK - "New Book Offers Revealing Look Inside The Current House of Representatives ": "On April 24th, Free Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, Inc., will publish DO NOT ASK WHAT GOOD WE DO, an eye-opening look at the current House of Representatives ... The title is a direct quote from one of the nation's first House members, Fisher Ames, who was lamenting the divisions already emerging in Congress by the mid- 1790's. ... DO NOT ASK WHAT GOOD WE DO is a high-octane narrative, following several current representatives on both sides of the aisle-including four of the hot-blooded GOP freshmen-through the past year's tumultuous legislative session. ... [T]he fevered antics captured in Draper's tale constitute a case study in Beltway dysfunction."

--The four GOP freshmen are Reps. Allen West (Fla.), Jeff Duncan (S.C.), Blake Farenthold (Tex.) and Renee Ellmers (N.C.). Also followed: House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) and Reps. John Dingell (D-Mich.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) and Jo Ann Emerson (R-Mo.), among others.

TIM TEBOW, ON POSSIBLE FUTURE IN POLITICS (to golf commentator Dave Feherty on a "Feherty Live" special from the Super Bowl, airing on the Golf Channel at 10 p.m. tonight): "I don't know -- it could be something in my future. If it's something I care about, possibly."

--NBC's Super Bowl 46 pre-game starts at NOON tomorrow; kickoff is at 6:30 p.m. : "Bob Costas will open NBC Sports' six hours of Super Bowl XLVI pre-game coverage with a live report from Georgia Street in downtown Indianapolis ... Matt Lauer will interview President Obama from The White House during a special pre-game edition of TODAY airing late Sunday afternoon. ... The Weather Channel's Jim Cantore will provide reports on the fan atmosphere surrounding Lucas Oil Stadium, including a ride on the popular 800-foot zip line located in the Super Bowl Village in downtown Indianapolis ... 'Top Chef' ... host Tom Colicchio and two popular former contestants, Richard Blais and Antonia Lofaso, [will compete to] create the perfect tailgate food. Tony Dungy and Rodney Harrison" pick the winner.

--To show the kids: "Roman Numeral Translation Table, 1 to 2,105" <http://bit.ly/waWdky>
<<http://go.politicoemail.com/?qs=28958ccaa7390a0f7285e33b2cd303a4810bcc6c5f4aacd27e3bf0f477b91ba6>>

TV TOMORROW - "Meet": Gingrich, plus "The political Super Bowl": N.Y. Mayor Bloomberg, Mass. Gov. Patrick and Indiana Gov. Daniels) ... "Face": Newt and Rudy ... "This Week": Ron Paul ... "Fox News Sunday": Rick Santorum ... CNN's "State of the Union": Maryland Gov. O'Malley, Va. Gov. McDonnell, plus Tony Perkins and Dick Armey.

CORRECTION: Based on info from a spokesman, Playbook yesterday incorrectly attributed comments to Blackstone CEO Stephen Schwarzman that were made by Blackstone President Hamilton "Tony" James. Thanks to alert reader Devin Banerjee of Bloomberg News for the outpoint. Always grateful for corrections, large or small: mallen@politico.com.

GAME CHANGE? WSJ 5-col. lead, "Jobs Power Market Rebound : Unemployment Dips to 8.3 on Broad Gains ... Dow Highest Since May 2008," by E.S. Browning: "News of strong job growth, a three-year low in unemployment and other positive developments Friday pushed the Dow ahead 156.82 points, or 1.23%, to 12862.23 ... The blue-chip index would have to rise just 10% to reach its record close of 14164.53, hit Oct. 9, 2007. ... The Dow's surge is a sign of the extent to which investors have put aside the global fears that gripped them last summer. ... Since Lehman collapsed in September 2008, stocks have often been driven by raw fear of financial meltdown rather than by economic fundamentals."

--N.Y. Times 2-col. lead, "Jobless Rate Falls to 8.3%, Altering Face of Campaign: President Gets New Hope on Crucial Issue, but Romney Must Weigh Strategies" ... WashPost 2-col. lead, "Surprise gains in employment shift landscape: U.S. ADDS OVER 200,000 JOBS IN JANUARY -- Markets surge as economists rethink outlooks" ... L.A. Times 1-col. lead: "Jobs report may be turning point."

IF YOU READ ONLY ONE THING -- WSJ A5, "Jobless Figures Cut Two Ways for Obama: Trend Line Looks Like Reagan's, but Without More Improvements This Year, It Could Wind Up Closer to the Elder Bush's," by Janet Hook and Jon Hilsenrath: "The unemployment rate dropped to 8.3% in January, not far from where it was at the same point in Mr. Reagan's first term, when it was 8.0%. And under both Mr. Obama and Mr. Reagan, joblessness was heading down. But the key for Mr. Reagan was that unemployment kept falling through his re-election campaign. By his first term's end, it had dropped to 7.3%-below where it was when he was inaugurated. ... Economists generally don't expect such rapid job growth this year. The Federal Reserve expects unemployment to be stuck between 8.2% and 8.5%. That would be higher than the 7.8% rate in January 2009, when Mr. Obama took office. ...

"Under Mr. Reagan, the economy enjoyed many months of superfast growth. From April 1983 until June 1984, ... the economy grew at an annual rate of more than 8%. ... Last year, ... the economy expanded a meager 1.6%. ... A more ominous comparison for Mr. Obama is Mr. Bush's failed re-election bid in 1992. The economy was improving during Mr. Bush's final year in office, but not enough for him to win. Economic output, for example, rose at an annual rate of more than 4% during his re-election campaign. The unemployment rate was falling by November 1992, but at 7.4% it was a full two percentage points higher than when Mr. Bush took office."

FIRST IN THE WEST - Nevada caucuses today - AP advisory: "Republican voters in Nevada will meet [today] in precinct caucuses across the state, beginning at noon EST in most counties and continuing until the final caucus convenes at 10 p.m. EST in Clark County. We expect Nevada Republican Party officials to release the first results of the presidential preference vote at these caucuses shortly after 8 p.m. EST. Party officials will not release results from Clark County, the state's largest county, until after 10 p.m. EST, following a special caucus for people observing the Sabbath. Clark County in the past has accounted for more than half the total vote in statewide Republican primaries and caucuses."

--POLITICO.com will have instant AP results feed (raw count and %) at top of homepage.

--TVNewser : "MSNBC's coverage will run from 6-10:30pmET. The first two hours will be hosted by MSNBC political analyst Michael Smerconish. Chris Matthews will take over from the DC bureau at 8pmET. CNN's live coverage will run from 7-10pmET and will be anchored by Wolf Blitzer, Anderson Cooper and John King. At 11pmET, Don Lemon will anchor a live edition of 'Newsroom.' Fox News will stick with a regular Saturday night schedule in the early part of primetime - 'Huckabee' at 8pmET, followed by 'Justice with Judge Janine.' At 10pmET, Bret Baier will host a one-hour live special on the caucus results. Baier will also provide extended live cut-ins during the rest of primetime programming."

--WHAT TO WATCH -- Charles Mahtesian and Juana Summers: "Mitt's margin: ... Romney could take a step toward proving he can win over conservatives by rolling up a big winning margin. ... In 2008, Romney managed to win just over half the vote, 51.1 percent. While recent polls have him just below that, breaking the 50 percent barrier for the first time this year would give him some welcome momentum going into Tuesday's contests in Colorado, Minnesota and Missouri. ... Newt's percentage: ... [I]f the former House speaker were able to finish in second and win close to, or more than, a third of the vote it would suggest that even at a low point he maintains a reservoir of support among tea party activists and the very conservative - and that there continues to be a determined resistance to Romney."

<http://bit.ly/xZOzdl>

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SPOTTED, by the Gingrich press corps at The Fix, a restaurant in the Bellagio in Las Vegas: Bill Richardson, eating alone at a table for two. (hat tip: Ginger Gibson)

"BC-CYC--Doping-Armstrong : Prosecutors won't charge cyclist Lance Armstrong," by AP's Greg Risling, in L.A.: "Federal prosecutors dropped their investigation of the seven-time Tour de France champion Friday, ending a nearly two-year effort to determine whether the world's most famous cyclist and his teammates joined in a doping program during his greatest years. ... 'I am gratified to learn that the U.S. Attorney's Office is closing its investigation,' Armstrong said in a statement. ;It is the right decision and I commend them for reaching it.' ... U.S. Attorney André Birtle Jr. announced in a press release that his office 'is closing an investigation into allegations of federal criminal conduct by members and associates of a professional bicycle racing team owned in part by Lance Armstrong.'"

** A message from the American Petroleum Institute: Americans from all walks of life are becoming energy voters. They know America needs more energy from all sources - including domestic oil and natural gas - to create jobs and get our economy moving. Learn more at Vote4Energy.org
<<http://go.politicoemail.com/?qs=28958ccaa7390a0f4db2eeda81caa3ba21102310e218d464300c8365c76132b>> . **

BIRTHDAYS: Hunter Biden is 42 ... Matt McDonald, seen here blowing out the candles on a chocolate football cake from co-workers at Hamilton Place Strategies <http://yfrog.com/mock2ej>
<<http://go.politicoemail.com/?qs=28958ccaa7390a0ffdc3a4a7659e19bed02c709a02512aff27527337398f1d9e>> ... David Edelman, White House's National Security Staff director for international cyber policy, is 27. Will be spotted later this evening at Little Miss Whiskey's on H Street ... Sara Himeles in communications shop at Department of Homeland Security ... Abigail Cable is 24, wishing for a big win for Mitt in Nevada ... @SethDMichaels, writer at Working America, AFL-CIO (h/t Tyrone Gayle) ... Susan Roth of Roth P.R. ... Janice Laurente, press director at Peace Corps ... Jennifer Granholm (h/ts Patrick Gavin) ... David Brenner is 76 ... Dan Quayle is 65 ... Lawrence Taylor is 53 ... Oscar De La Hoya is 39 (h/ts AP) ... H.P. Patel ... Chuck Pruitt ... Ann Liston ... Jason Hitchman (h/ts Teresa Vilmain).

BIRTHDAYS TOMORROW: Michael Steel, the Speaker's press secretary ... former Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm is 53.

OLIVIER KNOX's last day at AFP, before becoming Yahoo's first White House correspondent: Friday. Olivier's first day at AFP was July 23, 1996, as a desk editor: "First stories I remember editing were TWA Flight 800 crash stuff. First byline was, I think, a Jack Kemp profile." First day at Yahoo is Feb 13 -- the day in 2003 that he proposed to Jen.

KOMEN'S 180:

--"Statement from Susan G. Komen Board of Directors and Founder and CEO Nancy G. Brinker : We want to apologize to the American public for recent decisions that cast doubt upon our commitment to our mission of saving women's lives. The events of this week have been deeply unsettling for our supporters, partners and friends and all of us at Susan G. Komen. We have been distressed at the presumption that the changes made to our funding criteria were done for political reasons or to specifically penalize Planned Parenthood. They were not. ... We will continue to fund existing grants, including those of Planned Parenthood, and preserve their eligibility to apply for future grants, while maintaining the ability of our affiliates to make funding decisions that meet the needs of their communities."

--@NancyGBrinker: "We will have calls with our network and key supporters to refocus our attention on our mission and get back to doing our work."

--"Planned Parenthood's image boost," by Anna Palmer and Robin Bravender : "Planned Parenthood has been under siege for a year, but in three days it managed to recast its controversial image thanks to a fight with Susan G. Komen. When House Republicans voted to defund Planned Parenthood a year ago, the usual suspects came to the group's aid, like liberals and Democrats in Congress. But when Komen announced last week it planned to pull grants for breast cancer screenings, they got an unexpected response: the Internet exploded with thousands of angry supporters and others who gave the group \$3 million. Komen changed course Friday and Planned Parenthood claimed a win on an important source of power in Washington - angry, organized voters." <http://bit.ly/wlicTw>
<<http://go.politicoemail.com/?qs=28958ccaa7390a0f4c2dd88e396485dd9db02857aa45b37df7eaf2c2aac8e082>>

--N.Y. Times, "BAN IS REVERSED BY CANCER GROUP: Komen Restores Ties to Planned Parenthood" ... WashPost, "Komen foundation revises grant policy: Reversal makes Planned Parenthood eligible again for funding" ... L.A. Times: "Pressure on Komen wasn't new: For years, activists have tried to break its ties to Planned Parenthood."

--"Komen flap spurred by social media," by Keach Hagey : "For the second time in this very young year, following the social media-fueled stalling of the Stop Internet Piracy Act legislation last month, Twitter and Facebook are being credited with giving oxygen to a wildfire of protest that delivered profound, immediate political results ... Planned Parenthood's Facebook page got 10,000 new friends in the last couple days ... Twitter users sent more than 1.3 million Tweets referencing Planned Parenthood, the Susan G. Komen foundation and related terms and hashtags ... The chatter built steadily through the week, with more than 460,000 related Tweets sent on Thursday. Planned Parenthood helped spur the conversation by using a 'promoted tweet,' Twitter's equivalent of advertising." <http://bit.ly/A6l8ex>
<<http://go.politicoemail.com/?qs=28958ccaa7390a0f7f3c8ff334439b55420ea79afeab8f2a0838616c3db96b56>>

--"The Pink Ribbon and the Dollar Sign: The wrong lessons to draw from the Komen-Planned Parenthood debacle," by Dr. Russell D. Moore, the dean of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, on ChristianityToday.com: "This is an important victory for Planned Parenthood and the abortion rights lobby. First of all, the association with Komen is a key piece in Planned Parenthood's effort to present itself as a 'women's health provider' ... Beyond that, the surrender of the nation's leading breast cancer awareness group to this kind of political pressure proves the clout of Planned Parenthood and their allies. ... Planned Parenthood has won this one. ... But what we have is greater than that. We have a word that tells a pregnant young woman that we believe her Down Syndrome baby is a gift, not a health care burden. ... Let's work to legally protect women and children." <http://bit.ly/xWLLzp>
<<http://go.politicoemail.com/?qs=28958ccaa7390a0f2f0ef08391e806afe6ba42a9bfd1520c40da9469b1523f2d>>

THE PRESIDENT'S WEEK AHEAD: "On Saturday and Sunday, the President has no public events scheduled. ... On Monday, the President will attend meetings at the White House. On Tuesday, the

President will host the second White House Science Fair celebrating the student winners of a broad range of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) competitions from across the country. The President will also announce key steps that the Administration and its partners are taking to help more students excel in math and science, and earn degrees in these subjects. At the fair, the President will view exhibits of student work, ranging from breakthrough research to new inventions, followed by remarks to an audience of students, science educators and business leaders on the importance of STEM education to the country's economic future. On Wednesday, the President will attend meetings at the White House. On Thursday, the President will host Prime Minister Mario Monti of Italy at the White House. ... Obama looks forward to consulting with Prime Minister Monti about preparations for the 2012 G8 and NATO Summits that the United States will host in Chicago, as well as discussing developments in the Middle East and North Africa. On Friday, the President will attend meetings at the White House."

--THE V.P.'S WEEK AHEAD: "On Saturday and Sunday, the Vice President will be in Wilmington, Delaware. There are no public events scheduled. ... On Monday, Vice President Biden will visit Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, to discuss the importance of tackling rising college costs to ensure America's students and workers can obtain the education and training they need so that we have a workforce prepared for the jobs of the 21st century. ... [T]he Vice President will discuss the importance of college and the steps the Administration has taken to keep college affordable in Florida and across the country. ... On Tuesday and Wednesday, the Vice President will attend meetings at the White House. On Thursday, the Vice President will travel to Columbus, Ohio, to deliver remarks at the Ohio Newspaper Association Convention. On Friday, the Vice President will meet with senior advisors."

THE SHOWS, from @MattMackowiak:

--NBC's "Meet the Press": roundtable with Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-CA), New York Times columnist David Brooks, Republican strategist Alex Castellanos and MSNBC's Rachel Maddow

--ABC's "This Week": roundtable with ABC's George Will, political strategist Matthew Dowd, AOL Huffington Post Media Group's Arianna Huffington and BigJournalism.com editor and radio talk show host Dana Loesch

--CBS's "Face the Nation": roundtable with co-author and the Boston Globe's Michael Kranish ("The Real Romney"), CBS News' Norah O'Donnell and CBS News' John Dickerson

--"Fox News Sunday": Romney campaign surrogate Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell and Gingrich campaign surrogate former Rep. J.C. Watts; roundtable with The Weekly Standard's Bill Kristol, the Christian Science Monitor's Liz Marlanes, former State Department official Liz Cheney and Fox News' Juan Williams

--CNN's "State of the Union" (SUN 9 a.m. and noon): former CBO Director Douglas Holtz-Eakin, former OMB Director Alice Rivlin and Ron Brownstein; Rep. Mike Rogers (R-MI)

--CNN's "Fareed Zakaria GPS Live": (SUN 10 a.m., 1 p.m.): roundtable with author and New York Times columnist David Brooks ("The Social Animal"), Thomson Reuters' Chrystia Freeland, Wall Street Journal columnist Peggy Noonan and The New Yorker editor David Remnick; Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong

--CNN's "Reliable Sources": (Sun, 11 a.m. ET): POLITICO's Jonathan Martin, the N.Y. Times' Michael Shear and PBS' Christina Bellantoni; The Daily Caller's Matt Lewis and Newsweek / The Daily Beast's Michelle Cottle; former Washington Post reporter Mark Potts and Reuters' Felix Salmon

--NBC's "The Chris Matthews Show": roundtable with TIME Magazine's Richard Stengel, NBC News' Andrea Mitchell, the Huffington Post's Howard Fineman and the WashPost's Nia-Malika Henderson

--Univision's "Al Punto" (Sun., 10 a.m. ET): Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid ; Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.); former President of Peru Alan Garcia; roundtable with El Sentinel's Rafael Palacio and El Clarin's

Ana Baron

--SiriusXM's "Polioptics" with Adam Belmar and Josh King (Sat., noon and 6 p.m.): Jeff Berman, GM of Digital Media for the National Football League (and former senior aide to Sen. Chuck Schumer). And Jason Recher of NorthStar Strategies, former White House Trip Director and aide to Gov. Sarah Palin. On SiriusXM's POTUS Ch. 124; also available for download on iTunes and at www.polioptics.com <<http://go.politicoemail.com/?qs=28958ccaa7390a0fbcae0fc2996f81f0da35735655e7e693e26f91e7ba1540a4>> .

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