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Scoop: U.S. intelligence intervened with DOJ to push HPE-Juniper merger



Mike Allen



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Illustration: Shoshana Gordon/Axios

[China-specific](#) national-security concerns were a big reason the Justice Department decided last month to allow Hewlett Packard Enterprise to take over rival Juniper Networks, Trump administration officials tell Axios.

Why it matters: Axios has learned that the U.S. intelligence community intervened to persuade the Justice Department that allowing the merger to proceed was essential to helping U.S. business compete with China's Huawei Technologies, among other national-security issues.

A senior national security official tells Axios: "In light of significant national security concerns, a settlement ... serves the interests of the United States by strengthening domestic capabilities and is critical to countering Huawei and China."

- The official said blocking the deal would have "hindered American companies and empowered" Chinese competitors.
- A Justice Department spokesman added that DOJ "works very closely with

our partners in the IC [intelligence community] and always considers their views when deciding how best to proceed with a case."

The intrigue: The merger was back in the news this week with [reports that](#) two [senior enforcers](#) in the DOJ's antitrust division were fired Monday [amid infighting](#) over the [department's settlement](#) greenlighting HPE's \$14 billion acquisition of Juniper.

Behind the scenes: Attorney General Pam Bondi had conversations with top intelligence officials that convinced her there was a strong national interest in not driving allies to Chinese technology, a senior administration official tells us.

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- The administration official said the conversations about the deal reflect President Trump's tight-knit Cabinet: Many top officials have longstanding personal connections.

Bondi sees fellow Cabinet members "almost daily at happy hours, dinners, Bible studies," the official added. "It all feels very natural."



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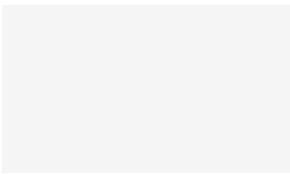
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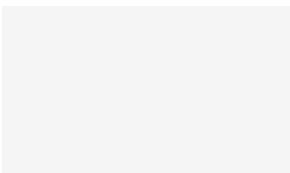


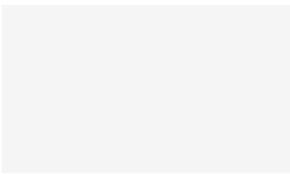
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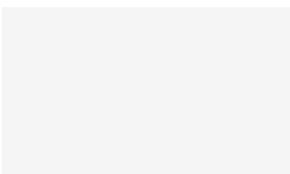
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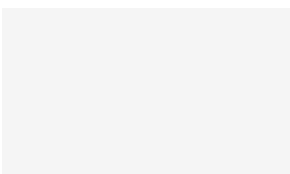
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