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# Giuliani slams Mueller leak

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## Giuliani slams Mueller leak

New York Times reports on frustrations with Barr.

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(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HOWARD KURTZ, HOST: On " MediaBuzz" this Sunday, Robert Mueller's prosecutors leaked words to The New York Times that their findings are far more negative toward President Trump than the attorney general summary says.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

RACHEL MADDOW, MSNBC HOST: You mean to tell me that maybe the Mueller report isn't exactly as exciting and positive and exculpatory for the president as the Trump administration and conservative media and congressional Republicans would have you believe? Really? Who could have seen this coming?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: If Bill Barr in any meaningful or significant way had mischaracterized the bottom lines of Robert Mueller, I think we would have heard from Robert Mueller saying that is not true.

LAURA INGRAHAM, FOX NEWS HOST: OK. So now we're to believe that the sainted figure Mueller has become either muzzled or in some way manipulated? Fat chance.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Is the press trapped by the spinning of unnamed sources? Rudy Giuliani, the president's personal lawyer, will be here. The media deeply divided over Joe Biden as women accuse him of unwanted touching with liberal pundits who know him leading the defense.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, FORMER VICE PRESIDENT: I'm sorry I didn't understand more. I'm not sorry for any of my intentions. I'm not sorry for anything that I have ever done. I've never been disrespectful, intentionally, to a man or a woman.

MIKA BRZEZINSKI, MSNBC HOST: He is a nice guy, he's not a predator, and this is ridiculous. And Democrats and those on the left who want to tweet me today and go nuts and get all woke, you're eating your young.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: But commentators on the left who find the former VP insufficiently liberal along with some conservatives are far more critical of his conduct.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I'm not sure that somebody who is so out of step with where this sort of energy in the Democratic Party is needs to get into this race and sort of swim against the tide, right?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: If he were pushing policies right now more progressive than where the Democratic Party is or even on the more progressive end of where the Democratic Party is, that would be one thing.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: If this was a Republican, it would be called groping. He would be disqualified from ever running from public office. Again --

SEAN HANNITY, FOX NEWS HOST: Creepy, crazy Uncle Joe Biden, he's facing a serious backlash for, you guessed it, being creepy.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Does the press give you the benefit of the doubt when you're a Washington insider? Plus, journalists are accusing the president of reversing himself on health care and on closing the borders. He dismisses that. Who is right here? I'm Howard Kurtz and this is "MediaBuzz."

The media anxiously in some cases breathlessly await the Russia report. The New York Times says that some of Bob Mueller's investigators believe William Barr failed to portray their findings as more troubling for the president than he indicated, that according to government officials and others familiar with their simmering frustrations.

And joining me now here in Studio One is Rudy Giuliani, the president's personal lawyer, welcome.

RUDY GIULIANI, PERSONAL LAWYER OF PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP, FORMER NEW YORK MAYOR: Howard, how are you?

KURTZ: I'm great. Some of these unnamed sources telling the Times that the Barr summary doesn't reflect damaging evidence they say they have on the president. Are you concerned first of all about these leaks?

GIULIANI: I'm very concerned about the leaks. I'm not concerned about the report. I would like the whole report to be out. I think we can handle it. I think it will show that the president didn't do any of the things he has been accused of.

KURTZ: Let me stop you right there. You would like the whole --

GIULIANI: I would like the whole report out. I mean, I can't do that because I can't deal --

KURTZ: I understand.

GIULIANI: -- with the grand jury --

KURTZ: The president wants the whole report out.

GIULIANI: Of course, he does.

KURTZ: And without redactions?

GIULIANI: The president will be very satisfied if the whole thing came up but it's up to the attorney general. I'm not -- I am a lawyer and I realize that Democrats are exploiting the fact that the A.G. is in a difficult position. There is grand jury secrecy. There is classification. Their reputation is used to consider on (ph) their ongoing investigation.

KURTZ: Right.

GIULIANI: But putting that aside, that leak really indicates all you need to know about Mueller's prosecutors. Leaking like that and they don't leak, that's been the biggest canard in this investigation. KURTZ: Journalists who covered the investigation said that was a very tight ship. But until now, clearly there has been --

GIULIANI: Journalists covering the investigation would call me up and say, "We just got this from the special counsel's office, how do you respond to it?" It could have only come from the special counsel's office. There are memos they only had that were put out.

KURTZ: Why --

GIULIANI: How about CNN being there when Roger Stone's house was raided in the early morning hours? KURTZ: CNN says it wasn't tipped off by Mueller.

GIULIANI Oh, they just kind of figured they were going to be there that day? So, OK --

KURTZ: Why --

(CROSSTALK)

KURTZ: -- if the story is true, why shouldn't the newspaper report that Mueller's prosecutors feel that this is not an adequate --

GIULIANI: There's something wrong with the prosecutor. But here is what it tells me. It tells me they don't have anything. Because if they were malicious enough to do that and they had a smoking gun, they wouldn't just say in general, you know, it's very damaging. They would have said -- in fact, a good reporter would have asked, give me an example.

KURTZ: They might have asked.

GIULIANI: But they didn't get an answer.

KURTZ: Right.

GIULIANI: Because there isn't anything.

(LAUGHTER)

KURTZ: Well, sources close to Barr say that he is unhappy in the same Time story being put in the position having to decide on whether to indict on obstruction because Mueller essentially punted on that front (ph). But here is the thing. House Democrats, as you know, mayor, have moved to subpoena the report and -- but the White House has a problem with that.

GIULIANI: The White House has problem with their getting the report?

KURTZ: Getting the report with the grand jury information in there on theory that --

GIULIANI: That's up to the A.G.

KURTZ: -- they will protect it and not --

GIULIANI: Well, they are not going to protect it.

KURTZ: You don't think so?

GIULIANI: Have they ever protected anything in the last five or six years? I mean, look, this is a joke. This is like Jerry Nadler and Cummings and -- they all decided he should be impeached a year ago, a year ago. Nadler was overheard on the train lining up the impeachment.

KURTZ: But there's no serious talk of impeachment now, according to Nancy Pelosi.

GIULIANI: But they prejudged the president -- collusion, collusion, collusion. I was just on with Jerry Nadler. He still thinks there may be evidence of collusion, could have been clear on collusion. So, you're really asking the president in all the circumstances of subpoena to go before a kangaroo court.

It is like saying, oh, you know, I'm going to execute you but I will you a trial first. That's essentially how unfair they've been, nothing like Watergate. When Watergate was going on, the committees were circumspect, were judicious. They had the Watergate report for 37 years and it never leaked. These guys can't hold on to a piece of paper for two days before it leaked.

KURTZ: Are you accusing the House Judiciary Committee controlled now by Democrats, obviously there are Republicans --

GIULIANI: Of being biased?

KURTZ: Of running a kangaroo court.

GIULIANI: Of course. Nadler shoot his mouth off too much. There are too many quotes from him. Let's just talk about the House Judiciary Committee. They have a fire house. The other congressman who announced that he's guilty of collusion, that they have evidence of collusion, where is the evidence of collusion? Why aren't they called to account for lying? Cohen goes before the House of Representatives.

KURTZ: Michael Cohen.

GIULIANI: He commits perjury at least five times, two of them demonstrable.

KURTZ: He is going to jail.

GIULIANI: He should go to jail for that perjury and not for the earlier perjury.

KURTZ: There is another charge of line to Congress.

GIULIANI: I don't see Cummings asking for him to be prosecuted. Remember Cummings to the beginning of the hearing said to him, "If you lie now, we will throw the book at you." He lied once, twice, three times, four times. I got tapes to prove his lying. I don't see Cummings throwing the book at him.

KURTZ: Where are these tapes? Are you going to provide these tapes?

GIULIANI: He has them. Chris Cuomo -- he said, "I never asked for a job." I could play Chris Cuomo's tape saying, "I asked for the job of chief of staff to the president of the United States." Direct lie. Direct perjury. It is -- it is required really when somebody cooperates and then they lie after that a prosecutor prosecutes.

KURTZ: Speaking --

GIULIANI: That is part of the prosecution agreement.

KURTZ: You were on with Chris Cuomo. You said that he should apologize and CNN should apologize for their coverage of the Mueller --

GIULIANI: Absolutely.

KURTZ: Why?

GIULIANI: Collusion, collusion, collusion, collusion, blockbuster. Papadopoulos, blockbuster, it's going to show collusion. Manafort, blockbuster, going to show collusion. Eight times, nine times. Totally biased, prejudice reporting, creating hysteria over what turns out to be something that's not true. KURTZ: I've been critical of the coverage saying that at times it was overwrought and overhyped. I'm talking about all media coverage here. But on the other hand, this was an investigation authorized by the president on deputy attorney general, 37 indictments. I've covered investigations but nobody ended up getting charged. It doesn't mean the stories were illegitimate. And yet you say the networks should apologize.

GIULIANI: They should apologize of overhyping the case.

KURTZ: Yeah.

GIULIANI: For not giving balanced coverage. NBC puts out the Lester Holt interview --

KURTZ: This is the one right after James Comey was fired, right after Comey was fired.

GIULIANI: I just did it this morning. If you go on CNBC and you Google it, you just get the first part of the interview. You got to go to the transcript to get the second part of the interview. It is on the second part of the interview where he completely exculpates himself by saying, "I believe that by doing this, I was going to extend the investigation and make it longer."

How can you be obstructing an investigation? You just extend it by firing -- by firing Comey. But they leave that out. They don't emphasize that. They bury it. In the first time they covered it, they buried. I can give you so many examples of that, my god. The coverage was so biased that it is

embarrassing. They should have apologized. They painted him as guilty before he was proven innocent.

KURTZ: Well, during the coverage, you appeared on just about every network as the president's personal lawyer. During that time, you took a lot of personal criticism from the press. I mean, look, there were some missteps where you had to come up with clarifying statements. Rudy is not good advocate for the president. Do you feel looking back that you were diverting heat from Donald Trump?

GIULIANI: No. I felt like they tried to twist everything you say in a way that they wouldn't have done to Avenatti. I can go on interview with one of them. One of them will be given by the press, softball question, never interrupt. I go on, they begin to interrupt immediately. I can tell. I'm not a jerk. I understand their bias.

Look at Rachel Maddow's face just when -- look at how happy she was that maybe there is some evidence of collusion. As an American citizen, she should be upset that there's evidence of collusion. As an American citizen, they should be happy that the president didn't do anything wrong with the Russians. KURTZ: I think that --

GIULIANI: They don't want to give it up.

KURTZ: -- whether you support the president or not, I think that outcome is good --

GIULIANI: These people want political.

KURTZ: You're saying this is a double standard. You're saying you have been interviewed in a far more, shall we say, prosecutorial fashion than people on the other side. You're not saying that you haven't made any mistakes in this process.

GIULIANI: Of course, I've made mistakes. How can you not make mistakes with something as difficult as this? I do think they have to credit the fact that we got a pretty darn good result. The guys that represented Bill Clinton walked him in perjury case.

KURTZ: That led to impeachment.

GIULIANI: Yeah.

KURTZ: And acquittal.

GIULIANI: We don't have a perjury. I'm going to tell you why. First of all, the president was telling the truth. Number two is we really avoided him going before a bunch of very angry, rabid Hillary Clinton supporting Democrats. Hey, I'm not making that up.

KURTZ: OK, but that's fine.

GIULIANI: One of them on that staff was counsel to the Clinton Foundation. That's ridiculous.

KURTZ: But if you look at the record of Mueller -- you spent a lot of time and the president of the United States spent a lot time attacking Bob Mueller. You had high opinion of him before. In the end, he said he found no collusion. He made no recommendation on obstruction of justice. In the end, you have to acknowledge now that he was fair.

GIULIANI: The result is fair. The way they conducted the process wasn't fair, not at all.

KURTZ: If the process wasn't fair, how did it lead to a result you're pleased with?

GIULIANI: Isn't that even better evidence that he's innocent? They tried very hard to frame an innocent man and they weren't able to do it. Do you know how many times they brought Manafort in from solitary confinement and told him he was lying because he wasn't implicating the president? Maybe 13. Thank god, the man has some principles and there is no evidence to corroborate it. But they tried everything they could.

KURTZ: Right.

GIULIANI: Listen to Jerome Corsi. What they did to him?

KURTZ: Right, I got to get --

GIULIANI: How about morning raids on Manafort and Stone? These are not normal prosecutorial and investigative processes in a white collar crime case. This is what you do at a terrorist case.

KURTZ: I got to get to a break.

GIULIANI: And you get criticized by the Times for doing it.

KURTZ: I got to get to break. But just to clarify, Paul Manafort is going to prison after two different --

GIULIANI: He should go to prison for --

KURTZ: But these are unrelated crimes to any collusion.

GIULIANI: You still don't keep in solitary confinement to try to crack him. That's what you do with a terrorist. KURTZ: More with Rudy Giuliani in just a moment as we get into more of this coverage, the subpoenas from the House, and we will talk about Joe Biden a bit as well. Later, the media furor over the former vice president and the women accusing him of making them uncomfortable.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: More now with former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani. Joe Biden, you have worked with him for many years, taken a lot of axe (ph) from the media this past week, eight different women saying

he engaged in unwanted touching and kissing. As you know, because you were involved in the Stormy Daniels's case, the president has been accused of much worse.

The New York Times news story says President Trump, ignoring his own troubled history with women and bragging about sexual misconduct, went after Joe Biden. Is it fair game to bring that in in the Biden story?

GIULIANI: I like Joe. I've known him for a long time, worked on the crime bill with him. I know him since 1981.

KURTZ: Crime bill was --

GIULIANI: The crime bill that some of the Democrats want to run away from now.

KURTZ: Yeah.

GIULIANI: Clinton passed it. I always liked him very much. I feel bad. It seems to me that these things -- I haven't heard one yet that goes over the line and -- look, I come from an Italian family and I have some relatives --

KURTZ: Yeah.

GIULIANI: That love to hug.

KURTZ: We didn't hug before.

GIULIANI: No, we didn't hug. I hug men. I mean, I'm a hugger.

KURTZ: Right.

GIULIANI: When I was mayor, I used to hug people all of the time. KURTZ: It sounds like you think he's getting a bum deal here.

GIULIANI: Yeah. And I feel sorry about his involvement in the Ukraine thing. Let me tell you my interest in that. I got information about three or four months ago that a lot of the explanations for how this whole phoney investigation started will be in the Ukraine, that there were a group of people in the Ukraine that were working to help Hillary Clinton and were colluding really --

(LAUGHTER)

GIULIANI: -- with the Clinton campaign. And it stems around the ambassador and the embassy, being used for political purposes. So I began getting some people that were coming forward and telling me about that. And then all of a sudden, they revealed the story about Burisma and Biden's son Biden's son --

KURTZ: Let me just say this to the audience. This is a big Ukrainian gas company. Biden's son, Hunter, served on the board.

GIULIANI: About four, five years.

KURTZ: Yeah. When he was vice president, he actually bragged about this after being in office. He bragged about pressuring Ukraine's president to firing a top prosecutor who was being criticized on a whole bunch of areas but was conducting investigation of this gas company which Hunter Biden served as a director.

My question to you since you brought this up, why would the former vice president of the United States brag about this publicly if he had something to hide as far as the dealings --

GIULIANI: Because -- who knows? But the reality is you just left out a fact that he did. His son was under investigation by that very prosecutor at the time.

KURTZ: His son or the company --

GIULIANI: No, no, no. His son is a named individual in the investigation. His son was on the board. He was making a million dollars a year from the company, a big shot in the company. He was running the company for a while.

KURTZ: Your contention --

GIULIANI: It's not my contention.

KURTZ: Hold on.

GIULIANI: There are two facts --

KURTZ: I have another -- let me ask the question first. You say the media is not giving this much attention. In 2015, The New York Times has a headline. "Joe Biden, His Son and the Case Against a Ukrainian Oligarch."

(LAUGHTER)

KURTZ: Talked about Hunter being on the board of the company, talked about -- raised questions about the vice president.

GIULIANI: Right.

KURTZ: So my point is it hasn't been completely ignored. It's a murky situation.

GIULIANI: Ignored. That's the best evidence that they don't give fair coverage. They never followed up on it. So what happened after that? The company went under investigation. The company is considered one of the most crooked companies in Ukraine. The owner of the company is a fugitive, Zlochevsky.

Hunter Biden stays on the board, gets millions of dollars a year, while President Obama names him the point man. So Hunter Biden goes on the board two months after Obama names Vice President Biden the point man for Ukraine.

And then the prosecutor is dismissed. The case is taken away from the prosecutor.

KURTZ: Right.

GIULIANI: Given to court that was put together by Soros people.

KURTZ: We are running out of time.

GIULIANI: And they dropped the case.

KURTZ: You are bringing this up now because Joe Biden is about to run for president.

GIULIANI: I'm bringing it up now because I want Ukraine -- I don't care about Joe Biden. I want that Ukraine investigated. Because I think in the Ukraine, we are going to find a lot of answers for how the Steel dossier was put together, how Manafort --

KURTZ: Mayor --

GIULIANI: -- case was revised (ph).

KURTZ: Last question. The president you work for runs the Justice Department. The Justice Department is free to investigate this if there is a case there.

GIULIANI: The Justice Department should investigate this. But it's up to them to take hold of it. So far, there has been no serious investigation of how these phony allegations started. Did a foreign government help in the development of this? How many Ukrainians were involved? Was the embassy in the Ukraine involved in helping to develop some of this evidence? That's all very, very important to pointing out where this started. This was a frame up. Old fashioned frame up.

KURTZ: On that note, Rudy Giuliani, great to have you here in Washington. Thanks very much. Ahead, after days of being battled by the press, Joe Biden defends himself and that is not stopping the story. But on deck, our panel weighs in on Bob Mueller's prosecutors complaining about the attorney general and a major leak to The New York Times.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: Joining us now to analyze the coverage of the Mueller report and the leak to The New York Times about his prosecutors being frustrated and unhappy: Mollie Hemingway, senior editor at The Federalist and a Fox News contributor; Gillian Turner, a Fox News correspondent here in Washington; and Mo Elleithee, a former Democratic official and Fox News contributor who runs Georgetown University's Institute of Politics.

Mollie, just as I asked Rudy Giuliani, journalists say that Mueller has run a pretty tight ship throughout this two-year investigation. Suddenly, clearly, there are leakers who are basically saying, hey, we got a lot of bad stuff on Donald Trump and Barr's letter didn't reflect that.

MOLLIE HEMINGWAY, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR, SENIOR EDITOR AT THE FEDERALIST: Right. Well, first off, I do agree that the lack of leaking was a false story. We knew what was going on with the special counsel including that it was really about obstruction of justice as opposed to Russia because they were talking to reporters --

KURTZ: Sometimes defense lawyers talk to reporters.

HEMINGWAY: Sure, sure, but I think that's just an overblown statement that they weren't leaking. What's interesting here and I thought in the second paragraph of that New York Times story, you have this Mueller affiliate saying they are upset that they didn't get to set the narrative.

The fact that they think setting the narrative is an important part of their role I think is something that should be looked at more critically and is not just sort of dispassionate law enforcement angle. They wanted to -- they wanted to smear the president essentially with what they have done in their report. I think that's a very interesting thing and worthy of coverage. I think these media reports actually do show that story pretty well.

KURTZ: Gillian, as I mentioned, William Barr's circle is leaking too, saying he didn't like being put in the position of having to make a prosecutorial call on part of this. So, I think it's true that prosecutors are frustrated. They think that Barr summary has framed the media debate and the more time goes on, the more that could be set in stone, so they are using the press to fight back.

GILLIAN TURNER, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: If we are going to base the story solely on reporting, then we have to accept the fact that two things can be true at one time, maybe they are, maybe they are not in this case, but within hours of that New York Times story going to print the other day, Fox News own justice team got new reporting of their own from Justice Department officials affiliated with Mueller's team pushing back against the specifics, the particular allegations in that story.

They said it's not true that many people who worked for Mueller or that even some people who worked for Mueller are unhappy with the report and how Barr chose -- what he chose to highlight.

KURTZ: Right.

TURNER: What he chose to share. That's not true. The team is largely happy. So, there are two conflicting sources of reporting here. This is how journalism works, right? It doesn't mean that anybody -- one report doesn't negate the other. We just have to be able to hold two things that arrived (ph) at once.

KURTZ: The president, Mo, tweeting again about The New York Times and media coverage being unfair. Let's put up on the screen one from the other day in which he says, "The New York Times had no legitimate sources, which would be totally illegal, concerning the Mueller report. In fact, they probably had no sources at all. They are a fake newspaper who have already been forced to apologize for their incorrect and very bad reporting on me."

The Times actually has not apologized to President Trump but did express some regret in how they covered the 2016 election. This is something the president often does. He questions whether unnamed sources even exist.

MO ELLEITHEE, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Yeah. I think there's a tweet maybe this morning or yesterday in which he attacks the leaks from Mueller's shop while at the same time attacking the media for making -- manufacturing sources. So, there's a littler disconnect there.

KURTZ: OK.

ELLEITHEE: Look, I am tired of having a conversation about a report that no one has seen yet. I am tired of the Justice Department and the president declaring victory when no one has had a chance to read it yet. I am tired of --

KURTZ: Including the White House.

ELLEITHEE: Including the White House. I am tired of people who are asserting that there's more in there than Barr is saying who haven't read it yet. I am tired of this whole conversation. I want to see the report. You know, the president has not been let off the hook in my mind until I've read the report. KURTZ: Well --

ELLEITHEE: We haven't seen it yet. Let us see it.

KURTZ: Mollie, you say that Mueller's prosecution is not being in the business of worrying about framing a media narrative, but isn't Barr and the Justice Department doing the same thing? Was it inevitable once they decided through the summary that that might frame a narrative that might be more helpful for to President Trump? HEMINGWAY: Well, no, unless you think that they were wrong when they said that there were no indictments coming out at the end of the probe.

KURTZ: Obviously, that must be true.

HEMINGWAY: I agree. I want to see everything that's in this report as well. But we do know that it ended without a single American, much less a single American close to the Trump campaign being

indicted for treasonous collusion with Russia. And this is why those anonymous sources are so important.

For many years, we've had anonymous sources alleging that they had great deal of evidence. They selectively leaked certain types of information. And they created the story that there were all these bombshells that we were going to have the president indicted for collusion with Russia. That's why those anonymous sources are so bad. And that is why the media needs to be much more careful about just receiving these leaks without being more critical of them.

KURTZ: I think that's a fair point. Very quick point.

TURNER: The White House a little bit is trying to have its cake and eat it too in this instance. They are trying to say because Mueller found no evidence of collusion, the whole thing, the whole investigation was legitimate. But if they have found collusion, they would have been saying the entire thing was illegitimate.

KURTZ: All right. I got to get a commercial break in here. But ahead, the president visits the border as the press says he has backed off his threat to shut it down. First, Joe Biden faces reporters for the first time since numerous women accused him of inappropriate touching. We will look at media's handling of that sensitive story, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: Joe Biden has been doing it for many years, the kissing and the hugging and the touching, all in plain sight. But in the days since Nevada Democrat Lucy Flores and seven other women have accused him of inappropriate touching, the media furor prompted the former V.P. to defend himself.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: In my brain I just kept thinking the vice president of the United States smelling me, the vice president of the United States is touching me, is kissing me, and I just don't, I just don't know what to do. I kind of felt frozen.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Do you think you owe these women a direct apology who have come forward so far?

BIDEN: Well, look, I -- the fact of the matter is I made it clear if I made anyone feel comfortable, I feel badly about that, it was never my attention ever, ever.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Mollie, Joe Biden was subjected to mocking over the years, we've all seen the pictures and the video, Uncle Joe, has the press been too easy on the former vice president?

HEMINGWAY: I don't know, I think there's just like a lack of consistency in how we talk about these things and there's a confusion about how to talk about human touching and we don't have a good way of understanding distinctions between inappropriate or unwanted touching and sexual assault.

And it would be just important I think for people not to buy this one type of human engage mint over another. Some people are friendly and touchy, other people are not so. So much that way, and in fact, very much don't like it. You don't want to privilege robotic stoicism over a more personal touch.

KURTZ: Right. Gillian, the media seem to be grappling in these debates about Biden with this question, where is the line between harassment, and none of these women have said they felt anything was sexual on Biden's part and touching, and the kind of unwanted kissing or touching head rubbing or whatever that invades their space and that offends them.

GILLIAN TURNER, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: I think the consensus based on what these women themselves have said, I would take away from that that whatever he did made them feel uncomfortable.

KURTZ: Sure.

TURNER: The problem is that we look for a line that, you know, men and women can potentially cross and when it comes to violating people's personal space, all the way from violating that space to sexual assault, the line falls in a different sort of place for each individual.

So, it's very hard to come up -- I would like, like Mollie, I would like the media to come up with a consensus by which to evaluate these accusations but I don't know that that's possible to do that.

KURTZ: And do you think, Mo, given that none of the women and I'm sure they'll be a few more, even Biden said that, is alleging groping or sexual assault that the heavy coverage is justified. I mean, this been a huge story this week.

MO ELLEITHEE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF POLITICS & PUBLIC SERVICE: This whole incident has kind of -- I think it's pushing us to think about what began with Me -- hash tag Me Too movement and broadening the conversation.

This isn't about the same thing; this isn't about harassment or misconduct or assault. This is about I think now a discussion in part of touchiness and everything that was already said, but also, you know, just the gender dynamic in the workplace and the fact that he has culturally, you can have some interactions with people where you maybe are a little bit more open to -- to touching.

I've been to Europe where people who I just met will embrace me --

KURTZ: Yes.

ELLEITHEE: -- and kiss me on both cheeks --

(CROSSTALK)

KURTZ: Yes, it's their culture.

ELLEITHEE: -- and off putting to me, right?

KURTZ: Yes.

ELLEITHEE: But it's a different thing. But in the office, if I were to walk up to a woman who works for me and just start rubbing her shoulders or kissing her on the back of the head, I would be reported to H.R. Now, I'm not saying --

(CROSSTALK)

KURTZ: Because the corporate culture is different. Right.

ELLEITHEE: -- I am not saying that -- I don't doubt the vice president's intentions at all. I mean, we all know that he's that kind of a guy.

KURTZ: yes.

ELLEITHEE: I'm a big fan of his, but do I think it's opening up now a conversation about that gender dynamic in the workplace and what is appropriate and where do we have to pull back.

KURTZ: Gillian, candidates have to learn how to deal with the media in 2019. Joe Biden hasn't run on his own but it hasn't a long time. So, he waited several days, put out a couple of mild statements that he didn't do it. Then he made a video and he gave a speech here in Washington which he started with a joke about hugging, and the networks broke away when (Inaudible) wasn't talking anymore.

And then a bunch of reporters gathered around and he took questions and he looked kind of hesitant and he was trying to defend himself. All of that, this is not a judgment on the substance but seem really slow to me. The media moved so much more quickly now.

TURNER: Yes, and that's a product of all the discussion, the Me Too discussions that we've been having for the last two years since -- since the 2016 campaign. Every time a woman speaks out about being physically uncomfortable it's like the media descends and wants to pick everything apart. I don't know candidly whether that's a good thing or helpful thing or not.

KURTZ: All right, now President Trump on a couple of occasions has seen fed to mock Joe Biden and the problems he's going through. Here's what he said the other day.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I said general, come here, give me kiss, I felt like Joe Biden. Sure.

(APPLAUSE)

TRUMP: But I meant it.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: The president also put up video that kind of makes fun of Biden. We can show that to you while we talk, Mollie. So, the press is sort of saying, well maybe Donald Trump ought to stay away on these subjects since he's had lots of accusations of more serious misconduct with women which he denies.

HEMINGWAY: But it's fine absolutely to bring up Donald Trump's relationship with women, it's important to be accurate when defining those relationships which the media struggle to be accurate in describing those things.

But also I think what's interesting here as you see with Donald Trump, he tends to make light of or make fun of candidates on the left, he seems less constricted and when he's talking about them and not -- and that in the media conversation you have a lot of rule and fears about handling things properly and part of Donald Trump's appeal, I think, and this would be interesting as it goes in 2020 race is seeing how comfortable he is just kind of joking about these things and not being afraid to talk about them.

KURTZ: Right. He does communicate a little bit differently and said, he goes into areas where the press is shock --shocked.

Let me get a break here, up next, why some media liberals are defending the former vice president and the way he touches women and others announcing, is it really about politics. And later, Christiane Amanpour says there should be limits on what crowds can say at campaign rallies, really?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: As the television pundits have debated Joe Biden's overly intrusive behavior with women, the former V.P. has gotten a big boost from those who know him and like his politics and even conservatives who don't like his politics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: There were times where he would grab my hand in meetings to make a point, there were times he probably has kissed the back of my head. I never thought anything of that. I didn't find it creepy.

SAMANTHA VINOGRAD, CNN NATIONAL SECURITY ANALYST: For over a decade, I watch him direct so many resources, so many efforts, so much of his staff's time to actually empowering women and preventing violence against women.

LAURA INGRAHAM, FOX NEWS HOST: And he put his hands, both hands on my shoulders and he said, guys on the streets, Ingraham, you're my favorite of the right-wing crazies, or something like that to that effect. And he looked at me and said, how are you doing and he was funny. It didn't bother me one bit.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: So, Mollie, I'm seeing a real divide here between media liberals who know Biden who like Biden and support policies and politics and others who I would call just sort of Uber liberals, the progressives wing of the Democratic Party who are using this or are they using this because he's not progressive enough.

HEMINGWAY: I think there is a political subtext here, and I think about this in part because I wrote about his touchiness five years ago and I remember --

(CROSSTALK)

KURTZ: You're way ahead.

HEMINGWAY: -- thinking that if he were a liberal, he would have been absolutely -- I mean, if he were a conservative he'd be destroyed for this type of behavior because the media tend to have a higher standard or they tend to be less forgiving of people on the right.

And I think what's happening here is that he's coming in a way of some more preferable or more liberal candidates, people to his left. And so, I think that means to be part of the conversation to understanding why are we talking about this now, it was on full display throughout the Obama administration.

And I think the fact that nobody is asking the Obamas about what they think about this is interesting. The fact that the Obamas have not talked about it is very interesting. But also, not thinking about who is pushing this campaign against Joe Biden right now and for what reason?

KURTZ: Right. By the way, Lucy Flores the former Nevada assemblywoman who started this by coming forward about a five-year-old incident, she said in one of the interviews that she didn't like Biden's position on abortion, that he had been wobbling on it years earlier, so there is ideological subject.

Gillian, you worked in the Obama White House, as well as the Bush White House, you know Joe Biden and there's actually a picture of the first time that you were introduced. Let's put that up on the screen. What was that encounter like?

TURNER: So, you can't see in the way that we've got the photo crop but the reason we were talking about the photo earlier today is because he did have his hand around my waist in the picture which you could see if we had the whole thing up there.

It was the first time I ever met Vice President Biden. I was a staffer at the White House at the National Security Council. We met, it was -- it was later, I think, in 2009, first meeting ever and he --

(CROSSTALK)

KURTZ: And what did he said to you?

TURNER: And he said, you're beautiful and he put his hand around my waist and we took a photo together. Did it make me uncomfortable? No. But do I remember it 10 years later because it was out of the norm of my other experiences at the White House, yes.

And so I think it's a perfect example of the kind of conversation that people are now starting to have about him which is that he does have markedly different behaviors than a lot of other government officials and it's up to, I think, every woman to make a determination about how they feel about their interactions with him.

KURTZ: Mo, is it fair to question the timing without being insensitive at all to women who are upset by Biden's behavior. Well, there is one woman who wrote piece in the Washington Post, saying, you know, she's very proud of the picture where they are touching foreheads but now, she has different thoughts.

But is it fair to question the timing of those who are coming forward now five or sometimes 10 years after these incidents knowing full well it will impact with Biden about to jump at the race?

ELLEITHEE: Yes, I mean, I don't know. I think we are now at the point where -- I mean, obviously it's going to come out now. Right? The guy is thinking about running for president.

KURTZ: Yes.

ELLEITHEE: So obviously, it's going to come out now. If he were to have faded off into the distance, I'm sure any --

KURTZ: Sure.

ELLEITHEE: -- sure any of those would come, right?

KURTZ: Yes.

ELLEITHEE: having said that, though, one, I believe that, you know, if someone is going to raise an allegation we ought to listen to the allegation. If someone is going to listen, raise that concern we

ought to listen and respect the concern and I do think we are way past time, way past time to start having these conversations about these dynamics in the workplace.

KURTZ: Are some of Biden's critics or some of these women using this as proxy to say, you know what, he's out of touch with the culture, he's 76, he's really too old to run for president because he does things that maybe were considered more acceptable in earlier generations.

HEMINGWAY: I wonder if that's -- I mean, because I don't think the issue is about women coming forward but how much attention the media are giving to it or how much how one-sided that media attention is. I do wonder if this isn't a proxy for having a conversation about age. It's very difficult to have those conversations. Two of the front runners, Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders would be older going into the presidency than Reagan was when he left.

KURTZ: He left, that's 77, yes.

HEMINGWAY: But you don't want -- I mean, it is that kind of inappropriate to say too much about that, so I think sometimes these conversations are ways to talk about concerns that reporters have rather than addressing it head on.

KURTZ: Yes, and it's also just a juicy story for reporters because it takes us into a realm that probably, it gets a lot of ratings and I think I'm giving it myself the last word.

Mo Elleithee, Gillian Turner, Mollie Hemingway, great to see you all this Sunday.

After the break, the press slamming the president for changing his mind on Obamacare, on closing the border. Is that a fair critique? Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: President Trump has sort of stunned the press by saying he would try yet again to abolish Obamacare and make the GOP the party of health care. The press blew the whistle saying he has no plan. And days later Trump said the vote wouldn't come until after the 2020 election.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Did Mitch McConnell ask you to delay this?

TRUMP: No. I want to delay it myself. I want to put it after the election because we don't have the House.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: The president also made headlines with the shifting rhetoric on the Mexican border.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRUMP: They'll close it. We'll keep it close for a long time. I'm not playing games. Mexico has to stop it.

We're going to give them a one-year warning and if the drugs don't stop or largely stop, we are going put tariffs on Mexico and products, in particular, cars, and if that doesn't stop the drugs, we close the border.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Joining us now David Martosko, White House correspondent for Dailymail.com.

So, on the border, Trump makes the threat, then he says maybe one-year delay, it's not clear. When the -- and then he says he didn't change his mind. So, when the Washington Post says the president is leaving D.C. reeling with policy reversals, does the paper have a point?

DAVID MARTOSKO, WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT, DAILYMAIL.COM: Well, two things going on here, first of all, I think you have to understand that what happened in the interim is Trump announces, the Mexicans are starting to police their southern border. Halleluiah.

These things don't happen overnight. I think it's reasonable to assume that the president knew this change from the Mexicans was coming, so he sets it up, he says we're going to close the border. He could look tough. He knows the Mexicans have already started policing the border, now he can say, no --

(CROSSTALK)

KURTZ: He set himself up to take credit here.

MARTOSKO: Exactly. And not only that, but now he creates a political situation where he can say something draconian and close the border. And he drags a bunch of liberals running for president out to say equally contentious things.

I mean, look what happened after he said that. Kamala Harris says DACA kids and illegal immigrants should be working in Congress. Gavin Newsom talks about creating a sanctuary state, and Beto O'Rourke says that illegal immigrants who are jumping the border is good for the safety of El Paso. Now he's got something to run against.

KURTZ: Let's look at the press performance on Obamacare. Because the president came out he joined this, his administration supporting the suit --

MARTOSKO: Sure.

KURTZ: -- get rid of ObamaCare without a replacement. The press was right. Mitch McConnell and Republicans privately and publicly said don't do this, don't settle us with this.

MARTOSKO: Yes.

KURTZ: And then he says, well, I never planned to do it before the election because Democrats control the House. Well, the Democrats can't control the House for several months now.

MARTOSKO: Look, I think it's a reasonable thing if he we wanted to interpret this in the kindest way possible, it's reasonable to say, of course Trump never knew that anything was going to pass, that he's saying that look, the Democrats sees healthcare as a powerful issue in 2018, we're going to see it in 2020. Does he have the political acumen always to say it as concisely as that? No.

KURTZ: So, therefore, is it fair. First of all, I think the media have never fully accepted Trump's disruptive style, which is throw in a lot of things, make threats.

MARTOSKO: Right.

KURTZ: Sometimes it works, sometimes it backfires and he has to retweet. And certainly, it would be fair for the press to say, hey, you're saying the GOP is going to own healthcare but where is the plan and when is the vote going to be.

MARTOSKO: Well, the vote is obviously not until after the next election, and presenting a plan if he's smart will come around the time of the next political convention. He wants to have something fresh to run on.

But I think the broader point here, to the point of why you do your show, wouldn't it be interesting and refreshing if every newsroom in Washington had a few people, or maybe half the people whose nature was to think the way the president thinks and present counterarguments for some of these things and say maybe we should present this in addition to that.

KURTZ: I think that's a good idea. Now some of the president's statements recently, I don't know why he said wind turbines cause cancer. There is no evidence to that. But leaving that aside, he got dinged by the press corps pronouncing origin as oranges.

MARTOSKO: Sure.

KURTZ: And also saying his father was born Germany and not just of German heritage. is this nitpicking or fair reporting?

MARTOSKO: Well, I certainly think it's nitpicking to talk about where his father was born. I can't explain why he talked about that. I do think it would be interesting if media would research a little bit why might he have meant by wind turbines cause cancer.

It turns out there's a whole movement in Australia to target wind turbines by saying there's something called wind turbine syndrome and that it includes cancer. People talked about do I think it's true? No. But he might have heard about that.

With the oranges thing this is kind of funny. If you think about it, I just think it's hilarious. In January, he was talking about you can call a wall peaches, he called Tim Cook, Tim Apple. Now he's doing oranges. If he says make America grape again, we have the Trump fruit salad.

KURTZ: A very fruity explanation. David Martosko, thanks very much.

Still to come, CNN's Christiane Amanpour rips a Trump rally chant and no, the president isn't coming to dinner.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: Christiane Amanpour, the veteran CNN journalist had a very unusual exchange with Jim Comey, one that I find pretty troubling. Amanpour didn't like that Trump supporters at 2016 campaign rallies kept chanting lock her up, meaning Hillary, of course, and she doesn't think it should have been allowed.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR, CNN HOST: Lock her up was a feature of the 2016 Trump campaign, do you, in retrospect, wish that people like yourself, the head of the FBI, I mean, the people in charge of law and order have shut down that language that it was dangerous potentially, that it could have created violence, that it's kind of hate speech?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: However distasteful she might have found those chants, are they free speech? Isn't Amanpour enduring the First Amendment and asking the FBI to intervene? Here is Comey's response.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JAMES COMEY, FORMER FBI DIRECTOR: That's not a role for government to play, the beauty of this country is people can say what they want, even if it's misleading and it's demagoguery.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Right. The former FBI chief at least sees that as out of balance. And yes, look, he said he might show up, but no, for the third straight year Donald Trump is skipping the White House correspondent's dinner.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRUMP: I'm going to hold a rally. Yes, because the dinner is so boring and so negative, that we're going to hold a very positive rally.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Actually, much less negativity this year because they'll be no comedian. Hamilton biographer Ron Chernow will be the entertainment. And no President of the United States.

That's it for this edition of "MediaBuzz." I'm Howard Kurtz. Check out my new podcast, "Media Buzz Meter." We riff on the says five hottest stories and you can subscribe at Apple iTunes, Google Play or foxnewspodcast.com. Hope you also visit our Facebook page. We post my daily columns and original videos we make just for online. Continue the conversation on Twitter at Howard Kurtz. I bet we're going to have a lot about the interview with Rudy Giuliani, Mueller, Biden.

And we'll be back here next Sunday, 11:00 Eastern, with the latest buzz.

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