



U.S.

TRUMP LASHES OUT AT TOP AIDES IN PRIVATE AS HE STRUGGLES OVER HARVEY, CHARLOTTESVILLE AND MEDIA COVERAGE

BY **CALLUM PATON** ON 9/1/17 AT 5:53 AM

Trump Fuming Over Top Aides



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U.S.

DONALD TRUMP

Wheeling from one crisis to another, President Donald Trump has unleashed his temper within the confines of the White House on cabinet members and top aides—and may be on a collision course with his Chief of Staff, John Kelly.

Insiders say that Trump is reeling from the recovery in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, the fallout from the deadly clashes in Charlottesville and what he sees as a media onslaught and has taken to lashing out because he feels he is not getting the credit he deserves.

“He’s having a very hard time,” one friend told the Washington Post. “He doesn’t like the way the media’s handling him. He doesn’t like how Kelly’s handling him. He’s turning on people that are very close to him.”

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Trump’s ire was directed at National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn after he criticized Trump’s ambiguous response to the August 12 demonstrations in Charlottesville, Virginia. Cohn reportedly drafted a resignation letter in response to Trump's controversial comments that both sides were to blame for the violence in which counter-protester Heather Heyer died.



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks about tax reform during a visit to Loren Cook Company in Springfield, Missouri, U.S., August 30, 2017.

REUTERS/KEVIN LAMARQUE

“I believe this administration can and must do better in consistently and unequivocally condemning these groups and do everything we can to heal the deep divisions that exist in our communities,” Cohn told the *Financial Times*.

The president has reportedly been fuming over Cohn’s lack of loyalty, but has not dismissed him because he is leading Trump’s tax-cutting strategy alongside Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

The president has also grown increasingly prickly towards Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. The pair have disagreed on troop levels in Afghanistan, the Saudi-led blockade of Qatar and U.S. policy in Cuba. One top diplomat said Tillerson’s approach to foreign policy had been dismissed by the president’s associates as “totally establishment.”

After the Secretary of State’s comments that “the president speaks for himself” over his Charlottesville statements, several people close to Trump said they would be surprised if Tillerson stays for longer than a year. He has said in private that he is unhappy with the recent string of controversies to hit the White House.

More generally, Trump is said to resent the new structure in the White House imposed by Kelly, who is referred to by Trump loyalists as “the church lady” because of his inflexible enforcement of the rules and moral superiority.

Previously Trump’s friends used to be able to call the White House and get through to the president directly. Now Kelly acts as gatekeeper with all calls routed through him. Similarly there are no more drop ins and visitors must have an appointment.

“Donald Trump resists being handled,” said Roger Stone, a former Trump adviser told the Post. “General Kelly is trying to treat the president like a mushroom. Keeping him in the dark [...] is not going to work. Donald Trump is a free spirit.”

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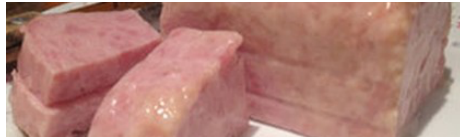
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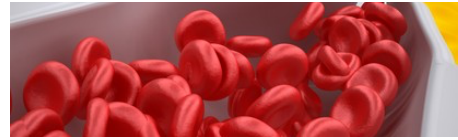
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