

THE MYSTERIOUS RAPID REVERSE VEEP WITH A PRESS BACKFLIP

[NB: Check the byline, thanks! /~Rayne]

Vice President Mike Pence was scheduled to travel to New Hampshire yesterday. That didn't happen.

Source close to VP tells me:
"Something came up and the VP had to be back at the White House. It is not a cause for alarm. ". We await more information on @vp abrupt change of travel plans that canceled or postponed NH event.

– Kelly O'Donnell (@Kelly0) July 2, 2019

Nearly 24 hours later this still smells really fishy.

Pence was scheduled to speak at 1:20 p.m. EDT at an addiction treatment center about the opioid crisis. Prepared remarks sounded less like an attack on the Sackler family, responsible for manufacturing opioids in the U.S., and more like an excuse for the crimes against humanity perpetrated along the Mexican border (because so many families with babies must surely be carrying fentanyl into the country).

Details are sketchy about when and how Pence's trip was canceled. There were reports that Air Force 2 was already in the air and called back mid-flight; some of these reports were based on feedback from Pence's aide Randy Gentry:

Pence Aide Randy Gentry: "Air Force 2 was heading this way. There's been an emergency call back. The Vice President was asked to return to Washington so at this time we're going to cancel today's event." <https://t.co/eBdX6GOBMJ>

– Alison King NBC10 Boston
(@AlisonNBCBoston) July 2, 2019

White House spokesman Judd Deere told AP that “Something came up and the VP needed to be in D.C.,” “there is no cause for alarm.”

Two more anonymous White House officials told AP that the matter was not national security-related or related to a health issue.

Whatever happened caught the Veep’s staff by surprise based on their flip-flopping messages:

Pence’s COS Marc Short told @meridithmcgraw that the Vice President was on the plane but it didn’t take off. Then he turned around, back to the White House. He told her we’ll find out “in a few weeks” what happened.

– Tara Palmeri (@tarapalmeri) July 2, 2019

What could have happened at the White House to cancel Pence’s speech on such short notice – the room in which he was to speak was already packed, waiting his arrival – and subsequent confusing press handling?

Some reports noted that Putin had a cancellation of his own nearly simultaneously with Pence, causing a lot of idle speculation and possibly some disinformation.

A fire aboard a Russian research submarine killed 14 aboard the vessel. But the timing of the actual fire and Pence’s reversal don’t sync. The fire was on July 1 and Putin offered remarks about the fatal event yesterday according to the U.S. Naval Institute news outlet.

Yet others attributed the problem to a local problem in New Hampshire after reports of gunfire at Pease Air National Guard Base, located a circuitous 50 miles northeast from where Pence was to speak and 50 miles east of the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport where

Pence was scheduled to arrive before his engagement at Granite Recovery Center.

None of this adds up and all stinks of manufactured fog. We'll have to hope the press remembers to follow up with Pence's chief of staff in a couple weeks.

There was one other key event yesterday that did not affect Pence directly but could easily have triggered a malignant narcissist's meltdown.

Sometime after 11:00 a.m. yesterday news outlets reported the House Ways and Means Committee had filed suit against the Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service to obtain Trump's tax returns.

Complaint via ABC News on Scribd

I imagine somebody in the Oval Office is squirming about Congress crossing the red line.

Another tetchy subject may be the Second Circuit's order yesterday unsealing the summary judgment record in the Jeffrey Epstein case; additional sealed materials are now subject to a particularized review for release to public.

NEW: As expected, the Second Circuit orders the unsealing of a tranche of files related to wealthy sex offender Jeffrey Epstein and his underage victims.

Doc, h/t @MikeScarcella:
<https://t.co/SmM3KGa3fL>

Background from the arguments via @CourthouseNews: <https://t.co/kxWdcYVL1z>

– Adam Klasfeld (@KlasfeldReports) July 3, 2019

Is somebody worried their name will come up in the unsealing process?

What other events might have created enough havoc in the White House that forced Pence to reverse his trip and his staff to perform

communications contortions with the reason to be known "in a few weeks"?

This is an open thread.