PLUS-DELTA ANALYSIS: CNN'S NEW POLITICAL HIRE ISGUR FLORES

[*NB: Check the byline. /~Rayne*]

Let's make like a cable news management team and assess CNN's hiring of former GOP operative Sarah Isgur Flores as a Political Editor ahead of the 2020 election using a plus-delta analysis.

Plus:

> Education background includes history, political science, and law; she has a JD from Harvard. History and law degree may be very important should the current administration face mounting investigations and the possibility of impeachment.

> With a decade of experience in political campaigns, Flores should understand well how media works campaign cycle from a campaign's perspective.

> Her hiring provides assurance to conservatives that CNN will not exercise a liberal bias covering 2020 campaigns.

> Flores' presence as an openly pro-GOP editor may discourage further attacks on CNN after this past year's bomb threats.

> A woman editor may offer some diversity in perspective as 2020's field of candidates already includes more women than ever.

Delta:

> Flores has zero journalism experience yet bypasses political analyst position for political editor.

> Worked exclusively for Republican Party candidates, revealing a partiality toward a particular political ideology.

She has been extremely open about her conservative ideology which may be off-putting to a moderate audience, ex. her strident anti-choice beliefs, evident in her Twitter feed, may offend women.

Worked for the Trump administration as Jeff Sessions' spokesperson, revealing a willingness to work for problematic Republicans.

Made a show of loyalty before accepting roll with DOJ by visiting Trump to assure him she was "on board with his agenda and would be honored to serve him." Not clear when this loyalty and service ends.

It's not clear whether a non-disclosure agreement was signed by Flores muzzling her from speaking about the Trump administration.

It's not clear if her loyalties and ideology pose a threat to confidential and anonymous sources CNN's reporters have relied upon while covering the Trump administration.

MSNBC had also been approached by Flores; she tried to sell them on her inside knowledge of the Special Counsel's investigation. CNN says she won't use this knowledge in her role but it's difficult to see how she can be firewalled off from matters related to the investigation if they affect Republicans in Congress or running in 2020.

Her ambitions may both outstrip her current role before 2020, stepping on her immediate boss's toes (David Chalian) and they may interfere with CNN's intentions:

> …"She had a detailed idea of what she wanted to do," someone with knowledge of the discussions told me. "She wanted to do something on-air combined with some sort of quasi-management, behind-the-scenes planning kind of work. I think she

> looked at Dave Chalian and said, I wanna do that."…(source)

CNN staff are not happy with this move (though Brian Stelter puts an awfully good face on it).

While Flores' hiring could be likened to CNN's hiring of Corey Lewandowski and Jeffrey Lord in terms of balance, the leap to an editorial position combined with strong ideology makes CNN look partisan — lacking neutrality in the public's perception.

One more critically important factor gives pause about Flores' new gig: CNN is owned by Warner Media LLC, which in turn is owned by AT&T. Is hiring Flores an attempt to shape policy to benefit ultimate parent AT&T, heading off pressure from the public for Net Neutrality and any changes in regulations affecting telecommunications and internet service providers?

This just doesn't look good to me, especially after so many good, seasoned news media people without baggage like Flores' were cut by outlets over the last two weeks.

This is an open thread.