

# [***Donald Trump Makes The "Bloodbath" Remark; Princess Of Wales Makes A Public Statement On Her Health Condition; "Media Buzz" Talks About The Hunter Biden Case; MTG Moves To Boot Johnson From The Speaker's Chair; Howard Kurtz Reacts To Jimmy Kimmel's Remarks.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BMK-SFC1-JCS1-6000-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

HOWARD KURTZ, FOX NEWS HOST, "MEDIA BUZZ": Just after my interview with Donald Trump aired last Sunday -- and boy, did that make news around the world, I briefly spoke about how the media were misrepresenting his bloodbath remark. And since then, it's only gotten bloodier. For all the screaming headlines about Trump threatening political violence if he loses, there's really no question he was talking about the impact of Chinese cars on the American auto industry.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP, PRESUMPTIVE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE: We're going to out a 100 percent tariff on every single car that comes across the line and you're not going to be able to sell those cars, if I get elected. Now, if I don't get elected, it' going to be a bloodbath, for the whole -- that's going to be the least of it. It's going to be a bloodbath for the country. That'll be the least of it. But they're not going to sell those cars.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: The criticism was fierce, but even among those who gradually acknowledged it was about auto jobs, that was irrelevant.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DANA PERINO,"THE FIVE" CO-HOST: Well, it's a real bloodbath for the media's credibility. Team Biden, the Democrats, and the liberal press all seeming to have to take Donald Trump completely out of context.

GREG GUTFIELD, "GUTFIELD" HOST: Bloodbath? Really? Once again, it's the media whores who pretend to misunderstand metaphors. Truth is, of course, it's just a deliberate hoax machine doing what it does best, taking something out of context, creating a story around it.

JOE SCARBOROUGH, "MORNING JOE" CO-HOST: These idiots on Twitter, these idiots on -- on, cable news, these idiots on Sunday shows going, well, our President, you know, he was talking only about the auto industry and this is one more, it's just bullshit.

LAWRENCE O'DONNELL, "THE LAST WORD" HOST: When Donald Trump predicts there will be a bloodbath in this country if he doesn't win the electoral college, you should take that for what it is, a Trump prediction.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: And by the way, it's not like this is some taboo off limits word. It's pretty common in media discourse.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ALI VITALI, NBC CAPITOL HILL CORRESPONDENT: Not only is it going to be a bloodbath, but after they leave New Hampshire, it's a bloodbath on her home turf.

SYMONE SANDERS-TOWNSEND, MSNBC HOST: The midterm elections may not be the bloodbath for Democrats that's been predicted.

UNKNOWN: Joe Biden was just talking the other day about, you know, his concerns about a negative blood, bloodbath.

UNKNOWN: This is probably going to be a bloodbath.

UNKNOWN: It's going to be a bloodbath in November.

JOHN HEILEMANN, NBC AND MSNBC NATIONAL AFFAIRS ANALYST: It would be a bloodbath.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Bloody good. Donald Trump says some inflammatory things, as we discussed in last week's Mar-a-Lago sit down. But when it comes to bloodbath gate, the facts didn't seem to matter. I'm Howard Kurtz and this is Media Buzz.

The media countdown began when Donald Trump said he couldn't post a bond of nearly half a billion dollars to cover the gargantuan fine imposed on him and his business in the New York civil fraud trial. The former president faces a deadline tomorrow before New York Attorney General Letitia James can ask a judge to start seizing his assets.

Trump said on True Social, the political hacks in New York judge and A.G. are asking me to put up massive amounts of money before I'm allowed to repeal the ridiculous decision election interference -- witch hunt. Some commentators decry the unfairness of the former president not being given enough time to appeal.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JONATHAN TURLEY, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: It's like a judge saying, I'm going to take your house away, but you can appeal my decision. You just have to sell your house in order to do it.

CHARLIE GASPARINO, FOX BUSINESS SENIOR CORRESPONDENT: There's the scary public policy implications of an attorney general essentially trying to bankrupt a guy that's running for presidency because she's from a different party over a non-crime.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: But many pundits could barely contain their glee at his financial crunch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CLAIRE MCCASKILL, MSNBC POLITICAL ANALYST: Donald Trump. Hello. Welcome to the rule of law. You have avoided it all of your life.

JOY REID, "THE REIDOUT" HOST: The desperation of a man facing a ticking clock with each tick and each talk, two thoughts weigh on this man's mind, staying out of prison and not becoming destitute and losing all of his properties.

CATHERINE RAMPELL, WASHINGTON POST OPINION COLUMNIST: I mean, would you lend him half a billion dollars if you had it at your fingertips? Probably not.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Joining us now to analyze the coverage, Ben Domenech, editor-at- large for "The Spectator" and a Fox News Contributor. And in Phoenix, Lucy Caldwell, an advisor to "Renew America". Ben, what do you make of the tone of the media coverage now that Donald Trump is up against the wall, having to put up, if he can, half a billion dollars in this civil fraud case?

BEN DOMENECH, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Well, I think it's been very unserious. And I think it also -- it kind of indicates, you know, as you said in your opening there, there has been no limit to the amount of glee on the part of a lot of Trump critics and the pundit punditocracy and everything like that.

KURTZ: They are loving this.

DOMENECH: They are absolutely loving it. And they have visions, I think, of some kind of permanent padlock on Trump Tower or something like that. That's not the way this is going to play out. I mean, I have news for you here.

I think that this is going to be something that, you know, we've seen at every point. The thing that the resistance kind of crowd wanted the most has backfired or has helped Donald Trump. They were looking forward to the mugshot, for instance.

KURTZ: Yeah.

DOMENECH: They were so eager for that. And then it ended up becoming kind of a meme and an iconic kind of image for people in a way that didn't hurt him at all.

KURTZ: For indictment.

DOMENECH: Exactly. And I think that this is a situation that, when it comes to this kind of seizure, it's going to absolutely backfire on the Democrats again. It only serves to further his narrative that he's being unfairly targeted. And you know, ultimately, I think that this whole thing is going to look like, in retrospect, a mistake when Democrats can assess it a few months from now.

Trump said Friday he'd almost raised $500 million in cash, but we haven't heard anything more about that. Lucy, even liberal "Washington Post" column Ruth Marcus, who's a lawyer and no fan of Trump, says it's unfair to make him put up this king's ransom before he can appeal.

LUCY CALDWELL, POLITICAL STRATEGIST: Yeah, I think that not only has the media discourse on this not been very helpful, it's also not very realistic about what it means to be a high net worth person. Even Mark Cuban himself, who is also not a Trump, not a Trump sympathist, not a Trump supporter, has said he will do anything he can to make sure that Trump is not elected in November.

And himself is a very, very rich man, much, much richer than Donald Trump, said, of course, it's unreasonable to expect that someone like Donald Trump would have $500 million in liquidity. But the reason that Donald Trump is in this position is in part because he created the context for folks to take aim at him because he constantly talks about how much cash he has, how rich he is in a way that's a little bit unusual and maybe a little unseemly.

And so, now, we're just in this -- in this narrative that is, I think, bad for both sides. I agree with Ben that this does not end well for -- for liberal activists either.

KURTZ: Most of his assets are tied up in real estate. That's what he did for a living. This reminds me, Ben --

CALDWELL: Right.

KURTZ: -- of the push by Colorado and other states. They just kick Trump off the ballot.

DOMENECH: Yeah.

KURTZ: It's by any means necessary. Rough him up by having a Democratic AG who ran on a platform of investigating Trump, hit him with this monster fine that everybody seems to think is unrealistic.

DOMENECH: Yeah. And to Lucy's point, I mean, basically the equivalent here, if you were going to further the Mark Cuban example, is to say, oh, everything's fine. You just have to sell your arena and your basketball team --

KURTZ: Yeah.

DOMENECH: -- in order to appeal this. Yeah. You know, it's an absurd thing to ask. And for, you know, people who are, you know, in at this level of wealth, the idea that they're going to turn around, especially in this corporate real estate market, and come up with that type of cash overnight, it's just absurd.

And I think that one of the things that, you know, really is going to come out of this is just him being able to appoint the point at one more example of they are unfairly targeting me. And, you know, frankly, for, you know, again, we've talked about this before, but what I think that Democrats underestimate is that there is a large portion, perhaps a larger portion of the population than they think, who voted for Donald Trump in 2016 and then voted for Joe Biden in 2020. And every time that they go down this road of saying, you should not be able to vote for this man --

KURTZ: Yeah.

DOMENECH: -- whether it's through the ballot access or through the different cases that they're going after him, it sends a message to those independent or swing voters. Hey, wait a minute, you know, I voted for this guy before. I should be able to make a choice again. What are you doing here? It seems like you're playing this in an underhanded way.

KURTZ: You know, I would say the same thing, even if Donald Trump was guilty of everything he was charged with in terms of inflating real estate assets. But I do have to point out that these valuations are ultimately subjective. There were no victims. The banks made money on these loans, which were repaid.

Lucy, "Washington Post" says that Trump could put off these payments for months or even years if he would take a couple of his buildings and place them in bankruptcy, but that he doesn't want to do that because of the impact on his campaign.

CALDWELL: Yeah, and he's no stranger to bankruptcy, of course. But I think that at the end of the day, to Ben's point, the optics are really tricky here, because on the one hand, we do want people to be held to the standards of the rule of law. And there are real questions about Donald Trump's business dealings and how he's gone about a lot of things.

On the other hand, you know, it does feel like he is finding himself in these situations because there are political motivations against him. So, how do you balance those features and the fact that we're in a live campaign environment? And so he has this real incentive to promote himself as a -- as a victim.

And meanwhile, all of the things that he's being charged with or being -- many of the things I shouldn't say all, because many of them are very clear, but are things that the American people don't really even understand. Many of them are quite arcane, I think, to your point.

KURTZ: Right. I mean, just to clarify, Trump has never declared personal bankruptcy, but he did put his Atlantic City casinos in bankruptcy. And a lot of people don't make the distinction when it's just particular properties. All right, let's come back to the bloodbath business, Ben.

We played the tape. It was right there. He's talking about the audio industry before and after. How could so many news organizations say, yeah, sure he was, but it was a secret bat signal to his supporters to go out and stir up violence?

DOMENECH: Okay, after all these years of being familiar with Donald Trump, are we -- can't we get past the idea that he dog whistles anything? He doesn't hide what he thinks. He always says what he thinks.

KURTZ: Yeah.

DOMENECH: He says it right out there.

KURTZ: Right.

DOMENECH: He throws it out for everybody to grab onto. This was not some kind of subtle message. He was being very clear about the fact that he thinks that there's going to be an economic bloodbath for the auto industry if he doesn't get re-elected.

That's something that I think if it came out of the mouths of any other politician in America, it would not have been depicted the way it was. And for people like Joe Scarborough to go on morning television and say that it's B.S. to claim what is obviously there in front of him, it just it's all laughable. You can't take any of this analysis seriously.

KURTZ: Yeah. "The Washington Post" had a piece saying, yes, it was about the auto industry, but here were all the other inflammatory things, he says. And in fact, Lucy Trump does sometimes say inflammatory things. We'll talk about that next segment. But this use of bloodbath wasn't one of them. Why did the media feel so compelled? There were just endless headlines to distort this.

CALDWELL: I disagree with you that it was that it was so cut and dry, because in his comments, he said something like it's a bloodbath. Well, that'll be the least of it, right? It'll be a bloodbath for the whole country. And so, I do think that that is a very strange thing to say and does suggest in that moment that he's talking about more than just the auto industry.

Your opening really did show that lots of people toss around the term bloodbath. But the reason that people are focusing on Donald Trump's use of the word bloodbath is that Donald Trump has a history of using apoplectic language. He talked about executing the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. He tossed off a comment about how shoplifters should be killed, right?

I mean, he is a person who is not careful with language. And that's the most general interpretation. The most generous interpretation, excuse me, a less generous interpretation is that he is doing these things in a coded way. And I do think you can you can see your way to both ways, surely.

DOMENECH: You left, you lock her up, which is like the thing that he literally ran on.

KURTZ: Yeah.

DOMENECH: So, I mean, it' not new.

KURTZ: I mean, look, but I've been on an earlier point, which is Trump comes out and says what he thinks most of the time. Look, he is also suing ABC and George Stephanopoulos for defamation for saying that two of the juries in the E. Jean Carroll defamation suits were -- said that he was found liable for rape. It was actually sexual assault. Ben, is this lawsuit going anywhere?

DOMENECH: I don't think it's going anywhere, but I do think it's sending a message, which is that, you know, he's been -- he feels that he's been lied about enough in the context of this that he that he wants to send a message, especially in an interview, I think, that he wants to highlight because of how bad it made George Stephanopoulos look. That interview with Nancy Mace went viral for a reason, and it's not because Stephanopoulos looked good in it.

KURTZ: Right. The judge in the case did say that for many people, the word rape is commonly used instead of sexual assault. So, he certainly may have a linguistic point and you may have a point about why he highlighted it. But he sues the press a lot and usually it winds up settling or being withdrawn.

All right, ahead, the latest Biden impeachment hearing. But when we come back, the media coverage of Donald Trump, Israel and American Jews.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: When Chuck Schumer asked Israel to call new elections in the middle of this war, clearly pushing for the ouster of Bibi Netanyahu, I asked Donald Trump what he thought.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRUMP: The Democrats are very bad for Israel. Israel sticks with them. I guess Israel's loyal, maybe to a fault, because they stick with these guys. Biden is so bad for Israel. They should have never been attacked.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: The former president went further on Sebastian Gorka's radio show and was asked about the matter while voting in Florida's primary.

(BEGIN AUDIO CLIP)

TRUMP: Any Jewish person that votes for Democrats hates their religion. They hate everything about Israel. And they should be ashamed of themselves because Israel will be destroyed. I think that the Democrats have been very, very opposed to Jewish people -- that's true, and to Israel. All you have to do is look at Senator Schumer. What he did with Israel is a disgrace.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: The comments drew sharply personal criticism, especially from Jewish journalists and commentators.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONNY DEUTSCH, MSNBC COMMENTATOR: How dare you, Donald Trump, tell me what it takes to be a good Jew and not be a good Jew, what it takes to love Israel and not love Israel.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Ben, let's start with the media's policy debate. Is it fair to say the Democrats are walking away from Israel when there's an increasingly open disagreement between the Biden team and Netanyahu over invading the densely populated Rafah area without a plan to limit civilians? This is quite open now.

DOMENECH: You know, for a while now, Democrats have been opposed to Bibi Netanyahu. And by a while, I mean, in 1996, Bill Clinton tried to block him from becoming prime minister.

KURTZ: That's a while. In 2012, Obama literally sent his national field director to run an opposition campaign against him. They've tried to block him and they've disagreed with him time and again. So, that's not new.

KURTZ: Okay. What is new, I think, is this backlash post-October 7th that the Democratic Party has experienced from its progressive wing, which has forced them into a position where they've had to signal in all these ways to their domestic political allies that they have some new position, some vague position that is going to frankly to, you know, disagree with Israel's tactics in the region.

And that's something that Chuck Schumer was trying to deliver, I believe, in that speech. But it's also one that, you know, frankly, I think they are walking back on an almost weekly basis. They sort of put themselves out there and then they walk it back because of the backlash.

KURTZ: Lucy, Senator Schumer's comments does seem like meddling in another country's internal ***politics***. But as I told Donald Trump, Biden has continued to back Israel at some political cost, despite the Palestinian demonstrations or the left wing of his party, many of whom do not support Israel.

CALDWELL: Yeah, look. I think that concern about the continued approach of Benjamin Netanyahu is -- does not put the Democrats at odds with Israel. The Israelis are at odds with Benjamin Netanyahu, from what we can tell from polling. And so week over week, you know, the situation on the ground is changing in the Israel-Hamas conflict, right, in their effort to fight back against what was a horrible terrorist attack in October.

But I think that when we think about how to assess how Joe Biden is doing and how he's doing in the electoral context, we have to keep in mind that we are now many months past October 7th and it is a very fluid situation. I think that we will see, as the cycle goes on, that Biden has to continue to work to shore up those folks who made sort of such great hay of claiming that they're not going to vote for Joe Biden and that they're going to vote, protest vote.

KURTZ: Yeah, but I don't -- I don't care how many months we are past October 7th, but that was an absolutely barbaric invasion. But there is legitimate concern about civilian death toll in Gaza. This question of the former president's explosive language, I raised that with him in Mar-a- Lago. Take a look.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: You use over the top, sometimes inflammatory language because that drives the media debate. Did Trump go too far? And then you get the next several news cycles talking about your issue.

TRUMP: It also gets people thinking about very important issues that if you don't use certain rhetoric, if you don't use certain words that maybe are not very nice words, nothing will happen.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Ben, what about the media's harsh reaction to Trump saying Jews who support Democrats are anti-Israel, they hate their religion? It seems to raise the old dual loyalty question.

DOMENECH: Yeah, well, I think that that was obviously irresponsible for the former president to say it, and I think it's intemperate, and I don't think that it's something that people generally agree with. The idea that you have to vote one way in order to, you know, be a good Jew or anything like that is absurd.

But I do think that his point is something that a lot of people have been discussing, and it's one of the things that we see happening in reality in front of us in American domestic ***politics***, where we see a lot of different major Jewish donors and other people who have been active within the Democratic Party coalition for a very long time, reassessing their position post-October 7th and after the reaction both from the Biden administration and from those on Capitol Hill.

KURTZ: Lucy, we could perhaps all agree that some of this language is over the top, but since 70 percent of Jews vote Democratic, aren't the pundits right in saying the former president is going after most of that community?

CALDWELL: Yeah, of course they're right. Of course they're right. It was an absolutely appalling thing to say, and it's not going to be effective. That didn't make American Jewish voters think, oh my gosh, I guess I should take a look again. If you're told that what you're doing is hateful or that you should be ashamed, that doesn't warm you to the person who's saying it, just like when MAGA voters are villainized, that doesn't warm them to the center.

KURTZ: Well, look, many Jews, even in Israel, oppose Netanyahu's policies, and when this war finally ends, we will see what happens. Many American Jews oppose Netanyahu's policies. That's how it works in a democracy. It doesn't mean that you're anti-Israel. It may mean that you think Israel is on the wrong course.

Lucy Caldwell, Ben Domenech, thanks very much for coming by this Sunday. Up next, did the media prompt Princess Kate to disclose her cancer diagnosis?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: Our hearts all went out to Princess Kate as television aired that touching and troubling video revealing she has cancer.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KATE MIDDLETON, PRINCESS OF WALES: It has taken me time to recover from major surgery in order to start my treatment, but most importantly, it has taken us time to explain everything to George, Charlotte, and Louis in a way that's appropriate for them and to reassure them that I'm going to be okay.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Joining us now, Griff Jenkins, the Fox News Correspondent and Anchor. Griff, what was your reaction when every network suddenly was showing Kate talking about cancer, talking about chemo, talking about her kids, and expressing concern for anybody else who has cancer?

GRIFF JENKINS, FOX NEWS NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: You know, Howie, that very clip you played there, that moved me because I, like many families who have dealt with cancer, my wife and eldest daughter are cancer survivors. She really struck a chord with every one of those families because that was a courageous statement to sit there, to take it on. She could -- Buckingham Palace could have just put out a statement --

KURTZ: Right.

JENKINS: -- and be done with it. But she sat there and she talked about it, and I think that she showed resilience and she did it, I think, a little bit also for those three kids that she has, the young kids, because you can't overstate the weight that a cancer diagnosis places on a family --

KURTZ: On the whole family.

JENKINS: -- albeit, a mother of three who is in the spotlight every day.

KURTZ: Right. You know, yes, her Photoshopping of that family photo was ill-advised, but what was worse were all the crazy conspiracy theories in the media, on social media. London had a headline, "Shame on You", talking about all the trolls. And a lot of celebrities have now apologized for making light of this or whatever. Does it seem like that's what forced, prodded Kate Middleton into making this disclosure?

JENKINS: Well, I think so. I mean, she was clearly forced at some level to do it. And look, Stephen Colbert, who I don't believe has apologized yet, a lot of people online saying he is the poster child of this for speculating that William was having an affair.

But he's far from the last one that was speculating wildly. And I think, Howie, this is a lesson in humanity for the media and all those prominent voices online. A lesson in the humanity of those in the spotlight, like her, and jumping to conclusions.

KURTZ: They're real people --

JENKINS: Yeah.

KURTZ: -- with real families, they get real diseases, and they're not just icons for us to project our feelings on.

JENKINS: Correct. And this isn't over for her. I mean, look --

KURTZ: Yeah.

JENKINS: -- we all are talking about it, and then the show will end --

KURTZ: Yeah.

JENKINS: -- and we'll go on Monday. But yet she's going to battle cancer. She's undergoing chemotherapy, and she's the future King and Queen carrying the monarchy --

KURTZ: Right.

JENKINS: -- many argue, on their backs, with the King, by the way, who has cancer, as well.

KURTZ: And the King Charles has cancer, as well. And I'm sure it would have been better, at least for the London tabloids, if the family's communications people had disclosed this already. But maybe that's not what she wanted while she was undergoing the beginning of treatment.

JENKINS: "New York Times" reports they had three sources that said that she and she alone made the decision to sit on that bench. And to do it also not sitting with William, who she spoke about him --

KURTZ: Right.

JENKINS: -- supporting her. She wanted to take this on. And I think, you know, she's certainly had an experience of the British tabloids.

KURTZ: Yes.

JENKINS: But she probably made the decision that this is so important and so personal now at this point. After, as you point out, a rough week, she had to issue a statement --

KURTZ: Yeah.

JENKINS: -- apologizing about the doctored photo. She wanted to own it and be the voice to put it to rest.

KURTZ: Yeah, she's now issued a plea for privacy. And the media should go along with that. Thanks, Griff. Next on "Media Buzz", why the media are largely ignoring a heated hearing on a potential impeachment. And later, my response to Jimmy Kimmel.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: The latest Biden impeachment hearing drew only scattered media attention despite its frequent fireworks. AOC clashed with former Hunter business partner Tony Bobulinski about what Hunter's dad had done wrong.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, U.S. DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATIVE: Did you witness the President commit a crime? Is it your testimony today?

TONY BOBULINSKI, FORMER HUNTER BUSINESS PARTNER: Yes.

OCASIO-CORTEZ: And what crime? Do you have your witness --

BOBULINSKI: How much time do I have to go through it?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: The Democrats called Lev Parnas a former associate of Rudy Giuliani and a businessman convicted of illegal donations to Donald Trump's last campaign.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LEV PARNAS, FORNER RUDY GIULIANI ASSOCIATE: The only information ever pushed under Biden's in Ukraine has come from one source and one source only -- Russia and Russian agents.

JESSE WATTERS, "JESSE WATERS PRIMETIME" HOST: The Democrats say there's no evidence. The media reports there's no evidence and the four-year cover-up continues. Everyone knows Biden's corrupt. We just have to vote him out.

MELANIE ZANONA, CNN CAPITOL HILL REPORTER: Those hearings only did not produce a smoking gun which has been lacking throughout this entire impeachment inquiry.

(END VIDEO CLIP

KURTZ: Joining us now Kevin Corke, Senior National Correspondent for Fox News and Shelby Talcott a reporter for "Semafor". Kevin even those in the media who think there are troubling and unanswered questions about Joe and Hunter and Jim and other family members and foreign money not giving this hearing a standing ovation.

KEVIN CORKE, FOX NEWS SENIOR NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: They're really not for two reasons how I, number one some of this was well-tread ground. Tony Bobulinski's testimony and information from him has been out there for a while. And I think the second thing there was no real moment. I think the AOC clip you played was probably the strongest moment of the weekend.

So, what that tells you is two things. One, nobody really cares does it really move the needle but I think more importantly what happens here now is does this lead to an impeachment vote? We'll have to talk about that.

KURTZ: You're so good that you anticipated my next question, Shelby. When Oversight Chairman Jim Comer starts talking about making criminal referrals to DOJ, does that signal the House is probably not going to vote on impeaching the President?

SHELBY TALCOTT, "SEMAFOR" ***POLITICS*** REPORTER: Yeah, well, I think the big thing here is it is such a slim majority that Republicans have right now that even other far less controversial votes say have struggled this year. And so, when you look at that, I think Republicans involved in this effort are recognizing that it could be really hard to pass an impeachment vote. And so, instead, they're looking at other avenues to try to make sure that something comes from all of this.

KURTZ: Right. And by the way, a referral to the Justice Department is largely symbolic since justice can do or not do whatever it wants. Kevin, let's be real. Biden family members His son his brother made big bucks trading off the family name old-fashioned influence peddling.

CORKE: Yep.

KURTZ: But at the same time, isn't it true, you can't impeach Joe without some evidence that money went into Joe's bank account?

CORKE: And that's the real issue. We're talking about 20 plus Shell companies. We're talking about sort of this sleight of hand where he can legitimately it was alone or not alone, or not alone. Did it end up in his hands? Who knows? And I think they banked on that and that makes the Republican push for this all the weaker, Howie.

KURTZ: Yeah, and just picking up on what you said earlier, Shelby. Some House Republicans have already come out against Biden's impeachment. I don't think it's helpful to the party in an election year. And also, you mentioned the one-seat margin because -- saw the Republicans keep resigning. It's possible. They just don't have the votes.

TALCOTT: Yeah, yeah, that's exactly right. And I think the other interesting thing when we're talking about this and we're -- when we're also looking at how the media is or is not covering all this is there's always sort of a selection bias when you're -- when you're in any outlet in any media publication.

And even you know lawmakers when it -- when it comes to what they're really focused on. And so, I think selection bias and in terms of what voters are interested in right now, writ large, is playing a really big role in in this entire inquiry and how it's being covered.

KURTZ: And what's the selection bias? How does it work?

TALCOTT: Well, I think a selection bias is essentially Individual reporters or even outlets, newspapers. They all have to determine day in and day out What they want to cover, what they think is newsworthy and then also what their readership or viewership are interested in. And so, I think that plays a really big role in all of this.

CORKE: This is where editors have to step in.

TALCOTT: Of course.

CORKE: And I mean, we've talked a lot about this thing with the bloodbath. How do you not know the context of something like that? If you're an editor, if you're running a team or you have reporters under your charge, you've got to step in and make the right call.

KURTZ: And a big setback was the FBI informant who the Committee -- Republican Committee had relied on, alleging a five million dollar bribe to Joe Biden indicted for lying by the FBI. Now, the other huge news this week had to do with the relatively new Speaker of the House, Johnson -- Mike Johnson and passing a big spending package that averted a government shutdown yet again, but was not pleasing to those on the right, and here's Marjorie Taylor Greene surrounded by a media mob.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE, GEORGIA CONGRESSWOMAN: This is a betrayal of the American people This is a betrayal of Republican voters. Mike Johnson, the Republican Speaker of the House handed over every ounce of negotiating power to Chuck Schumer and the Democrats.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: How are the media portraying Marjorie Taylor Greene's move to boot Johnson from the Speaker's Chair using the same maneuver --

CORKE: Yeah.

KURTZ: -- that ended up with Kevin McCarthy leaving the Speaker's Chair and over the same kind of issue which is compromising with Democrats on spending?

CORKE: The media understands that this represents to them chaos. There are the Republicans in chaos. You'll see the headlines often, Howie, where they'll say Republicans once again don't know what the right hand is doing, when the left hand is doing this and the other.

The real issue, I think, for Marjorie Taylor Greene and the Republicans writ large is whether or not they will have those -- how can I put this tactfully -- the courage to do what their voters want? If they don't, there will be more Marjorie Taylor Greene's for Mike Johnson to deal with in the future.

KURTZ: Well, don't just take it from us. I mean Laura Ingraham on our show said this was slow suicide by the Republican Party. But let me get into the details, Shelby. MTG said this was a warning, not a pink slip from Mike Johnson that she doesn't have a timetable for following through on there She could have demanded a vote within 48 hours that she doesn't want to cause chaos, because we'll all remember what happened when the House was paralyzed by the Speaker battles and nobody could get enough votes. So, she did cause a lot of confusion for the media -- how far is this going to go?

TALCOTT: Yeah, and that's that we don't know right? It does seem like she's serious but at the same time she has said this is a warning -- this is essentially, hey, Speaker Johnson heads up, you need to change course or be better or we're going to find a new Speaker.

I also think Marjorie Taylor Greene is facing some pushback internally from members of her own party who have seen the headlines and have seen that sort of coverage and in an election year, don't want round two of the Republicans and chaos focus.

KURTZ: Well, I thought it was around five or six. And that's the thing in an election, you are people worried about other things.

CORKE: That's right.

KURTZ: It can seem -- I don't want to say waste of time. She's entitled to do this but that rule where any Speaker can be out is when somebody calls a vote. Not helping the Republicans in my view now. After the break, how the press is covering the ***politics*** of abortion as Donald Trump talks compromise.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: When I asked Donald Trump about a "New York Time" report that he privately favored an abortion ban after 16 weeks of pregnancy, he did not dispute it.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Do you think that could be politically acceptable?

DONALD TRUMP, PRESUMPTIVE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE: So, we're going to find out and pretty soon, I'm going to be making a decision. And I would like to see if we could do that at all, Howie. I would like to see if we could make both sides happy.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Former President later refined his answer on WABC Radio.

(BEGIN AUDIO CLIP)

TRUMP: The number of weeks, now people are agreeing on 15 and I'm thinking in terms of that and it'll come out to something that's very reasonable. But people are really even hardliners are agreeing seems to be 15 weeks.

(END AUDIO CLIP)

KURTZ: Shelby, Trump told me that Republicans need to do a better job of talking about abortion in the post row era. Obviously, Democrats are hot on this issue. Has he been under media pressure to embrace a particular plan?

TALCOTT: Absolutely, I think the big thing is because up until now, he has been a little bit more evasive on where exactly he falls I'm the abortion issue. It has been highlighted by the media, by Democrats, by the Biden campaign --

KURTZ: Oh yeah.

TALCOTT: -- because -- and particularly by the Biden campaign because remember, because Republicans have struggled on talking about abortion, it has been seen as a win for Democrats because Democrats messaging has been a little bit stricter on this. So, certainly, Donald Trump has been under immense pressure from the media to give a solid answer on where exactly he stands heading into this election.

KURTZ: Yeah, I thought he would dismiss "The New York Times" there, but he did not. Whether it's 15 weeks -- 16 weeks that Donald Trump wants a compromise, that makes both sides happy. As I told him during the interview, I'm not sure that's possible. A 15-week ban would leave untouched the vast majority of abortions which are performing earlier and pro-life groups are not going to like that.

CORKE: They're not going to like that, but I think if I were Republicans, I might change the script just a bit. Let's get the President on the record - - do you support abortion up until birth? Are we talking eight months? Where's your line?

And I think, if the President and former president have to drill down on where they really want to stand on this issue, I think both sides really need to sort of focus so that the voters know, I think the 15 --16 week, 14 weeks -- I think it is in France. I think that's where most people are falling in. And I think, you're right about this. I think this is really an issue that has hurt Republicans previously. They have to figure out a way to communicate that it's -- they're more in line with the vast majority of Americans.

KURTZ: Right. In that same interview, the former president talked about late-term abortions and how the Democrats are the radicals with all the late-term abortions after say seven months are less than one percent of all abortions. So, Trump also went off on Democrats on that issue. But still, the pro-choice side is not going to like any restrictions, it seems to me. Do you think the media which leans strongly pro-choice will rally viewers and readers against any limitations?

TALCOTT: I think that's a really good question and ultimately, any answer I give will be a guess. But I do think that there is this -- this tendency to focus on the abortion issue during this election year and really focus on how Republicans view abortion because of the overturning of Roe v. Wade.

So, that has been in the spotlight for the media much more than where Democrats might stand on it. And I anticipate that it will continue to be a major focus again because of Roe v. Wade and because Donald Trump helped overturn Roe v. Wade.

KURTZ: Right. I mean there is no answer that we can give definitively at this point So, an educated guess is probably as good as we can do. So, Trump also feels strongly about -- he talked about this a lot -- three exceptions -- rape, incest life of the mother. He talked about Republicans who didn't embrace that and how they lost in '22.

What's not clear from both of these interviews that I played is whether he favors a national ban after say, 15 weeks, 16 weeks, whatever it is, or just applying those in state-by-state battles and not a big deal.

CORKE: Absolutely. Stick with the state-by-state. If you talk about a national ban, it is an absolute political powder keg. Can't have it, but I think he has to be honest about how he personally feels. I think he's a little bit more pro-choice than people probably --

KURTZ: He was once pro-choice --

CORKE: Absolutely.

KURTZ: -- back in the day.

CORKE: Back in the day.

KURTZ: And I think it's okay to have that narrative let people see how you've come along in your journey that's probably would be effective not just for Republicans but for those who are in the middle.

KURTZ: But you think that he's on to something here that both sides might, while not crazy about it, might be willing to compromise -

CORKE: Hundred percent he can do it.

KURTZ: There's one line that he delivered that really stuck with me. He says you have to go with your heart, but --speaking to Republicans -- you also have to get elected.

CORKE: That's right.

KURTZ: And both of those things can be true. Shelby Talcott, Kevin Corke, thanks so much. Still to come, MSNBC revolts against the Trump ally. A betting scandal touches baseball's biggest star. And Jimmy Kimmel unloads on my interview with the former president,

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: NBC hired ousted RNC chairwoman Ronna McDaniel to appear across all platforms But there's been a revolt at MSNBC over her close ties to Donald Trump and role in trying to overturn The 2020 election. Now, "The Wall Street Journal" reports MSNBC president Rashida Jones told her staff she has no plans to put McDaniel on the cable network, got a placate the liberal talent.

Ousted CNN Anchor Don Lemon has now posted his interview with Elon Musk which cost him a multi-million dollar contract at X. Musk was clearly annoyed by Lemon's questions.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DON LEMON, "THE DON LEMON SHOW" HOST: You have a ketamine prescription.

ELON MUSK, CEO, X: Yeah, yeah.

LEMON: What's that for?

MUSK: Well, I mean, it's pretty private to ask somebody about a medical prescription, you know that.

LEMON: By saying just that standards are being lowered and that you're implying that they're being lowered, because people are less skilled and less intelligent and you're talking about people of color and or women.

MUSK: Look, I'm saying we should not lower standards.

LEMON: But do you -- you don't --

MUSK: That's it. I don't think that we should care about the media thinks about them.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Don Lemon told his old network that Musk has abandoned his embrace of free speech since buying Twitter.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LEMON: Apparently, that doesn't matter to Elon Musk. It's just for, maybe, talking points for him or rhetoric, because it doesn't seem to matter when it's about him, questions about him from people like me.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: But it seems tone-deaf to interrogate your boss right after being hired. Based on reporting by ESPN, "Los Angeles Times", the L.A. Dodgers have fired the interpreter for Shohei Ohtani, the team's phenomenal pitcher and slugger who's the highest paid player in North American sports? There's no suggestion that Ohtani himself involved in sports betting. Even the interpreter Ipe Mizuhari says that.

But there are questions about four and a half million dollars in wire transfers sent from Ohtani's account to a bookie operation at first and Ohtani spokesman told the ESPN, the baseball star had to help pay his friends gambling debts. But then, the company representing Ohtani said, " - - we discovered that Shoehei has been the victim of a massive theft and we are turning the matter over to the authorities."

But ESPN says it reviewed bank information showing Ohtani's name on two $500,000 payments over a two-month stretch last fall. Mizuhari says he followed baseball's rules by betting only on other sports. Journalists should absolutely keep digging into this mess.

Jimmy Kimmel jumped on my interview with Donald Trump -- of course, he did, devoting much of his monologue to hitting back at the former president You'll recall that Trump trashed a late-night comic while he was hosting the Oscars and Kimmel read that on the air. He later played a whole lot of our interview.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRUMP: Look, Jimmy Kimmel is -- every night, he hits me. I guess his ratings are terrible. He's not a talented guy. I hear he hits me all the time So, I figured I'd hit him because I thought he was a lousy host. JIMMY KIMMEL, "JIMMY KIMMEL LIVE" HOST: What he doesn't realize is that I love this. I love that this bothered him so much. Thank you for watching. I'm surprised you're still -- isn't it past your jail time? Barbie was laughing at you.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: And there was more -- much more.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRUMP: I said this guy's even dumber than I thought. The thing went viral. It's been all over the world now, and all he had to do is keep his mouth shut.

KIMMEL: Imagine him telling anyone they should have kept their mouth shut. That should be on his tombstone, "Should Have Kept His Mouth Shut".

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Oh, and Kimmel didn't like the former president describing him as not too bright.

KIMMEL: Maybe you're right about me being dumb. You know, we should take one of those cognitive tests or an IQ test together. Maybe we can sit down for a long game of Scrabble and find out who has the bigger brain.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: And then, while he didn't deign to mention my name, Jimmy took a whack at me.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KIMMEL: I love that Fox picks a news guy nobody knows to interview him.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: You've got one thing right? I'm a news guy. Fox didn't pick me. I got the interview on my own, wrote the questions on my own and maybe I'm not as famous as you, Kimmel, but I've been number one in this time slot for nearly 12 years.

You've been trailing Stephen Colbert in second place for a long time and your numbers on a broadcast network this year, just under a million and a half. My modest Sunday cable show practically matched that last week. So, maybe a few people know me. I guess endless Trump bashing is one way to boost your name I.D.

Well, that's it for this edition of "Media Buzz". I'm Howard Kurtz. And you can subscribe to my daily podcast "Media Buzzmeter". Join the club. We have millions of downloads. We riff on the day's top five stories and more. We've been shoving things in at the last minute on this program trying to get it all for you. Thanks for watching. We're back here next Sunday, 11 Eastern with the only media analysis show on national television.

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