

Media Speculation Building as Trump Holds More One-on-One Meetings

During Wednesday's morning press briefing, Presidential Transition Team communications staffers Jason Miller and Sean Spicer played a little bit of keep-away with the liberal mainstream media.

President-elect Donald Trump, who was announced as *TIME Magazine's* "Person of the Year" for 2016 earlier in the day, held a transition fundraising breakfast with more than 800 in attendance and visited with Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. He was also slated to meet with a series of potential Cabinet appointees, which drew the majority of the media's attention during the brief Q&A session.

Among those meeting with the president-elect Wednesday were North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory and Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt. Andy Putzer, CEO of CKE Restaurants—which include Carl's Jr. and Hardee's restaurants—is also being eyed for a potential role in the Trump White House.

Miller, in mentioning McCrory, praised the governor's efforts in education, regulatory reform and energy modernization, including his lifting a ban on fracking in his state. The governor conceded defeat in November's election earlier this week.

Although Trump has named a probable secretary of education, he has not yet named labor and energy secretaries.

In discussing Pruitt's visit, Miller praised his record as a prosecutor and his efforts in taking on the Obama Administration's Environmental Protection Agency. He's been rumored to be a finalist for EPA administrator in the Trump

White House.

While not technically a Cabinet position, it is considered a Cabinet-level position.

Both McCrory and Pruitt have openly professed their Christian faith and evangelical leanings and have demonstrated how their faiths inform their decisions as public servants. If selected for the Trump Cabinet, they would build on a growing evangelical Christian influence in the White House.

So far, five nominees to the official Cabinet are evangelicals.

Puzder is described as “devoutly Catholic.” He’s being considered for a nomination as secretary of labor.

Members of the media tried to pry what information they could from Miller and Spicer regarding these meetings and what they could mean for future Cabinet appointments. But, the president-elect’s communications team simply reminded them that Trump has met with more than 80 people, some of whom are candidates, and some who are merely providing input to assist in his decision-making processes.

Miller also noted the president-elect will return to the road Thursday and Friday with events planned for Ohio, Iowa, Louisiana and Michigan. {eo}