

*CNN News Central*

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3 minutes

JOHN BERMAN: And now the breaking news, this just in — the pool released a statement saying — this is the White House pool — “This is to advise that effective today, the TV pool will not be covering the events designated as pool coverage of the President. This follows the White House position preventing CNN from fulfilling its assigned pool duties. There will be no replacement pool put in place.” Okay. With us now, CNN chief White House correspondent, anchor of *The Source*, Kaitlan Collins. No one better to explain what this now means, because we’ve never seen anything like this before.

KAITLAN COLLINS: No, and that statement there is really important, John, because it means that when the President does anything today, there will be no TV camera with the President that is broadcasting and sharing this footage of what a President does on a daily basis. It’s 9 a.m., which means typically at this time, when CNN is the assigned pool, all of our reporters and photojournalists would be at the White House at this time, prepared to cover whatever it is the President does that day. Every day it rotates, it’s a different outlet. And so, you know, when I’m in the Oval Office asking the President questions, I’m not just there on behalf of CNN. I’m there on behalf of the entire TV pool. We’re asking questions on behalf of Fox, CBS, ABC, NBC, and then that footage that our photojournalist shoots in the Oval Office of whatever the President is saying is distributed and shared with everyone. It’s a time, and a resource, and space issue, basically. That’s why the pool was created and has existed in some form since the FDR era. And so, that’s why this matters so much today, because it’s not just about CNN, it’s about all these other outlets and how they have access to the White House and how we cover the President, and so, because of this ban that the President announced on Friday, instead of us showing up at the White House on our assigned time today to travel with the President to New York, we’re blocked from accessing the White House. You cannot scan your badge. You cannot enter the White House. We cannot go to Joint Base Andrews to board Air Force One with the President, as I was scheduled to do, to fly with him here to New York today, we are effectively blocked from doing all of that. And, because of that, and with this new statement from the TV pool and the Correspondents’ Association, that means there will be no camera there on behalf of that group that serves as the TV pool, covering the President. And it’s a major moment in White House coverage and the presidency, where he is not going to have access to that with him in this moment, and obviously has major implications for the free press.

BERMAN: And we’re talking about the press pool. This means CNN, MS NOW, and *Politico* were singled out. But this means that NBC, and CBS, and ABC, and Fox News are, in a way, standing by CNN, which was pushed out of the pool.

COLLINS: Yeah, because alternatively, the White House could say, well, actually, we’re not going to let CNN today. Another outlet could come in and bring their cameras and their reporters and their technicians, but instead, the pool is banding together in solidarity and saying, actually, no, that’s not going to happen because the President is — is saying that these certain outlets can’t

come in the Oval Office because he doesn't like their coverage. I mean, he himself called it a free speech ban on Friday.