

Trump named repeatedly in Epstein files, Wall Street Journal reports

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Donald Trump's name appears repeatedly in Department of Justice (DOJ) files of the investigation into sex-trafficker and financial speculator Jeffrey Epstein, according to a report Wednesday by the *Wall Street Journal*. Attorney General Pam Bondi informed Trump of this fact in May, after a review of the files by the DOJ and the FBI, the newspaper added, although Trump was publicly denying it as recently as July 15, when asked directly by a reporter for ABC News.

The *Journal* report is the second broadside in a week against Trump from the newspaper, owned by right-wing billionaire Rupert Murdoch, who has backed Trump in three consecutive presidential elections. Last Thursday, the *Journal* reported on a note sent by Trump to Epstein in 2003, accompanied by a lewd drawing, that was part of a book of letters from friends and associates on the occasion of Epstein's 50th birthday.

Trump responded to the first report by denying it as "fake" and filing a \$10 billion lawsuit against Dow Jones, the corporate owner of the newspaper, and its parent company, News Corp. Dow Jones responded, "We have full confidence in the rigor and accuracy of our reporting, and will vigorously defend against any lawsuit."

Murdoch has now replied to the suit with an even more devastating report on Trump's efforts to cover up his connections with Epstein. According to the latest article, citing unnamed "senior administration officials," the DOJ reviewed what Bondi called a "truckload" of documents in which "Donald Trump's name appeared multiple times."

Bondi and Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche informed Trump at a White House meeting that his name was in the Epstein files, the *Journal* reported:

Many other high-profile figures were also named, Trump was told. Being mentioned in the records isn't a sign of wrongdoing. The officials said it was a routine briefing that covered a number of topics and that Trump's appearance in the documents wasn't the focus.

Bondi and Blanche said the files contained "unverified

hearsay about many people, including Trump," and that they didn't plan to release any more material stemming from the Epstein investigation because it involved "child pornography and victims' personal information."

Trump readily agreed with the decision to suppress any further investigation. He had every reason to believe that Bondi and Blanche were looking out for his interests, since that was their principal qualification for their present positions.

Bondi, a former Florida state attorney general, was a Trump defense lawyer during his first impeachment trial in January 2020 over withholding military aid to Ukraine. Blanche was his senior defense attorney in the 2023-24 prosecution in Manhattan over falsifying financial records to cover up hush-money payments to porn star Stormy Daniels.

The Justice Department and FBI announced the decision to wind up the Epstein investigation without releasing any further documents in a brief, unsigned statement issued July 7 and posted on the internet. The memo declared that no list of Epstein's clients had been found, despite Bondi's claim last February, in an interview with Fox News, that the list was "on my desk right now."

While the White House denounced the latest *Journal* report as more "fake news," Bondi and Blanche effectively conceded the truth of the story last Friday, five days before it appeared. They told the newspaper that they had informed the White House that there was no basis for further investigation into the Epstein case. "As part of our routine briefing, we made the President aware of the findings," they said in a statement.

On Tuesday, Blanche made public that the DOJ was seeking a meeting between himself and Ghislaine Maxwell, who is serving a 20-year prison term for her role as Epstein's collaborator and assistant in the recruitment and exploitation of young girls, to discuss any information she could provide about those who joined Epstein in his crimes.

House Oversight Committee chair James Comer said Wednesday that he would issue a subpoena for Maxwell to testify before his committee on August 11. This cuts across the efforts of Speaker Mike Johnson to bury the Epstein controversy by moving up the summer recess for the House to take effect on Wednesday, July 23, continuing until early September.

The Epstein affair has revealed previously concealed fault lines within the Trump administration and his entourage of fascists, anti-immigrant bigots, and white supremacists.

According to the *Journal* report, “FBI Director Kash Patel has privately told other government officials that Trump’s name appeared in the files, according to people close to the administration.” Both Patel and his fascist deputy director, former podcaster Dan Bongino, had made repeated claims that the Epstein case would expose many prominent Democrats and that Trump, once he returned to office, would move quickly on the matter.

Bongino reportedly had a loud confrontation with Pam Bondi at the White House on July 9, during which he called her a liar in claiming there was no client list. He was said to be considering quitting his post at the FBI.

The falling out between Murdoch and Trump is a further demonstration of the weakness and crisis of this administration, whose policies are deeply opposed by the majority of the American people, but enabled by the spinelessness of the Democratic Party and the support of the Republican-led Congress and the Supreme Court.

In addition to the *Wall Street Journal*, Murdoch’s media holdings also include Fox News, the principal cable television cheerleader and propaganda outlet for the fascist president. Fox News has supplied many Trump administration officials, including Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy, border czar Tom Homan, deputy assistant to the president Sebastian Gorka, Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee, and a half dozen lesser aides.

The crisis is further manifested in increasingly desperate legal maneuvers by the Trump administration. Last week, Trump directed Bondi to “produce any and all pertinent Grand Jury testimony, subject to Court approval.” The next day, Bondi did as she was told and filed a motion with a federal court in South Florida. On Wednesday, a federal judge denied the request, saying the government had failed to provide any justification for breaching grand jury secrecy.

Legal commentators have pointed out that the grand jury testimony is the least likely to implicate Trump, since he was never charged in relation to Epstein. More importantly, these transcripts are a drop in the bucket compared to the hundreds of thousands of documents developed by the FBI in the course of its lengthy investigation, which reportedly began in 2006 and continued until Epstein’s supposed suicide in a Manhattan prison cell in 2019.

Among the materials reportedly collected by the FBI are hundreds of video records of sexual encounters between teenage girls and older men, associates and clients of Epstein, each carefully labelled with the names of both the victims and the perpetrators. Despite the FBI identifying at least a thousand girls trafficked by Epstein, not a single one of the abusers has been identified, let alone arrested and charged.

Meanwhile, the gusher of revelations continues about the scale of Epstein’s sex-trafficking operation and Trump’s relationship to the multi-millionaire financial operator. The right-wing British newspaper *Daily Telegraph* published an interview with Trump biographer Michael Wolff in which he described how he had recorded nearly 100 hours of interviews with Epstein during the five years before his death, in which Epstein spoke about his relationship with Trump and with other well-known figures, including Bill Gates, former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak, Prince Andrew of the British royal family and former Treasury secretary Larry Summers.

“Epstein had this set of a dozen Polaroids of Trump around Epstein’s swimming pool,” Wolff told the newspaper, which he kept in a safe that the FBI seized in July 2019. “I remember three of them vividly. Two of the pictures had topless girls sitting in Trump’s lap ... These guys defined each other. Epstein is the best window through which to understand Trump.”

CNN published photos of Epstein at Trump’s 1993 wedding to Marla Maples, his second wife, as well as video footage from a Victoria’s Secret fashion show in New York in which Trump and Epstein are laughing and chatting together. (Epstein made his initial fortune as the manager of the personal wealth of Leslie Wexner, the billionaire founder of The Limited, which owns Victoria’s Secret.)

Yahoo! News reported on a 2006 appearance by Trump on the Howard Stern radio program, in which Trump, then 58, heartily agreed with the suggestion that he “could now be banging 24-year-olds.” “Oh, absolutely,” Trump responded “I have no trouble.” Asked by co-host Robin Quivers whether he had any age limit for sexual activity, Trump hesitated, then said, “I don’t want to be like Congressman Foley, with, you know, 12-year-olds.” Trump was referring to a then-current scandal involving a Republican congressman and teenage boys.



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