

# Bondi hearing exposes Epstein cover-up and secret “domestic terrorist” lists

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After months of stonewalling, Attorney General Pam Bondi appeared Wednesday before the House Judiciary Committee for an oversight hearing on the operations of the Justice Department.

Bondi’s appearance took place amid a collapse in support for the Trump administration as a whole, as outrage is growing among workers and youth over the actions of the US government and the Justice Department in particular. These include the selective prosecution and intimidation of political opponents of the Trump administration, the protection of murderous immigration agents and the shielding of wealthy associates of convicted child sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein. As the hearing convened, students across the country were walking out of classes to protest the immigration police, while more than 6,400 San Francisco teachers had joined 34,000 Kaiser healthcare workers on strike in California and Hawaii.

The hearing itself was an indictment of the political and economic order presiding over it. Bondi responded to substantive questions with open hostility, evasions and non sequiturs. At the same time, numerous Democratic lawmakers, many of whom have repeatedly voted to fund Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the broader apparatus of repression, used their time not to demand accountability but to grandstand over Jeffrey Epstein.

Bondi, for her part, adopted the political style and rhetoric of Trump himself. She repeatedly personally attacked Democratic lawmakers, praised Trump effusively and at one point responded to pointed questions about the ongoing Epstein cover-up by boasting about record stock market gains.

“You should all apologize to Trump,” Bondi declared, characterizing Trump and the administration as the most “transparent” in history. She added, “because Donald Trump, the Dow, the Dow right now is over, the Dow is over 50,000... the S&P is over 7,000 and the Nasdaq smashing records. Americans’ retirement and 401(k) savings are booming, that’s what we should be talking about.”

As survivors of Epstein’s crimes sat in the hearing room, Bondi went on to insist, “The Dow has shattered 50,000 for the first time.” The exchange laid bare the real priorities of the ruling class: not accountability for a multi-decade child sex trafficking conspiracy but the defense of financial markets,

wealth and profits.

Several Democrats did issue sharp denunciations of Bondi’s conduct. California Representative Ted Lieu accused her of lying under oath and declared, “if you had any decency, you would resign right after this hearing,” while others raised the prospect of impeachment.

The only sustained and aggressive questioning of Bondi from the Republican side came from Kentucky Representative Thomas Massie, who is currently being targeted for a Trump-backed primary challenge following his leading role in passing the Epstein Files Transparency Act. Massie described the Justice Department’s compliance with the law as “a massive failure” and walked the committee through three sets of documents demonstrating deliberate redaction and manipulation.

He cited emails from victims’ attorneys instructing the department not to release certain names, which were nonetheless published with victims’ names unredacted, while other names, including one victim and a lawyer, were selectively blacked out, proving, Massie said, that the department had “touched” the documents. Massie also referenced an FBI document titled “Jeffrey Epstein Child Sex Trafficking,” listing alleged co-conspirators, all of whom were redacted, noting that one was later revealed to be billionaire Leslie Wexner.

Finally, Massie pointed to the FBI’s FD-302 interview summaries, documents in which victims named perpetrators, all of which were entirely redacted. When Massie asked Bondi who was responsible for the redactions and demanded accountability, she refused to answer, dismissing the exchange as “a political joke.”

Bondi attacked Massie personally, calling him a “failed politician” with “Trump Derangement Syndrome,” and later refused to answer whether she agreed with FBI Director Kash Patel, who has claimed there is no evidence Epstein trafficked women or girls to other individuals.

While Republicans generally praised Bondi and the Trump administration’s war on immigrants, which serves as a spearhead for establishing a presidential dictatorship, virtually every Democrat made some mention of the files. Vermont Representative Becca Balint accused the Justice Department of

operating a “two-tier system of justice.” She said the files contained “evidence of a multi-decade international criminal conspiracy involving some of the wealthiest, most powerful people in the world,” encompassing financial crimes, political corruption and “horrible sexual abuse.”

She named senior Trump administration officials with “clear and confirmed ties to Jeffrey Epstein,” including Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, Secretary of the Navy John Phelan and Deputy Defense Secretary Steven Feinberg, and demanded a direct answer from Bondi. Asked repeatedly, “yes or no,” whether the Justice Department had questioned Lutnick, Phelan or Feinberg about their ties to Epstein, Bondi refused to answer, deflecting by asking, “What does ties mean?” and veering into unrelated remarks. Balint pressed further, urging Bondi to “do the right thing” and meet with Epstein’s survivors, which Bondi has so far refused to do.

Balint’s appeal to Bondi to “do the right thing” underscored the political dead end of the hearing as a whole. Amid the bickering, insults and theatrical denunciations, there was broad bipartisan agreement on the essential question of power. Despite sharp exchanges and occasional calls for resignation, senior Democrats made clear that they did not seek to remove Bondi or disrupt the operations of the Justice Department. Ranking member Jamie Raskin implored Bondi not to step aside but to improve her conduct, telling her, “Please do your job and bring the Department of Justice back from the brink.”

Tennessee Democrat Representative Steve Cohen, whose district includes Memphis, was even more explicit in his support for the federal law enforcement apparatus. Cohen stated, “We do have a Democratic mayor Paul Young ... not against the task force being there, but is against ICE being in Memphis and is against the National Guard, and I concur with him on those positions.”

He then emphasized his approval of other federal agencies, declaring, “I think the DEA being there, the Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, the FBI who have been in Memphis in other ways is good for Memphis. ... thank you for the task force.” Cohen reserved his criticism not for the expansion of federal policing itself but for ICE recruitment bonuses that draw officers away from local departments, stating that “the worst of the worst are not the immigrants, the worst of the worst, records show are native-born Americans,” and objecting that ICE was encouraging police “to leave local law enforcement and go to work for ICE.”

The most ominous exchange of the hearing came near its conclusion, when Pennsylvania Representative Mary Gay Scanlon raised questions about National Security Presidential Memorandum-7, a subject otherwise ignored during more than four and a half hours of testimony. Scanlon was the only member of the committee to press Bondi on the memorandum, which brands anti-fascism and opposition to capitalism as “domestic terrorism.”

Citing Section 3 of NSPM-7, Scanlon noted that the directive

instructed Bondi to send to White House officials, including Stephen Miller and Donald Trump, a list of “groups or entities whose members are engaged in acts that meet the definition of domestic terrorism.” She further referenced Bondi’s December 4 directive ordering the FBI to work with multiple law enforcement agencies to compile such a list and asked whether, following a January 3 update, the report had in fact been completed.

Bondi did not deny that the list exists. Instead, she interjected, “I know that Antifa is part of that,” before accusing lawmakers of asking questions “they don’t want answered.” When Scanlon asked directly whether Bondi would commit to providing Congress with any list of organizations she had recommended be designated as domestic terrorist organizations, Bondi paused and replied only, “We will comply with the law in all matters.” Pressed again, she flatly refused: “I am not going to commit to anything to you because you won’t let me answer questions.”

Scanlon summarized the implications of Bondi’s refusal. “We do understand that your current position is that you have a secret list of people or groups that you are accusing of domestic terrorism but you won’t share it with Congress,” she said, noting that when the government designates a foreign terrorist organization, it must notify Congress and the accused entity precisely because “the government can make a mistake” and the designation can be challenged. Under the framework described by Bondi, Scanlon warned, Americans or domestic organizations falsely labeled as terrorists would have no such recourse.

“So your position seems to be that if you falsely designate an American or an American organization as a terrorist group, there is nothing they can do about it,” Scanlon continued. “I think we get it, you don’t want to answer the questions.”

Bondi responded curtly, “No, you don’t get anything ... regarding public safety. Nothing.”

Scanlon closed by stating the administration is maintaining secret lists of Americans allegedly engaged in domestic terrorism, lists that could include individuals who have committed no acts of terrorism but simply oppose the administration’s policies. She warned that such lists could encompass clergy, elected officials and members of political organizations such as Indivisible, while likely excluding groups like the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, whose members have been convicted of violent crimes.

No other member of the committee followed up on Scanlon’s questions, and no demand was made for the lists to be produced.



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