

DOJ CHARGES JAMES GORDON MEEK WITH TRANSPORTING CHILD SEXUAL ASSAULT MATERIAL

Back in October, I commented on a Rolling Stone article describing the search, in April 2022, of reporter James Gordon Meek's residence in Virginia. I noted that given how he and his attorney were acting, it was likely this search wasn't an improper intrusion into his journalism.

[H]is attorney is quoted, complaining that this story is out there.

"Mr. Meek is unaware of what allegations anonymous sources are making about his possession of classified documents," his lawyer, Eugene Gorokhov, said in a statement. "If such documents exist, as claimed, this would be within the scope of his long career as an investigative journalist covering government wrongdoing. The allegations in your inquiry are troubling for a different reason: they appear to come from a source inside the government. It is highly inappropriate, and illegal, for individuals in the government to leak information about an ongoing investigation. We hope that the DOJ [Department of Justice] promptly investigates the source of this leak."

Meek's lawyer, at least, is not trying to generate the kind of media attention that would immediately raise questions

about his treatment as a journalist the way – say – Project Veritas’ lawyers did when James O’Keefe and others were searched. If he had concerns about Meek’s treatment or the propriety of the search, I highly doubt he would respond this way, by complaining that the search was made public.

[snip]

All of which suggests there’s something about this story – or perhaps follow-ups – that led Meek and Epstein to withdraw.

Today, EDVA described what that thing is: Charges against Meek for transportation of Child Sexual Abuse Material from North Carolina to Virginia in 2020.

The affidavit is available on CourtListener; it is graphic enough I want make sure you click twice before accessing it. It covers material spanning from 2014 through 2020. It describes CSAM, including CSAM involving toddlers, found on an iPhone 8 found next to Meek’s door, CSAM found on the hard drive storing his iPhone back-ups, CSAM on an Apple laptop next to the couch, and CSAM on an iPhone 6 stored next to his bed. Two minor victims were described in the affidavit.

The arrest, however, was only for transportation of the iPhone 8, along with the CSAM, from North Carolina to EDVA on February 28, 2020.

15. Travel records and evidence from the iPhone 8 indicate that from February 24, 2020, to February 28, 2020, MEEK was located in the area of Charlotte, North Carolina and/or Rock Hill, South Carolina. American Airlines records demonstrate that MEEK traveled on a flight from Charlotte, North Carolina, to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, within the Eastern District of Virginia, on February 28, 2020, at 12:57 PM.

16. Evidence from the iPhone 8 indicates that MEEK carried this phone with him during his travel from North Carolina to Virginia. For example, text messages recovered from the phone indicate it was used to send several text messages throughout the period of MEEK's travel. Among other evidence, the phone contained a message dated February 26, 2020, MEEK texted a friend that he was in South Carolina, as well as messages dated February 28, 2020, in which MEEK discussed going to the airport, as well as MEEK's messages to family members coordinating their joining him at his residence in Virginia that evening.

17. Additionally, on or about October 25, 2021, Kik provided records related to the Pawny4 account that indicated that the device used to access the Pawny4 Kik account was an iPhone. Kik also provided IP addresses used to access the account during the relevant time frame. From between February 24, 2020, and approximately 12:52 PM UTC on February 28, 2020, open-source information indicates the IP addresses geolocated to locations in North and South Carolina. The next IP address used to access the Pawny4 Kik account several hours later geolocated to Arlington, Virginia.

DOJ could have charged – still could charge – Meek far more aggressively than they did.

It took DOJ a good deal of time to charge a man they had evidence was abusing minors.

According to the affidavit, DropBox submitted a tip to NCMEC on March 11, 2021 about five videos uploaded to the service. The search warrant, covered by the Rolling Stone story, was executed on April 27, 2022. FBI obtained a search warrant for Meek's iCloud on November 14, 2022 (after the Rolling Stone story). And yet Meek was still

arrested on a complaint, not an indictment, 22 months after the original tip.

The affidavit also made sure to make it clear how little distance Meek put between his family and the CSAM (the Rolling Stone piece quoted a neighbor describing the amount of time he spent with his two young daughters). In addition to the reference to arranging details with his family, above, the affidavit describes how he allegedly went, in the span of two hours, from fantasizing with someone about raping her when she was 12 to using the same phone to talk to family.