

PAM BONDI FIRED THE AVENGER OF SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIMS ON DONALD TRUMP'S PERSONAL AUTHORITY

I've often said that, *this time*, Donald Trump has chosen poorly of which people to make political martyrs.

Less than eight hours after proclaiming that the Jeffrey Epstein scandal was just some "new SCAM" perpetrated by Democrats, about four days after he first attempted to float the wildly illogical claim that the Epstein "Files [were] written by Obama, Crooked Hillary, Comey, Brennan, and the Losers and Criminals of the Biden Administration," DOJ fired Jim Comey's daughter, Maurene.

According to the NYT, the letter terminating Ms. Comey cited Article II authority.

Ms. Comey was informed of her firing in a letter that cited Article II of the Constitution, which describes the powers of the president, according to two of the people.

In recent weeks, Pam Bondi's DOJ has pursued an accelerating purge of prosecutors, public affairs professionals, and ethics advisors protected by civil service protections, also citing Article II authority. But somehow Ms. Comey's firing took place *after* Trump started to lose his shit over his inability to squelch his own supporters' mania about the Epstein scandal.

After Donald Trump started to go nuts about Epstein, Ms. Comey was fired on Trump's own personal authority. It's certainly possible this SCOTUS would uphold his authority to do so, if sued. But he'd have to spend a lot of time

arguing about his own personal discretion in the decision to fire her.

He did this. Donald Trump did this.

And all the while, her role as a prosecutor in the Epstein, Ghislaine Maxwell, and Diddy cases would be at the forefront.

Even ignoring the insanely stupid timing of Ms. Comey's termination, creating at least the appearance of a connection between Trump's failing attempts to squelch conspiracy theories and her firing, there are two other details that Pam Bondi cannot have thought through.

First, the indictment of Epstein and the prosecution of Maxwell depended – as did the reporting from Julie Brown (which Miami Herald has now posted together) it built on – on developing the trust of the victims. Here's how Geoffrey Berman described it in his book.

Over the next weeks and months, a team of FBI agents, NYPD detectives, and our prosecutors scrambled to make that happen. This meant that they identified victims, interviewed them, and went about the sensitive task of getting them to agree to testify in open court against their tormentor. Without the voices of these young women—girls when Epstein raped them—there was not a case. That our team accomplished these tasks without word leaking to Epstein or his lawyers that he was under investigation is a testament to their intelligence and deftness.

[snip]

I made a plea to the victims: Our job is not over, there is justice to be done, and we need your help. Epstein could not have done what he did without the assistance of others. We ask for your cooperation in our ongoing investigation into Epstein's co-conspirators. The response was overwhelming. We conducted

interviews that afternoon and in the days that followed. Over time, many other victims agreed to be interviewed. After the initial shock of Epstein's death, I could feel the team refocusing and reenergizing.

One big break was the cooperation of a victim, one of Epstein's first, whom Maxwell and Epstein had recruited at a summer arts camp back when she was just fourteen years old. She is now an actress and married with children. She told us that Epstein and Maxwell approached her at the camp when she was fourteen. They took what seemed to her, at first, to be a genuine interest in her life and aspirations. Epstein paid for her voice lessons and some other arts instruction.

She had told no one about the abuse that followed, and specifically not her mother, who had naively believed that Epstein's interest was benign—that he was a kind, wealthy man helping her daughter reach her dreams. It was difficult for her to come forward. She had never wanted her mother to feel guilty. (Her name, thankfully, has not been publicly revealed. Judge Alison Nathan, who was assigned the Maxwell case, allowed the victims to remain anonymous if they so chose.)

What she told us, and would later testify to, was that Maxwell was walking her pet Yorkie when she approached her at the camp. Epstein soon joined them and began asking questions. "He seemed very interested to know what I thought about the camp, what my favorite classes were," she said.

They stayed in touch, and at one point he took her to Victoria's Secret and bought her white cotton panties. Soon after, when she was alone with Epstein

at his Palm Beach residence, he pulled his pants down, got on top of her, and masturbated. As she later testified at trial, "I was frozen and in fear. I had never seen a penis before. I was terrified and felt gross and like I felt ashamed." What followed were group sessions involving Epstein, Maxwell, and other women, which began with "Ghislaine or Jeffrey" summoning everyone to follow them to Jeffrey's bedroom or massage room. We continued to build the case and search for other victims.

The SDNY team, including Ms. Comey, spent a lot of time assuring victims that their willingness to testify might bring them some kind of justice.

I don't know how the victims will respond to the news that Ms. Comey was fired before Maxwell's appeals were exhausted (to say nothing of the Diddy sentencing, currently scheduled for October 3). But these victims put trust into Maurene Comey. Maurene Comey was one of the few people who convinced them she would take on very powerful people in search of justice for them.

And Pam Bondi fired her, on Donald Trump's personal authority.

There's one more detail. According to Berman, not long before he killed himself, Epstein proffered cooperation with SDNY, in another bid to get a sweetheart plea deal.

[Reid Weingarten] said that he had just come from meeting with Epstein at the Metropolitan Correctional Center and that his client was not happy. (Good! I remember thinking.) "I think my client might want to have an interesting conversation with your office," he said.

I had expected an overture. With Epstein facing forty-five years in prison—a life sentence for a man his age—it made sense for him to want a deal. But my openness

to one was quite limited. He'd already been given the deal of the century in South Florida, buying him more than a decade of undeserved freedom.

Prosecutors, though, never foreclose the conversation. At minimum, you may get new leads, more victims to talk to, additional perpetrators. "The Southern District is always interested in having interesting conversations,"

I said. I told my team to expect a call. A few days later, Weingarten reached out. He said that his client would come in for a proffer—an agreement between a defendant and a prosecutor's office in which the defendant agrees to share information with the understanding that his statements won't be used against him at trial.

But Epstein had one condition: he wanted assurances that the SDNY did not see him as a rapist. That was the end of that. He was a rapist, and we were not about to give him some other, more polite-sounding label.

Ms. Comey would be one of the people privy to that proffered testimony.

That doesn't mean she'll go release it, or even start naming the rapists who victimized the girls Epstein trafficked. Unlike Bondi and her top aides, Ms. Comey will presumably honor her ethical duty.

But having fired Ms. Comey, one of a few people who earned the trust of sex trafficking victims that she would go after the powerful to seek justice for them, and having claimed to do so on the President's own authority, Pam Bondi has chosen to fire precisely the person who championed justice for sex trafficking victims ... and she did so in Donald Trump's name.

Update: I should say one more thing. It's

possible Bondi ("Blondi," as Laura Loomer has dubbed her) did this in response to pressure from Loomer. As I noted here, Trump seems loathe to confront Loomer directly, and Bondi is trying hard to shrug off the pressure of Loomer.

But Loomer, for all her hubris, really is pretty dumb about politics outside of her bubble, to say nothing of the law. For example, she's calling for a Special Counsel to be appointed on Epstein, but under Trump's FL Get out of Jail Free Card, that would likely require Senate confirmation. So it would be especially rich if Bondi did something this stupid in response to pressure from Loomer.

Update: Politico reports that Ms. Comey sent a letter to colleagues warning against fear.

"If a career prosecutor can be fired without reason, fear may seep into the decisions of those who remain. Do not let that happen," she wrote. "Fear is the tool of a tyrant, wielded to suppress independent thought. Instead of fear, let this moment fuel the fire that already burns at the heart of this place. A fire of righteous indignation at abuses of power. Of commitment to seek justice for victims. Of dedication to truth above all else."

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In her parting message, Comey wrote that during her nearly 10 years at the Manhattan U.S. Attorney's office, her goal was "making sure people with access, money, and power were not treated differently than anyone else; and making sure this office remained separate from politics and focused only on the facts and the law."

"Fear," she wrote, "was never really conceivable."