Opinion

NCR Voices



Anouska De Georgiou speaks during a press conference to discuss the Epstein Files Transparency Act, directing the release of the remaining files related to the investigations into Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Sept. 3, 2025. (OSV News/Reuters/Jonathan Ernst)



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A trove of emails from Jeffrey Epstein, the late accused sex trafficker and convicted sex offender, was released by House members, both Democrats and Republicans, shining more light on the sordid story of one well-connected man's criminal behavior. The whole story gives everyone the creeps.

Except President Donald Trump. He does not get the creeps when he thinks about the Epstein saga. He has responded with more denial and more obfuscation, asking the Department of Justice to investigate any Democrats who are implicated by the emails. Of course, Attorney General Pam Bondi complied.

White House interference in the Department of Justice used to be the kind of thing that won nearly universal, bipartisan condemnation. Remember former President Richard Nixon's firing of Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, which prompted the resignations of Attorney General Elliot Richardson and Deputy Attorney General William Ruckelshaus? That turned the tide of public opinion against Nixon, and constituted a large step towards Nixon's impeachment. One wishes history would repeat itself but back in 1973, congressional Republicans still put loyalty to the Constitution ahead of loyalty to the president.

Trump is hoping that by investigating prominent Democrats and their links to Epstein, he will cause Democrats to back off. In an interview with Sam Stein, Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy said, "He wouldn't be acting this way if he wasn't so deeply worried about what sits in those files. ... Clearly, Donald Trump was at the center of a child sex ring." That is true, but every Democrat should respond to every question about the Epstein files by stating, clearly, unequivocally, that if Democrats are implicated in these files, then let the chips fall where they may. No one gets a pass.

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At Politico, Jacob Wendler highlights nine of the "most shocking" revelations contained in the newly released documents. "Surprising" would be more accurate. There is an old joke about Noah Webster's wife finding the dictionary author in bed with his mistress. "Noah, I am shocked," she said to which Noah replied, "No ma'am, you are surprised. It is we who are shocked." The fact that Larry Summers was in email contact with Epstein is surprising. The morally craven behavior of America's powerful elites is no longer shocking.

The files do not have a great deal to say about Trump, but they do undercut his claim that he knew nothing about the sex trafficking of underage girls by Epstein. In one email, Epstein states that Trump "knew about the girls." Certainly, White House press secretary Karline Leavitt was less than accurate when she insisted, "These emails prove absolutely nothing other than the fact that President Trump did nothing wrong." It is astonishing to watch Leavitt at the podium. Politicians often lie with ease, but Leavitt has taken the art of mendacity to a whole new level.

Sexually abusing and trafficking children are utterly depraved. Oftentimes, perpetrators of child sex abuse were themselves abused as children. They are often very damaged people themselves. That does not excuse the crime to be sure, but it does mitigate the moral responsibility.

What is so appalling here is that the people associated with Epstein are not damaged in any colloquial way. They are highly competent, successful, very smart people. It is impossible not to conclude that they engaged in this behavior simply because they could. They are masters of the universe. So convinced of their own importance, they saw these girls merely as means to their own gratification.

Back in May, Elon Musk said, "The fundamental weakness of Western civilization is empathy." Anyone who found their way to Epstein's "pedophile island" to exploit young girls for sex suffers from an acute lack of empathy. It is the mark of a sociopath.