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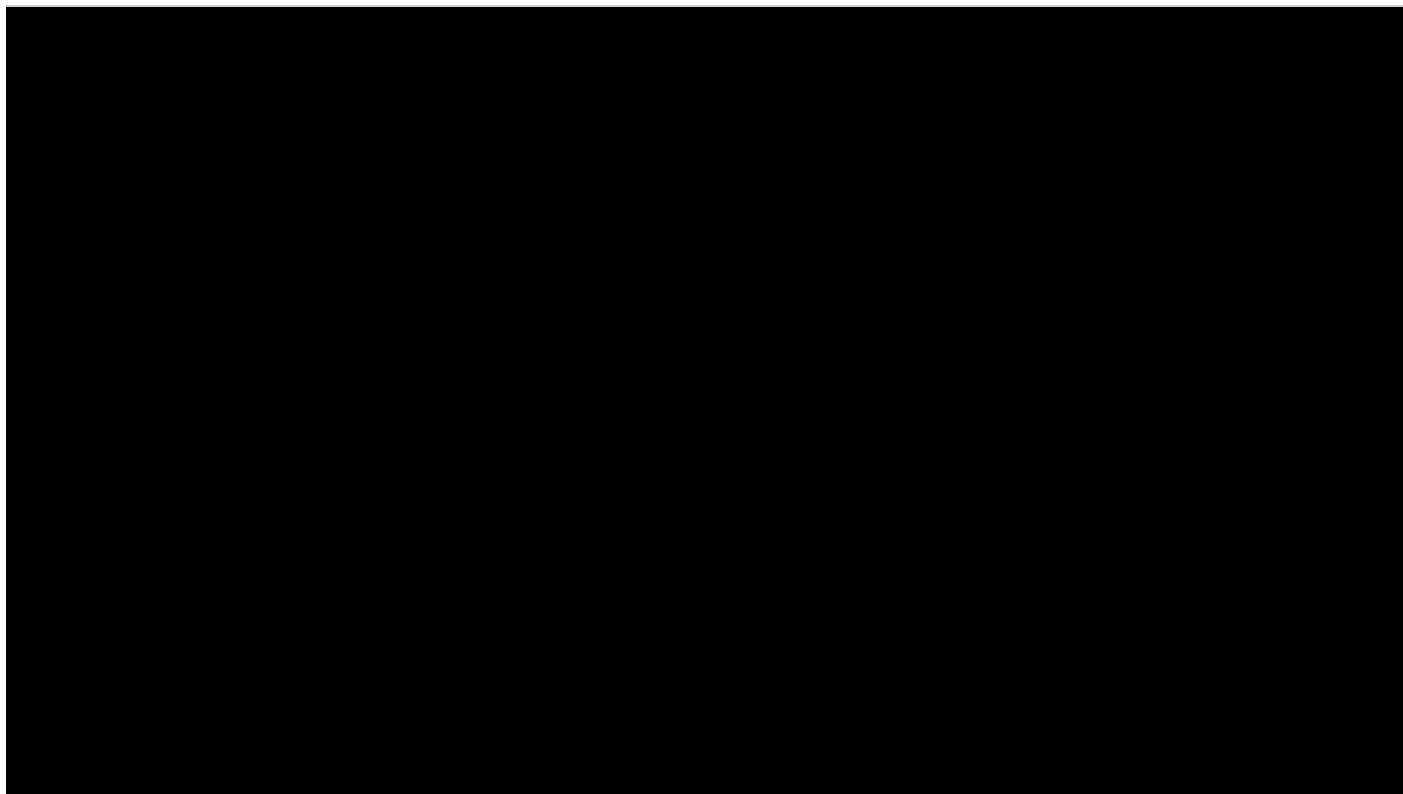
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POLITICS **EXCLUSIVE**

Howard Lutnick tells 'Pod Force One' ex-neighbor Jeffrey Epstein showed off massage room, made creepy comment during townhouse tour

By [Josh Christenson](#)

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Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, in a **notable break with the Department of Justice**, claimed late pedophile **Jeffrey Epstein was “the greatest blackmailer ever”** — and may have traded the feds video of his rich and well-connected associates getting massages from young women in exchange for a controversial 2008 plea deal.

Lutnick made the shocking allegations to The Post’s Miranda Devine on the latest episode of **“Pod Force One,”** out now.

The 64-year-old cabinet secretary said Epstein himself showed off his notorious “massage room” while giving Lutnick and his wife a **tour of the infamous East 71st Street townhouse** after the couple moved in next door to the since-disgraced financier in 2005.

“I say to him, ‘Massage table in the middle of your house? How often do you have a massage?’” Lutnick recalled. “And he says, ‘Every day.’ And then he gets, like weirdly close to me, and he says, ‘And the right kind of massage.’”



Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick claimed Jeffrey Epstein was “the greatest blackmailer ever” and may have traded to the feds video footage of powerful associates getting massages in exchange for a plea deal in 2008.

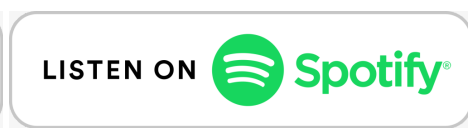
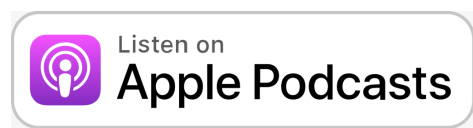
Ron Sachs – CNP for NY Post

Lutnick said he and his wife quickly excused themselves and left Epstein’s home, “and in the six to eight steps it takes to get from his house to my house, my wife and I decided that I will never be in the room with that disgusting person ever again.”

When asked by Devine whether Epstein’s rich and powerful associates — including the likes of Prince Andrew and Microsoft founder Bill Gates — “could hang around him and not see what you saw, or did they see it and ignore it,” Lutnick responded, “They participated.”

“They get a massage, that’s what his MO was. ‘Get a massage, get a massage,’ and what happened in that massage room, I assume, was on video,” the commerce secretary went on. “This guy was the greatest blackmailer ever, blackmailed people. That’s how he had money.”

Every week, Post columnist Miranda Devine sits down for exclusive and candid conversations with the most influential disruptors in Washington on ‘Pod Force One.’ [Subscribe here!](#)



A spokesperson for Gates told The Post in a statement: “This is absolutely false. Gates met with Epstein to discuss philanthropy and nothing else.”

Lutnick added: “I assume way back when they traded those videos in exchange for him getting that 18-month sentence, which allowed him to have visits and be out of jail. I mean, he’s a serial sex offender. How could he get 18 months and be able to go to his office during the day and have visitors and stuff? There must have been a trade.

“So, my assumption, I have no knowledge, but my assumption is there was a trade for the videos, because there were people on those videos,” he also claimed.

The DOJ and FBI released a memo July 6 claiming a systematic review had found that Epstein held no “client list” of rich and powerful associates.



“I assume way back when they traded those videos in exchange for him getting that 18-month sentence, which allowed him to have visits and be out of jail,” Lutnick added.

Ron Sachs – CNP for NY Post

The memo also stated there was “no credible evidence found that Epstein blackmailed prominent individuals as part of his actions” and no “evidence that could predicate an investigation against uncharged third parties” — despite Epstein having “harmed over one thousand victims.”

Epstein, 66, was found dead in his Manhattan lockup on Aug. 10, 2019, while awaiting federal trial on sex trafficking charges.

More than a decade prior, he had been forced in 2008 to register as a sex offender and plead guilty to Florida charges of soliciting prostitution and soliciting a minor for sex as part of an agreement that saw him serve no more than 13 months' confinement, most of it on work release.



Epstein quietly paid girls hundreds of dollars to give him massages in his Florida home, though none who spoke later with law enforcement said there were video recordings made of the encounters, according to the DOJ.

Brigitte Stelzer

Epstein quietly paid girls hundreds of dollars to give him massages in his Florida home, though none who spoke with law enforcement said that there were video recordings made of the encounters, according to a 2020 DOJ Office of Professional Responsibility report on the prosecution.

The South Florida US Attorney's Office, headed up then by Alex Acosta, had reached a non-prosecution agreement with Epstein due to evidentiary issues in order to force the financier to cop to state charges. Acosta has since **expressed remorse about how its terms were not followed**.

"The Palm Beach State Attorney's originally proposed resolution — no jail time or sex offender registration — was unacceptable to Mr. Acosta and his team," said attorney Jeffrey Neiman, who represented the ex-Miami prosecutor before a House panel grilling earlier this month.

"That
guy's
gross,"
Lutnick in
his
interview
said he
recalled
thinking
after
meeting
Epstein at
the
penthouse
next to his
own on
the Upper
East Side
and being
offered a
tour.

Ron Sachs
— Co.
NY

President
Trump
was also
once a
close
associate
in the
1990s
but had
broken
off
contact
with
Epstein
by 2007.

Getty
Images

"Mr. Acosta took responsibility for approving the final resolution, admitting that relying on the state system was a mistake," Neiman added, saying Epstein's sentencing and sex offender registry sent "a

message to the community that Epstein's conduct was unacceptable."

Two years ago, a photo allegedly taken by Epstein **showed himself and Gates** at the Microsoft founder's Seattle office in March 2014 — six years after he registered as a sex offender and went to prison.

Gates met Epstein for the first time face to face at dinner in the latter's Manhattan townhouse in January 2011, **according to the New York Times**.



What do you think? Be the first to comment.

President Trump enjoyed a close association with Epstein in the 1990s and early 2000s, but **revealed earlier this year he had booted Epstein from his Mar-a-Lago club** after finding out that the pervert was recruiting masseuses from the spa to work for his lecherous ends.

"People were taken out of the spa, hired by him," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on July 29. "When I heard about it, I told him, I said, 'Listen, we don't want you taking our people,' whether it was spa or not spa, I don't want him taking people. And he was fine. And then not too long after that, he did it again. And I said, 'Out of here.'"

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