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Sent: 5/30/2018 11:23:48 PM
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Subject: Memo: Sex offender Jeffrey Epstein talked to FBI to get plea deal

https://www.mypalmbeachpost.com/news/crime--law/fbi-epstein-files-say-gave-info-does-explain-sweetheart-deal/NdgitAifci1k6dJgpLV63O/?utm_source=newspaper&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=4832804&ccmp=newspaper_email&

FBI Epstein files say he gave info. Does it explain sweetheart deal?

Updated: 12:28 p.m. Wednesday, May 30, 2018 | Posted: 12:21 p.m. Wednesday, May 30, 2018



Uma Sanghvi WEST PALM BEACH —

Ten years after convicted [Palm Beach sex offender Jeffrey Epstein](#) escaped federal charges in connection with allegations that he [paid dozens of teenage girls for sex](#), the FBI last week released what appears to be an explosive explanation for what many have long described as a sweetheart deal.

“Epstein has also provided information to the FBI as agreed upon,” agents wrote in one of dozens of heavily redacted, decade-old memos that were unexpectedly and inexplicably posted on an FBI website known as “The Vault.”

The simple declaration stunned those who have been following the tortuous and celebrity-studded case for years. It rekindled talk that the billionaire’s 2008 decision to plead guilty to state charges to make the federal investigation disappear was part of a cover up to protect [Epstein’s high-powered friends, including President Donald Trump, former President Bill Clinton and Britain’s Prince Andrew](#).

“That sentence obviously means something but I, too, am at a loss as to what it really means,” said attorney Brad Edwards, who for a decade has been trying to unravel the mystery of Epstein’s plea deal. “If there was some cooperation I would have expected that we would have been told. However, nothing surprises me at this point.”

In recent years, federal prosecutors have offered various explanations for why they agreed to drop the case they were building against the 65-year-old enigmatic money manager if he pleaded guilty to state prostitution charges. In court papers, they have said they wanted to get justice for Epstein’s young victims but worried a jury wouldn’t believe them.

So, they have said, they negotiated a deal, allowing Epstein to plead guilty in Palm Beach County Circuit Court to one count of soliciting a minor for prostitution and another charge of soliciting prostitution. In exchange, federal prosecutors agreed to close their investigation. They have said they had no idea Epstein would only serve 13 months of an 18-month sentence in a vacant wing of the county stockade — a cell he was allowed to leave 16 hours a day, six days a week.

While voicing dismay at his lax punishment, prosecutors have pointed out that the plea deal required Epstein to pay the roughly 30 young women who filed civil lawsuits against him. Further, they said his guilty pleas force him to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life, potentially protecting other girls from abuse in the future.

However, over the years, they have never suggested that Epstein provided them any information in return.

Like Edwards, two people close to the long-closed federal investigation said they were flummoxed by the sentence in the FBI's memo that was written in September 2008, roughly two months after Epstein pleaded guilty in state court.

"I have never, ever heard of Jeffrey Epstein cooperating in any sense of the word," said one official, who requested anonymity because of the top role the person played in the investigation. "I am stumped. It's totally out of left field."

Another individual with ties to the case voiced similar views. Epstein may have been required to talk to FBI agents but it's unlikely he offered anything that would incriminate others, said the person, who declined to be identified because of ongoing efforts to help Epstein's victims challenge the plea deal. "I don't think he ever told the truth," the person said.

A lawsuit Edwards filed against the federal government, claiming prosecutors violated the Victims Rights Act by not notifying Epstein's victims of the pending plea deal, is still pending in U.S. District Court. Also, awaiting trial in Palm Beach County Circuit Court is a malicious prosecution lawsuit Edwards filed against Epstein. Edwards claims the billionaire filed a frivolous lawsuit to punish Edwards for representing a handful of Epstein's young victims.

West Palm Beach attorney Jack Goldberger, who was on Epstein's potent defense team, said he was "unable to respond" to questions about the FBI's memo. Other prominent lawyers who represented Epstein, including New York lawyer Jay Lefkowitz and retired Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, didn't respond to requests for comment.

The one line was part of a brief missive dated Sept. 18, 2008, closing the case: "On 9/11/08, case agent advised writer that Epstein is currently being prosecuted by the State of Florida and is complying with all conditions of his plea with the State of Florida. Epstein has also provided information to the FBI as agreed upon. Case agent advised that no federal

prosecution will occur in this matter as long as Epstein continues to uphold his agreement with the State of Florida. ... Case agent is requested to contact writer in the event this matter moves forward on a federal level.”

The memo was one of hundreds of documents, including dozens of copies of newspaper articles about Epstein, that were posted on the FBI’s website. The website, www.vault.fbi.gov, serves as the FBI’s electronic FOIA library. The heavily redacted documents showed agents traveled to New York City, Sante Fe, N.M., and St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands, where Epstein has homes. But there is little information about who they interviewed or what they learned.

The only witness named in the documents is Alfredo Rodriguez, who was a houseman at Epstein’s Palm Beach mansion in 2004. That’s when Epstein regularly paid young women to give him sexually-charged massages, police said.

Rodriguez was convicted of obstruction of justice in 2010 and sentenced to 18 months in jail for trying to sell a journal he purloined from Epstein. Prosecutors said the journal detailed Epstein’s sexual dalliances. Rodriguez, who lived in Kendall, died in 2014.

Those familiar with FBI procedures said the records are administrative files, not investigative ones. Some questioned why the files were posted on the FBI’s web site. The FBI didn’t return a phone call for comment. According to the web site, the records were released “in compliance with the National Archives and Records Administration requirements.”

And while it’s been 10 years since Epstein pleaded guilty to prostitution charges and settled dozens of lawsuits with young women, litigation continues.

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