

FBI PUBLIC AFFAIRS – DIRECTOR’S AM NEWS BRIEFING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2019 5:00 AM EDT

Barr “Appalled” By Epstein Suicide In Jail, Vows To Find Anyone “Complicit” In Crimes. All three broadcast networks opened their Monday evening newscasts with coverage of the Jeffrey Epstein suicide and of Attorney General Barr’s criticism of “serious irregularities” with Epstein’s incarceration. David Muir reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/12, lead story, 4:00, 6.42M) that Barr said he is “‘appalled’ this happened at a federal jail.” Barr: “We are now learning of serious irregularities at this facility that are deeply concerning and demand a thorough investigation.” Norah O’Donnell reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (8/12, lead story, 3:20, 4.45M) that Barr “vow[ed] to go after anyone else involved in Epstein’s alleged crimes, including sex trafficking. ... Barr said he was angry and appalled when he learned of Epstein’s apparent suicide in a federal jail...promising to get to the bottom of it.” [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/12, lead story, 2:45, Holt, 5.75M) showed a clip of Barr saying, “Let me assure you that this case will continue on against anyone who was complicit with Epstein.”

The [AP](#) (8/12, Mustian, Sisak, Balsamo) reports that Barr, addressing the Fraternal Order of Police in New Orleans, said, “I was appalled, and indeed the whole department was, and frankly angry to learn of the [Metropolitan Correctional Center’s] failure to adequately secure this prisoner. ... We are now learning of serious irregularities at this facility that are deeply concerning and demand a thorough investigation. The FBI and the office of inspector general are doing just that.” [USA Today](#) (8/12, Johnson, Bacon, 10.31M) reports “an angry [Barr] vowed Monday to press on with the federal investigation into accused sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein, despite the former financier’s apparent suicide while in federal custody.”

The [Washington Post](#) (8/12, A1, Zapotosky, Barrett, 14.2M) reports that Barr said Epstein’s death will “not derail the ongoing investigation of those who might have aided Epstein’s alleged sex abuse of minors.” [Politico](#) (8/12, Dugyala, 4.29M) reports that Barr said DOJ will “get to the bottom of what happened” and “there will be accountability.” According to Politico, Barr “did not address any conspiracy theories, but he said the case was very important to the DOJ and ‘to me personally.’ The victims, he added, should have the opportunity to confront those accused in the courtroom.”

The [Washington Post](#) (8/12, Paul, 14.2M) reports, “Epstein’s death makes it as if his indictment never happened,” but “the evidence gathered in his case and the harm he allegedly inflicted will continue to have far-reaching legal consequences – for his victims, his allies and his estate.” According to the Post, “lawyers representing Epstein’s accusers said Saturday that their clients will continue to seek justice from the people they claim enabled Epstein’s alleged abuse.” The Post adds, “Although federal prosecutors have not yet named or charged anyone, legal experts have implied they are focused on certain individuals, citing the conspiracy charge brought against Epstein,” and “while taking them to court might be an uphill battle, experts ultimately predict the government would be successful.”

The [New York Post](#) (8/12, Fredericks, 4.57M) reports Barr “had a warning for anyone involved in the supposedly wealthy financier’s alleged crimes.” The [Washington Examiner](#) (8/12, Dunleavy, 448K) headlines its report “Barr To Epstein Co-Conspirators: You ‘Should Not Rest Easy.’” A brief [Daily Caller](#) (8/12, Ross, 716K) report is similarly headlined “William Barr Has A Message For Jeffrey Epstein’s Co-Conspirators.” [Reuters](#) (8/12, Allen, Lavietes), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/12, Gurman, Subscription Publication, 7.57M), the [Washington Times](#) (8/12, Dinan, 492K), and [The Hill](#) (8/12, Chalfant, 2.98M) also cover Barr’s remarks.

The [AP](#) (8/12, Mustian, Sisak) reports that in the wake of Epstein’s suicide, “federal prosecutors in New York have shifted their focus to possible charges against anyone who assisted or enabled him in what authorities say was his rampant sexual abuse of underage girls.” Authorities “are most likely turning their attention to the team of recruiters and employees who, according to police reports, knew about Epstein’s penchant for underage girls and lined up victims for him.” The Associated Press “reviewed hundreds of pages of police reports, FBI records and court documents that show Epstein relied on an entire staff of associates to arrange massages that led to sex acts.”

Glenn Kessler of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), “Barr: I’m shocked, shocked I am running a completely incompetent operation.” Post conservative blogger Jennifer Rubin [tweeted](#), “Every story and headline about Barr claiming irregularities at Bureau of Prisons facility should include ‘that reports to him.’” National security journalist Marcy Wheeler [tweeted](#), “In April Barr testified that understaffing was very much regular. At least some of the ‘serious irregularities’ we know about stem from that.”

The [Washington Post](#) (8/12, 14.2M) editorializes that the “apparent suicide...represents an unforgivable failure by the federal prison system. ... Yet suicide in correctional facilities, especially among those recently confined, is not as irregular as it should be. Before Mr. Epstein, there was Aaron Hernandez and Sandra Bland – and those are just the names people remember. ... It is crucial to house people in the right places from the start.” Law enforcement officers “complain that preventing suicide has

become harder as jails and prisons house more people with mental-health problems; detainees should be diverted into treatment early instead of warehoused in jail."

House Judiciary Committee Opens Bipartisan Investigation. [Axios](#) (8/12, Basu, 521K) reports the House Judiciary Committee has "launched a bipartisan investigation" into Epstein's death. In a letter to Bureau of Prisons Acting Director Hugh Hurwitz, House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler and ranking member Doug Collins (R-GA) "demanded answers to 23 questions – most of which concern the conditions of the facility Epstein was kept in and the circumstances of his death."

Schumer Has "A Lot Of Faith" In FBI Leadership In Probe Of Epstein's Death. [Spectrum News Capital Region \(NY\)](#) (8/12, 44K) reports, "Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer on Monday said he has 'a lot of faith' in the leadership of the FBI to investigate the death of Jeffrey Epstein, the wealthy financier accused of running a child sex trafficking ring who is alleged to have died by suicide in a federal jail over the weekend. 'I have a lot of faith in Christopher Wray, who is the director of the FBI,' Schumer said during an unrelated press conference in the Albany suburb of East Greenbush. 'They are doing a thorough investigation. All I would say is they should turn over every stone and get to the bottom of everything without any interference. Wray assures us that will happen.'"

"Several High-Ranking Prison Officials" Would Have Had To Approve End Of Suicide Watch. The [New York Times](#) (8/12, Watkins, Benner, 18.61M) reports that "according to Bureau of Prisons policy, several high-ranking prison officials would have had to have approved Mr. Epstein's removal from the facility's suicide prevention program, including the prison's chief psychologist." The Times says Barr "has asked the F.B.I. and the Justice Department's Inspector General to launch inquiries into what was happening at the prison in the days and hours leading up to Mr. Epstein's death," and "to investigate why Mr. Epstein was taken off suicide watch six days after" another "apparent attempt."

Epstein's Death Leaves Questions For Prosecutors On Path Ahead. [USA Today](#) (8/12, Phillips, 10.31M) reports that Epstein's death "left loose ends about who prosecutors can – or will – go after now that the alleged mastermind, in a case that has raised serious questions about the prosecution of the wealthy, is dead. An attorney for some of Epstein's accusers says the obvious target for prosecution is his ex-girlfriend, Ghislaine Maxwell, a British socialite described in a civil case as a co-conspirator accused of recruiting girls to perform sex acts on Epstein." [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/12, story 2, 1:30, Holt, 5.48M) reported on some of the claims by Epstein accuser Virginia Roberts Giuffre that were revealed in court documents "hours before his death."

FBI Agents Searching Epstein's Private Island. [Reuters](#) (8/12) reports that on Monday, ABC News "observed federal agents, including FBI and Customs and Border Protection, at the dock and on the grounds of Little Saint James," Epstein's "island home in the U.S. Virgin Islands." The [Miami Herald](#) (8/12, Chang, 1.09M) reports authorities "fanned out in golf carts across Epstein's estate" and "scooped up evidence just two days after Epstein was found dead in his jail cell."

[The Hill](#) (8/12, Budryk, 2.98M) reports, "Epstein's accusers have claimed the financier and his confederates used the island in the U.S. Virgin Islands as a discreet location to sexually assault underage girls," and "residents of the nearby island of St. Thomas had reportedly noticed heavy construction and high security in recent months."

The [Daily Caller](#) (8/12, Talcott, 716K) reports, "The private island is called Little St. James, but many have referred to it as 'Pedophile Island,'" and "residents on St. Thomas, another island, were concerned about the suspicion and security at Epstein's private home, CNBC reported."

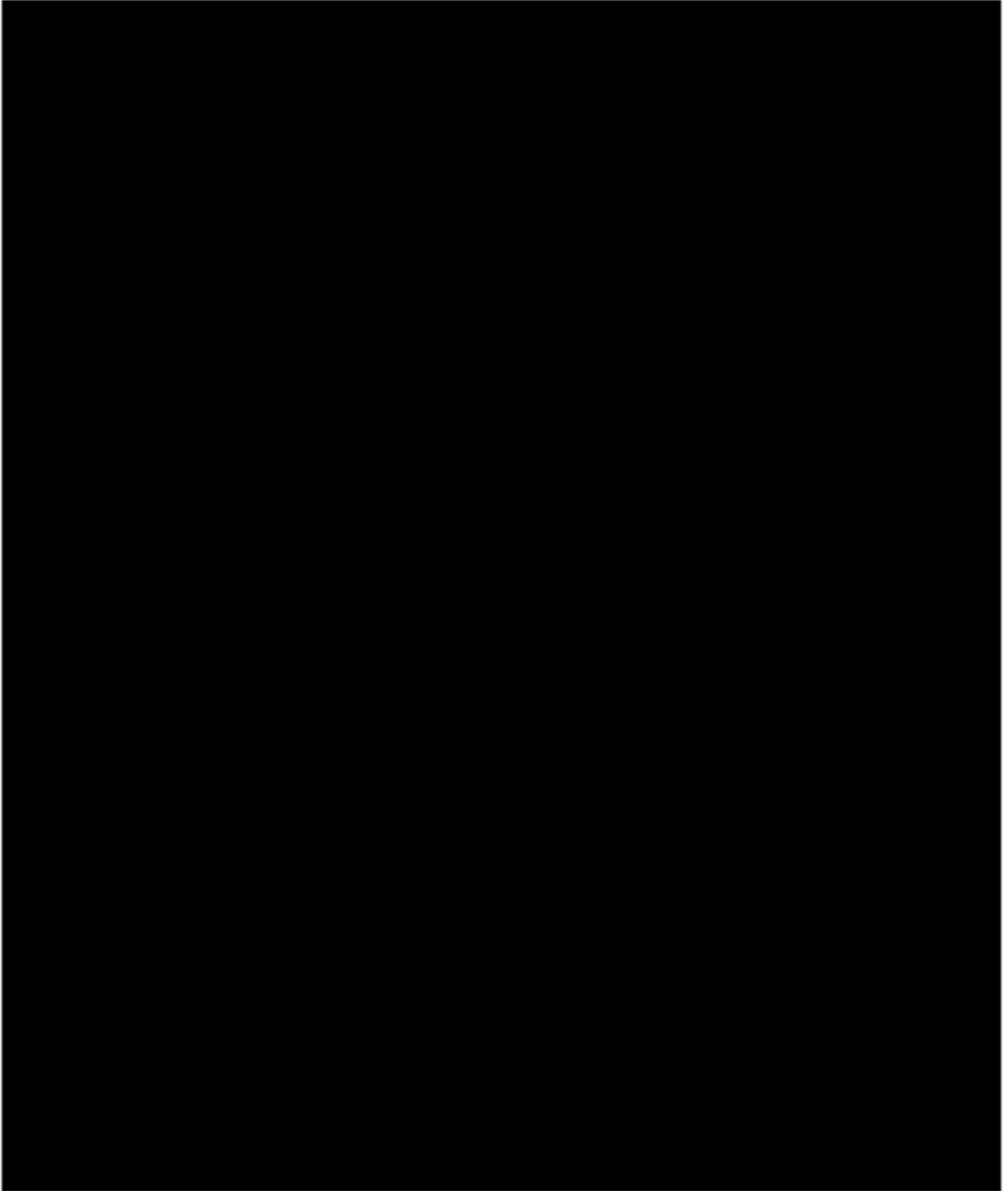
NBC: Trump's Promotion Of Epstein Conspiracy Theory Part Of A Long Pattern. Lester Holt reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/12, story 3, 1:45, 5.48M) reported, "In the wake of Epstein's death, it didn't take long for people to spread wild conspiracy theories on social media. Among them: President Trump, who has a long history of fueling unfounded conspiracy claims." NBC's Andrea Mitchell: "Within hours of Jeffrey Epstein's apparent suicide, President Trump was [retweeting](#) a conspiracy theory linking Bill Clinton to his death. It was immediately picked up by Russian state media, going viral. ... For the President, seizing on a conspiracy theory is part of a pattern. He launched his political career with the false birther claim against President Obama...[and] in 2016, there was a bizarre claim that Ted Cruz's father had been involved in the Kennedy assassination. ... After the election, the false charge that millions in California had voted illegally for Hillary Clinton."

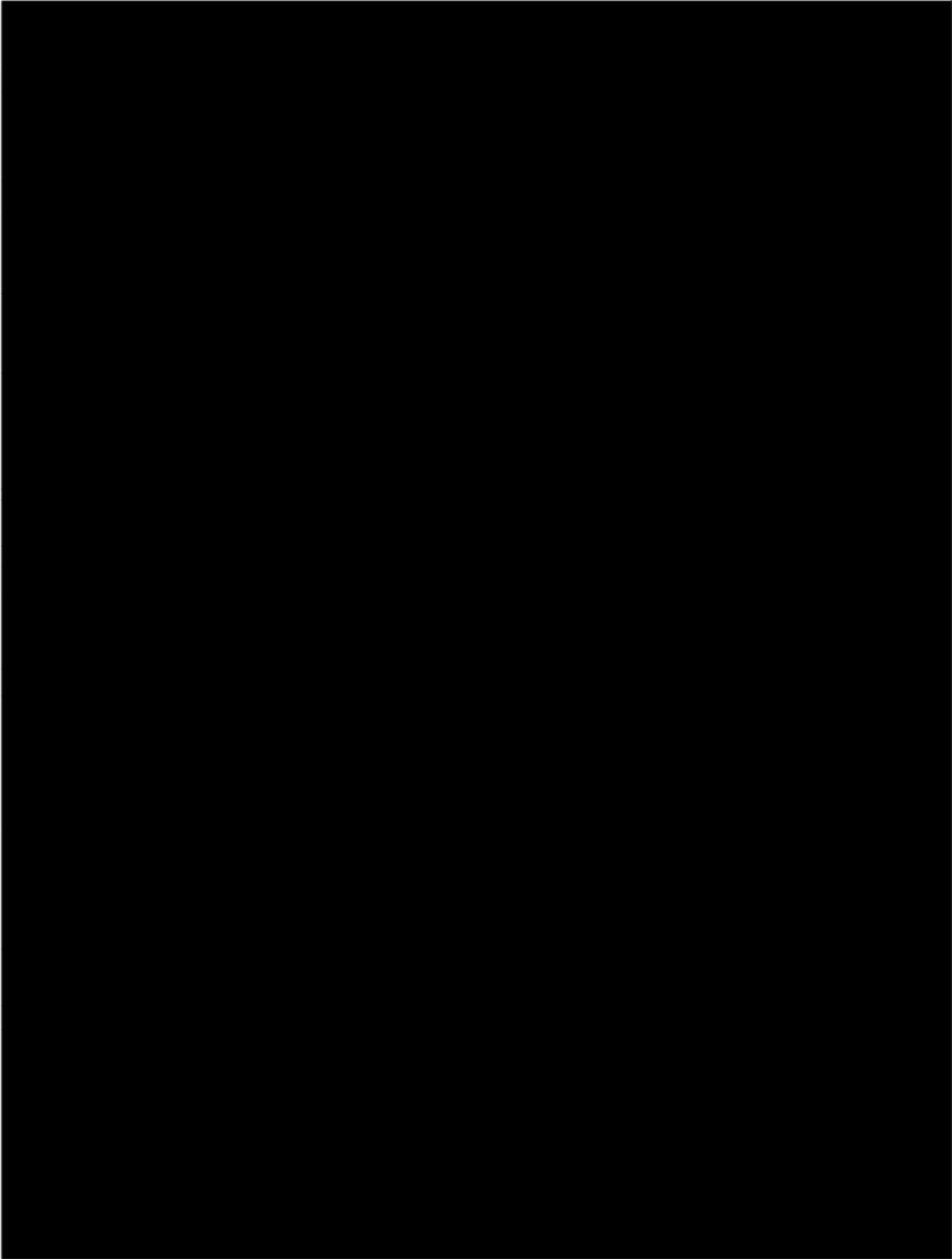
The [New York Times](#) (8/12, Haberman, Karni, 18.61M) reports Trump "has long used his fame and platform to amplify conspiracy theories and undermine his political enemies by muddying the waters when it comes to facts. ... But a macabre subgenre of Mr. Trump's fondness for conspiracy theories has been to accuse, directly or indirectly, his political enemies of murder," in the case of Cruz's father, the death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, and now the death of Epstein.

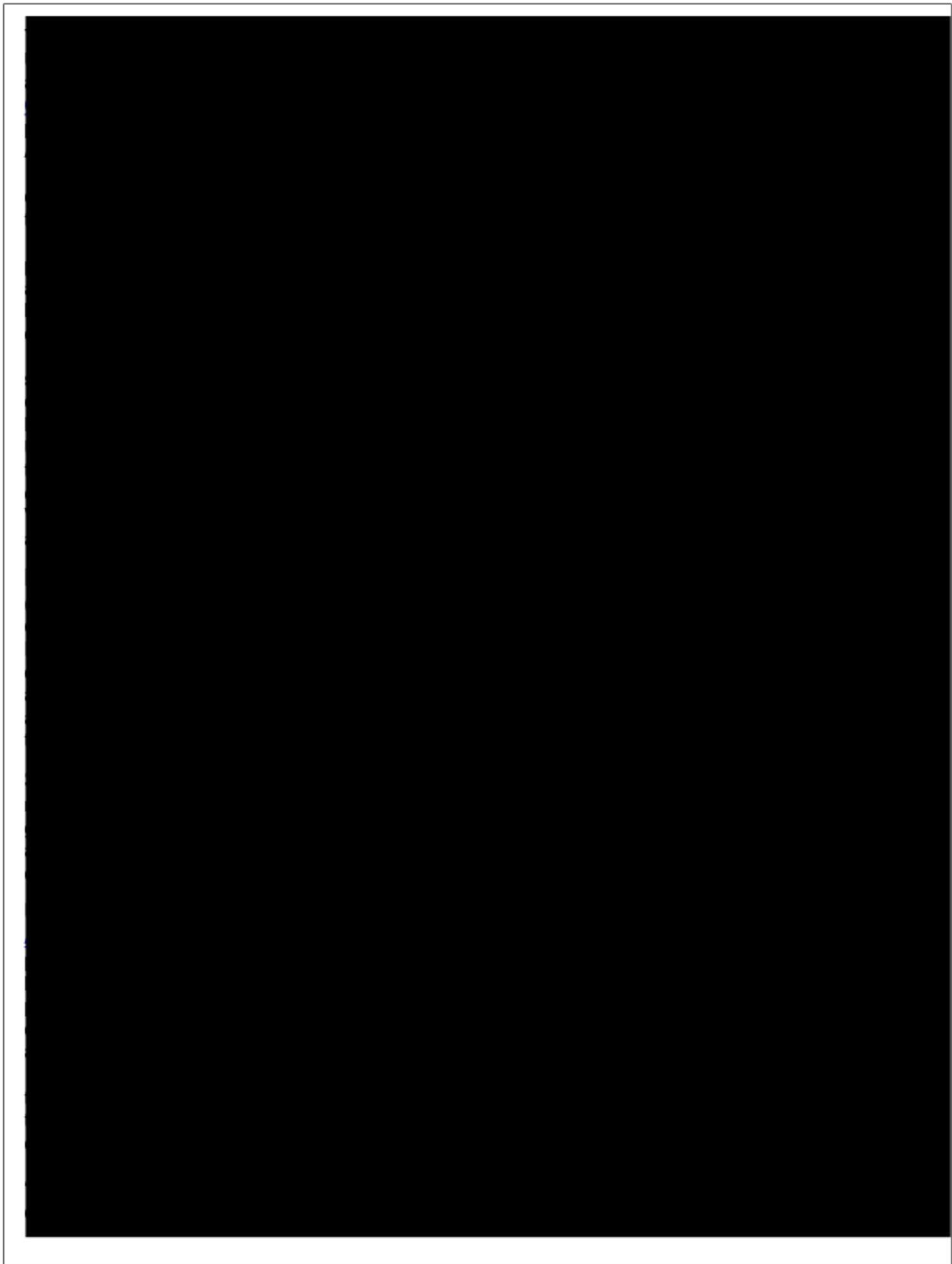
[Business Insider](#) (8/12, Sheth, 3.67M) reports, "FBI personnel are furious that President Donald Trump retweeted to his 63 million Twitter followers a baseless conspiracy theory suggesting that former President Bill Clinton was involved in the death of the disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein." BI adds, "There is no evidence that the conspiracy theory Trump retweeted has any merit," and "FBI agents who spoke with INSIDER said the president's actions aren't just irresponsible but also dangerous. 'The Epstein case was hypercharged from the get-go,' one current FBI agent, who requested anonymity to freely

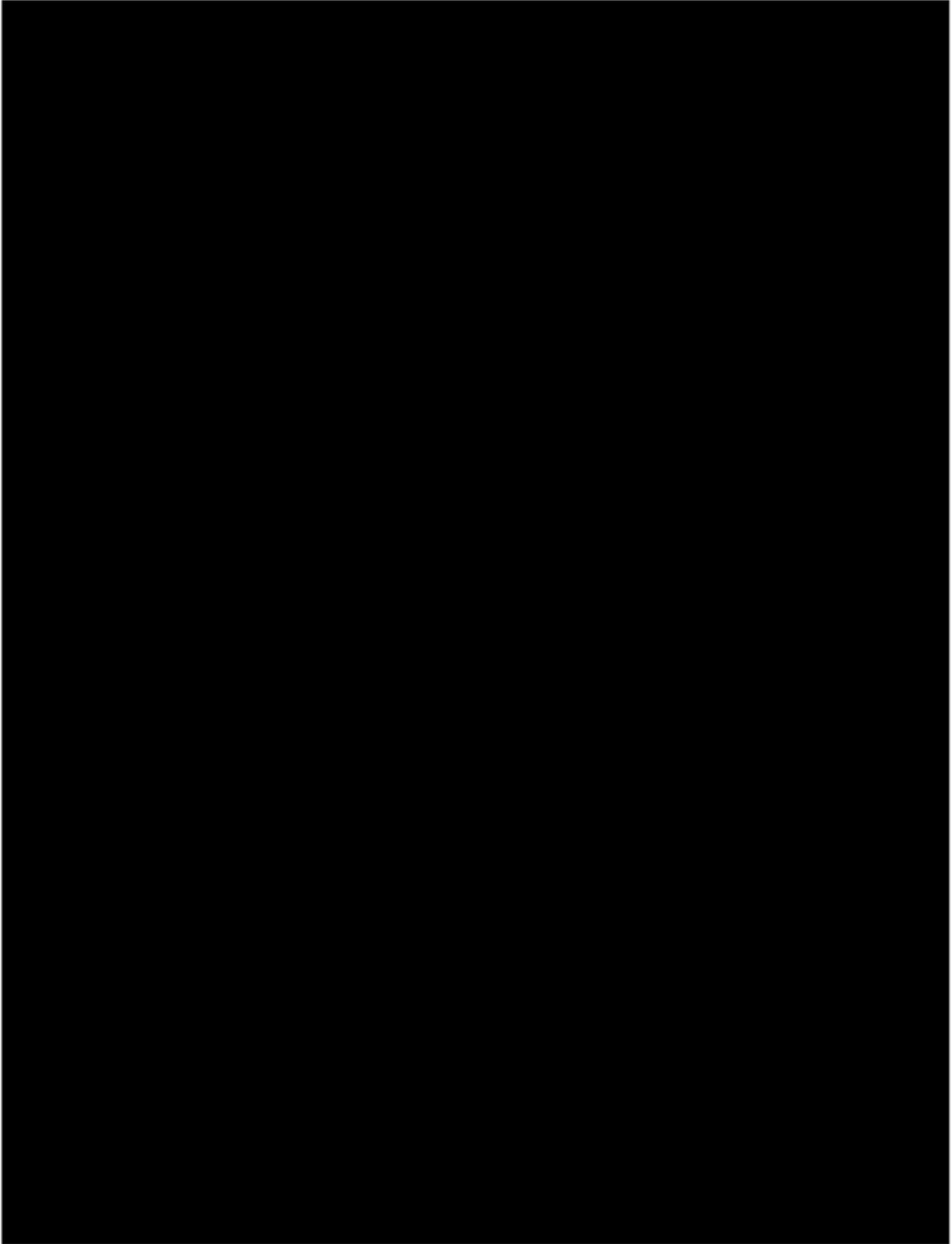
discuss Trump's actions, told INSIDER. 'The last thing investigators need is the president of the United States fanning the flames with these bulls--- theories that have no basis in reality.'

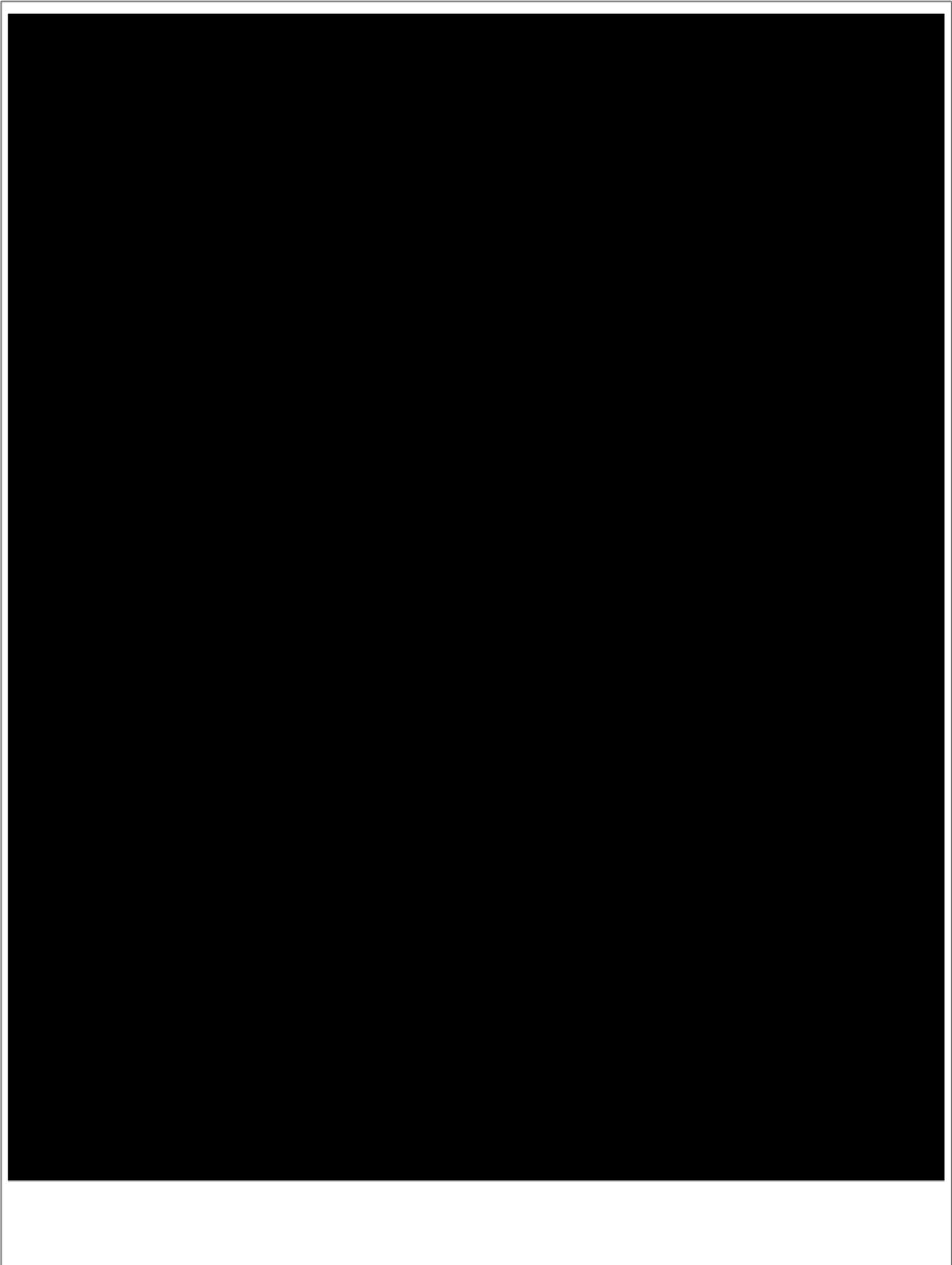
Max Boot of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), "None of Trump's conspiracy theories make the slightest bit of sense. If the Clintons are powerful enough to slay Epstein in a federal prison run by Trump's DOJ, why weren't they powerful enough to change 80,000 votes and defeat Trump in 2016?"











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