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Epstein Tried Contacting Lavrov to Discuss Trump, Emails Reveal

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An art installation in Washington, D.C. depicting U.S. President Donald Trump and Jeffrey Epstein. **Jose Luis Magana / AP / TASS**

The late American financier and convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein attempted to pass a message to Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov about U.S. President Donald Trump weeks before he first met with Russia's Vladimir Putin in Helsinki in 2018, Politico reported on Wednesday, citing newly released emails.

The messages were among hundreds released by congressional investigators this week, shedding light on Epstein's extensive network of foreign contacts. The emails, obtained after a Democratic subpoena of Epstein's estate, span years and cover interactions with Russian officials and others close to Trump.

In a June 24, 2018, email to former Norwegian prime minister and then-Council of Europe leader Thorbjørn Jagland, Epstein proposed meeting Lavrov.

"I think you might suggest to putin that lavrov can get insight on [Trump] talking to me," the

email, which came nearly a month before Trump met Putin in Helsinki, read.

Jagland wrote that he would meet Lavrov's assistant the following day and could propose a connection with Epstein. It is unclear if any contact between the two was ever made.

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Epstein also referenced his prior discussions with the late Russian Ambassador to the United Nations, Vitaly Churkin, who died in 2017, that helped him gain insight into Trump.

"Churkin was great," Epstein reportedly wrote. "He understood trump after our conversations. it is not complex. he must be seen to get something its that simple."

A day after the July 2018 Helsinki summit, Epstein criticized Trump's approach to dealing with Putin in an email to former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers. Epstein appeared to refer to Trump publicly praising Putin while accepting the Russian president's denial that Moscow meddled in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Epstein was arrested in July 2019 on federal sex trafficking charges and died by suicide in a Manhattan jail cell the following month while awaiting trial.

Russia's Embassy in Washington and Jagland did not immediately respond to requests for comment. It is unclear whether Lavrov was approached for comment.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Wednesday that the broad set of emails "proves absolutely nothing other than President Trump did nothing wrong." Trump, posting on Truth Social, accused the Democrats of "trying to bring up the Jeffrey Epstein Hoax again" to deflect from the party's handling of the recent U.S. government shutdown.

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