

## Justice is a Just One More Bargainable Commodity in the US

### News:

The US Labor Secretary, Alex Acosta, stood beside President Trump on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July and announced his resignation in front of the US media who were publicizing Acosta's agreement to let a rich pedophile escape justice in 2008 while he was US Attorney in Miami. Trump praised him highly for his current work within his administration, and Acosta declared, "It would be selfish to stay in this position and to continue talking about a case that's twelve years old rather than about the amazing economy we have right now."

### Comment:

Acosta was not as principled when he agreed a plea bargain with billionaire Jeffrey Epstein's lawyers to not pursue a federal prosecution against him for trafficking and sexually exploiting dozens of girls at his mansions or on his private jet, which was called the 'Lolita Express.' Epstein has been described as a 'sexual predator' who employed a sophisticated network of people to seek out vulnerable girls to be lured into his clutches for sexual abuse. He used his three-engine 727, the Lolita Express, to move girls between his Manhattan and Palm Beach residences for sordid and illegal purposes, but his victims suffered a double insult when their case against him was dropped by Alex Acosta. Last February, a federal judge called Acosta's actions illegal, and it was only a matter of time before he would have to leave his current position as labor secretary.

Acosta had agreed to not charge Epstein with child-rape if he agreed to be put on a sex-offenders' register and pay some restitution to his victims in addition to serving 13 months in jail. However, the victims were not informed that a secret deal had been made and that Epstein was actually allowed to spend 12 hours each day at his nearby office and be driven to a comfortable county jail to spend the night six days of the week. The failure to inform the victims of the deal is what a Florida federal judge called illegal. Acosta's defense for such a sweet deal for such serious crimes was to blame the Palm Beach state attorney's office of being ready to "let Epstein walk free, no jail time, nothing." Acosta claimed that he got the best deal he could, and that Epstein had a very powerful legal team supporting him, which is a miserable admission of defeat.

Whatever the state prosecutor wanted to do with the case, the US attorney's office could have filed its own federal charges, and indeed, his own prosecutors had a strong 53-page indictment with 36 victims all telling the same story. Journalists have discovered that there were more than 100 such girls who have been Epstein's victims and the list is growing. Finally, last week New York federal prosecutors did charge Epstein, who now faces the possibility of life imprisonment. Federal prosecutors revealed that Epstein paid \$350,000 last year to two potential witnesses against him, and his links to a former US president, and to the current president, along with many other famous and influential personalities leaves open the question of what leverage did Epstein use to get Acosta to abandon the case against him in 2008?

Whatever will be revealed in the coming days and weeks, this case is an indictment against a system that fills its prisons with black and Hispanic inmates while the rich and privileged can bargain their way out of trouble for so long in spite of the most serious of offences.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by**

**Dr. Abdullah Robin**