



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on February 9, 2026

Maxwell Pleads the Fifth; Europe's Elite Crumble Under Epstein Files

As expected, Jeffrey Epstein's sidekick Ghislaine Maxwell refused to answer questions during her closed-door interview with the House Oversight Committee on Monday. Meanwhile, fallout and backlash triggered by the January 30 Epstein file dump continue reverberating across the globe and toppling a number of high-profile international figures.

Ghislaine Maxwell

Maxwell, who "enticed and groomed minor girls to be abused in multiple ways," as the Justice Department put it when she was sentenced, pleaded the fifth during her deposition with lawmakers. During the short hearing, her lawyer told lawmakers that she didn't know of any wrongdoing by Presidents Donald Trump or Bill Clinton.



AP Images
Peter Mandelson

Maxwell is serving a 20-year sentence in a minimum-security prison camp in Texas. She was moved from a federal detention center in Florida back in August. The transfer outraged the family of Epstein accuser Virginia Giuffre. They said it was "preferential treatment" that proved the justice system was "failing victims right before our eyes." Maxwell's transfer to the cushy facility, unusual for someone serving such a heavy sentence, happened a week after she spoke with DOJ Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche. The Epstein accomplice is trying to get Trump to pardon her. The president has indicated he isn't completely repulsed by the idea.

The Clintons

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee is conducting an investigation to "determine how the government failed the victims and who all was involved," Committee Chairman James Comer (R-Ky.) [said](#) Friday. In addition to attempts at talking with Maxwell, the committee is also harassing Bill and Hillary Clinton, whose many rendezvous with Epstein are well documented. Epstein made numerous visits to the Clinton White House in the 1990s, and Bill has flown with Epstein many times. The couple has also stayed at Epstein's ranch in New Mexico, per reports.

The committee has been trying to set up deposition interviews with the former first couple since July. Recently, it looked like it had made some headway when the Clintons finally agreed to sit down for interviews later this month. This happened after the committee got enough votes, those of Democrats included, to charge them with contempt if they didn't show.

But the Clintons' agreement appears to be predicated on [several conditions](#), which Comer has interpreted as ways to obfuscate questioning. Moreover, the Clintons are now asking that the



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depositions be live and public. Comer, so far, has refused. He recently [told](#) Newsmax that what the Clintons really want is a hearing, which tends to be heavy on entertainment and light on substance, and that they're trying to forge a narrative that paints them as the victims.

Comer wants to keep the Clintons' deposition closed-door. But that doesn't mean the public won't know what was said, he clarified. The deposition will be recorded and a transcript will be produced. After the interview is complete and the lawyers approve, the transcript will be made public.

No Client List?

The Oversight Committee's mission implies that lawmakers don't believe the FBI. In July, the top police agency in the country released a [memo](#) claiming that, based on an exhaustive review, there is "no incriminating 'client list,'" no evidence that Epstein blackmailed powerful figures, and no sign of anything to warrant "an investigation against uncharged third parties." The memo triggered a torrent of outrage and alienated a segment of then-Trump supporters. That outrage only created more pressure for transparency, which resulted in multiple additional releases that have totaled well over three million documents since.

More recently, mainstream media have been amplifying an Associated Press [report](#) published Sunday saying the "FBI concluded Jeffrey Epstein wasn't running a sex trafficking ring for powerful men, files show." Somebody should tell the lawmakers who co-sponsored the Epstein Transparency Act and the police departments investigating elites in Europe for their alleged involvement with Epstein.

Not long after the January tranche dump, Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) noticed the missing elephant in the files. "They're still withholding names of the men that Epstein trafficked women to," he said on social media. Moreover, he added, three million other files that should've been released weren't.

The new files are also bringing down powerful men in European society.

England

In England, police are investigating former British Ambassador to the United States Peter Mandelson. The latest files suggest that "Mandelson shared sensitive government information with Epstein after the 2008 global financial crisis," [per](#) reports. "They also include records of payments totaling \$75,000 in 2003 and 2004 from Epstein to accounts linked to Mandelson or his husband, Reinaldo Avila da Silva."

Prime Minister Keir Starmer fired Mandelson back in September in response to his Epstein ties revealed in earlier file releases. And on Sunday, Starmer's chief of staff Morgan McSweeney resigned because he had advised his boss to appoint Mandelson, he said.

Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor, who was Prince Andrew until compelling accusations that he had sex with an underage girl trafficked to him by Epstein de-princing him, has found himself in deeper water thanks to the latest batch. Local police announced a new potential investigation after files "showed the former prince shared substantial information with the child sex offender when he was a UK trade representative and a working royal," the *Financial Times* [reported](#) on Monday. That same police department is also looking into claims by a young woman who is alleging she was trafficked to the UK by Epstein for sex with the former prince in 2010.

Other Europeans

Also in big trouble is a former Norwegian prime minister, Thorbjørn Jagland. Norway's economic crime



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unit, Økokrim, launched an investigation into him last week for “aggravated corruption.” The probe was triggered by Jagland’s mention in the latest batch of files. “The files include communications between Mr Jagland and the late convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein over several years, including emails suggesting Mr Jagland stayed at Epstein’s home during a period when he held some of Europe’s most influential diplomatic posts,” [per](#) the U.K.’s Independent.

Then there’s Joanna Rubinstein, who resigned as president of the Swedish United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) after the latest files revealed she visited Epstein’s island in 2012.

Further east in Europe, the “national security adviser to Slovakia’s prime minister has resigned after documents released by the US showed he exchanged messages about girls and diplomacy with Epstein,” the BBC [reported](#). The files suggest Miroslav Lajčák was very much open to partaking in deviant activities. Per the BBC:

In a [text exchange](#) from October 2018 – when Lajčák was serving as Slovakia’s foreign minister – Lajčák and Epstein could be seen lightheartedly discussing women and a forthcoming meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

After Epstein sent an image, which cannot be seen in the record, Lajčák replies: “Why don’t you invite me for these games? I would take the ‘MI’ girl.”

“Who wouldn’t,” Epstein texts back. “You can have them both, I am not possessive. And their sisters.”

Back in the U.S.

Stateside, the fallout has been more muted. While some high-profile figures have been embarrassed, no former or current officials have resigned. But Massie has called for a high-ranking member of Trump’s Cabinet to step down after the latest tranche suggested there was more to his relationship with Epstein. Based on the files, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick visited Epstein’s island in 2012, four years after the pedophile received his light sentence of 13 months in jail for acquiring a minor for prostitution. Lutnick [emailed](#) Epstein saying he and his wife and children, as well as some friends and their kids, were traveling to the Caribbean on Lutnick’s boat.

“He should just resign,” Massie said on CNN’s “Inside Politics Sunday.” “Howard Lutnick clearly went to the island if we believe what’s in these files; he was in business with Jeffrey Epstein, and this was many years after Jeffrey Epstein was convicted.”



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