

The Telegraph

Exclusive: Ghislaine Maxwell's brother says 'self-destructive' Prince Andrew will not be a witness

Ian Maxwell says that Duke of York is 'hostage to fortune' and that his sister has become a hate figure as she awaits sex trafficking trial

By [Robert Mendick](#), CHIEF REPORTER

2 April 2021 • 9:00pm

Ian Maxwell is adamant his sister, Ghislaine Maxwell, will [not be calling the Duke of York](#) as a witness for the defence when she stands trial this summer. Following [Prince Andrew's last public interrogation](#) – on BBC television by the journalist Emily Maitlis – he considers it wouldn't be a good idea for the Queen's son to spring to Ms Maxwell's defence. "It was the most remarkable piece of self destruction," says Mr Maxwell. "I think he would be – as he proved in that interview – I think he's a pretty serious hostage to fortune. I don't think that's going to happen."

Mr Maxwell, 64, is giving a wide-ranging interview in defence of Ms Maxwell. He believes his younger sister (now aged 59) has become a hate figure, in part because she is a woman accused of sex crimes. He says she is being treated far worse ahead of her trial than famous (now infamous) men,

such as Harvey Weinstein and Bill Cosby, who were both subsequently convicted of sex offences.

He has written a letter to Joe Biden's Attorney General, pleading for the US to give Ms Maxwell a fair trial. In the letter, he draws a comparison between his sister's plight and that of [Field Marshal Lord Bramall](#), the former head of the Army and D-Day veteran, who was falsely accused of being a paedophile by a fantasist subsequently jailed for 18 years.

Ms Maxwell, he believes, risks becoming a victim of a terrible miscarriage of justice, a "patsy" in his words for the sex crimes committed by her one-time boyfriend, the billionaire financier, who [hanged himself in the summer of 2019](#) while awaiting trial for child sex abuse.



From left to right: Elizabeth Maxwell, Ghislaine Maxwell, Robert Maxwell and Ian Maxwell, Jan 1 1990 CREDIT: Bridgeman Images

“It is completely Kafka-esque,” said Mr Maxwell of his younger sister’s predicament. She is languishing in a Brooklyn jail on charges relating to allegations that took place – in some cases – 27 years ago and made by four women, now presumably middle-aged, whose identities the courts will not reveal. This, says Mr Maxwell, is the American justice system. And he holds it in pretty low regard. Ms Maxwell is in a tiny cell, [watched over 24 hours a day](#), woken up and checked on every 15 minutes to ensure she hasn’t killed herself, as her former boyfriend did. Mr Maxwell likens the “truly horrific” conditions of her captivity to “torture” and questions how she can mount a defence in such “circumstances”. There are two million pages of discovery documents for her to plough through.

“My sister has been banged up for 280 days. It really is grotesque,” he says. It’s a word he uses a lot in relation to his sister’s current situation. So too “Kafka-esque”. When – or if – she is acquitted, he says, she plans to campaign for the other half a million people who spend month after month on pre-trial detention in the US.

In the latest twist in the Maxwell saga, the British socialite was informed this week she faces [two further charges of sex trafficking](#) of a minor after a new woman came forward claiming she procured her for Epstein. In total, she faces eight charges over allegations made by four women over a 10-year period. Mr Maxwell insists there isn’t a shred of corroborative evidence to back up historic allegations and that the new charges, perversely, suggest the US prosecutor’s case is a weak and desperate one. He points to testimony given by a police officer in a civil case against Ms Maxwell who under oath said her name had never come up in a previous criminal

investigation into Epstein dating back to a conviction 2008. “It’s not in her nature to do any of these things,” says Mr Maxwell.

Ms Maxwell, says her brother, is now in a quandary. If she delays her trial – due to start in July – in order to prepare her defence against the new allegations, then she will spend more time in jail. A fourth attempt to secure her bail is being prepared.

In his letter to Merrick Garland, the new US Attorney general, Mr Maxwell writes: “I live in Britain and am completely confounded by the American legal system.” He complains of the repeated decisions to block bail but adds: “What is most puzzling is the court’s refusal to identify the now four anonymous complainants who only stepped forward after Epstein’s death, 25 years after the offences were alleged to have been committed. As you may be aware, Ghislaine is adamant that she has committed no crime. Given the anonymity of the accusers she is unable to prepare her defence, simply because she doesn't know who they are and of what she is accused.”

He then draws parallels with Operation Midland, the police investigation in the UK in which a man named as “Nick” and [later revealed to be Carl Beech](#), accused a series of VIPs of being involved in a murderous paedophile gang.

“One of them was the former Head of the Armed Forces, Field Marshall Lord Bramall and in particularly tragic circumstances his wife, who had been made aware of the allegations, sadly died before he was cleared,” writes Mr Maxwell. “Lord Bramall himself died a couple of years later. After

all of this suffering it was determined that the accuser had fabricated the entire story and he was subsequently tried and sentenced to 18 years imprisonment for his lies.”

Mr Maxwell had known and befriended Bramall – they worked together at a military publishing company owned by the Maxwells – and is adamant his sister too is being falsely accused.

“This D-Day vet must have been churning inside with anger,” says Mr Maxwell in an interview conducted over zoom from his London home. “The reason that I raised it [[Operation Midland](#)] is simply that here we have a situation where we have now four anonymous accusers. Their allegations have never been put to the test, no-cross examination, no evidence furnished, no names provided. It's completely Kafka-esque. You don't know who's accusing you; you don't know what you're accused of specifically; you don't know when it's alleged to have happened other than it did happen.”

He criticises prosecutors and the FBI for staging what he calls a “dog and pony” show to announce she had been captured, in the hours after Ms [Maxwell's arrest last July at a remote home](#) she had bought in New Hampshire. What followed was, he says, “an outrageous perp walk of a press conference, designed to be prejudicial and it's been highly successful. If you look at the headlines Ghislaine is a ‘monster’ or a ‘madame’ or whatever else she has been described as and it's grotesque and really offensive.”

Mr Maxwell doesn't buy conspiracy theories that his sister is somehow being put in a squeeze to give up bigger names. Epstein, aged 66 when he was found dead in his New York jail cell, was friends with not just Prince Andrew but also Bill Clinton and Donald Trump. All of them deny vehemently any suggestion of wrongdoing or knowledge of Epstein's behaviour. An infamous [black book of his influential contacts](#) has been widely circulated on the internet.

"The reality is that as far as my sister is concerned this is completely peripheral," says Mr Maxwell although he wonders if their associations have created more publicity and fanfare.

He doesn't recognise the sister he knows, her depiction as a sexual predator and procurer of girls and young women. "We grew up together in England seeing a lot of each other and she has the right values. You couldn't be a child of Bob Maxwell and be some kind of floating socialite, doing nothing. It just was not possible to be in our family and be like that."

Their father, the [publishing tycoon Robert Maxwell](#), fell overboard and died off his yacht the Lady Ghislaine in November 1991, leaving behind a business empire in tatters and which fell apart soon after. People have tried to draw a connection between father and daughter, suggesting they both had "bad genes" but that is unfair, says Mr Maxwell.

Mr Maxwell says his sister's subsequent work promoting environmental concerns over the oceans has been utterly "disparaged" in the wake of her association with Epstein.

Her next project will be to help 500,000 pretrial detainees should she ever be set free. “She wants to use her name; she wants to use her case; she wants to use her resources, her intelligence, her network to get a powerful light shone on this absolutely unacceptable side of American, so-called justice. It’s wrong,” says Mr Maxwell. “If she is exonerated, which she fully expects to be, she's not going to just walk away and forget about this. She's going to put her shoulder to the grindstone trying to do something positive to get that situation changed.”

After attending the University of Oxford, Ms Maxwell moved to the US while her brother remained in the UK and they saw less and less of each other. But Mr Maxwell is now riding to his sister’s defence. The last time he heard his sister’s voice was nine months ago, listening to her give monosyllabic answers at an early court hearing that was viewable online. She has lost weight – and hair – while in jail and communicates through her lawyers.

Mr Maxwell insists his sister’s relationship with Epstein was not a normal boyfriend-girlfriend relationship and that they maintained separate homes. “I don't think you could characterise this as a kind of conventional lovey-dovey living together relationship,” he says. “I think the most important thing that you could possibly report is that they never lived together, ever. He had his place. She had her place. It's hugely important for a man who was as compartmentalised as Jeffrey Epstein clearly was.”

Epstein, he believes, kept his sordid sex life and criminality secret from Ms Maxwell. It is an argument that her lawyers will need to win to persuade a jury of her innocence.

Dozens of women have filed lawsuits against the Epstein estate, valued at close to \$600 million on his death. To date, four women are involved in the criminal prosecution of Ms Maxwell. It is unclear if others will give supporting evidence. The new charges, announced last week, had the effect of “lobbing a grenade into the proceedings”.

Mr Maxwell says: “Ghislaine is facing charges effectively created by the US government solely to satisfy the media, to appease accusers, and their trial lawyers, bolstering a weak case in an effort to justify huge settlements for crimes committed by Jeffrey Epstein, and by Jeffrey Epstein alone. They're trying to revive Epstein by relitigating crimes, with a proxy defendant Ghislaine. That just ain't right.”

The latest charges relating to sex trafficking between 2001 and 2004 are intriguing, not least because that is a timeframe when Prince Andrew, Ms Maxwell's long-time friend, was becoming close to Epstein. The pair met in about 1999. Prince Andrew gave an interview to the BBC current affairs programme Newsnight in November 2019, three months after Epstein died, in which he denied any wrongdoing but failed to express sympathy for Epstein's victims and argued, for example, that the account of one victim [Virginia Roberts Giuffre](#) was false because he did not sweat and had, anyway, been at Pizza Express.

The claims opened Prince Andrew up to ridicule but Mr Maxwell doesn't believe that interview had any bearing on the subsequent pursuit of Ghislaine. The die was cast when Epstein died in custody and, says Mr Maxwell, authorities – the then Attorney general William Barr was “livid” – needed somebody in the dock.

“I don't actually agree that this particularly reignited [the case],” says Mr Maxwell. “I think it was, it was bubbling away there after Epstein died... it [the interview] did sort of shine a light back on it, but it was the most remarkable piece of self-destruction.”

Prince Andrew and Ms Maxwell, long-time friends since her Oxford days, last saw each other in June 2019 when she was visiting London at the start of a charity car rally. In almost two years since then their lives have been turned upside down over their association with Epstein. The [Duke of York is banished from public duty](#), free to roam the Queen's Windsor estate. Ghislaine Maxwell is confined, meanwhile, to her 9ft by 7ft jail cell. A trial, should it take place in July, will decide once and for all if she deserves anyone's sympathy.