

# US media barely touches Epstein links with Israeli intelligence

Jim DeBrosse    The Electronic Intifada    25 July 2025



Protesters in Washington, DC, a day before US President Donald Trump ordered his attorney general Pam Bondi to release transcripts of Jeffrey Epstein's grand jury testimony. (Sue Dorfman / ZUMA Press Wire)

Noticeably absent from US news coverage of US President Donald Trump's waffling over the release of the Jeffrey Epstein files is any mention of the child sex predator's apparent ties to Israeli intelligence.

A 13 July Nexis search of US news outlets found that, of the 383 stories unleashed by Trump's broken promise to reveal everything Epstein, only a single article broached ties between Epstein and Israel's intelligence agency, the Mossad – and then tried to undercut it.

The single [story](#) that did mention Mossad links, on 10 July in *Atlantic Online*, the online edition of *The Atlantic Monthly*, merely dismissed those making a case for Epstein's ties to Mossad as "a claim often expressed with anti-Semitic rhetoric."

Such omission, however, didn't stop former Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett on 14 July [from](#) rejecting any Epstein-Mossad links as "categorically and totally false."

There is plenty of good evidence, however, to suggest otherwise. The Epstein-Israeli intelligence connection was covered extensively in a 2019-2021 series of in-depth articles by [MintPress News](#).

*MintPress* investigative reporter Whitney Webb summarized an interview by former CBS News executive producer and Narativ investigative journalist Zev Shalev with former senior executive for Israel's Directorate of Military Intelligence Ari Ben-Menashe. There, Webb summed up, Ben-Menashe [claimed](#) "not only to have met Jeffrey Epstein and his alleged madam, Ghislaine Maxwell, back in the 1980s, but that both Epstein and Maxwell were already working with Israeli intelligence during that time period."

Ben-Menashe also [told](#) Shalev he saw Jeffrey Epstein in the office of Mossad asset Robert Maxwell, Ghislaine Maxwell's father, several times in the 1980s.

*MintPress* further reported that one of Epstein's chief financial backers, Victoria's Secret owner Les Wexner, was part of [The Mega Group](#) – a secretive group of billionaires formed in 1991 by Wexner and Seagram's heir Charles Bronfman focused on "philanthropy and Jewishness," its mission described by one member as faith in and devotion to the state of Israel.

Wexner [became](#) Epstein's biggest financial client in 1989, handing over the financial management of his \$1.4 billion business and his charitable foundation to a young man virtually unknown on Wall Street. By also granting him power of attorney, Epstein was authorized to cash Wexner's checks and give away his money.

Among more mainstream journalists, *Miami Herald* investigative reporter Julie K. Brown, whose vigilance reopened the Epstein case after it was buried by federal prosecutors in 2008, also [suspects](#) that Epstein had connections with Israeli intelligence.

"It's not beyond the realm of possibility that Epstein had connections to the [Israeli intelligence community]," Brown said in a July 2021 interview with *The Times of Israel* to promote her book, *Perversion of Justice: The Jeffrey Epstein Story*. "Robert Maxwell certainly had those kinds of connections, and Epstein had a close relationship with Robert Maxwell."

## Unlikely story

Maxwell is the British media mogul who had secretly worked for Mossad before drowning under mysterious circumstances in 1991. A 2022 BBC documentary series, *House of Maxwell*, [revealed](#) how Epstein helped Maxwell hide millions of his assets in offshore accounts after the newspaper tycoon was accused of plundering his employees' pension funds.

Ultimately, more than a billion dollars was found missing from the Maxwell firms.

Epstein and associate Ghislaine Maxwell, the youngest of Robert Maxwell's nine children and reportedly his favorite, recruited and trafficked underage girls who were sexually abused by Epstein and, it is contended, at least by some of the many powerful individuals he made a point of meeting and catering to.

In 2019, while awaiting trial on federal sex trafficking charges, Epstein, 66, was found hanged in his cell in the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan. His death was ruled a suicide, a finding that is now backed by the Trump administration to the outrage of Trump's MAGA base.

But those close to the case, including Brown and Epstein's brother [Mark](#), believe he was murdered. Mark Epstein has pointed to a [mark](#) embedded in Epstein's neck as evidence of strangulation.

He also hired a private pathologist, Michael Baden, to conduct his own autopsy of his brother. Baden [found](#) broken bones in Epstein's neck that occur "much more commonly in homicidal strangulation."

Suspicious, too, is that the two prison guards keeping suicide watch over Epstein happened to fall asleep during their scheduled checks that night while, at the same time, the two cameras outside Epstein's cell were not functioning, according to a 2023 [report](#) from the Justice Department's Office of the Inspector General.

The report cited "a combination of negligence, misconduct and outright job performance failures ... contributed to an environment in which arguably one of the most notorious inmates ... was left unmonitored and alone in his cell."

To back up the official argument for Epstein's suicide, US Attorney General Pam Bondi earlier in July [released](#) footage from cameras covering the common areas, stairwells and elevator bay leading to Epstein's cell tier. Federal investigators say the footage is proof no one entered or left Epstein's tier overnight.

An [analysis](#) by *WIRED* and independent experts, however, found the "raw" footage had been modified with a professional editing tool prior to its release. The experts also discovered nearly three minutes of missing footage from the recordings before midnight on the night of Epstein's death.

## A Who's Who

Even if there is no missing footage, Mark Epstein points out that the cell doors could have been left unlocked inside the tier so that another inmate could have left his cell, killed Epstein and returned undetected.

"There are two possibilities: one, somebody killed him before they locked up the tier. Or two, someone already on the tier went into his cell," Epstein's brother [told](#) WPBF News, a TV station in West Palm Beach, Florida. "Nobody coming in from outside doesn't mean he wasn't murdered."

In her interview with *The Times of Israel*, Brown questioned Epstein's suicide by asking the question many in the US media have ignored: "Why would Epstein give up before he even got to court?"

Indeed, Epstein had no trouble skirting a tough sentence the first time he was charged with child sex trafficking in 2005. In a plea agreement that avoided federal prosecution, Epstein served just 13 months in a work-release program on a [single state charge](#) of solicitation for prostitution.

The [architect](#) of that deal was then US Attorney Alexander Acosta, who was later named Labor Secretary in Trump's first term.

Acosta reportedly told White House interviewers prior to his selection that he cut the deal with an Epstein attorney because "I was told Epstein 'belonged to intelligence' and to leave it alone." The source of the quote was a former White House staffer cited in a 2019 *Daily Beast* [article](#) by *Vanity Fair* journalist Vicky Ward.

As Epstein's [accomplice](#), socialite and heiress Ghislaine Maxwell is understood to have lured most of the girls for Epstein's abuse with promises of easy money, modeling careers and educational assistance. She was nabbed after a year of eluding federal authorities and convicted in 2022 of recruiting, grooming and sex trafficking underage girls for Epstein between 1994 and 2004.

Maxwell is serving a 20-year sentence in a low-security federal prison in Florida and won't be eligible for release until July 2037. According to Trump biographer Michael Wolff, Trump considered a [pardon](#) for Maxwell near the end of his first term.

Hundreds of Epstein-related court [documents](#) released in 2024 don't accuse anyone of sexual misconduct but list the names, dates and places of many of those who met with Epstein.

The list reads like a "Who's Who" of America's top politicians, businessmen, scientists, academics and assorted celebrities. It includes Bill Clinton, Donald Trump, Michael Jackson, Bill Gates, David Copperfield, retail magnate Les Wexner, hedge fund billionaire Leon Black, celebrity lawyer Alan Dershowitz, Nobel prize-winning physicist Stephen Hawking, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and Bard College President Leon Botstein, along with Britain's Prince Andrew and many others.

## Intelligence ties

As is often noted, Trump and Epstein were a jet-setting playboy duo for more than a decade until they had a [falling out](#) in 2004, just a year before the FBI began to investigate Epstein for child sex trafficking. As late as 2002, Trump [told](#) *New York Magazine*, "I've known Jeff for 15 years. Terrific guy. He's a lot of fun to be with. It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side."

Epstein later claimed in an [interview](#) with Wolff that Trump first had sex with now-wife Melania on Epstein's private jet, dubbed the "Lolita Express," one of seven documented flights Trump took on the infamous private jet.

Epstein's lavish lifestyle and his ties to suspected Mossad asset [Robert Maxwell](#) and at least one high Israeli official – former Israeli general, defense and prime minister [Ehud Barak](#) – have raised questions as to whether he was working for Israeli intelligence, including the military arm, Aman.

Epstein met with Barak on nearly a monthly basis – [36 times](#) between 2013 and 2017. After one particular visit to Epstein's luxury Manhattan apartment in 2017, Barak was spotted leaving the complex with his [face covered](#) to dodge surveillance cameras.

According to his former employees, his victims and a lawyer for the victims, Epstein had 24-hour security [cameras](#) in every room of his residences.

Epstein also knew former CIA director William Burns, when Burns was US Deputy Secretary of State under former US President Barack Obama. Epstein met with Burns [three times](#) in 2014. Burns was named CIA director in 2021.

The sex trafficker's political influence goes back at least to the Clinton administration, says *MintPress* investigative reporter Whitney Webb in her recent book, *One Nation Under Blackmail*.

"White House visitor logs show that Epstein visited the Clinton White House 17 times, accompanied on most of these visits by a different, attractive young woman. Reporting on those visitor logs was largely done by a single media outlet, Britain's *The Daily Mail*, with hardly any American mainstream media outlets bothering to investigate these revelations about Epstein and a former US president."

## Israel's leverage

Flight logs show Bill Clinton traveled [at least 17 times](#) on the "Lolita Express." There are also numerous reports that he visited Epstein's private island in the Virgin Islands, Little Saint James. That's where lawyers for Epstein's victims say many of the worst crimes against underage girls were committed.

In a 2011 deposition for her attorneys, Virginia Roberts Giuffre, who at [age 16](#) became one of Epstein's sex trafficking victims, [testified](#) that he told her he had "compromising" information on Bill Clinton and that the former president "owes me a favor."

An earlier [story](#) for *MintPress News* illustrated Israel's leverage over Clinton by citing his last-minute presidential pardon of Marc Rich, the commodities trader and hedge fund manager charged in 1983 for violating the US embargo on Iranian oil while dealing on Israel's behalf.

According to the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, Rich was friendly with prominent Israel politicians, including Barak, and often volunteered his services for Israeli intelligence.

In his presidential campaigns, Trump has repeatedly [brought up](#) Clinton's association with Epstein, but only to suggest that Bill and Hillary were involved in Epstein's death.

*Miami Herald* reporter Julie K. Brown deserves the credit for not letting the Epstein story die. After his [plea deal](#) in Florida on much-reduced charges in 2008 that otherwise could have put him in jail for up to 45 years, Epstein's case would have been forgotten after his having served little more than a year in a cozy work-release program if Brown hadn't pursued the story further.

In a [three-part series](#) of investigative articles in 2018, she exposed the manipulation and corruption of law enforcement officials resulting in Epstein's secret plea on state rather than federal charges for a much softer prison sentence.

In her *Times of Israel* [interview](#), Brown said there was a striking similarity between Epstein's death in August 2019 and Robert Maxwell's death in November 1991.

The 68-year-old media magnate was alleged to have drowned after falling from his yacht, the Lady Ghislaine, near the Canary Islands. Spanish police insisted no foul play was suspected in Maxwell's death, but rumors [persist](#) to this day.

## Maxwell to Bondi

Suicide is one possible theory. Another is that Maxwell was assassinated.

Maxwell was [mired in debt](#) at the time and may have been trying to [blackmail](#) the agency to bail himself out, according to political and investigative journalist Gordon Thomas, author of *Robert Maxwell, Israel's Superspy: The Life and Murder of a Media Mogul*.

After Maxwell's death, Epstein ingratiated himself with members of the Maxwell family who had been left bankrupt and riddled with debt, Brown said in her *Times of Israel* interview. Epstein may have offered financial assistance to Robert Maxwell's widow Elisabeth.

Ghislaine was likely aware of the many secrets her father took to the grave related to his life in politics, finance and espionage, Brown said.

Following his death, Maxwell was [honored](#) with a burial on Jerusalem's Mount of Olives – formally occupied territory – where members of the Israeli intelligence community as well as then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir attended his funeral.

"Shamir eulogized the British tycoon for the political connections he brought to Israel during the 1980s and for the money he invested in it," reported *The Times of Israel*.

Brown believes the Epstein case is far from closed.

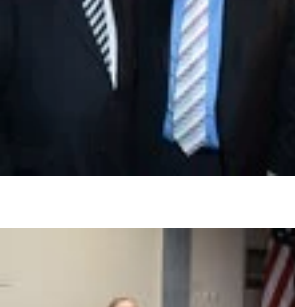
"[Epstein] did not do this alone," she told *The Times of Israel*. "There were plenty of people that either knew about what Epstein was doing, or even participated in what he was doing. This was an international sex trafficking organization that was similar to an organized crime family – so it shouldn't just end just with the prosecution of [Ghislaine Maxwell]."

But before Trump ordered her to [release](#) the transcript of Epstein's grand jury testimony on 18 July – after his support base had started [a petition](#) demanding her resignation – US Attorney General Pam Bondi said there was nothing further to investigate in the Epstein case.

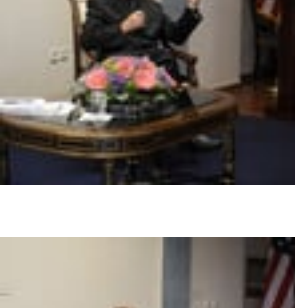
She was at least consistent. This was something she failed to do while she was attorney general in Florida two decades ago.

As Brown [noted](#) on her X account in February: "It's interesting to note that Pam Bondi was Florida's attorney general 2011-2019 – a period of time when Jeffrey Epstein's plane records became public, victims' lawsuits were filed and a lot of new evidence against Epstein surfaced. So, questions should be asked about why she didn't take up the case – or launch a probe – when she was attorney general in Florida."

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