

# Sex trafficking trial of Epstein assistant Ghislaine Maxwell moves to closing arguments

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The defense rested its case on Friday in the trial of Ghislaine Maxwell after the confidante and former girlfriend of the deceased sex offender and billionaire Jeffrey Epstein decided not to testify on her own behalf.

The jury was not present when Maxwell told Judge Alison Nathan on Friday, “Your honor, the government has not proven its case beyond a reasonable doubt and so there is no need for me to testify.” The judge had asked the defendant if she understood her rights.

Ghislaine Maxwell, 59, pleaded not guilty to six federal charges: sex trafficking of minors, enticing a minor to travel to engage in illegal sex acts, transporting a minor with the intent to engage in criminal sexual activity and three counts of conspiracy. The indictment against Maxwell charged that between 1994 and 1997, she “assisted, facilitated, and contributed” to the abuse of minors by Epstein despite knowing that at least one girl was only 14 years old.

Maxwell’s lawyers used days 11-12 of the trial to bring witnesses to testify in her defense. Among the character witnesses brought by Maxwell was Eva Andersson-Dubin, a former model and doctor who is married to the hedge fund manager Glenn Dubin, who told jurors she dated Jeffrey Epstein between about 1983 and 1990 or 1991 and never witnessed any inappropriate conduct on his part with teenage girls.

The defense said another witness named “Kelly” could not be located and had not responded to subpoenas. The proceedings began on Thursday with a decision by Judge Nathan denying a last-minute request by the defense to allow three of their witnesses to testify anonymously.

Responding to the defense in a written opinion, Judge Nathan characterized the request as unprecedented in

the annals of law. The defense lawyers had argued that their witnesses should be afforded the same identity concealment as three prosecution witnesses who had accused Maxwell and Epstein of sexually abusing them when they were teenagers.

The women were permitted identify themselves by the pseudonyms “Jane” and “Kate” and the first name only “Carolyn” to conceal their identity. Judge Nathan wrote that the court was obligated to ensure that their privacy and dignity were protected.

The judge justified her protection of the prosecution witnesses by writing, “If alleged victims of abuse were subject to publicity, harassment, and embarrassment, other alleged victims of sex crimes may be deterred from coming forward to report abuse.”

Judge Nathan said none of the defense witnesses intended to testify to sensitive personal topics or sexual conduct and that denying their request for anonymity would in no way deter others from reporting sexual abuse.

Responding to the claim that denying the request compromised the defendant’s rights to a fair trial because some of the witnesses would be reluctant to testify, the judge said that Maxwell’s team should have anticipated these concerns and could have used subpoenas to compel testimony instead of making their motion two days after the prosecution rested its case.

The conflict over the anonymity of defense witnesses was one expression of the extreme weakness of the defendant’s case following the testimony over the two prior weeks by prosecution witnesses, including four women who said they were sexually abused by Epstein with the assistance of Maxwell in the 1990s while they were teenagers.

It is notable that, as compared to the #MeToo campaign and reporting by the corporate media of the prosecution of figures such as Harvey Weinstein—who was sentenced to 23 years in prison after he was found guilty in a trial punctuated by a “mountain of doubt”—the trial of Maxwell has been given perfunctory placement and essentially buried in the coverage of major news outlets like the *New York Times*.

For all the claims of concern about sexual abuse against women, as reviewed previously on the *World Socialist Web Site*, #MeToo’s unsubstantiated and sensationalized accusations of sexual misconduct had been suddenly turned off by July 2020.

The WSWS explained at the time that immediate electoral concerns of the Democrats may well have played a role in the silence. “The charges of sexual misconduct leveled by former staffer Tara Reade in March against Joe Biden, the presumptive Democratic Party presidential candidate, were received coldly by the *Times* and the media generally (except for its openly pro-Trump wing). Unquestionably, in that case the #MeToo campaign and its slogan of ‘believe women’ cut across the plans and politics of the *Times*, the *New Yorker*, *Time* and the sections of the American ruling elite for whom they speak.”

In the present case, not a peep had been heard from #MeToo about Ghislaine Maxwell since her arrest more than 18 months ago until the movement’s Chief Vision Officer Tarana Burke and Chief Executive Officer Dani Ayers issued a joint press statement on December 1 expressing support for the Epstein accusers in the trial, who had already begun taking the witness stand two days earlier.

While the #MeToo officers write of “the survivors bravely sharing their stories in the Ghislaine Maxwell trial,” and how “abusers will use their power and influence to attempt to discredit survivors and diminish the harm they caused,” the names of Jeffrey Epstein and the entourage of wealthy and powerful individuals who participated with him in the sexual abuse of teenage girls are not even mentioned.

A new book, *Perversion of Justice: The Jeffrey Epstein Story*, by Julie K. Brown, an investigative journalist with the *Miami Herald*, relays critical information about the events leading up to the arrest and prosecution of Maxwell in July 2020. The details contained in the Epilogue shed light on the politics

behind the scenes in what is without question an effort to cover up the degeneracy and depravity of the ultra-wealthy ruling elite both within the US and around the world.

Brown writes, “In the days before Maxwell’s arrest, I had been closely following another dramatic story—the ouster of Geoffrey Berman, the US attorney for the Southern District of New York.” Berman, who was the prosecutor responsible for the arrest of Epstein in July 2019, was “hastily fired by President Trump. His removal led to a public standoff between Berman and Attorney General William Barr, who had initially declared that Berman was resigning.”

Brown says that Berman refused to leave and suggested that there was a “clandestine effort by Trump to delay or disrupt investigations in SDNY’s office.” She goes on, “While the Epstein-Maxwell case was never mentioned by Berman, it’s telling that Maxwell’s arrest came so quickly after Berman was fired.” This series of events spawned theories about whether Trump and Barr intended to install prosecutors who would have been “more politically friendly, not only to Trump but to others in his orbit, like Maxwell, who were facing criminal investigation.”

Two weeks later, Trump was asked at a White House press conference about the arrest and placement of Maxwell in solitary confinement after her request for bail was denied. Expressing the concerns of many among the ruling elite with ties to Jeffrey Epstein, Trump said, “I just wish her well. I’ve met her numerous times over the years, especially since I lived in Palm Beach and I guess they lived in Palm Beach. But I wish her well, whatever it is.”

Closing arguments in the trial in US District Court for the Southern District of New York are expected to begin Monday and Judge Nathan has indicated that she plans to give the jury two days to deliberate before the Christmas break that begins on Thursday.



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