

BETWEEN THE LINES

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A Royal Mess for Prince Andrew

Introduction

On November 16, 2019, Prince Andrew spoke out on BBC's Newsnight to deny he had sex with an underage woman who was procured for him by the convicted and now deceased sex offender, Jeffrey Epstein. Four days later, on November 20, Prince Andrew stepped down from his public duties. While we at BIA typically apply our proprietary methodology to evaluate the reliability and transparency of statements made by C-suite executives, here we examine Prince Andrew's responses in the BBC interview and his statement of resignation through our behavioral lens. What we determined is that the prince likely knew of Mr. Epstein's sex trafficking—prior to the conviction—and likely did have sex on multiple occasions with an underage woman in Mr. Epstein's properties. Below are some of the highlights of our analysis.

The Party Prince and Epstein: Chums with Benefits

The beginning of the interview focuses on Prince Andrew's relationship with Jeffrey Epstein. BBC's Emily Maitlis asks a variety of questions about how well the two men knew each other, the nature of their relationship and whether Prince Andrew knew that Mr. Epstein was trafficking young girls for sex. Throughout the interview, the prince consistently attempts to distance himself from Mr. Epstein, emphasizing that he only knew Mr. Epstein through Ghislaine Maxwell, with whom he had gone to university. He says that the two men were friends "because of other people" and that it would be "to some extent a stretch to say" that "we were close friends" and later that it would be a "considerable stretch" to say that "he was a very, very close friend." These qualified statements are meant to give the impression that the prince did not know Mr. Epstein very well. Indeed, the qualification that "to some extent" it is a stretch to say the two men were "close friends" indicates that the prince considered Mr. Epstein a closer friend than he wants to admit. Furthermore, even as he attempts to distance himself from Mr. Epstein, Prince Andrew also tries to justify his connection with Mr. Epstein, characterizing it as "absolutely vital" for learning about the international business world after his career in the Navy. Later, he says that his friendship with Mr. Epstein had some "seriously beneficial outcomes." Notably, the prince never condemns Mr. Epstein. He merely says, "I regret the fact that [Mr. Epstein] has quite obviously conducted himself in a manner unbecoming." His efforts to defend his connection with Mr. Epstein coupled with his use of soft language to describe Mr. Epstein's sex trafficking activities strongly suggest that the two men had a closer relationship than the prince implies and that, even now, Prince Andrew wishes to protect the benefits he gained from the relationship.

Ms. Maitlis goes on to ask if meeting people, whom the prince describes as "eminent," at Mr. Epstein's dinner parties was the appeal of the friendship or, since he is known as the "party prince," if the appeal was the partying itself. Prince Andrew responds by visibly shifting in his seat, a BIA Indicator signaling discomfort with the topic. Then he says, "I think that's also a bit of a stretch. I don't know why I've collected that title because I don't...I never really partied." He also says that after he got married, "I've never really felt the need to go and party" and "certainly going to Jeffrey's was not about partying." These statements are meant to convince viewers that he would not be interested in the types of parties Mr. Epstein is now known to have thrown. However, the qualifications in these statements, such as he never "really partied" and that he never "really felt the need" to party after he got married, suggest that the prince likely has "partied" to some extent in his life and fall well short of definitively saying he has not "partied" even after his marriage. Also, the prince's statement that visiting Mr. Epstein was "not about partying" does not preclude the possibility that he engaged, to some extent, in "partying" during those visits. Notably, Prince Andrew does not take the opportunity to confirm that meeting important people was the primary reason for visiting Mr. Epstein, suggesting that this may not have been the sole purpose of the visits.

Prince Andrew's Long Goodbye Is No Mystery

Ms. Maitlis asks a series of questions about how much Prince Andrew knew about Mr. Epstein's sex trafficking. In response, the prince consistently insists that he had no idea of what was going on. However, in doing so, he also consistently exhibits BIA Indicators suggesting he knew more than he wants to admit. He says that at the time there was "no indication to me or anybody else" that Mr. Epstein was trafficking young girls, yet the prince makes a concerted effort to bolster the credibility of those statements by reminding viewers that "if there was" any indication, since he was "patron of the NSPCC's Full Stop campaign," he would know what to look for in terms of child abuse and that he "never saw them." His impulse to make his statements sound more credible reflects his underlying awareness that the statements do not stand on their own merit. Further, Prince Andrew is consistently careful to specify that when he saw Mr. Epstein in the "United States" he never saw any indication of trafficking and that an "awful lot of this was going on in the United States" and "I knew nothing about it." His overly narrow focus on activities in the U.S. suggests the prince may have seen signs of such activity when he was with Mr. Epstein in London.

It is notable that when Ms. Maitlis asks Prince Andrew how he felt when he learned in 2008 that Mr. Epstein was convicted of soliciting and procuring a minor for prostitution, he does not answer. The prince says instead that he "ceased contact with him after I was aware he was under investigation" in 2006 to explain away his apparent indifference to the conviction in 2008. However, this also suggests that the prince's main concern upon learning of the investigation was distancing himself from Mr. Epstein, which is a strong indication that he was aware of Mr. Epstein's activities before they were public.

In stark contrast, when confronted with questions about why he stayed with Mr. Epstein in December 2010, even though Epstein was, by then, a convicted sex offender, Prince Andrew says that he went there with the "sole purpose of saying to him that because he had been convicted, it was inappropriate for us to be seen together." Further, the prince felt he "had to go see him and talk to him" directly to deliver the message. That the prince felt an urgent need to communicate this message, in person, to Mr. Epstein after purportedly having cut off contact with him years earlier suggests that either the consequences of his relationship with Mr. Epstein had worsened or that the reason for his visit is not entirely what he states. Furthermore, the prince's repeated and insistent attempts to brush off his reason for staying with Mr. Epstein as a matter of "convenience" (at one point he raises his voice) reflect an effort to shut down the line of questioning, which strongly suggests he is concealing information.

When asked what Mr. Epstein said when the prince told him it was inappropriate for them to have contact, Prince Andrew says Mr. Epstein was "understanding" and that he had "served his time and was carrying on with his life." However, the prince then adds that "yes, but...with all the attendant scrutiny on me" he did not think contacting each other was a "wise thing to do." This statement reveals that Prince Andrew perceived this scrutiny as a significant threat and felt that his involvement with Mr. Epstein was incriminating. Additionally, when confronted with the accusation that another guest at the time, literary agent John Brockman, said the prince received a foot massage from a young Russian woman, Prince Andrew says he is "absolutely sure" this did not happen. Yet, when asked if Mr. Brockman's statement is false, Prince Andrew responds, "I wouldn't...I wouldn't...I don't know Mr. Brockman so I don't know what he's talking about." His reluctance to flatly assert that Mr. Brockman's statement is false indicates that the prince cannot refute the accusation.

The Photo Elicits 1000 Words but No Memories for the Duke of York

Ms. Maitlis asks Prince Andrew to respond to claims from Virginia Roberts, an accuser of Mr. Epstein, that she met the prince in 2001, dined with him, danced with him at Tramp Nightclub in London and had sex with him in Ghislaine Maxwell's house. Prince Andrew states he has "no recollection of ever meeting this lady." Indeed, in his responses to the entire series of questions about Ms. Roberts' claims, the prince relies heavily on this strategy, which BIA calls selective memory. He repeatedly states, "I don't know if I've met her," "I have no recollection of meeting her," and "I don't think I've ever bought a drink in Tramps whenever I was there." These statements all fall short of specifically saying he has not met Ms. Roberts. More important, the prince's selective memory lets him appear to deny the accusation while leaving himself wiggle room should evidence come out to the contrary that he cannot refute. This is a strong behavioral indication that Prince Andrew believes that evidence to support Ms. Roberts' claims might exist and that he would not be able to refute it. In fact, when he does attempt to refute certain accusations, in doing so he exhibits behaviors that weaken his explanations.

For example, Prince Andrew disputes the date of the alleged nightclub meeting by saying, "that couldn't have happened because the date that's being suggested I was at home with the children." He claims to have taken his daughter to a Pizza Express in the town of Woking for a party. However, the prince resorts to an overly detailed explanation that "because the duchess was away, we have a simple rule in the family that when one is away the other one is there. I was on terminal leave at the time from the Royal Navy so therefore I was home." While his explanation is intended to convince viewers that he was home, his excessive embellishment on the point undermines the veracity of his statement. Further, Prince Andrew says he

remembers the visit to Pizza Express because going there “is an unusual thing for me to do” so “I remember it weirdly distinctly” and “as soon as somebody reminded me of it I went, ‘oh yes, I remember that.’” However, the phrase “I remember it weirdly distinctly” is at odds with the phrase “as soon as somebody reminded me of it,” creating a contradiction in his account.

When Prince Andrew disputes Ms. Roberts’ claim that he was sweating profusely while they were dancing at Tramp, he laughs and says, “There’s a slight problem with the sweating because I have a peculiar medical condition which is I don’t sweat, or I didn’t sweat at the time.” He explains he had suffered from an overdose of adrenalin in the Falklands War and that because he has “done a number of things” recently he is able to sweat again. He concludes with, “So I’m afraid to say that there’s a medical condition that says that I didn’t do it so, therefore.” Here, the prince offers an explanation, at the same time convoluted and vague, to convince viewers he could not have danced with Ms. Roberts, without ever actually saying so.

When Ms. Maitlis asks the prince about a photograph of him with his arm around Ms. Roberts’ waist, Prince Andrew admits that the photo is of him, but repeatedly says he does not recall the photo being taken. Even so, he also does not commit to the notion that the photo could be a fake. He says, “from the investigations we’ve done, you can’t prove whether or not that photograph is faked or not.” He goes on to say, “That’s me, but whether that’s my hand or whether that’s the position I...but I don’t...I have simply no recollection of the photograph ever being taken.” Prince Andrew also equivocates when talking about *where* the photo was taken. He says, “I don’t remember going upstairs in the house because that photograph was taken upstairs” and that “I don’t believe it’s a picture of me in London because...when I go out in London, I wear a suit and a tie...those are my travelling clothes.” He says that “public displays of affection are not something that I do” to convince viewers that “I don’t believe that photograph was taken in the way that has been suggested.” Altogether, his heavy reliance on claiming that he has no recollection of the event and his noncommittal statements about the content and authenticity of the photo provide strong behavioral evidence that Prince Andrew is aware that he cannot credibly refute what the photo depicts.

For the Record, The Prince Can’t Say for Sure It Didn’t Happen

Ms. Maitlis asks Prince Andrew if he believes Ms. Roberts is lying in all the claims she has made in her U.S. deposition. In response, he says, “That’s a very difficult thing to answer because I’m not in a position to know what she’s trying to achieve.” This statement, in lieu of a yes-or-no answer, indicates that the prince is psychologically unable to say Ms. Roberts is lying, which, in turn, is strong evidence that he cannot refute at least some of her claims. He goes on to say, “I can tell you, categorically, I don’t remember meeting her at all. I do not remember a photograph being taken and I’ve said consistently and frequently that we never had any sort of sexual contact whatever.” Prince Andrew again resorts to claims of an inability to remember events to give the impression they did not happen. Additionally, his statement that “I’ve said consistently and frequently” that he never had sexual contact is not the same as specifically saying so. Referring to previous statements rather than simply saying in the present that he did not have sexual contact with Ms. Roberts reflects the prince’s psychological inability to do so.

Prince Andrew continues to exhibit BIA Indicators when asked if, for the record, there is any way he could have had sex with Ms. Roberts or any young woman trafficked by Mr. Epstein in any of his residences. Upon hearing the question, the prince laughs, licks his lips and makes a conspicuous movement in his chair, signaling a high degree of anxiety over the topic. He says “no,” but then adds yet another overly detailed, circuitous explanation to convince viewers why “It just never happened.” Prince Andrew says that “if you’re a man it is a positive act to have sex with somebody. You have to take some sort of positive action and so therefore if you try to forget it’s very difficult to try and forget a positive action and I do not remember anything. I can’t. I’ve wracked my brain and thinking oh...when the first allegations, when the allegations came out originally, I went, well, that’s a bit strange, I don’t remember this and then I’ve been through it and through it and through it over and over again and no, nothing. It just never happened.” This is an elaborate effort to convince viewers that since he cannot remember having sex with any underage woman, it therefore did not happen. However, in saying that he had to think about it “over and over again,” Prince Andrew inadvertently reveals that he cannot be sure it did *not* happen. Given the nature of the question and that such sexual misconduct would undoubtedly stand out in someone’s mind, any response other than an unequivocal “no” is behaviorally both significant and concerning. Prince Andrew’s failure to make a direct and immediate denial of ever having had sexual relations with an underage woman strongly suggests that he has, in fact, done so.

Prince Andrew Resigns Public Duties, But Not His Story

In this interview, Prince Andrew said he would carry on with his work with organizations such as Pitch@Palace and iDEA. However, four days later, on November 20, the prince stepped down from his public duties. In his statement announcing the decision, he says, “I continue to unequivocally regret my ill-judged association with Jeffrey Epstein.” While he expresses similar sentiment during the interview, it is notable that in neither the statement of resignation nor the interview does the prince admonish or rebuke Mr. Epstein’s actions.

Also in this interview, when asked if he would be willing to testify or give a statement under oath, the prince said that he would “have to take all the legal advice there was before I was to do that sort of thing” and that “if push came to shove and the legal advice was to do so, then I would be duty bound to do so.” This response indicates that the prince is not willing to tell his story under oath and will strongly resist any efforts to require him to do so. In his statement of resignation, Prince Andrew says that he is “willing to help any appropriate law enforcement agency with their investigations, if required.” While in the statement it appears that the prince has changed his position on the matter, the qualifications that he is willing to help “appropriate” law enforcement agencies “if required” continue to indicate that he is resistant and that he will cooperate with only a limited set of agencies and then only when he has no alternative.

Full BBC interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKQi3wzNFGQ>

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