

Free Press Unlimited **The **Publeaks** projects**

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Free from propaganda
Free from deception
Free from ...

The **Publeaks** projects

Nigerian certificates

Certificate scandal that caused shock and outrage amongst many Nigerians. Published by *Premium Times* in April 2018, via **Leaks.ng**.

Barbie's records

Unauthorised viewings of medical records of a Dutch hospitalized celebrity. Published by *EenVandaag* in April 2018, via **Publeaks NL**.
→ p.81

Paradise Papers

A set of confidential electronic documents related to offshore investments, created by legal firm Appleby. Published by *The Süddeutsche Zeitung* in November 2017.

Killer contracts

Illegal contracts to deregister students from the central exams to raise the school's average results. Published by *de Volkskrant* in July or August 2017, via **Publeaks NL**. → p.41

Election leak

WhatsApp group conversation in which officials from the Health Institute of the State of Mexico were organizing brigades to rally votes for Del Mazo, the PRI candidate. Published by several news outlets in May 2017, via **Mexicoleaks**.
→ p.31

Football Leaks

Documents including contracts, e-mails and spreadsheets containing information about tax avoidance by several football stars. Published by several news outlets in December 2016.

Unaoil Leak

Cache of emails dating from 2001 to 2012 sent within Unaoil revealed that Unaoil's operatives bribed officials in oil-producing nations in order to win government-funded projects. Published by Fairfax Media in 2016.

Ochoa corruption scandal

Documents indicating Mexico's anti-corruption president Enrique Ochoa privately accepting improper payments from a public entity. Published by several news outlets in September 2016, via **Mexicoleaks**.
→ p.53

Destruction documents

Documents involving the systematic destruction of an area of archaeological importance and the collusion of the authorities that had granted construction permits in Valle de Bravo, west of Mexico City. Published by several platforms in March 2016, via **Mexicoleaks**. → p.63

Highway to hell

Federal Roads and Bridges laid the foundations of the tender for the company Rediseño, which was supposed to offer cybersecurity services, but did not install the systems. Published by several news outlets in January 2016, via **Mexicoleaks**. → p.13

Swiss Leaks

Giant tax evasion scheme allegedly operated with the knowledge and encouragement of the British multinational bank HSBC via its Swiss subsidiary, HSBC Private Bank (Suisse). Published by CBS in 2015.

Free Press Unlimited
The **Publeaks** projects

ABOUT INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM AND THE ROLE OF **PUBLEAKS**

- A. **Publeaks** is a failsafe when
legal protections fail 7
Leon Willems, Free Press Unlimited

- B. **Why laws to protect whistleblowers
matter for us** 49
Anna Myers, Whistleblowing
International Network

- C. **Whistleblowers are essential for
informed citizens and vital democracies** 89
Antoine Deltour, LuxLeaks whistleblower

THE STORIES BEHIND THE STORIES

- 1. Leaking news to get revenge** 13
Eduard Martín-Borregón, *RindeCuentas*
Homero Campa, *Proceso*
- 2. A case that smells on all fronts** 21
Annemieke van Dongen, *BN DeStem*
Sander van Mersbergen, *BN DeStem*
- 3. Whistleblowing platforms at election time** 31
Sebastián Barragán Hidalgo, *Aristegui Noticias*
Mathieu Tourliere, *Proceso*
- 4. How a **Publeaks** tip can lead to a different story** 41
Kaya Bouma, *de Volkskrant*
- 5. **Méxicoleaks** is not a vehicle for politics** 53
Claudia Ocaranza, *Animal Político*
Nayeli Roldan, *Animal Político*
- 6. A Leak that prevented the destruction of pre-Hispanic ruins** 63
Celia Guerrero, *Periodistas de a Pie*
- 7. Suppose it is true: Krol fails to pay his own pensions** 71
Jeroen Trommelen, *Investico*
- 8. **Publeaks** on snooping into medical records** 81
Jan Born, *EenVandaag*
Lotte Kuipers, *EenVandaag*

A. Publeaks helps whistleblowers when legal protections fail

Leon Willems, Free Press Unlimited

PERSONALIA

Name

Leon Willems

Biography

Leon Willems (1961) was appointed Director of Free Press Unlimited in May 2011. Before this, he served as Director of Press Now.

His leadership and vision have contributed to Free Press Unlimited becoming one of the leading press freedom organisations of today. The organisation is active in more than 30 countries, focusing on conflict reporting, safety for journalists, investigative journalism, gender and youth and media.

During the nineties, Leon Willems held several positions at Ikon Television, a small broadcaster specialized in war reporting and social documentaries. For years he was the producer of important news stories about the Middle-east and Sub Saharan Africa. Between 2004-2007 Willems worked for the United Nations, setting up independent radio stations in South Sudan. In 2008 he initiated the Radio Dabanga project in partnership with journalists, NGO's and peace groups.

As of December 2008 Radio Dabang is broadcasting daily, independent news for the people in Darfur, Sudan.

Leon Willems believes that media are crucial tools for democracy building and contribute to the development of society as a whole. Bringing independent media to the people is the principle aim of his work.

It is the early morning of Wednesday, December 20, 2017. Busloads of people get ready to visit Europe's largest underground Christmas fair. The annual fair in a cave system in Valkenburg, in the southern tip of the Netherlands, is popular with visitors from Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and farther afield. The market has earned the city of Valkenburg the title 'European City of Christmas'.

At the same time as the visitors get ready to enter the cave, *EenVandaag*, a prominent current affairs program that airs on television daily during prime time hours, publishes *Life threatening situation in Christmas market-caves*. The major of Valkenburg has for years ignored warnings by the fire department. Should fire breaks out at the underground Christmas market, it's visitors are trapped like rats in a cage. *EenVandaag* was able to bring this revelation after a whistleblower contacted its newsroom via [Publeaks NL](#).

The revelations about the Christmas market-caves have had several cascading effects. Firstly, newsrooms around the country and abroad picked up on the press release instantly, to warn the hundreds of thousands of visitors from home and abroad that visit the caves every year. Secondly, *EenVandaag* prominently highlighted both the indispensable role of the whistleblower and [Publeaks NL](#) in its broadcast and publication. In the weeks that followed, both *EenVandaag* and other participating newsrooms are able to bring additional high-profile stories based on whistleblower tip-offs. Thirdly, local administrators have promised to re-evaluate fire safety at the Christmas fair. A decision on permits and decision making processes is expected ahead of next year's fair.

Public interest whistleblowing is indispensable for strong and independent watchdog media. Without whistleblowers, the stories documented in this book — about corruption and election tampering in Mexico, about exam fraud and privacy breaches in the Netherlands — would never see the light of day. All too often, journalists and their sources are subjected to violence. The perpetrators of this violence continue to threaten independent watchdog journalism with impunity. While protection for journalists and their sources is imperative, **Publeaks** is a technological failover for whistleblowers in countries where sources don't enjoy or trust legal protections offered by the state.

With **Publeaks**, Free Press Unlimited enables whistleblowers to contact journalists privately and anonymously. Whistleblowers can choose to remain the unsung heroes behind important publications, because a story is too explosive, the environment too violent to be named as the source. Journalists gain the tools to safely conduct online investigations, and access to information that would otherwise have been kept from the public. Free Press Unlimited chooses to work with professional media: investigative journalists are uniquely trained to objectively balance access to information with the public interest.

The stories in this anthology document the bravery of whistleblowers, the resilience of journalists, and the propensity of information to always reach the public.

Each platform adapts to the local environment. **Publeaks NL** has closed the gap between the

media and its audiences in the Netherlands. **Méxicoleaks** has rekindled a solidarity among its member newsrooms, and an urgency to publish and find strength in numbers. **Leaks.ng** has created a platform for Nigerian newsrooms to jointly advocate for stronger whistleblower protection. To participating newsrooms, **Indonesialeaks** is a common banner to rally public support for whistleblowing.

But the backbone of these initiatives is the provision of a service to journalists and their sources: to connect whistleblowers and their stories of corruption and abuse of power to professional media and their audiences. **Publeaks** provides a public service — protection for whistleblowers and journalists — that is the responsibility of governments. But sadly, around the world, more often than not, this service is conspicuously absent.

1. Leaking news to get revenge

Eduard Martín-Borregón, *RindeCuentas*
Homero Campa, *Proceso*

THE TIP-OFF

Date

November 13th, 2015

Content

Police reports and notary statements

Submitted to

All [Méxicoleaks](#) partner newsrooms

Submitted by

Edgar Chake Corella Flores made his accusations openly to the [Méxicoleaks](#) members

THE PUBLICATION

Date

January 19th, 2016

Title

Amañan licitación de 75 mdp en CAPUFE y no la pueden ejecutar
Capufe: la historia de una licitación amañada

Byline

Eduard Martín-Borregón,
Homero Campa

Publishers

PODER, *Proceso*, *Animal Político*, *Aristegui Noticias* and *Periodistas de a Pie*

THE OUTCOME

Result

Expose bad tender practices by the Federal Roads and Bridges agency CAPUFE.

It was certainly a unique case: an entrepreneur used [Méxicoleaks](#) to denounce a case of corruption in which he was one of the original beneficiaries. In addition, although the [Méxicoleaks](#) platform allows documents to be leaked safely and anonymously, he made the accusation openly, without hiding his identity.

On July 8, 2015, the federal agency that operates Mexico's highways, Caminos y Puentes Federales (Federal Roads and Bridges, or CAPUFE), launched a public tender for an IT security service. Rediseño.com, the company that won the tender, signed a contract for 75 million Mexican dollars.

The tender, however, was rigged: the technical specifications that CAPUFE had requested coincided point-by-point with the products and services offered by the multinational firm Barracuda Networks, whose exclusive distributor in Mexico was Rediseño. This was no coincidence: Enrique Agustín Martínez Salgado, a notary public at Mexico's third Notary Office, had the "connections" to set up meetings between CAPUFE officials and Rediseño's owner, Edgar Chake Corella Flores. This was how the "customized" call for tenders was drafted and Rediseño won the tender in exchange for a 30% "commission" on the contract.

The notary public, however, "double-crossed" the entrepreneur: he asked Corella to come by his office where, after surrounding him with a group of armed men, Martínez Salgado forced him to sign falsified minutes of a Rediseño general shareholders meeting in which Corella and his mother (a minority shareholder) sold the company

and waived any related rights. According to those meeting minutes, which are now in the hands of **Méxicoleaks** members, Corella and his mother “sold” Redisegno for 50,000 Mexican dollars to Cristel Amparo López Santos and Carlos Alberto Lugo Vega. Both are shareholders of the firm Fact Leasing and, coincidentally, employees at Mexico’s third Notary Office, which is directed by Martínez Salgado.

It was quite the business deal: the notary public used his employees to “purchase” a company for 50,000 Mexican dollars — when that company had just been awarded a contract with CAPUFE worth 75 million Mexican dollars.

But the notary public’s plan backfired. During the call for tenders, Corella had transferred Redisegno’s licenses for the Barracuda Networks products to another one of his companies as a precautionary measure. In other words, Redisegno needed Corella’s other company to fulfill the contract with CAPUFE.

The notary public thus landed the business but not the licenses required to operate the equipment; the entrepreneur still held the licenses, but could not sell them to CAPUFE. The federal agency received the new equipment from Barracuda but was unable to use the equipment because it lacked the operating licenses.

This can of worms ended in a legal battle in which the entrepreneur reported the notary public’s actions to the Mexico City Attorney General (PGJDF) and to CAPUFE’s internal oversight body and, by doing so, tacitly acknowledged his own involvement in the rigged tender.

Although Redisegno had not complied with the contract deadlines, CAPUFE did not terminate the agreement until January 18, 2016, just one day before the news organizations that form the **Méxicoleaks** alliance ran the story after confirming the information with the federal roads agency. Given that it was impossible for Redisegno to fulfill the contract, CAPUFE signed an agreement for the “updating of IT perimeter security system licenses” with the company Reiscom. This was a temporary measure that cost 4,847,000 Mexican dollars.

The case, which was thoroughly documented due to Corella’s thirst for revenge, not only sketched the trail of corruption but also shed light on how tender fraud occurs. First, “contacts” with a government agency are needed to come up with technical specifications adapted to the products and services a company offers. Later, the same company is “urged” to participate with the assurance that it will win the bid. Of course, as part of this process, the company must hand over a percentage of the contract amount.

There is one part of the story that remains unclear, however. Who was protecting Martínez Salgado? The notary public never responded to requests that reporters left with his office. According to Corella, when he met the notary public, Martínez Salgado told him that he “belonged to a political group within the State of Mexico that had entrusted him with the task of allocating projects to different federal, state and municipal offices.” Before becoming the country’s president, Enrique Peña Nieto was the governor of the State of Mexico, and the events recounted here occurred during his presidency (2012-2018).

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APUFE amaña licitación, la empresa ganadora cumple y sale 'libre' de sanciones

os y Puentes Federales hizo las bases de la licitación a modo para la empresa Rediseño, la cual debía ofrecer servicio cibernético, pero no instaló los sistemas.



Rediseño diseñó las bases del concurso a partir de la cotización que le entregó la propia empresa. // Foto: Especial

2. A case that smells on all fronts

Annemieke van Dongen, *BN DeStem*
Sander van Mersbergen, *BN DeStem*

THE TIP-OFF

Date

January 22nd, 2015

Content

Reports of the Social Affairs and Employment Inspectorate, health certificates by doctors of the Netherlands Center for Occupational Diseases, internal correspondence from management to personnel.

Submitted to

BN DeStem, de Volkskrant, Nieuwsuur, Omroep Brabant

Submitted by

Anonymous

THE PUBLICATION

Date

January 29th, 2015

Title

Meer overtredingen bij mestverwerker AquaPurga

Byline

Annemieke van Dongen,
Sander van Mersbergen

Publisher

BN DeStem, other regional news publication of *De Persdienst*

THE OUTCOME

Result

Creditors seize company assets.

It all began on January 22 with a message via **Publeaks NL**. A source reported abuses at AquaPurga, a company known as a reputable player in the world of manure processing.

A week earlier, members of the Council of Brabant paid a working visit to the company. Apparently, employees were home sick because they were not protected against toxic fumes when they worked on the installations. In addition, 500 investors were threatened with losing their millions because the company was in financial trouble. The machines did not perform as promised: turning manure into clean water and valuable residues, the source reported.

Although the tip was sent to other media (*de Volkskrant, Nieuwsuur* and *Omroep Brabant*), we decided to start working on it. After all, manure processing is a hot issue in the countryside, where farmers are required to process their cattle's surplus manure in an environmentally friendly way. The chemical process can be a risky business, we learned from the accident in Makkinga: in 2013 three people lost their lives in a manure silo. In addition, manure processing is a new business. And new branches are more likely to attract cowboys who promise the moon to their investors and customers.

Our source had sent 47 documents, ranging from reports from the Social Affairs and Employment Inspectorate, health reports from doctors of the Netherlands Centre for Occupational Diseases Health and internal correspondence from management to personnel.

After some detective work, we quickly identified the probable source. Since we did not have a telephone number, only an address, we drove to his house on Friday afternoon, 24th January, where we met his partner. We then arranged a meeting for Monday the 27th. The information from this former employee formed the basis for the rest of the investigation.

Because there was some pressure on this case — other media were also tipped — we did not purposefully draft a key question. The questions we had were not that different than for any other journalistic story: what happened, how could that happen, who is responsible, what are the consequences? Some of the answers could be found in the documents we had been sent, some could not. The biggest challenge was to fill in the gaps in the story with other sources within the shortest possible time span.

After hearing the (shocking) story from our source, we started to look as fast as we could for other sources that supported his claims and for answers to the questions that were still open. On the same Monday that we interviewed the former employee, we visited Brabant farmers to ask them about their experiences with AquaPurga manure processors.

Once back at the editorial office we contacted the Employment Inspectorate, water boards, other former employees, other farmers, farming organisations, pulmonologists, suppliers, investors, lawyers, the court, etc. They all gave us a piece of the puzzle we wanted to solve. We had a fairly clear division of tasks: Annemieke focused on the environment and health aspects of the story, Sander on the economic side. Parallel to the

journalistic process, we also thought about the means of publication. We were quite quick to decide that we wanted to open the newspaper with the story — once it was complete — and that we would use the inside of the newspaper for a reconstruction.

The sources were in part handed to us: an inspection report here, an internal mail there. That provided a good but fragmented picture. To complete the picture, we needed more: additional written sources, but above all, human interpretation of the documents. How should you interpret an excess of nitrogen content? How dangerous is that? What does it mean that the bankruptcy has been requested for an AquaPurga subsidiary? How exactly was the — extremely complex — financing structure of the company constructed? Who pays the price if the whole place collapses? Also: what type of water may or may not be discharged into surface water? The list of experts we approached in a short time, is almost infinite.

We established the reliability of the sources partly from their authority (official bodies, professors) and partly by meticulously checking and verifying all claims. The main point of concern at this stage: is the former employees' story accurate? Are we not just dealing with frustrated people who have lost their jobs and want to put their former employer in a bad light? We therefore made sure that we talked to five employees and that their story was supported with documentation — doctors' statements, for example. Finally, we showed the documents to people who still worked for the company and of course to the employer, AquaPurga, itself.

The conclusion of the story quickly became quite clear: there's something wrong on all fronts at AquaPurga. The claims of the whistleblower were in fact all true. That was disconcerting. Exposing employees to dangerous substances, making false promises to investors, misleading farmers, discharging contaminated water into surface water, not paying salaries: we were able to substantiate everything.

We wanted to publish our story in Thursday's newspaper. That gave us three days to complete our research and work out our findings. On the tight side, but it had to work. However, Tuesday afternoon we received a signal from our whistleblower: in the meantime Omroep Brabant and *Nieuwsuur* had also sounded the alarm. So, we decided to aim for Wednesday's newspaper. We worked ourselves into a frenzy to make everything watertight and to present our findings to the management of AquaPurga. Early Tuesday evening, after two days intense research, the publication was ready. All the Wegener and the Limburg newspapers, with a total of more than a million readers, could open with the story the following day. We both had the feeling that, despite the short window of time, we had brought to the surface everything we needed to write a revealing and complete story.

Of course, there was one disadvantage to the speed at which we had to process the story: we couldn't get to the bottom of everything. For example, in two days it was not possible to determine the precise damage suffered by the farmers who had the machines on their property. Nor could we fully answer the question of whether grant monies were involved.

Also, the exact risk for the investors would require further investigation. We did all of that at a later stage, partly through a Freedom of Information Act request for grant money, and as a result, several follow-up stories were also published.

We wrote the stories together, from start to finish. Of course, it must be noted that we could never have published the story without **Publeaks NL**. In provincial and national politics, our story has led to questions in parliament and provincial government. At the time of writing this, the company balances on the edge of the abyss. Creditors have laid claim to company assets; various subsidiaries have been declared bankrupt.

Biggest gains of our story? The debate about manure processing, particularly in Brabant, has received a new impetus. This subject is vitally important for the quality of life and health of the inhabitants of the province, and through our work, the discussion can now be conducted with more insight.

Een zaak die aan alle kanten stinkt



door **Annemieke van Dongen** en **Sander van Mersbergen**
illustratie **Mark Reijntjens**

Het lijkt een soort wondermachine aan de voorkant stop je er varkensmest in, aan de achterkant stroomt er schoon water uit, en een voedingsrijke kunstmestervanger. Een van de directeleden van AquaPurga, de fabrikant van die *state of the art* mestverwerkingsmachine, laat in een filmpje zien hoe dat werkt. De camera zwenkt door een moderne varkensstal, langs een indrukwekkende installatie en een groen weiland. Aan het einde van het proces is het water zo zuiver, dat het in de sloot mag worden geloofd, legt de directeur uit. „Hij tapt een bekertje water uit de machine. „Het is zelfs zo schoon, dat ik het durf te drinken. Proost!“ Medewerkers liggen in een deuk als ze het filmpje zien. Zij zagen zelden iets anders uit de machines komen dan groene drab. AquaPurga valt op in de agrarische wereld. De directeuren rijden in dikke auto's, lopen in maatpakken en delen genereus consumpties uit. „Het waren bepaald geen boeren die op haaren binnenkomen“, herinnert Wiebren van Stralen van boerenbond LTO zich. De met veel tamtamt gepresenteerde plannen klinken veelbelovend, vertelt Theo Dute-weerd van varkenshouderorganisatie NVV. „Boeren zouden hun mest tegen ongekend lage kosten kunnen verwerken.“

AquaPurga verdient daarnaast aan verkoop van producten die de mestverwerking oplevert. Het is niet moeilijk voor die mooie verhalen te vallen. „Het zijn gewoon heel aardige mensen“, verzucht een Brabantse boerin. „Dat vind ik nog steeds.“ Voor haar en haar man was de mestverwerker een uitkomst, in ieder geval in theorie. Mest afvoeren kost varkensboeren veel geld. En de bijdrage die AquaPurga van boeren verwacht, is beperkt. Het apparaat staat op hun erf, maar blijft eigendom van AquaPurga. Er zijn meer enthousiaste boeren in het varkensrijke Brabant. In Esbeek, Lithoijen, Heeswijk-Dinther, Boekel en Someren plaatst AquaPurga mestverwerkers.

Onder vermogende Nederlanders is het enthousiasme zo mogelijk nog groter. Mestpartners, de BV die geld aantrekt voor de activiteiten van AquaPurga, lokt hen met advertenties in glossy's en kranten. Het beloofde rendement is drie-

Mestbedrijf AquaPurga betrad in 2010 vol bravoure het toneel. Vijf jaar later wordt er nog amper mest verwerkt, zitten medewerkers ziek thuis en dreigen investeerders miljoenen te verliezen. Wat ging er mis? Een reconstructie.

GEEN COMMENTAAR

AquaPurga wilde gisteren niet op de ze reconstructie reageren. „Wij zijn druk bezig om zaken op orde te krijgen. We geven nu geen commentaar“, zei directiechef Bér Sweering.

Dit verhaal kwam mede tot stand dankzij een tipgever die gebruik maakte van Pubeleaks: een website die klokkenluiders de kans biedt om informatie veilig en anoniem te versturen naar de pers. Naast rapporten en andere informatie die deze krant via Pubeleaks ontving, hebben we gesproken met investeerders, oud-medewerkers, varkenshouders, betrokkenen uit de agrarische sector en mediale deskundigen.

legt, kan door een fiscaal foefje meteen na de inleg al 140.000 euro tegemoet zien. Gedurende de levensduur van de mestmachine komt daar nog eens een ton bij, is de voorspelling. Vanaf 2010 maken zo'n 500 mensen gebruik van dit aanbod. Samen brengen zij 30 miljoen euro in. Van varkensmest hebben ze weinig kaas gegeten.

Binnen twee jaar wil AquaPurga 120 installatie plaatsen. Maar het zit al snel tegen. Het valt niet mee om varkensmest te splitsen in water en andere stoffen. Soms draait de machine wel, soms een beetje, maar meestal helemaal niet. „Er was altijd iets“, zegt een van boeren die zo'n apparaat op zijn dam had staan. „We hebben er van alles aan gedaan. AquaPurga liet mensen komen uit Frankrijk, Duitsland en zelfs uit Singapore. Wij hebben een loods van 130 meter laten bouwen omdat dat beter zou zijn voor het proces.“ Het is aan de technuemen om de machines aan de praat te krijgen. Ze nemen monsters, proberen het biologische proces bij te sturen en klimmen op containers om aan de installatie te sleutelen. Beschermende werkkleding hebben deze werknemers niet, laat staan gasmaskers. Regelmatig moeten ze naar buiten om een luchtluchje te scheppen. Brandende ogen, hoofdpijn, duizeligheid, hoesten, een misselijk gevoel: iedereen die met de machines werkt, krijgt wel ergens last van. Bij een aantal gaat het echt mis. In april 2013 maakt monteur Roy Leo (27) in z'n eentje een lekbaak schoon, als hij het plots benauwd krijgt en misselijk wordt. „M'n ogen en neus brandden, ik viel bijna flauw.“

Hij weet buiten te komen en rijdt in een roes naar het ziekenhuis in Eindhoven. Ook collega Robert Slieker (35) ontsnap – achteraf gezien – aan de dood, op 16 september 2013 in Lithoijen. Nadat het alarm van de meetapparatuur is gaan piepen, klimt hij een dak op om een leiding te isoleren. „Dat waren de instructies. Op het dak ademde ik te veel schadelijke stoffen in, uit een luchtgat. Dat spul ruik je niet.“ Hij wordt misselijk en draaierig. Eenmaal thuis hoest hij, tot bloeden toe.

Ook Slieker moet naar het ziekenhuis. Leo en Slieker hebben nog steeds klachten. Slieker lijdt aan RADS, een langaandoende die veroorzaakt wordt door eenmalige blootstelling aan schadelijke stoffen. „Vroeger fietste ik zonder problemen een heuvel op. Als ik dat nu doe, sta ik bovenaan te hiegen.“ Zowel Leo als Slieker zit nu thuis. AquaPurga verlegde hun contracten niet. Een bijk van medeleven hebben ze nooit ontvangen. Wellicht heeft de bedrijfsleiding iets anders aan het hoofd. Het wil maar niet lukken de

draaien. Het beoogde aan bij lange na niet gehaald. techniek die ze verkochte als gedacht“, zegt varkensweerd. „Er kwam niets van Van het handjevol installat bouwd, staat een aantal s al twee jaar. Er kraait ge ook al kosten ze 1,6 milio De boeren horen niets v eigenaar van de apparatu met een kostenpost van t ringen, stroom en het op mest. De agrariërs willen kwijt. „Ik wil geen herrie nog geld van ze te krieger ander. „Ik weet van niks. Coppens, mijn naam is h. De particulieren die geld teerden, hebben hun eige dat het licht binnenkott Bronnen stellen dat het p vember geen salaris meer rechtbank in Rotterdam l bedrijf failliet te verklaren in het bezit van deze krat investeerders rampzalig z ment dreigen zij al hun g Het speculeren over de o de is al in volle gang. Wa nen gebleven die particul bracht? AquaPurga wil o ingaan, zoals het ook and te beantwoorden. Investe buiten hun medeweten g een waterstofproject in D Heeft het bedrijf de boel bels, voorzitter van de be van investeerders, wil o gaan. Een andere invest wil blijven, zegt dat de h: AquaPurga het midden h en onkunde. „Er is te laat fouten gemaakt, maar ik zichzelf heeft willen ver werden ze zelf het groots het uiteindelijk misging.“ Over de toekoms van he gende week meer duidel de directie met de invest water heeft niemand het probeert uit alle macht s ken. De laatste hoop is ge we bedrondende langs hau licht levert die genoeg op standen te kunnen weg van nieuwe mestvergiste De investeerder heeft er v meer in. „Wat te mooi lij is ook niet zo mooi op v

3. Whistleblowing platforms at election time

Sebastián Barragán Hidalgo, *Aristegui Noticias*
Mathieu Tourliere, *Proceso*

THE TIP-OFF

Date

May 31th, 2017

Content

Screenshots of WhatsApp conversations, Excel spreadsheets

Submitted to

Aristegui Noticias, Animal Político and Proceso

Submitted by

Anonymous source

THE PUBLICATION

Date

June 2nd, 2017

Title

Gobierno mexiquense utiliza doctores para amarrar votos a Del Mazo

Byline

Sebastián Barragán Hidalgo, Mathieu Tourliere

Publishers

Aristegui Noticias, Proceso

THE OUTCOME

Result

These tip-offs and these publications were received in the middle of an election cycle. This election was the closest ever contested state elections in the Mexican state of Mexico.

The 2017 elections for governor in the state of Mexico involved an electorate of more than 15 million people and political parties employed enormous manpower and money to attract votes. In some cases, they went so far as to use illegal tactics, as documented by **Méxicoleaks**.

The fact is, there was a lot at stake in these elections. Not only is the state of Mexico the country's largest, which also means it has the highest budget of any Mexican state, it is also the historic bastion of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which has not lost a governor's race in the state for the past century. Enrique Peña Nieto, Mexico's current president, was the governor of the state from 2006 until 2012 and several high-ranking members of his administration also served under him when he held this post.

However, in the lead-up to the 2017 elections, the PRI leaders were nervous: for the first time in history, surveys indicated that Alfredo Del Mazo, the PRI candidate and cousin of Peña Nieto, could very well lose the governor's elections to Morena, the candidate of the National Regeneration Movement. All eyes in Mexico were focused on this election as it was deemed likely that the PRI would go to any extreme — even resorting to illegal tactics — to keep the governor's seat.

Méxicoleaks received two leaks that confirmed these fears.

The first files it received confirmed one frequent hypothesis during the campaign: that governments use public funds for shadow structures that seek to obtain votes illegally.

Just a few days before the vote was scheduled, a citizen leaked a file detailing the workings of a WhatsApp group in which officials from the Health Institute of the State of Mexico (ISEM) were organizing brigades to rally votes for Del Mazo, the PRI candidate. Some of the group members were high-ranking officials in the state healthcare system: hospital directors, heads and vice-heads of departments.

The WhatsApp messages published on **Méxicoleaks** provided an unprecedented look at the ruling party's system for illegally getting votes: they revealed how over a ten-month period, doctors exchanged maps and official voter lists from the populous town of Ecatepec. Once voters were identified, the doctors were expected to gather their data and send them charge cards that would supposedly provide economic benefits.

The Ecatepec Town Hall, where the PRI party also holds power, actively participated by ordering public lighting in the areas where the groups of recruited voters were concentrated. These joint efforts are considered illegal because they involve the misappropriation of public funds.

The leak, however, not only unveiled the work the PRI did "on the ground", it also revealed the existence of an electronic platform where the ruling party gathered the names, addresses, phone number and illegal perks given to the recruited voters.

Through **Méxicoleaks**, journalists received the IP addresses and the passwords they needed to access a hidden portal where the PRI stored

directories with the names, addresses and phone numbers its electoral associates, along with the personal information of the voters each had recruited.

The portal and the WhatsApp chats provided extraordinary insight into part of the PRI's electoral workings. According to the documents **Méxicoleaks** received, the associates would receive a call on election day to reach out to the voters they had recruited, in exchange for electronically activating the charge card.

In the information reviewed, **Méxicoleaks** journalists confirmed that the funds were revoked if beneficiaries did not present valid voter credentials at the polls.

After confirming the information, the **Méxicoleaks** reporters made several simultaneous calls to members of the WhatsApp group, including its "leader," Miguel Ángel Muñoz Hernández, an ISEM advisor.

Taken aback by the call, Muñoz claimed to know nothing of the matter and hung up. However, there were voice messages sent to the WhatsApp group in which the official encouraged doctors to rally votes. The other officials contacted also hung up, refusing to comment.

The second leak sent to **Méxicoleaks** involved another WhatsApp chat involving PRI-affiliated youth from Fundación Coliseo who were also commissioned to rally votes in the state of Mexico.

One young man who was a member of the WhatsApp group was not affiliated with the ruling party and did not intend to vote for the PRI candidate; he kept his eye on the chats exchanged by the party-affiliated members for weeks and when he noted some irregularities, he decided to go to **Méxicoleaks**.

One of the members of this group was Abraham de Jesús López Fuentes, who offered on two separate occasions to add senior citizens to the “65 and over” program run by the Department of Social Development (Sedesol), a federal entity that aids Mexico’s poor.

According to Mexican law, it is illegal to use any public program to promote a candidate or public official.

Nonetheless, López Fuentes invited his fellow group members to sign up the elderly in the public program as part of their campaign to win votes for the party. On two separate occasions, he urged them to hurry since the program registrations would have to be completed before the commencement of the pre-election restrictions established by law.

The nature of the files received (the WhatsApp chats) revealed documents secretly exchanged among public officials to illegally rally votes, in addition to providing the names and phone numbers of group participants.

A great number of people read and discussed the reports published by the media outlets that comprise the **Méxicoleaks** alliance: although the complex electoral structures of Mexican parties

are common knowledge, documents that provides details of their workings are rare.

The PRI candidate, Alfredo del Mazo, won the elections with 33.56% of the votes, while Delfina Gómez of the Morena party received 30.78%; it was the closest election in the history of the state of Mexico, one in which public resources were employed to rally votes. Neither case was ever brought before a judge or so much as investigated by the courts. Sadly, for the moment such practices continue to be par for the course in Mexican politics.

mano de programas sociales para apoyar a Del Mazo

Aristegui Noticias recibió, vía Méxicoleaks, copia de un chat entre jóvenes priistas que participan en la campaña de Alfredo del Mazo.



Foto: Artemio Guerra/ Cuartoscuro

Sebastián Barragán

mayo 18, 2017 9:01 am



Integrantes de la Fundación Colosio en el Estado de México se apoyan de programas de la Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (Sedesol) para apoyar la campaña del priista Alfredo del Mazo a la gubernatura del Estado de México, según muestra un chat de la organización.



Aristegui Noticias recibió vía Méxicoleaks copia de un grupo de Whatsapp donde fueron

4. How a tip-off can lead to a completely different story

Kaya Bouma, de Volkskrant

THE TIP-OFF

Date

July or August 2016

Content

Notification without attachments

Submitted to

de Volkskrant

Submitted by

Anonymous

THE PUBLICATION

Date

7 September 2016

Title

Scholen weren zwakke leerlingen van examen

Byline

Kaya Bouma

Publisher

de Volkskrant

THE OUTCOME

Result

The Education Inspectorate comments on the article to say that these exam practices pop up from time to time. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science reiterates that such practices are illegal in a comment to the newspaper.

The final exams have hardly come to an end when a message comes in via **Publeaks NL**. The tip is about a high school in the east of the country. The sender is a pupil who, in his own words, risks 'suspension or even removal' from school by sending this message.

Something is not right at school around the final exams, the informant writes. In the weeks prior to the central examinations, a department head spoke separately to students whose grades were poor. 'Under slight pressure', they were given a 'binding advice' to deregister for the central exams. '(...) with the aim of raising the school's average results for the exams, after disappointing results in recent years.'

After being passed around the editorial office, the message ends up in my inbox. I only started as educational reporter about two weeks ago. 'Slight pressure' and manipulation of the success rates — sounds like a tip worth checking out. A request for more information had already been sent to the whistleblower via **Publeaks NL**.

I approach the school's parent-teacher committee. They refer me to the board of directors, but first I want to speak to the students concerned: the students who did not take the final exams. Was it indeed a matter of a binding advice?

An internet search provides a list of final exam students. I find the telephone number of one of them. 'That rumour is indeed going around our school,' the boy says. He will put me in touch with the students who did not take the final exam. He promises to call back soon.

Then there's silence. I hear nothing more from this student. He doesn't answer his phone or reply to text messages. I approach as many final exam candidates as I can from the school in question through Facebook. I talk to students and parents of students who did not sit the final exams.

Some did indeed feel they had little choice, they say. 'You noticed that they wanted to get rid of you,' says a boy who did not sit the exam and left school without graduating. Was the advice binding? 'That's how they put it.' Other students say the complete opposite: 'My grades were already poor,' one girl tells me. She chose not to participate because of the stress the exams caused her. 'This was my own choice!'

When asked, the school confirms this opinion. The pupils withdrew from the final exams voluntarily, insists the department head mentioned in the tip. I have reached a dead end. The stories differ too much from each other. What one considers to be good advice, is in the eyes of the other, a binding advice. Nothing more is heard from the informant himself. Case closed? Not entirely. Meanwhile, several calls to the Education Inspectorate, the National Action Committee for Students (LAKS in The Netherlands) and Parents & Education, lead to something else.

Apparently, the authorities are familiar with the complaints about students who feel pressured not to take the final exams. Around exam time, telephone calls pour in about schools that, according to them, use a wide range of tricks to exclude students from final exams. One of the softer and more ambiguous variants is the advice to students who score poorly not to take the exams.

'Advice is always permissible,' says a LAKS employee. 'The bottom line is: whose interest is served? The student's or the school's?'

There also appear to be harder versions. There are schools that give students a contract where it is set out in black and white: if the student is not doing well, he may not take the final exams. This is how schools screen for favourable success rates. Grades are considered important by many school boards because parents take them into consideration when choosing a school.

May I look at those contracts? Not long afterwards my inbox fills up. And so another issue presents itself. Stories about 'killer contracts' have been circulating for a while. This method is forbidden, but every year schools that use them pop up. The Education Inspectorate has to deal with them every year but will not disclose details. The NCRV TV program *de Monitor* devoted an interesting broadcast to the subject, but apart from that, it is unexplored territory.

Then in one fell swoop, I receive a series of documents that give a rare insight into the world of exam contracts. In the weeks that follow, I talk to students, parents and directors of schools that use these contracts. I review reports about the pressure at schools in relation to success rates and talk to educational lawyers.

'Schools use contracts to deter weak students from taking exams' is the headline of the final article in the newspaper. The school where it all began is not mentioned in the article. Nothing more was heard from the whistleblower through [Publeaks NL](#). Nonetheless, all that research paid off.



as. Daar dien- f. Foto Reuters

eid'

gering. Als het ar naar huis we verkiezind jaar gebeurt, is het stokje ht in handen alisten. igt komt er hem. Hij beschul-een staats-aatloofgstaal in wat er in Tur-half augustus in 'Edogan zal iken vergele-rt als rechts de 'resident. andrekening referendums-lagen. ond werd e nsenmassa uit-zoek aan het soest er ren-|jaar, een jour-gegaan van het vaangeklaagd. l. Vorige maand urnalisten de zweigerd. ie zijn Tintori ders vasbeslo- te houden. Af- ngen honderd- n de straat op eisen. Vandaag n het hele land e Nationale of de regering 'dat groen de volksraad- oxford bij de onstratie. 'Ik sio neem'. 'o- l in de ogen iticus op een t met kogels- stond an der- n overleefde e werpen. Eeren van een jeren andere op-aasten gesabo- oor haar leven, doen met en ja- rouw om God en

SELECTIE AAN DE POORT VAN HET EINDEXAMEN: SOMMIGE SCHOLEN DOEN DAT VIA CONTRACTEN. EEN STIMULANS VOOR DE LEERLING OF JUIST EEN CONTRAPRODUCTIEVE BRON VAN STRESS?

Door Kaya Bouma

Als Mina Morlok (18) uit Rotterdam in de zomer van 2015 een gesprek heeft met de teamleider van haar school, krijgt ze de keuze. De school, het Wolfert Tweetalig in Rotterdam, twijfelt of de scholier klaar is voor 'het eindexamenjaar. Ze moet eigenlijk blijven zitten in 5vwo, vindt de teamleider. Als ze per se door wil naar het examenjaar kan dat ook, maar dan moet ze wel een contract ondertekenen.

In de overeenkomst staat onder andere dat de scholier alle onderdelen van het schoolexamen in één keer moet halen. Ze mag geen lessen missen zonder goede reden en moet altijd op tijd aanwezig zijn. In de eerste toetsweek moet ze cijfers halen waarmee ze kan slagen voor het eindexamen.

Als Morlok zich niet aan de voorwaarden houdt, mag ze geen eindexamen doen en moet ze terug naar 5vwo. In ruil daarvoor biedt de school extra persoonlijke begeleiding van haar mentor. 'Prima, denkt de scholier. Ze wil zo snel mogelijk klaar zijn met school en tekent het contract. Twee maanden later heeft ze spijt.

Het is een even hardnekkig als onbegrijpbaar fenomeen: 'Jaen drukten er verhalen op van scholen die leerlingen contracten aanbieden waarin ze voorwaars stellen aan deelname aan het eindexamen. De contracten zijn verboden, maar worden toch ingezet. Volgens de scholen als drukmiddel, leerlingen en belangengroepen denken dat het de scholen om het oppoetsven van de slagingspercentages te doen is.

Ho vaak de contracten precies worden gebruikt, of het toeneemt, er vallen geen harde uitspraken over te doen. Scholen lopen er niet mee te koop en leerlingen en hun ouders weten vaak niet dat het niet mag.

Scholieren die toch het idee hebben dat ze onterecht worden uitgesloten van het eindexamen kloppen in de meeste gevallen aan bij het Landelijk Actie Komitee Scholieren (LAKS). Afgelopen schooljaar waren dat er 42, een stijging ten opzichte van 2015; toen waren het er 27. Bij Ouders & Onderwijs kwamen er dit jaar zo'n twintig meldingen binnen.

Als deze organisaties er niet uitkomen met de school, ze kunnen klacht bij de inspectie. Die kritieken

veel stress. In het contract stond bijvoorbeeld dat ik vanaf de eerste toetsweek op slagen moest staan, dat leverde veel druk op.'

Zoals de meeste scholen, zegt het Wolfert Tweetalig het contract alleen gebruikt te hebben om de scholier te motiveren. 'Een pedagogische stok achter de deur', noemt Rob Fens, voorzitter centrale directie van scholengroep Wolfert van Borselen de overeenkomst. Het contract was een uitzondering. 'Dat doen we nu niet meer.' Met slagingspercentages heeft de overeenkomst niets te maken, zeg Fens. 'Het ging om één contract op 120 examenkandidaten. Als we het slagingspercentage hadden willen beïnvloeden dan hadden we veel meer contracten uitgezet.'

Volgens Noortje Schaddenberg, voorzitter van het platform voor examenscrectarissen PLEX en zelf ook werkzaam als teamleider op een middelbare school, kunnen slagingspercentages op de achtergrond een rol spelen bij scholen. 'Ik gebruik deze constructie zelf ook een enkele keer. Aan de ene kant denk je vooral aan de leerling; zo'n contract werkt motiverend.' Maar de overeenkomst komt ook goed van pas bij een slecht scorende scho-

Vanaf de eerste toetsweek moest ik op slagen staan. Dat leverde veel stress op

Mina Morlok kreeg een contract van haar school met de voorwaarden waaronder ze eindexamen mocht doen

liet. Schaddenberg: 'Ik wil een leerling die op zakken staat een vernedering besparen. Voor het slagingspercentage van de school is het natuurlijk ook beter.'

'De druk op scholen om met goede cijfers te komen groeit', zegt Rob Martens, onderwijskundige aan de open universiteit. 'Ouders vinden

GEZEL VOOR HET EINDEXAMEN TE SLAGEN



Mina Morlok (18) slaagde voor haar eindexamen. Haar school stelde, tegen de regels in, een contract op omdat haar cijfers te laag waren. Foto Freek van den Bergh / de

op scholenopdekaart n zijn ze per school terug te vinden. *RIL.Nieuws* en *Ebevier* publiceren bovendien Jaarslij ranglijstjes met scholen die goede scores op eindexamens.

Het gevolg van die toeneemende cijferdruk kan volgens Martens zijn dat steeds meer scholen zwakke leerlingen proberen te weren van de eindexamens. 'Het valt moeilijk te controleren, veel gebeurt buiten het zicht. Maar uit internationaal onderzoek weten we dat scholen die onder grote druk staan dit soort strategisch gedrag vertonen.'

Vlak voor haar eindexamens is Mina Morlok nog altijd een twijfelgeval. Op basis van haar cijfers zal het moeilijk te worden om te slagen, de scholier is bang dat ze van school geen examen mag doen. 'Toen ik er weer eens 's nachts wakker van lag vond ik op internet het LAKS. Medewerkers vertelden me dat dit niet mag.' Met die kennis in haar achterhoofd gaat ze nog één keer in gesprek met de teamleider op haar school. Ze zei: als je naar de rechter stap, houdt dit contract geen stand. Als je per se mee wilt doen, mag je examen doen.'

Morlok doet examen. Na een herkansing haalt ze haar vwo-diploma, met één onvoldoende om haar eind-

Drie trucs voor een hoger slagingspercentage

1 Officieel mogen scholen leerlingen om drie redenen uitschrijven van het eindexamen: als een leerling zelf geen examen mag afleggen; als een leerling het programma van toetsing en afsluiting niet heeft afgerond voor het ingaan van het eindexamen; en bij 'onregelmatigheden', zoals plagiaat of spieken. De onderwijnspectie, het LAKS, Ouders & Onderwijs en andere betrokken instanties stichten de afgelopen jaren op verschillende methoden om slecht presterende leerlingen van het examen te weren. Dit zijn

Blijven zitten in het voorlaatste jaar

De eerste selectie begint vaak bij de overgang naar het eindexamenjaar. Slecht presterende leerlingen krijgen het advies naar een lager niveau te gaan of te blijven zitten. Volgens het CPB lijkt het erop dat scholen leerlingen in het jaar voor het examen laten zitten om te voorkomen dat ze zakken voor het examen.

Uit een rapport dat de instantie vorig jaar naar buiten bracht, blijkt dat het aantal zitblijvers in het voortgezet onderwijs piekt in het voorlaatste schooljaar. Was het aantal zitblijvers in 3 havo in 2013 gemiddeld nog 9 procent, voor 4 havo lag dat percentage dat jaar op 18 procent. Bijna één op de vijf leerlingen ging kortom niet door naar het eindexamenjaar. Volgens het CPB is rapport is dat deels te verklaren omdat scholen 'externe

Voorwaardelijk over via een contract

In sommige gevallen besluiten scholen leerlingen over wie twijfel bestaat alsnog door te laten naar het eindexamenjaar, maar onder bepaalde voorwaarden. De inspectie hamert er elk jaar weer op: scholen mogen leerlingen niet voorwaardelijk plaatsen in het eindexamenjaar. Dat betekent dat een leerling, eenmaal over naar 4 vmb, 5 havo of 6 vwo - mits er geen gekke dingen gebeuren - gewoon mee kan doen aan het eindexamen.

Toch duiken er telkens weer scholen op die leerlingen alleen laten overgaan als ze een contract ondertekenen waarin ze verklaren zich terug te trekken als ze niet op slagen staan. 'Als scholen zo'n officieel contract sturen, komt het over alsof dat kan en heel normaal is,' zo' Petra Hiet-

Weigering na sl schoolexamen

'Een klasleerkerje', noemt werkwijze bij het LAKS. Scholieren, mondeling of mede dat ze geen eindexamen doen omdat ze te slecht hebben gehaald tijdens de mens. 'Sommige leerlingen pas een dag voor examens te horen d mee mogen doen', zitter Sven Aanden. 'I kunnen ze niet in de tegen zo'n beslissing. ' riant gaat soms gepaard r tract waarin ouders verkla zoon of dochter terug te tr het eindexamen.

Scholen mogen leerling bieden mee te doen aan de men omdat ze er niet goed staan. Voor de uitslag tellen mens even zwaar mee als

B. Why laws to protect whistleblowers matter for us

Anna Myers, Whistleblowing
International Network

PERSONALIA

Name

Anna Myers

Biography

Anna Myers serves as the Director of the Whistleblowing International Network (WIN). Anna helped establish WIN, which is a network of civil society organizations that helps build capacity to defend and protect whistleblowing around the world. She is a legal expert with over 15 years experience in the field of public interest whistleblowing and anti-corruption.

Previously, Anna Myers was Deputy Director at Public Concern at Work (PCaW) — the UK’s leading whistleblowing authority — for nine years and was UK evaluator for GRECO (Council of Europe’s Group of States against Corruption). She has advised hundreds of individual whistleblowers in the UK and has long worked with governments and civil society in North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Leon Willems describes in the introduction to this anthology how an important story hit the airwaves via **PubLeaks NL** because those who had the authority to address a serious problem were failing to do so. It reveals the true value of whistleblowing in preventing disaster. The anonymous whistleblower that revealed the *Life threatening situation in Christmas market-caves* knew that the mayor of Valkenburg was failing to discharge his obligations to protect the public; letting other interests override serious safety warnings that the Christmas market cave was an underground fire trap. There had been no proper scrutiny of the merits of his decision not to act until the story was made public. Plenty of people were doing their jobs properly but the message was blocked at the highest level. Someone — likely working close to the fire service or the mayor’s office — finally decided to let the public know.

On the 14 June 2017, just months before the Dutch story was made public, 72 people were killed in the Grenfell Tower fire in London. A fire that began in a lower level flat of a social housing tower block quickly turned into a blaze that engulfed the entire structure. The directions the fire service gave to residents to stay inside their homes proved disastrous. The community looked on in horror while those trapped inside called their families to say goodbye.

We now know that the fire exits were not up to standard and that the building’s external cladding was highly flammable. Repeated warnings were made over many years. An independent public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower disaster opened in May 2018. It began with two weeks of moving testimony from family and friends about the lives of those who perished.

The inquiry will take 18 months to examine the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire and make recommendations to the UK's Prime Minister. There is public outrage about how decisions were made and warnings ignored.

Laws to protect whistleblowers make serious sense. These laws make it clear that it is right to speak up. They make it illegal to punish someone directly or indirectly for reporting a concern about risk, wrongdoing or abuse of power to those who have a responsibility to address it — whether that is their own employer or another organisation. The laws must also protect public disclosures via the media about wrongdoing or other matters that the public has the right to know. If we make it too difficult for people to act in the interests of others, we risk not learning about serious problems before it is too late.

There are an increasing number of whistleblowers raising important issues that impact people's lives around the world. Laws to protect these brave individuals help us hold those with power to account, whether in government or corporations. Whistleblowing laws are not the only way to ensure the public has the information it needs but they are an important resource to those who see the obstacles that are in the way, whether by accident or by design, and can act to bypass or remove them. The rest is up to us.

The people of Valkenburg are lucky. It is thanks to whistleblowing platforms like **Publeaks** that they can make sure their underground Christmas market is the happy carefree event it is meant to be, safe for all to enjoy.

5. **Méxicoleaks** is not a vehicle for politics

Claudia Ocaranza, *Animal Político*
Nayeli Roldan, *Animal Político*

THE TIP-OFF

Date

September 1st, 2016

Content

Contracts, HR documentation and internal CFE regulations

Submitted to

All [Méxicoleaks](#) partner newsrooms

Submitted by

Anonymous source

THE PUBLICATION

Date

September 25th, 2016

Title

Enrique Ochoa dona a fundaciones la liquidación de 1.2 mdp que le dieron al renunciar a CFE

Byline

Claudia Ocaranza,
Nayeli Roldan

Publishers

Animal Político, Proceso, Aristegui Noticias, Más de 131, PODER and Pie de Pagina

THE OUTCOME

Result

Ochoa admits to receiving excess severance payments and donates money to charity.

In September 2016, Enrique Ochoa had recently been appointed president of Mexico's ruling party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). His first task was to deal with the accusations of corruption against Veracruz Governor Javier Duarte, whom President Enrique Peña Nieto had named as an example of the "new generation of the PRI" during the 2012 elections.

To accept his new appointment, Ochoa had resigned his directorship with the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE), the state energy firm that he had headed for two years and five months. With regards to his resignation, [Méxicoleaks](#) received documents showing that Ochoa had received 1.2 million Mexican dollars as a settlement from the CFE. However, because he had resigned and not been dismissed, the payment should have been 231,118 Mexican dollars, as established by the Federal Labor Law and the CFE Workers Manual. The amount he received was equal to nine months of his salary — half of the time he had in fact worked for the commission — and was presumably an improper payment.

It appeared that the information could sully not only Ochoa but his entire party: the new head of PRI had taken a solid stance against corruption among party members but had privately accepted an improper payment from a public entity. Right around the same time, Governor Duarte was thrown out of the ruling party, and the leak revealed Ochoa's contradictory position.

However, when [Méxicoleaks](#) began, its founders had decided that regardless of the relevance of a link to a current-day event, the platform would

only publish information that had been double-checked. The leak was information of public interest, since an official had received public funds, but it was essential to confirm the authenticity of the documents and assure that the money received had, in fact, constituted an improper payment. This would protect **Méxicoleaks** in case certain individuals intended to utilize the information to undermine someone.

Among the documents sent to the **Méxicoleaks** platform was a copy of the check for 1.2 million Mexican dollars with Ochoa's signature, Ochoa's electronic status change record in SAP from "active" to "voluntary separation," and status change records for other former CFE directors. Therefore, as always, the work of **Méxicoleaks** involved in-depth investigation and intense reporting to ensure the authenticity of the documents. The first step involved obtaining the CFE Workers Manual through both reporter sources and public information access, to confirm the criteria which applied to Ochoa's settlement and the CFE policy.

To ensure the documents were authentic, **Méxicoleaks** paid a visit to the Federal Conflict Resolution and Arbitration Court, which stores files on all termination of employment between companies and their employees. There we located the file with all relevant documents, including one with Ochoa's signature acknowledging receipt of the check for 1.2 million Mexican dollars.

In addition, we sought out labor rights experts who explained the legal criteria for differentiating settlements for resignation from severance payment upon termination. The experts

confirmed that Ochoa had in fact received an improper payment.

Based on the **Méxicoleaks** methodology, one step remained: before going public with the leak, it was necessary to contact those involved to ask them if they had any comments. Ochoa's public relations team was contacted to explain the nature of the investigation, which was nearly finished at that point. Initially Ochoa refused to be interviewed though he later agreed to meet with two reporters from the research team.

Ochoa came to the interview with a big smile, as if he had nothing to worry about, though he was accompanied by two CFE lawyers, a PRI senator and his PR team.

Before the reporters began recording, Ochoa insinuated that **Méxicoleaks** was being used to thwart his attempts to remove corrupt party members like Governor Javier Duarte: a case of shooting the messenger to diminish the importance of the message.

"Duarte will be deprived of his political rights later this week," said Ochoa. "There are no coincidences in politics. So I'm wondering, this information you want to publish, who sent it?"

"**Méxicoleaks** is not a platform for attacking anyone. This information is of public interest, which is why we are investigating," replied the reporters.

The CFE lawyers—who theoretically had no connection with Ochoa any longer—had come from their state offices for the meeting between

the entity's former director and the reporters. For more than an hour, they argued that the payment corresponded to that received by any high-ranking official who left the institution.

"It is moral — or ethical — to receive a settlement equivalent to nearly a year's salary after resigning?" the reporters asked.

"The settlement I received from the CFE is a standard settlement (...) I received no preferential treatment and the norms apply to me just as they would apply to any other official in my same position moving forward (...) It's a suitable payment, because it's in accordance with CFE norms," said Ochoa.

After the interview, **Méxicoleaks** had scheduled to release the news on Monday, September 26, and it informed both Ochoa and his PR collaborators of the publication date. However, on Saturday, September 24, the PRI social communications director called a **Méxicoleaks** member to ask whether Reforma would also be publishing with **Méxicoleaks**. He said that a Reforma reporter had asked for an interview with Ochoa and sent the recording of the **Méxicoleaks** interview, as it was "easier" than scheduling another interview with the head of the PRI party.

The PRI team's strategy of sending the information to another media outlet appeared to be an attempt to diminish the impact of the publication of the news by the **Méxicoleaks** members, and thus benefit Enrique Ochoa.

In response to this situation, those of us at **Méxicoleaks** decided to publish the same day

as Reforma, Sunday, September 25, with the assurance that our articles in *Aristegui Noticias*, *Proceso*, *Periodistas de a Pie*, *Animal Político* and *PODER* would provide more in-depth reporting, in addition to quoting both experts and Ochoa himself. That same day, Reforma went public with quotes from the interview conducted by **Méxicoleaks** reporters with the PRI leader.

Despite this disloyalty, the story caused quite an impact. Public opinion turned against Ochoa and other news outlets replicated the information in different ways, with the Mexican paper *La Jornada* releasing cartoons by Helguera and Rocha, and with a story by a Proceso reporter that followed up on employee settlements in the public sector.

Ochoa was under so much pressure that he decided to donate the money to the Foundation Michou y Mau for child burn survivors and the UNAM Foundation in December 2016. Yet Ochoa never admitted that he had in fact received an improper payment. "Severance pay is legal and shall continue to be legal. My donation is a voluntary act that does not seek to cover up anything. It is a transparent, public act."

Ontdek wat Managed Hybrid Cloud
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Bekijk het hier



El líder nacional del PRI, Enrique Ochoa Reza. Foto: Benjamin Flores

La liquidación de Ochoa Reza: millonaria... e "indebida"

POR HOMERO CAMPÁ Y MATHIEU TOURLIÈRE, 25 SEPTIEMBRE, 2016 MEXICOLEAKS



A pesar de que Enrique Ochoa Reza renunció voluntariamente a la dirección de la Comisión Federal de Electricidad, cobró una liquidación de un millón 206 mil pesos, cinco veces mayor a la que le correspondía. El actual dirigente nacional del PRI, que se proclama "zar anticorrupción", recurrió a un retorcido proceso administrativo –legal–, asegura él; "indebido", sostiene un especialista en derecho laboral– para obtener su millonaria liquidación. Los engranajes de dicho proceso son expuestos por una investigación de la alianza Méxicoleaks –de la que este semanario forma parte –, realizada con base en documentos filtrados a su plataforma digital.

CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (Proceso).- La renuncia de Enrique Ochoa Reza a la dirección de la Comisión Federal de Electricidad (CFE) fue costosa para el erario: el actual dirigente del PRI recibió una liquidación de un millón 206 mil 271 pesos por haber trabajado en esa empresa del Estado apenas 2 años con 155 días; es decir, de un jalón recibió el equivalente a nueve meses de su salario.



Ontdek wat Managed Hybrid Cloud
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Bekijk het hier

CARTÓN DE LA SEMANA

4 julio, 2018



Monosapiens

REPORTAJE ESPECIAL

4 julio, 2018

Migración: La doble car...



6. A leak that prevented the destruction of pre-Hispanic ruins

Celia Guerrero, *Periodistas de a Pie*

THE TIP-OFF

Date

November 21st, 2015

Content

Construction licence, photos of the archeological site

Submitted to

All [Méxicoleaks](#) partner newsrooms

Submitted by

Citizens living in and near the Valle de Bravo

THE OUTCOME

Result

The social movement against construction at an archaeological site in Mexico increases in strength and manages to stop the construction of a shopping mall.

THE PUBLICATION

Date

March 8th, 2016

Title

Valle de Bravo, un “pueblo mágico” construido sobre vestigios

Byline

Celia Guerrero

Publishers

Pie de Pagina, Animal Político, Proceso, Aristegui Noticias, Más de 131 and PODER

When we think of leaks, our minds immediately focus on enormous quantities of data or digitized documents that become public thanks to today’s tech-savvy activists. And to a certain extent, that is the case. However, there is also an analog aspect that is relevant to the activities related to whistleblowing and investigative journalism.

Investigations that begin with digital information can later spill over into physical archives or other documents that do not necessarily originate in a digital medium. In the case of a leak to the digital platform of [Méxicoleaks](#), they can start with a simple clue that leads us to historical archives that have not been digitized.

In 2016, a tip-off on the destruction of a pre-Hispanic archeological site in the tourist town Valle de Bravo, west of Mexico City, reached the media outlets that comprise [Méxicoleaks](#). Valle de Bravo was a ceremonial site of the Matlatzinca people who inhabited the state of Mexico more than 1,400 years ago. Today, luxury residences go for millions of dollars on this lakeside peninsula.

The leaked documents included architectural plans for a shopping center, “Patio Valle.” The plans considered the partial archeological recovery of the base of a pyramid in the parking lot of a grocery store. The source reported on the systematic destruction of an area of archaeological importance and the collusion of the authorities that had granted construction permits there. Among the permits was one for the shopping mall, an investment by a company owned by powerful Mexican entrepreneurs.

Journalistic investigation and the double-checking of information posed different challenges in this case. The first involved a historical archive of archaeological documents on the site's importance that had not been digitized. Later, it was necessary to compare the analog map with the digital one to verify the exact location of the sites where the ruins were located; constructions now exist on many of them.

Once the information had been verified, reports were published by each of the media outlets and partner organizations of **Méxicoleaks**. These articles evidenced the destruction of the site and created sufficient media, social and political pressure to prevent the construction of the shopping mall.

The National Anthropology and History Institute (INAH) is the Mexican government office entrusted with the preservation of the country's archaeological, anthropological and historical heritage. One of its tasks is to research Mesoamerican cultures within the country.

Founded in 1939, the INAH has an important historical archive that includes archeological research; it offers public access with certain restrictions. Visiting the archive was one of the first steps taken by the group of **Méxicoleaks** journalists to double-check the leaked information.

After poring over dozens of folders related to this archeological site at the INAH archive, we discovered that research had been carried out at Valle de Bravo since 1972. The first archaeological study had confirmed the complex nature of the

site and its importance. Additionally, it divided the site into five sections, each of which had been explored by different archeologists over a 30-year period.

The historical archive included notes, photographs and maps — some rudimentary and others more developed — but both the format and technical language of all the materials hindered the investigation. It was necessary to make several visits to the archive over the course of several weeks; two reporters were involved, along with an assistant who gathered and organized the substantial information included in the news reports.

The digitalization of the archive material allowed the historical pictures and maps to be compared with the current state of each property. Through mapping tools and satellite photographs, it was possible to reconstruct the terrain, visit it and understand the ruins without having to set foot on the site.

During the investigation, it became evident that the institution created to protect the archeological heritage had been more focused on archeological recovery than on preservation. In other words, the archeological area of Valle de Bravo, inhabited during the Preclassic period just like Teotihuacan, was systematically destroyed and although some of the relics had been recovered, it had been looted on more than one occasion and eventually relegated to oblivion.

Even with the investigations of several group of archeologists, the INAH authorities, in collusion with the municipal authorities, began to approve

INAH aprueba la construcción de un centro comercial en una zona arqueológica de Valle de Bravo

La empresa Desarrollo Las Monjas, propiedad de Alejandro Martí y Alejandro Aboumrád, desarrolla una construcción en una "importante" zona arqueológica con vestigios de la cultura matlatzeca, conocida como La Peña, donde pobladores y especialistas reclaman devastación y afectaciones.



Nayeli Roldán (@nayaroldan)

marzo 8 2016 08:26



Comentarios



FONDEA el periodismo independiente



El Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) autorizó a la empresa Desarrollo Las Monjas, propiedad de Alejandro Martí y Alejandro Aboumrád, la construcción de un centro comercial en una zona arqueológica de Valle de Bravo, Estado de México, protegida desde 1984 debido a su valor histórico.

Éste es el capítulo más reciente de edificación sobre el "importante" sitio arqueológico conocido como La Peña, definido así por los propios antropólogos.

Desde hace tres décadas empezaron estas edificaciones gracias a que el INAH avaló que inmobiliarias construyeran casas de descanso en la parte sur del terreno, sin realizar investigación ni rescate de vestigios, y a que pobladores edificaran de manera irregular, en la parte norte. Sin embargo, ahora habrá incluso un centro comercial.



the construction of luxury residences alongside the lake on these properties. The final permit went to the group owned by Alejandro Martí and Alejandro Aboumrad, both of whom hail from powerful Mexican families.

Several factors contributed to ultimately preventing the construction of the mall: public pressure to protect the last remaining relics of an archeological zone that had been decimated; the prominence of the entrepreneurs behind the mall; and the joint publication of the reports documenting the destruction by the **Méxicoleaks** alliance.

The fact is that this incident began with an activist who blew the whistle on the destruction of the archeological area, after documenting it on his own for years. During the investigation, the whistleblower became a source and a key to understanding the collusion between the authorities and the entrepreneurs. In addition, he served as a liaison with archaeologists who worked on the archeological recovery at the site and who were willing to share the political-cultural strategy behind the institution that had employed them.

The strategy of a group of local activists to spread the reports was also critical to the social and political pressure that has continued to prevent the shopping mall from being constructed to this day.

7. Suppose it is true: Krol fails to pay his own pensions

Jeroen Trommelen, *Investico*

THE TIP-OFF

Date

September 24th, 2013

Content

Short explanation without attachments

Submitted to

de Volkskrant,
NRC Handelsblad

Submitted by

Anonymous

THE PUBLICATIONS

Date

October 4th, 2013

Title (1)

Krol ontdekt voor
tienduizenden Euro's aan
pensioenpremies

Title (2)

Our-colleaga's:
pensioenpauze Henk
'een gotspe'

Byline

Jeroen Trommelen

Publisher

de Volkskrant

THE OUTCOME

Date

October 4th, 2013

Result

Parliamentarian Henk Krol
resigns from office.

It is not often that a politician resigns as Member of Parliament on the morning of a newspaper publication. The exception occurred on 4th October 2013 when two articles appeared in *de Volkskrant* about Henk Krol, Member of Parliament for the 50Plus party. The man who presented himself as the champion of better pensions, turned out to have kept tens of thousands of euros from his own personnel's pension fund when director and editor-in-chief of the *Gay Krant* magazine.

That was 'breach of contract and an utter failure', concluded Evert Verhulp, professor of labour law at the University of Amsterdam. For former employees that meant a hefty loss of pension. For some, all that was left after twelve years of work, was a meagre pension of between 26 and 60 euros per month.

Krol's now bankrupt company had ceased payment to the pension funds to save costs. As MP, Krol had fiercely opposed this type of practice. Before his own affair came to light, as a parliamentarian he was vociferously against the 'robbery' of billions from pension funds to 'close gaps in government budgets or to inflate company profits. That means pensioners have to give up a lot of percentages. That's downright theft.'

Former employees said that Krol denied having been aware of the arrears, but he did know all about the day-to-day operations of the company. One scandalous fact that came to light was that while Krol cut back on pensions, printing costs, freelancers and photos, he systematically left one expense untouched. That was the salary of his

former life partner, Joop Boonstra, who had founded the magazine with him but who had not done anything for the last ten years.

On the morning of that publication, Henk Krol wrote his letter of resignation. 'After the article in *de Volkskrant* it is not possible for me to continue as the people's representative. I have no choice but to resign my position,' it read. He denied nothing but remarked 'my enemies have won.'

His period of regret and repentance did not last long. Within a year, Krol was back in the House of Representatives as the 50Plus party leader.

For **Publeaks NL** the Krol affair was probably an important publicity success. The newspaper article specifically mentioned that the tip about the affair came from the relatively young and unknown whistleblowers website. On the morning of the publication — when the consequences turned out to be unexpectedly large — I realised that that new method might raise questions with the reader. So, I immediately typed an explanation about it, published it on my personal blog and told the outside world about it via Twitter. In the course of the day, that piece also appeared on *de Volkskrant* website, where it was one of the most read contributions of the day.

Almost all the talk shows and news programmes telephoned. Apart from the real news about Krol's resignation, they were specifically interested in the way in which the news had reached the outside world. I thought I had explained that adequately in my piece, so I let the chance of temporary celebrity pass me by.

What was the tip? It consisted of three paragraphs of text about unpaid pension contributions for *Gay Krant* employees in the early nineties. There were no documents included. It arrived on Tuesday 24th September and was sent to both *de Volkskrant* and the *NRC Handelsblad*. That's how the collective whistleblowers site works: as a source, you can tick multiple media at the same time.

That's no fun for us journalists, I wrote. If you want to stay one step ahead of colleagues, you are forced into rapid triage and can sometimes lose a lot of time checking tips, 'just to be sure'. This tip seemed to have come in second hand and was not easy to verify. What's more, I had a deadline for another article and I was not even the newspaper's pension expert. Earlier, the administrator of our **Publeaks**-laptop, data journalist Sybren Kooistra, had tried to pass the tip onto other colleagues, but they turned out to be unavailable.

But just suppose for one second that it was all true! I searched on LinkedIn for former *Gay Krant* editors from the period mentioned. I got the most important editor-in-chief from that time on the phone. He knew nothing and was able to convince me that if something like that had happened, it would have been discussed in the small editing department of the time. I contacted the curator of the *Gay Krant*, who was still working on settling the bankruptcy. He also said he knew nothing about the story of overdue pension funds.

So, the tip was incorrect, or so it appeared. "At times like that, it's a problem that *de Volkskrant* no longer has real investigative

editors,” I wrote that morning in my hastily typed explanatory piece. “Who has the time to further verify a suspected incorrect report? On the other hand: if it were true, pension defender Henk Krol would have some explaining to do.”

That same day, my remark about the lack of real investigative editors got me into a fierce argument with my editor-in-chief. He called me up, furious, and said I had damaged the newspaper. I should discuss the desirability of a separate editorial team with him; not out in the open.

But that was not how the comment was intended. I wanted to explain that, despite pressure from possible competition, we had not just taken an anonymous tip, but that we had done solid research, even if it was rushed. Together with data journalist Sybren Kooistra I had found other former employees of the *Gay Krant* via their profiles on Facebook, LinkedIn and Hyves. One employee said, ‘he had heard the rumour’, but knew nothing himself (which did not turn out to be true later). I asked if I could send a mail through him to people who might know something about it. That’s what happened.

A couple of days later we were contacted by someone who wanted to tell the true story, and through him a few more too. It had to be anonymous because of the confidentiality clause that employees had signed. Some former employees are now freelancers and did not want to be seen as recalcitrant or difficult. Others worked for the re-launched *Gay Krant* under a new owner.

So, everyone had his own reason for not wanting to go ‘on the record’ with their story. But through them I could get the written evidence that the **Publeaks NL** tip-off had unfortunately not included.

Some readers suspected that *de Volkskrant* was out to see Henk Krol fall from grace, as the first reactions showed. In my view, my explanation showed that this was certainly not the case. I was just doing my job. It was a relatively simple, journalistic exercise based on a tip that seemed a bit too serious to ignore. The immediate impact of the publication was extraordinary but also temporary — as it turned out a year later. Much to my surprise, in 2014 I was awarded the Tegel for it, the press prize for the best news publication of that year.

I remained bothered by the remark about the investigative editors. It is, after all, better to have a specialised group of investigative reporters for stories that often present themselves spontaneously, take a lot of time and are socially relevant. In September 2016 I decided to follow my heart and became editor-in-chief of Investico, a platform for investigative journalism.

Krol ontdook pensioenprem

Van onze verslaggever
Jeroen Trommelen

AMSTERDAM Henk Krol, de voorman van ouderenpartij 50Plus en voorvechter van goede pensioenen, heeft als werkgever van de *Gay Krant* zelf jarenlang de betaling van pensioenpremie voor zijn personeel ontboden.

Tussen 2004 en 2007 en in 2009 betaalde Krol geen werkgeversbijdrage voor het pensioen van zijn werknemers, en hield hij het geld achter dat de mensen zelf inlegden. De oud-medewerkers hebben daardoor nu een pensioengat van vier of vijf jaar. Ondanks een dienstverband van twaalf tot veertien jaar hebben ze als gevolg hiervan een pensioen opgebouwd dat vaak niet hoger is dan 60 euro per maand.

De handelwijze van de werkgever 'komt neer op contractbreuk en pure wanprestatie', zegt hoogleraar arbeidsrecht Evert Verhulp van de Universiteit van Amsterdam. Pensioenen zijn deel van de arbeidsvoorwaarden die niet eenzijdig kunnen worden veranderd. Werkgevers zijn verplicht de premies te voldoen.

Krol, toen directeur en hoofdredacteur van de *Gay Krant* en nu fractievoorzitter van 50Plus, zegt dat hij jaren niet wist van het niet afdragen van pensioenpremie. 'Niemand wist het. Het was de verantwoordelijkheid van een werknemster die haar taak niet goed heeft gedaan.' Formeel en juridisch was hij verantwoordelijk, erkent hij. 'Maar dat was niet hoe de *Gay Krant* toen functioneerde.'

In totaal hield Krol als werkgever vele tienduizenden euro achter, die gestort moesten worden bij pensioenverzekeraar Nationale Nederlanden.



Niemand wist dat het moest. Het was de taak van een werknemster die haar werk niet goed heeft gedaan

Henk Krol Fractievoorzitter 50Plus



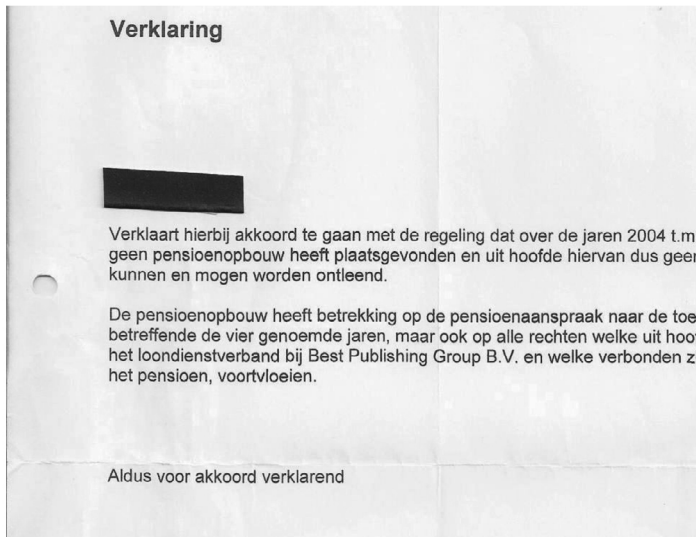
Foto ANP

moesten toen een verklaring ondertekenen waarin men afzag van pensioen over de periode van vier jaar.

Als het personeel niet direct tekende, zou het bedrijf volgens Krol failliet gaan en geen lening meer krijgen van de bank. Dat faillissement werd in maart alsnog uitgesproken.

Krol noemt de pensioenverklaring een 'gezamenlijk besluit', zoals volgens hem alles gezamenlijk werd besproken bij de krant. 'De *Gay Krant* was nooit een gewoon commercieel bedrijf, eerder een ideeel collectief.'

Maar ook na 2007 ging het bedrijf van Krol in de fout. Volgens Nationale Nederlanden heeft de werkge



Detail van de verklaring die de werknemers werd voorgelegd.

keraar met Best Publishing Group.

Als voorman van 50Plus sprak Krol zich steeds krachtig uit tegen bedrijven die misbruik maken van pensioengelden. Tijdens het debat over de regeringsverklaring keerde hij zich tegen het 'wegroven' van miljarden uit diverse pensioenfondsen. Dat gebeurde 'om gaten in de overheidsbegroting te dichten of om bedrijfswinsten op te poetsen', aldus Krol. 'Het uitgestelde loon kwam zo onder druk en nu moeten de gepensioneerden vele procenten inleveren. Dit is gewoon diefstal.'

Pensioenverzekeraar Nationale Nederlanden erkent dat ook hij het personeel van de *Gay Krant* nooit heeft ingee

waarin het overlijden van de werknemers werd verzekerd. De pensioenpremie zelf betaalde hij inderdaad niet. Daar hebben we hem meermalen in brieven op aangesproken, maar het personeel niet. De verplichting dat te doen, werd pas opgenomen in de nieuwe pensioenwet van 2007.'

Toenmalig accountant Ton Timmermans van Best Publishing Group wil niets kwijt over het toezicht op de betaling. 'Onze beroepscode verbiedt daarover iets te zeggen en ik wil niet het risico lopen op een schadeclaim.'

Dit artikel kwam mede tot stand door een aan de Volkskrant gerichte tin via

.....
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8. Publeaks NL on snooping in medical records

Jan Born, *EenVandaag*
Lotte Kuipers, *EenVandaag*

THE TIP-OFF

Date

April 2018

Content

Notification without attachments

Submitted to

de Volkskrant

Submitted by

Anonymous

THE PUBLICATION

Date

April 5th, 2018

Title

Tientallen snuffelden ongeoorloofd in medisch dossier Barbie

Byline

Jan Born, Lotte Kuipers

Publisher

EenVandaag

THE OUTCOME

Result

Haga Hospital files a report with the Dutch Data Protection Authority. Questions are raised in Dutch Parliament. Following an internal investigation 85 members of staff at the Haga hospital are formally reprimanded.

In the spring of 2018, a short tip came in on the *EenVandaag* [Publeaks NL](#) account, causing great commotion when it reached publication. The whistleblower reported anonymously that there was to be a major investigation into the Haga Hospital in The Hague, concerning more than 80 unauthorised viewings of the medical records of a Dutch celebrity hospitalized there at the time.

The Dutch celebrity in question was reality-star Samantha de Jong, popularly known as ‘Barbie’. Up to then, the hospital had kept quiet about the investigation, because checking medical records without good reason is a gross violation of patient privacy. Although this tip naturally attracts more attention because it concerns a Dutch celebrity, I am immediately triggered by ‘medical records’ and ‘privacy’. The discussion about security of electronic patient records has been around for some time in the Netherlands and neighbouring countries, where medical records are digitized more and more, and exchanged between care providers electronically.

The tip is concise, but that doesn’t matter. An earlier tip that reached me via [Publeaks NL](#), was about “inadequate fire safety in the caves of Valkenburg and the Christmas markets held there”. It was a single sentence, which brought us three stories about what was and is wrong at the caves.

Let’s get back to Barbie, and the tip. Of course, I had to verify that the tip was correct. Before I made the call to the hospital, me and our intern, Lotte, first made several calls to various organisations that deal with this type of incidents. From the Dutch Association of Hospitals to the

Dutch Data Protection Authority, from the Patient Federation to the Royal Dutch Medical Society. Without giving away too much, we first wanted to know what the rules are. What happens when someone snoops around in patient records without the proper authorisation?

The informant told us that he/she runs the risk of losing his or her job. That is why we proceeded cautiously. I call the Haga Hospital, hoping to have the **Publeaks NL** tip confirmed. That took a while, but we eventually received confirmation from the hospital the day after we received the tip. I let the hospital tell me who's medical records are concerned, and I also want to hear straight from the horse's mouths just how many times these records were accessed.

It turns out that since March 2018 an investigation had been ongoing and that the breach of privacy had not been reported to the Dutch Data Protection Authority. Shortly after my telephone call, the Haga Hospital apparently did inform the Dutch Data Protection Authority. We set dates for interviews and I prepared a press release.

Since the tip was sent to several media and I am the second person to have opened it, I remain uncertain until the next morning whether we can keep this story 'dry'. In other words, that after investigation, *EenVandaag* is the first to publish, without other media aware of our research. When it is clear I am the first and only person so far to have telephoned the Haga Hospital, I am more confident. We jointly agree that they won't work with third parties while in return I will keep the hospital informed about what we intend to publish.

At 6 o'clock in the morning, the press release is sent to the various media and our research is published online. The news explodes, it's all over the place, on every platform. And the follow-up stories are still running to this day. In our items we explicitly mention that the tip came to us via **Publeaks NL**. We also did that with earlier, valuable tips received via **Publeaks NL**. Our experience is that this leads to more new tips and it's a sign of appreciation for those who have taken the trouble to 'leak' to *EenVandaag*.

There is plenty of room for improvement, but, in this sense, **Publeaks NL** lives up to our expectations. Whistleblowing pays off, especially when it comes to matters that concern everyone. Do you want to report something? Then do it preferably to *EenVandaag*.

Actueel › 'Tientallen snuffelden ongeoorloofd in medisch dossier Barbie'

'Tientallen snuffelden ongeoorloofd in medisch dossier Barbie'

05-04-2018 | Gezondheid | Redactie: Jan Born, Lotte Kuipers | Verslag: Herman Zaalberg



</> Dit item op uw eigen site plaatsen



Tientallen medewerkers van het Haga-ziekenhuis in Den Haag hebben ongeoorloofd het medisch dossier van BN'er Samantha de Jong, beter bekend als Barbie, bekeken. Dat meldt een tipgever via klokkenluidersite Publeaks aan EenVandaag. Het Haga-ziekenhuis bevestigt dat sinds half maart een intern onderzoek loopt.

UPDATE

Naar aanleiding van dit item van EenVandaag stelde Kamerlid Sharon Dijksma (PvdA) Kamervragen. Bruno Bruins (VVD), minister voor Medische Zorg en Sport: "De beveiliging van medische gegevens valt onder de verantwoordelijkheid van de ziekenhuizen zelf en de regels zijn streng en duidelijk. Het is aan de Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens om hierop

Het Elektronisch Patiëntendossier

9 artikelen

- [HagaZiekenhuis neemt extra maatregelen na onrechtmatig raadplegen patiëntendossier Barbie](#)
 26-04-2018
- ['Slachtoffer van dossiergluuders? Ga naar de tuchtrechter'](#)
 05-04-2018
- ['Tientallen snuffelden ongeoorloofd in medisch dossier Barbie'](#)
 05-04-2018
- [Opvolger elektronisch patiëntendossier gaat er komen](#)
 16-11-2017
- ['Zonder patiëntendossier moeizaam of geen medicatie'](#)
 12-05-2017

Alle artikelen >

C. Whistleblowers are essential for informed citizens and vital democracies

Antoine Deltour, LuxLeaks whistleblower

PERSONALIA

Name

Antoine Deltour

Biography

LuxLeaks whistleblower

I was working as an auditor for a large accounting firm in Luxembourg when I discovered that the firm was working for clients with tax practices that were outrageously unfair beyond your imagination. The Luxembourgish tax administration gave written consent, in extremely confidential documents called 'tax rulings', to sophisticated tax arrangements that allow multinationals to pay practically no tax on colossal profits generated in other countries. More often than not, benefiting from such tax rulings was the only reason for these multinationals to establish a branch office in Luxembourg.

Deeply outraged by these practices, I resigned from my position. The day before I left, I took with me hundreds of documents with these very sensitive tax rulings. I subsequently entrusted these documents to a journalist.

My actions led to the Luxembourg Leaks scandal also known as LuxLeaks. The Luxembourg tax rulings and its consequences were revealed in November 2014 by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalism (ICIJ). The extensive media coverage and the wave of outrage that followed, generated significant political pressure for tax reforms in Europe. To date, these reform are very insufficient and have not eradicated tax avoidance in Europe. But there have been some real steps forward, such as the automatic exchange of information on tax rulings between European member states. The European Commission has also started several investigations into corporate tax avoidance in the European Union.

While this scandal was unfolding in the international media, the two whistleblowers — Raphaël Halet and myself — and the journalist Edouard Perrin were prosecuted for their actions in national courts in Luxembourg. The judicial inquiry forced me to give up my status as an anonymous source. I was now a public whistleblower. A long, trying and costly legal battle followed. Thankfully I received overwhelming support from relatives, NGOs, elected representatives and a host of people that choose to remain anonymous. I was finally acquitted in January 2018 when the courts ruled that I am indeed a whistleblower deserving of whistleblower protection, given the criteria set by the European Court of Human Rights.

Publeaks and other civil society initiatives like it, allow people to tell the truth and speak out, safe in the knowledge that 'someone will have their back'. A source may face intimidations, reprisals, sanctions or even forced exile. It is therefore absolutely essential to strengthen legislative provisions for the protection of whistleblowers. The vitality of our democracies depends on a well informed citizenry, and well informed citizens depend on protection for those who choose to speak truth to power.

COLOPHON

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Stichting **Publeaks**

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The **Publeaks** projects



The mission of **Publeaks** is to connect witnesses with the media, no matter who they are.

The number of **Publeaks** projects around the world is growing. New platforms are planned for Iran, Malaysia and other countries.

publeaks.nl
mexicoleaks.mx
leaks.ng
indonesialeaks.id



Leaks.ng

- Since August 2017
- 25 media partners
- Tens of tip-offs
- Tens of publications

Indonesialeaks

- Since Month 2016
- 9 media partners
- Tens of tip-offs
- Tens of publications

Méxicoleaks

- Since March 2015
- 8 media partners
- Thousands of tip-offs
- Tens of publications

Publeaks NL

- Since September 2013
- 25 media partners
- Hundreds of tip-offs
- Dozens of publications



Publeaks allows whistleblowers and journalists to communicate privately, anonymously and safely.

Publeaks makes counter-surveillance technologies transparent and available to journalists and their sources.



Publeaks supports investigative journalism, holding governments and businesses to account.

Publeaks improves security for journalists and their sources.

- Secure communication between whistleblowers and investigative reporters.
- Easy-to-use counter-surveillance technology and digital security training.
- A trusted media alliance leads to joint research, knowledge sharing and better investigative reporting.

Free Press Unlimited strongly believes that all people are entitled to have access to unbiased, reliable and timely information. This enables them to assess their own living conditions, influence these and make the right decisions.

Freedom of the Press and Freedom of Information are vital for gathering and spreading reliable, unbiased information. Media play a crucial role in providing people free and unrestricted access to information that can help them develop and monitor the authorities.

Free Press Unlimited wants to make and keep objective news and information available to everyone, especially to people in countries without or with limited (press) freedom.

By supporting local media professionals and journalists, Free Press Unlimited wants to help people gain and keep access to the information they need to survive and develop.

With **Publeaks, Free Press Unlimited enables whistleblowers and journalists to communicate free from censorship and interference.**

Whistleblowers are anonymous and in control of their communication, and remain the silent heroes behind the headlines.

Only after a thorough investigation will a story be published to publicly expose wrongdoings. In this way, the public gets to hear about matters which the authorities, powerful business and criminal gangs want to keep under wraps.

The **Publeaks projects**