Dutch Newspaper 'De Telegraaf' Accuses Scientists of Being Corporate Publicists

By ACSH Staff — July 20, 2020

Dutch journalist Jannes van Roermund sent an embarrassing, unprofessional, and accusatory email to epidemiologist and ACSH advisor Geoffrey Kabat. Dr. Kabat's response is pure gold.

Last month, we reported that a Dutch journalist named Jannes van Roermund collaborated with the infamous troll and anti-GMO conspiracy theorist Paul Thacker to spread misinformation about 5G technology and to smear those involved in science communication as corporate "publicists," including the American Council on Science and Health.

What these journalists -- and we use the term here loosely -- don't seem to realize is that we fight back, viciously when necessary. Staying quiet is simply not an option when unhinged activists use the media's megaphone to libel scientists and malign the scientific enterprise.

One of the many highly respected scientists and communicators that he contacted was epidemiologist Dr. Geoffrey Kabat. His unprofessional email was riddled with disrespect, innuendo, and bias.
Dear Mr. Kabat,

I am a Dutch journalist for De Telegraaf newspaper and I’m writing a story about the scientific discussion on harmful effects of 5G and phone radiation. You’ve been writing about this, at Forbes, for example. Before you used to write about tobacco and work as a tobacco consultant, somewhere in your work is stated.

Also, you are on the board of the ACSH, which has been described as an ‘industry front’ before.

You would be a small part of the article we are preparing. Could you answer a few of the questions below? Happy to receive them today. Many thanks.

• Where do you currently work?
• Are you aware of the financial ties between big corporations and the ACSH that were shown in 2012? Don’t you believe science should be impartial and independent?
• You call 5G in an article ‘not dangerous’. Did you publish any articles in respected journals about this matter?

Many thanks for your attention.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Jannes van Roermund

This email is embarrassing. Dr. Kabat's response was pure gold, and with his permission, we have reprinted it below. (We highlighted the especially good zingers.)

Mr. van Roermund,

Based on the sloppiness with facts and the unsupported accusations evident in your email, I don’t see how you could think that I would answer your questions.

You have not bothered to find out anything about me from a reliable, authoritative source, for example:


Rather, you make allegations based on things you find on the internet. In fact, I am not "on the board" at ACSH. I am one of about 400 "advisors" -- a group that includes first-rank scientists (Norman Borlaug [deceased], the vaccinologist Paul
Offit, Michael Bracken [head of epidemiology at Yale], etc.)* You didn’t bother to look at my publications on electromagnetic fields in the top epidemiology journals. You didn’t bother to read my articles in Forbes about cell phones and brain tumors. All you did was to read some crap on the internet posted by people with their own strong agendas (anti-pesticide, anti-GMO, etc.), who have smeared anyone who tries to clarify the scientific issues at stake.

And you are obtuse enough to hurl these allegations at me and pretend that you are interested in asking objective questions about 5G.

It is frightening that a major Dutch newspaper considers you a journalist.

And, by the way, if I were writing to a scientist, I would bother to find out that he has a Ph.D., and I would begin with "Dear Dr. Kabat." I am not a stuffy academic, but this carelessness at the beginning of your email is indicative of everything that follows.

You are a symptom of the scourge of ignorance and laziness that is so rampant.

Geoffrey Kabat, Ph.D.

Ouch. We felt that republishing this for the world to see would be a righteous thing to do.

*Note: Dr. Offit and Dr. Bracken are currently not members of the ACSH Board of Scientific Advisors.

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