

Various recipients  
European Parliament  
Wiertzstraat 60  
B-1047 Brussel

Amsterdam, Netherlands, 1 July 2013

Subject: Formal complaint against Mr. Baldassarre, MEP

Dear recipients,

Last week, Dutch journalist Tom Staal of weblog GeenStijl.nl ran into your PdL- and EPP party member, Mr. Raffaele Baldassarre, when he entered the European Parliament at half past six in the evening to sign the attendance register to collect his subsistence allowance of 304 euro, before making his way to the exit of the Parliament building again - without subsequently attending a session or meeting of parliament. Mr. Staal's attempt to confront Mr. Baldassarre with this behavior was met with verbal and physical aggression by Mr. Baldassarre.<sup>1</sup>

In this writing, GeenStijl formally files a complaint against Mr. Baldassarre for his actions against Tom Staal and his cameraman, but also for his questionable and peculiar behavior that breathes the suggestion of the deception of an electorate that put its trust in the hands of Mr. Baldassarre to represent them in Europe, and even the entire European public that is represented in and by the European Parliament.

As a Member of the European Parliament, Mr. Baldassarre is bound to the rules set for its members. With his acts and subsequent behavior, Mr. Baldassarre violated the guiding principles as formalized in Article 1 of Annex 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament<sup>2</sup>. This article states that in exercising their duties, Members of the European Parliament:

*(a) are guided by and observe the following general principles of conduct: disinterest, integrity, openness, diligence, honesty, accountability and respect for Parliament's reputation,*

*(b) act solely in the public interest and refrain from obtaining or seeking to obtain any direct or indirect financial benefit or other reward.*

Mr. Baldassarre appears to have violated a number, if not all of these guiding principles. This reflects poorly on the credibility of his Italian party PdL, his European party EPP, and the European Parliament as a whole. In order to restore the damage done, GeenStijl urges all parties involved to internally research and evaluate the behavior of their party member, Mr. Baldassarre, and to act upon the outcome of your findings.

On top of violation of the guiding principles, Mr. Baldassarre showed a striking lack of respect for journalists and the free press by verbally assaulting and physically threatening Mr. Staal. This resulted in painful images that do damage to an institution like the European Union, that proudly claims to both possess and protect free press in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.dumpert.nl/mediabase/6549901/06a6b8fd/tom\\_staal\\_trekt\\_rioolput\\_eu\\_open\\_brussel.html](http://www.dumpert.nl/mediabase/6549901/06a6b8fd/tom_staal_trekt_rioolput_eu_open_brussel.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+RULES-EP+20130521+ANN-01+DOC+XML+V0//EN&navigationBar=YES>

Surely you will agree that this sort of conduct by members of the European Parliament is unbecoming for an institution that proudly totes a Nobel Peace Prize.

Therefore GeenStijl urges you to take our complaint in serious consideration, and we thank you for your time and concern. We would appreciate it if you could actively keep us updated on the measures you take to prevent incidents like this to occur again in the future - both the potential fraud with subsistence allowances and the aggressive approach towards independent journalists by your Members of the European Parliament.

Best regards,

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