

Royal Dutch Shell: Murder and cover-up on the high seas

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SHELL, DE HALVE WAARHEID EN DE DOOFPOT.... Shell, half the truth and the cover-up....

By Alfred and John Donovan of royaldutchshellplc.com

In 1974 it was reported that a Shell employee, Leo Rapmund (36), a crewmember on the Shell tanker, 'Capulonix', had gone missing, presumed lost overboard.

Over two decades later Rapmund's family was contacted by a fellow crewmember at the time of the tragedy who wanted to clear his conscience about his knowledge of what really happened. Basically he revealed that Leo Rapmund had been murdered and there were many eyewitnesses to the crime.

The family claim that when they contacted Shell in 1995 with this alarming news, Shell and its lawyers (the most prestigious and expensive law firm in the Netherlands, De Braauw, Blackstone & Westbroek) denied any knowledge or responsibility and treated them in a disgusting and arrogant manner. All responsibility and accountability were rejected. The family was fobbed-off like a bunch of nagging children.

In 2008, the family contacted the acclaimed Dutch investigative crime reporter Peter R. de Vries who has his own Emmy Award winning TV programme. De Vries has been involved in a number of high profile cases including that of Natalee Holloway, the American student who mysteriously disappeared in 2005 while on a high school graduation trip to the Caribbean Island of Aruba.

De Vries approached Shell HQ in The Hague on 23 February 2009 and spoke with a senior Shell Public Relations official, Herman Kievits. His response was described as arrogant, at arms length and mainly on the lines that 'we know nothing'. The same holds true for the lawyers.

On 26 April 2009 Peter R. de Vries presented the case in his TV programme. Afterwards a number of viewers contacted Shell and expressed disgust at these cover-ups by the oil company.

The viewers who reacted towards Shell, all received a rather clumsy standard reaction with many half-truths. The facts however are totally different and in his unique manner Peter R. de Vries dissects all the nonsense by Shell and provides substantial evidence on what really happened. He tracked down a dozen witnesses of the murder. They all confirmed that Leo Rapmund had been in a fight on board and was shoved overboard. He managed to just hang on to the railing but his assailant had kicked his hands so long that he had to let go and

disappeared forever in the waves. This act was unanimously described as 'murder'. The witnesses were greatly surprised that they never have been formally heard nor summoned in a court case.

De Vries also makes mincemeat of all the statements by Shell and detailed evidence is provided on his website. He exposes Shell as a bunch of liars. In the end Shell even had to admit in a letter to him that they 'did not know' what happened to the assailant and why he had not been charged. Shell even did not know whether the man had been fired or not. That in itself is strange: on a tanker of Shell a Shell employee is literally kicked overboard by another Shell employee, but Shell subsequently never informs how all this has been handled in a legal matter.

Therefore it was nice that in the meantime aging offender is still alive. He told de Vries that the handling of the case also amazed him. After the incident he was taken from Singapore to the head office in Rotterdam. There he had to hand-over his passport and was sent home on extended leave. After half a year he was summoned again, received his passport back as well as six months of pay, was in a proper manner shown the door by Shell and subsequently signed on immediately with another company as a sailor. Done. Never heard anything anymore.

In his summary de Vries states:

It is simply embarrassing that Shell tried to blame the relatives of Leo that they all that time have not understood and that they more or less tried to misuse the situation for their own benefit.

De Vries points out that a multinational faced with such unfortunate circumstances can apologise and compensate the victims family or deny all allegations and NEVER admit to anything. He concludes Shell is in the latter category behaving in a vicious and shameful manner.

After Leo Rapmund was killed, this is another form of character murder on the next of kin, which also remains unpunished. In that sense de Vries claims to have more respect for the aging assailant, who after so many years admits his act and honestly says he deserved prison. That Shell kicks the family and refrains from any form of an apology is a scandal. And it shows very clearly how the next biggest oil company of the world can be very small.....

The information comes from an article published by Peter R. De Vries in Dutch. It includes reference to a long email to Shell setting out facts and evidence, which Shell ultimately agreed was basically correct.

<http://www.peterrdevries.nl/>

ARTICLE ENDS

The above article was sent in advance of publication to Mr Michiel Brandjes, Company Secretary and General Counsel, Royal Dutch Shell Plc. The relevant email is printed below. Since Shell chose not to reply on this occasion, we assume this is one of the times when Shell decided the safest thing to do is to say nothing.

From: Alfred Donovan <alfred@shellnews.net>
Date: Thu, 21 May 2009 10:36:37 +0100
To: "michiël.brandjes@shell.com" <michiël.brandjes@shell.com>
Conversation: SHELL, DE HALVE WAARHEID EN DE DOOFPOT
Subject: SHELL, DE HALVE WAARHEID EN DE DOOFPOT

Dear Mr Brandjes

The draft article below is based on the article in Dutch recently published by Peter R. de Vries...

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<http://www.peterrdevries.nl/>

The gist of the content was kindly provided by a Dutch Shell insider. Although not having time to provide a full translation, the draft does contain some translated passages.

Could you kindly point out any significant error of fact before I publish it? If Shell does not take issue with the facts as stated, then there is no need to reply. If I receive no response by 12 noon tomorrow UK time, I will assume that the information is true. If you need more time to check out matters, then kindly let me know when we can expect a response and we will take no further action until then.

If Shell is taking legal action challenging the facts, then please advise accordingly and we will await the outcome of any such litigation.

If you want to supply for publication with the article any related comment by Shell, we will happily publish it on an unedited basis.

This is an important story which deserves publication in the English language.

Regards
Alfred Donovan