
From: Heidi Blake [heidi.blake@buzzfeed.com]
Sent: 3/25/2015 4:17:51 PM
To: Alan White [alan.white@buzzfeed.com]
CC: Robert Colvile [robert.colvile@buzzfeed.com]
Subject: Re: Touching base

Sure thing

Heidi Blake | UK Investigations Editor

BuzzFeed News

40 Argyll Street,
London, W1F 7EB

@HeidiBlake <<https://twitter.com/HeidiBlake>>

On Wed, Mar 25, 2015 at 8:09 PM, Alan White <alan.white@buzzfeed.com> wrote:

Hoo boy. You see, I feel the tenor of this piece is going to change once we approach him. Understand I can't show to Craig, but do you mind me sending to Tom? He's going to be co-bylined.

On Wed, Mar 25, 2015 at 7:57 PM, Heidi Blake <heidi.blake@buzzfeed.com> wrote:

In confidence, dug out this email from Leidig ... We spoke last year about a big investigation he was doing into child trafficking and he got in touch on LinkedIn to see if it might work for BuzzFeed & followed up by email. Interesting that he leapt to defend the 'tabloid' stories they do without me even asking about them - and says that they churn those out to drum up funding for their investigations. I never got round to responding to this but in light of your stuff it's quite interesting ...

Heidi Blake | UK Investigations Editor

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----- Forwarded message -----
From: Michael Leidig <editor@cen.at>

Date: Wed, Jan 14, 2015 at 6:00 PM
Subject: RE: Touching base
To: heidi.blake@buzzfeed.com

Yes we already do a lot of work for buzzfeed but not anything you'd be interested in, it's the tabloid stories that provide the funding for everything else we do.

Mind you I reckon I'm happier with that than taking money for PR or marketing firms to include stuff in our news feed. Or a sponsor with vested interests for that matter.

Turned down a small fortune yesterday to include a story about an Austrian/International celebrity who'd won an award for charity work.

What I want to do is deliver finished investigations that we do here simply because we are interested in them, like the child trafficking, and to have a network of editors like you trying to place the items where they will probably find the most interest.

Money is not the main priority, happy also to work for free if the story is the right one, at the end of the day it all helps to build up a reputation for what we are doing.

I'm happy to talk in February, although I do have a story on corruption involving Microsoft and the former PR agency that used to employ the British justice minister Grayling which is written and ready to go - are you interested in looking at it? I have all the leaked documents necessary to keep the lawyers happy.

I had been planning to do it for my friend at private eye exclusive but he decided the Grayling angle was too weak. He is quite correct of course, the only connection really is that it's the place he used to work and I don't think he had anything to do with the Microsoft deal which I found out about.

Anyway, also happy to leave it until February where I'm sure we will have some other ideas and good luck with the book project, sounds very exciting. I can't say that my books have ever been very well read, but I've always enjoyed doing them and I consoled myself with it's not getting there, but it's how you get there that counts.

Pass my regards onto Jonathan, and I will leave you with my Strasser story sent earlier this week to the UK media.

See below and wishing you all the best for 2015.

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(starts)

A corrupt MEP caught by a British newspaper offering to propose amendments to EU laws in exchange for 100,000 EUR (78,000 GBP) a year has been allowed go back to work just two months into a three-year-jail term.

Austrian Ernst Strasser, 58, also a former interior minister of Austria, was originally given a four-year term in 2013 after he was filmed by reporters from the Sunday Times newspaper offering to pursue amendments to a planned law on hedge funds for cash.

After a retrial, he was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in jail for bribery by a Vienna court in March last year, which was reduced again in October by the country's highest court to three years taking into account the massive fall from grace that he had experienced by his actions.

Strasser's lawyer Thomas Kralik had appealed the sentence in March, saying: "To a certain extent this was entrapment. Had they not put the carrot before his nose, there would have been no case to answer."

And he added: "He is now politically and socially a dead man." However Strasser, a member of the conservative Peoples' Party (OeVP) who had served as interior minister from 2000-2004, has spent just eight weeks in prison since beginning his sentence towards the end of last year and is now allowed to leave on a daily basis in order to start work as a consultant once again.

He is obliged only to sleep in the jail, arriving back at his two man cell in the late evening.

When his jail sentence was finally confirmed, Supreme Court President Eckart Ratz said it was "vital for democracy to fight against people who use politics to line their own pockets". He then addressed Strasser directly as he told him: "An EU parliamentarian who is corrupt is an evil that destabilises and calls into question the functioning of the European Union."

Strasser is being held at the prison in Simmering on the outskirts of the Austrian capital Vienna.

(ends)

From: Heidi Blake via LinkedIn [mailto:member@linkedin.com]
Sent: Mittwoch, 14. Jänner 2015 18:12
To: Mike Leidig
Subject: RE: Touching base

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Assistant Editor at The Sunday Times attached to the Insight investigations team.

Hi Mike!

Great to hear from you. I'd love to chat to you about your investigations. Jonathan and I are up against a fiendish deadline on our book about Fifa just now, but could we touch base in February? I haven't moved yet but am accessing BuzzFeed email - <mailto:heidi.blake@buzzfeed.com> heidi.blake@buzzfeed.com

Speak soon!

Heidi

On 01/14/15 8:49 AM, Mike Leidig wrote:

Happy New Year and all that and congratulations on the appointment. Read it in Press Gazette. Child Trafficking is still out there if you are interested, also I have a new investigations team with a former Dow Jones / Wall Street Journal reporter who is running it and slowly coming over to the dark side. Lots of investigations we'd like to place if you are interested?

Looking to try and do something new though, I think the old newspaper model is still influencing too much the way we work.

Left a message on your old mobile number but not sure if it is still active?

Best as always

Mike

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