

## Lawyer Peter Stassen makes moral appeal to judge without Arno van Kessel



**Ido Dijkstra** | Date: July 10, 2025



Image: Attorney Peter Stassen amidst interested parties at the Leeuwarden District Court.

## **"The court must now show its worth"**

**Four weeks after the shocking arrest of lawyer Arno van Kessel, his associate Peter Stassen single-handedly resumed the mega case against the State of the Netherlands, former Prime Minister Mark Rutte, Pfizer director Albert Bourla and billionaire Bill Gates in the Leeuwarden District Court on Wednesday, July 9. Hundreds of sympathizers, including Van Kessel's wife, gave him a hero's welcome afterwards. Stassen had made a moral appeal to the judge in the courtroom to the effect: make sure no blood gets on your hands.**

"We have to do something about this, this can't happen again," a police officer shouts to his colleague at the entrance to the Leeuwarden Courthouse. Several officers have just started barricading the main entrance to the building on Zaailand, the large market square in the Frisian capital. Roughly a hundred people have just squeezed in through the security gate with permission, but what can we do with at least the same number still standing outside?

In the courtyard of the courthouse in the Frisian capital, those remaining behind, who are not allowed into the courtroom, chant "free Arno van Kessel, free Arno van Kessel." Passersby often have no idea what it's about, but everyone is eager to tell them that a brave lawyer has been arrested who is tackling the criminal executive elite and that this is a matter of importance to everyone on earth. In that light, it is rather strange that the Court of Northern Netherlands, Leeuwarden location, appears to have significantly underestimated the public interest. All the pre-trial commotion means the trial starts fifteen minutes late. Notably absent from the courtroom is Arno van Kessel, one of the plaintiff's lawyers, who was dragged from his bed exactly four weeks earlier by a special intervention team and has been held in the Vught High-Security Facility ever since, based on vague allegations by the Public Prosecution Service. His wife, Helena, who was present at the trial in Leeuwarden, hasn't spoken directly to her husband for four weeks.

Neither the plaintiffs nor the defendants mention the matter. The courtroom is focused on the case, with attorney Peter Stassen speaking on behalf of seven coronavirus vaccination victims—one of whom died last year. The rest of the long, semi-circular lawyers' table is occupied by eight counsel for the defendants, almost all employed by the Hague-based law firm Pels Rijcken, also known as the State Attorney.

Stassen begins the hearing strikingly by immediately addressing the judge about the amended press guidelines (see box—ed.). He then begins his official plea just as strikingly, with a Bible verse: "And you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free" (John 8:32). The case revolves around truth-finding, Stassen argues, and this Wednesday the judge, Ms. Werkema, must consider whether former top US official Catherine Austin Fitts, former Pfizer vice president Mike Yeadon, former pharmaceutical executive Sasha Latypova, researcher Katherine Watt, and psychotherapist Joseph Sansone are good witnesses in this mega-case.

Stassen argues that these experts should be heard under oath, but the defendants vehemently refuse, to the dismay of the North Brabant resident. If my clients are not allowed to use this information through preliminary evidence, then this court doesn't want to know the truth, let alone release them. For this reason, there is only one good decision possible on this request.

It's noteworthy that the lawyers for defendants like Bill Gates, Agnes Kant, Diederik Gommers, Jaap van Dissel, Sigrid Kaag, and Hugo de Jonge don't offer much verbal input. They mostly refer to what's already on paper: they don't consider the people nominated by Stassen to be good expert witnesses. The counsel for the State of the Netherlands offers some clarification. "The experts the plaintiffs are proposing are not experts, and certainly not independent experts. Many of the questions they ask are not factual and irrelevant." While three coronavirus vaccine victims are sitting next to Stassen, she also states that the coronavirus vaccines have proven to be "safe and effective," because, as she argues, that's the "general scientific consensus." The audience expresses dismay at the flimsy argument. Stassen then retaliates sharply. "Scientific consensus? What is that, anyway?"

"Scientific consensus" is, in itself, a monstrosity of a term. Just because the majority says A is true doesn't mean A is true by definition. Science isn't a democracy. I could easily name five prominent figures who draw a different conclusion. It's all about the quality of the evidence. The defendants consistently refuse to accept that, as is evident.

Finally, Stassen impressed his supporters, especially, with a fiery closing argument. He accused the opposing party of merely using "false ad hominem arguments to undermine the expertise of his witnesses." The Eindhoven-based lawyer called the coronavirus vaccination programs "the greatest genocide of humanity ever. An unprecedented crime accompanied by coercion, deception, and even murder" and made a moral appeal to the judge. "If you, as a judge, reject our request to hear these witnesses, which I doubt you will, then the blood already on the defendants' hands will soon be on yours as well. This case must become a public debate that can only be resolved in court. Politics has already proven that it cannot do that. Now the court must show its worth. I wish you much wisdom in your decision." Afterwards, Stassen — visibly moved — was greeted with thunderous applause and the slogan "Peter, thank you" by hundreds of sympathizers, including Van Kessel's wife.

*After hearing the parties, the judge indicated that he would take approximately six weeks to reach a decision.*

## **Stassen also challenges the judge on the press guidelines: "You are the boss in the courtroom"**

The new press guidelines, which the Judiciary implemented on June 1, 2025, restricting free journalism, violate constitutional press freedom and encourage censorship. This became clear during the trial last Wednesday. For example, De Andere Krant photographer Markus Kamphuis, who held a police press card, was not allowed to take photos, even though the rules state otherwise. Journalist Ido Dijkstra—who did not hold an NVJ press card—received a one-time leniency from the Court in Leeuwarden as a journalist. Court reporter Djamila le Pair wanted to film the entire case but was denied. It was a thorn in Peter Stassen's side. He told the judge that she doesn't have to comply with these rules at all, "because there's only one boss in the courtroom, and that's you. In a constitutional state, everyone must be able to report equally. Censorship shouldn't stand a chance. The rule of law is compromised if journalists can't do their work properly. If journalists pay in exchange for a piece of plastic (as in having certain press passes) and then commit to all sorts of rules, that has nothing to do with press freedom. In my opinion, you decide whether censorship is allowed in this courtroom, not some press guideline."

The judge said he recognized "the general interest of the case" but didn't elaborate on the content of Stassen's argument. She did mention that she would have an audio recording made, but after an objection from one of the defense attorneys, what would happen to it remained unclear.