

RESEARCH

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"CASE OF THE TAPPING": CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY OF SPINNING IN PORTUGAL

“Caso da escutas”: contributos para o estudo do spinning em Portugal

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ABSTRACT

The Portuguese Público opinion was surprised in August 2009 for two front page news of the newspaper Público saying that elements of the Presidency of the Republic suspected that they were being heard / watched by the Government. Information released later showed that after all it was a case of spinning, with its respective spin doctor clearly identified. This text tries to characterize the case, using various documents, without losing sight of what is understood to be necessary: a conceptualization of spinning (and its relationship with the press office).

KEY WORDS

Spinning - manipulation - journalism - politics - communication

ABSTRACT

A opinião pública portuguesa foi surpreendida, em agosto de 2009, por duas notícias de primeira página do jornal Público dando conta de que elementos da Presidência da República suspeitavam de que estariam a ser escutados/vigiados pelo Governo. Informações divulgadas posteriormente permitiram concluir que afinal se tratava de um caso de spinning, com o respectivo spin doctor bem identificado. Este texto procura fazer a caracterização do caso, com recurso a diversos documentos, sem perder de vista aquilo que se entende ser necessário: a conceptualização do spinning (e a sua articulação com a assessoria de imprensa).

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Spinning - manipulação - jornalismo - política - comunicação

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"CASO DE LAS ESCUCHAS" CONTRIBUCIONES PARA EL ESTUDIO DEL SPINNING EN PORTUGAL

RESUMEN

La opinión pública portuguesa fue sorprendida, en Agosto de 2009, por dos noticias de primera página del periódico Público dando cuenta de que elementos de la Presidencia de la República sospechaban que estarían siendo escuchados/vigilados por el Gobierno. Informaciones divulgadas posteriormente permitieron concluir que al final se trataba de un caso de spinning, con el respectivo spin doctor bien identificado. Este texto busca hacer la caracterización del caso, con ayuda de diversos documentos, sin perder de vista aquello que se entiende necesario: la conceptualización del spinning (y su articulación con la asesoría de la prensa).

PALABRAS CLAVE

Spinning - Manipulación - Periodismo - Política - Comunicación.

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1. INTRODUCTION

An empirical observation, consolidated or not by a Google search, allows us to conclude that there is much talk but little is known about what is the spinning² of information. Worse, there is much talk, but the confusion of concepts is great.

Despite being a recent word and concept, spinning and spin doctor have experienced in recent years an evolution, which has changed, in some cases, structurally, the concept itself.

Today press office is confused (in the broad sense) with spinning and a press officer is already called a spin doctor.

Although not the aim of this study to propose a reconceptualization of the two words, the topic interests us as we understand spinning as something far beyond the press office and spin doctor as someone who may not even be the particular press officer organization or protagonist.

The characterization of this we consider at the outset as one of the first cases of spinning in Portugal also depends on the setting of the two concepts and perception as accurate as possible of the two words, which we will try to do so in this work.

But the primary objective is to collect contributions and documents that allow to characterize - or not - the "case of tapping" as a spinning situation.

2 Spinning ou spin-doctoring? Havendo quem defenda diferenças entre as palavras, seguimos neste trabalho aqueles que as usam como sinónimos;

2. METHODOLOGY

We propose a detailed analysis of what became known in Portugal as the 'case of tapping', involving those who were then in the Presidency of the Republic and the Government, and with the participation of the *Público* newspaper (August 2009).

It is intended to show why it is a case of spinning and we will try to also show the reasons to say that is one of the first to be documented in Portugal.

The descriptive analysis of the case, from its chronology and its main elements, will provide us the necessary elements for this characterization.

But why now, seven years after the *Público* disclosure of the case? We believe that although essentially nothing has changed (not even new and / or relevant elements appeared in recent years), some distance on a case as unusual as media have been a good counselor. And we expect, symbolically, to the end of President Cavaco Silva's mandate.

Still, it is clear that there are several issues, especially political and partisan, that this case raises and which go beyond the skills and capabilities of this work³.

2.1. In search of a concept of spinning (and spin doctor)

We have already said, refusing, in this context, the confusion between spinning and media, in the same way a press officer is not, by definition synonymous to a spin doctor. In the field of *Público* relations ("Spin has become the ubiquitous term for *Público* relations tactics", as claimed by Miller and Dinan, [2008: 2]), but not for having a shelter under the same umbrella that they pass They are equal.

As is defended by Vasco Ribeiro (2015: 249), "the action of these advisors / consultants is so cryptic and manipulative that, it often, brushes with amorality and even illegality (as is the case of "bullying")." And the phrase that Miller and Dinan (2008, p. 14) use to describe how one of the first spin doctors, Ivy Lee, worked in 1914 ("facts were flexible and minds were malleable") is representative of the concept.

However, the confusion is installed among journalists, consultants and politicians, as noted by Portuguese reality⁴. There is no shortage of authors for whom everything is confused. This is the case of Moore (2006: 1): "The term 'spin' has now become ubiquitous and is normally used pejoratively. But spin, in the right wing sense, is simply the way in which the government, any government, seeks to present its actions in the most favorable light. All governments spin."

And when Maltese (1992, p. 215) explains that "Spinning a story involves twisting it to one's advantage, using surrogates, press releases, radio actualities, and other

³ Referirmo-nos, nomeadamente, às motivações que terão estado subjacentes ao início do caso e que, tanto quanto se julga saber, entroncam no relacionamento difícil entre os então Presidente da República e Primeiro-ministro;

⁴ Cfr Ribeiro, Vasco, "O Spin Doctoring em Portugal; estudo sobre as fontes profissionais de informação que operam na Assembleia da República", tese de doutoramento, Universidade do Minho, 2013 <http://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/handle/1822/34431> (consultada a 1/7/2015);

friendly sources to deliver the line from an angle that puts the story in the best possible light" in short "twisting" that is the key. In short, the word "has become a euphemism for deceit and manipulation" (Andrews, 2006, p. 32).

The confusion will result both disinterest conjugation (conscious), starting with the industry itself but extended to scientists, conceptualizing the terms as the fact that, indeed, increasingly see the adoption by the press officers, some of spinning techniques. As Ribeiro recalls (2013: 293), "*almost all political press aides were accused of bullying.*"

Regarding the press office, we follow what they defend, for example, Yale and Carothers, when they explain the concept of "publicity" in their "The Publicity Handbook" (2001): "the provision of factual and newsworthy information to the media we do not control, such as radio, television, magazines, printed and online newspapers and other websites. Their goal is to make news coverage with the information we send and that journalists think is of interest to their audience" (cited by Ribeiro, 2013, p. 89).

We agree, however, with Hill (2002, p. 276) when he says that the spinning is taking political communication, leaving the press office for increasingly residual contexts. But we do not forget that "virtually every government communication in a modern democracy is formulated and evaluated in the context of spin" (Moore, M, 2006: 1). Speaking of the 60s, Schudson (2001, p. 63) says that "nothing was more threatening to this ideal [journalism] than the work of public relations" and cites complaints from a journalist (Don Seitz) for whom "the Pulitzer School of Journalism 'turns out far more of these parasites than it does reporters'" (Seitz 1926, p. 210, cited Schudson, *ibid.*).

The separation of the two concepts is not easy and probably we will see a gradual integration in the sense of their merger. But in this context, still it appears to make sense to keep the separation.

3. DISSICION

3.1 Analysis of the "case of tapping"

Ribeiro (2015, p. 249) says that "*spin doctoring is now inseparable from the Portuguese political practice*" and "*it is a widely practiced activity in Portugal*" (2015, p. 250).

But many examples that allow us to know and support this claim - which the author argues (and well) in his own professional and academic experience.

The "case of tapping" brings together several features that make it unique, if not internationally, at least in the national context; it is the first time that a case of manipulation of public opinion appears so well portrayed in Portugal:

- Is profusely documented in Público terms (including the Internet);
- Involves journalists and sources of information (politicians and advisors);
- It is clearly a case of manipulation of public opinion (and journalism, although in this case is not yet possible to tell whether it happened or not consciously);

In the center of the case is the former director of communications of the President, former journalist Fernando Lima.

Ribeiro, who interviewed him, noted that Fernando Lima "does not identify himself with this model of communication [spinning] and denies having exercised it. However, there is a number of texts published by the former aide of Cavaco that clearly demonstrate his vocation for spin doctoring, and a clear understanding of the processes of 'manufacture of consensus'" (Ribeiro, 2015, p. 231).

"But what turned Fernando Lima into a real spin doctor, even though he did not admit it, was the 'case of tapping' in Belém" (idem).

Not by chance, and by the way of example, in the backwash of the announcement of the substitution of Fernando Limas, made by Cavaco Silva, the director of the Business Journal wrote: "With the departure of Fernando Lima, there is one less 'spin doctor', that it is even good ⁵".

3.2 Notes from the chronology

The case begins with the publication in the Público newspaper of a news on August 18, 2009, supported by this headline: "President suspect he is being monitored by the government." The report quoted an unnamed source from the President's Civil House to report that "the psychological climate that we live in Belém Palace is consternation and doubt that settled was whether the Presidency of the Republic is under listening and if the advisers of Cavaco Silva are being watched" ⁶.

The next day, new headline on the same subject in the Público: "It all started during the visit of Cavaco Silva to Madeira, a trip during which the President was, for the first time in its mandate, under the constant criticism of prominent figures of the PS (...) .Since the episode in Madeira that Cavaco employees act with more concern about the risks of any leakage of information" ⁷.

On 13 September the provider of Público readers, Joaquim Vieira, published a chronicle in the newspaper that says that the correspondent of the Público in Madeira, Tolentino Nóbrega, had informed to the editor of the newspaper that he failed to confirm any of the informations, even after a personal contact with the aide of Socrates. But this statement does not appear in any of the articles in August ⁸.

Five days later, the Daily News publishes an email exchanged between the Público editor, Luciano Alvarez and the journalist in Madeira ⁹ (and in the annex). From that email various indications can be drawn:

5 Guerreiro, Pedro Santos, "Peão atrás de peão", *Jornal de Negócios*, 23/9/2009 http://www.jornaldenegocios.pt/opiniao/detalhe/peatildeo_atracutes_de_piatildeo.html (consultado a 6/7/2015)

6 Almeida, São José, "Presidência da República teme estar a ser vigiada". *Público*, 18/8/2009 <http://www.publico.pt/politica/noticia/presidencia-da-republica-teme-estar-a-ser-vigiada-1396571> (consultado a 1/7/2015)

7 Almeida, São José e Alvarez, Luciano, "Belém preferiu não comentar, Sócrates falou em "disparates". *Público*, 19/8/2009 <http://www.publico.pt/politica/noticia/belem-preferiu-nao-comentar-socrates-falou-em-disparates-1396733> (consultado a 1/7/2015)

8 Vieira, Joaquim, "Subitamente neste Verão", *Público*, 13/9/2009 <http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/search/label/Cr%C3%B3nicas?updated-max=2009-09-27T18:40:00-07:00&max-results=20&start=16&by-date=false> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

9 "O "e-mail" que denuncia as escutas (transcrição)", *Diário de Notícias*, 18/9/2009 http://www.dn.pt/especiais/interior.aspx?content_id=1365657&especial=Caso%20das%20escutas&eccao=POL%CDTICA (consultado a 1/7/2015)

- The source of Público is responsible for the communication of the Civil House of the Presidency of the Republic, Fernando Lima (Fernando Lima did not make press advice in Belém, there were, at that time, other people with these tasks);
- the journalist of the Público assures that Fernando Lima is speaking on behalf of the President;
- The source of the Público suggests the research development strategy (which should begin in Madeira, also to disguise the track) and even the first questions;
- The initial contact was established in April 2008, ie 17 months before the two Público news, following a visit by the President to Madeira, and would have as context (justification) a reaction "to statements of socialist leaders criticizing the participation of presidential advisors in drafting the PSD electoral program (a participation that the source of Belém does not disavow)"¹⁰.

On September 20 Joaquim Vieira writes again about the two August news to say that "the Público allowed the script of the research to be dictated by the Presidency of the Republic"¹¹.

The next day Fernando Lima is removed from the head of the Social Communications Office of the Presidency of the Republic.

3.3. About the email

Will the email be a fake? The question cannot be considered irrelevant, since this is the centerpiece of the whole argument around the spinning. Without the email, there would only be speculation and the two Público headlines would, ultimately, be seen as elements called "silly season" of that year¹²; therefore, the question of the veracity of the email seems to us relevant. Much more because the document's authenticity has been questioned, beginning with its author: "Contacted yesterday by the DN, the Público National Editor denies the existence of the email." "It's all forged," said Luciano Alvarez¹³.

But, anticipating the question, the editorial in the Daily News Journal of September 18 said: "What we have shown in these documents and the authenticity of what is the most relevant was confirmed to us by one of the recipients"¹⁴.

10 Vieira, Joaquim, "Subitamente neste Verão", Público, 13/9/2009 <http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/search/label/Cr%C3%B3nicas?updated-max=2009-09-27T18:40:00-07:00&max-results=20&start=16&by-date=false> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

11 Vieira, Joaquim, "A questão principal", Público, 20/9/2009 <http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/2009/09/questao-principal.html> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

12 José Sócrates chamou-lhe "disparate de Verão"; cfr. "Sócrates: Vigilância da Presidência é um disparate de Verão", Expresso, 18/8/2009 <http://expresso.sapo.pt/actualidade/socrates-vigilancia-da-presidencia-e-um-disparate-de-verao=f531494> (consultado a 7/7/2015)

13 Guerreiro, Catarina, Henriques, Graça e Saraiva, Nuno, "Homem forte do presidente encomendou 'caso das escutas'", Diário de Notícias, 18/9/2009.

http://www.dn.pt/inicio/portugal/interior.aspx?content_id=1365623 (consultado a 29/6/2015)

14 "NOTA DA DIRECÇÃO: Uma notícia substantiva", Diário de Notícias, 18/9/2009 http://www.dn.pt/especiais/interior.aspx?content_id=1365626&especial=Caso%20das%20escutas&eccao=POL%20CDTICA&page=-1 (consultado a 29/6/2015)

That same day, the director of the Público said that part of the message refers to a "natural discussion between a director, a journalist and an editor," but that other part "does not match its exact content"¹⁵. In the editorial of the 22th, the first written on the subject, José Manuel Fernandes does not return to the question of the authenticity, total or partial, of the document, preferring to criticize the DN that "chose to reveal private correspondence in order to expose the source of the news of 18 August."¹⁶ But the intervention that he made on 29/9, the President stated that "personally, I have serious doubts about the veracity of the statements contained therein" and explains that none of his aides are allowed to speak in his name. "And" although I was assured that this has not happened (...) ", he decided to dismiss Fernando Lima¹⁷.

Finally, on October 1st, an administrator of the newspaper Público acknowledged the authenticity of the email in its entirety¹⁸ - condition that we also followed for this study, after analyzing the various available elements.

3.4 Features of the Spin Doctor Fernando Lima

- 1) The relationship of extreme trust and closeness with Cavaco Silva - "has been described as 'the shadow' of the President, such is the degree of closeness between them - began with the arrival of this one to the functions of Prime Minister in 1985"¹⁹. Cavaco Silva resigned the functions, but not the Civil House of the Presidency. "Fernando Lima will thus last to take more reserved functions in the President's office, but in practice Cavaco Silva maintains confidence in Fernando Lima, accompanying as an advisor for over 20 years"²⁰. As can be read in the email (attachment) "Fernando Lima (...) was there to talk to me at the request of the President of the Republic";
- 2) Involvement of the media - consciously or unconsciously, the spinning is made through the collaboration of the media. "[Fernando Lima] had chosen to talk to me because he took me as a serious journalist (this would be to praise me) and because he

15 "Director do «Público» acusa Secreta de aceder a email interno", TVI24, 18/9/2015

<http://www.tvi24.iol.pt/politica/socrates/director-do-publico-acusa-secreta-de-aceder-a-email-interno> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

16 Fernandes, José Manuel, "Editorial: O caso das suspeitas de Belém não acabou ontem", Público, 22/9/2015 <http://www.publico.pt/opiniao/noticia/editorial-o-caso-das-suspeitas-de-belem-nao-acabou-ontem-1401711> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

17 "Declaração do Presidente da República", 29/9/2009, <http://www.presidencia.pt/?idc=22&idi=31744> (consultado a 30/6/2015)

18 António Lobo Xavier no programa "Quadratura do Círculo", SicNotícias, 1/10/2009; cfr. "O silêncio de Luciano Alvarez", 2/10/2009 <http://www.cincotons.com/2009/10/o-silencio-de-luciano-alvarez.html> (consultado a 6/7/2015)

19 "Cavaco Silva não demitiu Fernando Lima", TVI24, 25/9/2009, <http://www.tvi24.iol.pt/politica/escutas/cavaco-silva-nao-demitiu-fernando-lima> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

20 "Cavaco Silva não demitiu Fernando Lima", TVI24, 25/9/2009, <http://www.tvi24.iol.pt/politica/escutas/cavaco-silva-nao-demitiu-fernando-lima> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

thinks the Presidency of the Republic, that the PÚBLICO is the only Portuguese newspaper that is not sold to the power" (the email);

3) Creation / selection of messages: as the journalist Luciano Alvarez says, in the email sent to the corresponding in Madeira, "The Lima suggests and I think well two questions for the beginning of the work (even because they are also interested that this starts in Madeira not to seem that was Belém²¹, who passed this information, but someone on the Garden). Questions suggested by Lima (...) ". The provider concludes, "to the best evidence, everything is a clue, yes, of paranoia, coming from the Belém Palace, and is Fernando Lima who takes the initiative to contact the journalist Luciano Alvarez;

4) Using the technique of "planted leak [of information] ": in the book of Vasco Ribeiro (2015b: 164), Fernando Lima explains, "I make an escape and the big question is whether the body for which I do the escape respects my information on what I want. Because if it does not respect, and then turns the escape against me, I'm screwed. (...) There must be a contract of trust between the parties. There has to be trust in the journalist and he also has to have trust in me. When I make a leak of information, then I will not give what I said for what I did not said if it goes wrong. In the history of tapping [to Belén], I never contradicted it"²²;

5) "Anything goes" to sabotage political opponents: the facts that would support the case are extremely fragile, as the journalist in Madeira realized shortly after. The Presidency had no evidence of any suspicion and it remains curious that all began, as noted in the email, by a "false question": "Ask the Doctor. Helena Borges, head of the Office of the representative of the Republic if she knows him [Rui Paulo Figueiredo, the suspect] and if it is true that in the dinner hosted by the representative at the Palace of São Lourenço he was at the table of the PR advisors (we already know that is true but let's pretend we do not know)" [of the email]; And if, as we have seen, it is not clear that the newspaper has consciously collaborated, it is now clear that the PR aide misled the newspaper to achieve his goals, "or [the Público] produced more concrete evidence about the alleged surveillance of which the presidency was the victim (which never arose) or would have to conclude that it was all a political low blow aimed at putting St. Benedict in check"²³;

6) Disclaimer: coinciding with the time of e-mail publication, the president merely said that "after the elections I will not stop trying to get more information on security issues

21 Vieira, Joaquim, "A questão principal", Público, 20/9/2009

<http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/2009/09/questao-principal.html> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

22 Cf. With what Fernando Lima says on 16/1/2010 in an opinion article published in the Expresso: "(...) what was nothing but a web well woven by the fertile imagery of the creators of 'political facts' (...) publication of the Email to which I am, of course, oblivious and without correspondence with reality. (...) this plot lines the incredible and that is one of those cases where reality surpasses fiction, hence it is virtually impossible to pretend that someone, in good faith and with smooth feelings, believe that all this happened. For a deeper knowledge of the thought of Fernando Lima, cf. Ribeiro, Vasco, "The Spin doctoring in Portugal: study on the professional sources of information that operate in the Assembly of the Republic", doctoral thesis presented at the University of Minho, 2013

<https://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/handle/1822/34431> (consultada a 17/11/2015)

23 Idem, ibidem

The President should be concerned with security issues."²⁴. Later, on September 29, he made a presentation to the country on the subject in which, among other things, denies that Fernando Lima has spoken on his behalf and therefore he substituted him.²⁵ Fernando Lima have only addressed the issue on January 16, 2010, when he published in the Express an opinion piece called "My truth". There it is said in particular that it was just "a well-planned web by the fertile imagination of the creators of political facts," in order to "engage the President on the stage of the electoral struggle that then stemmed." "The political struggle was at its peak and was necessary to divert attention from what he could clarify the Portuguese or inform them about the real situation of the country", accusing the former adviser to the President. The email is classified as "strange", it mentions the "supposed talk" without "correspondence to reality," belying to have invoked "the President's name on something that not arose from Público interventions."²⁶. That is, the only Público statement on the matter, Fernando Lima denies any involvement and whether he wants President to belie what the journalist writes in the email, namely, that the aide "was there to talk to me at the request of the President". The journalist never explained what happened, but as it turned out, we take it for granted that the email has not changed; to register: Fernando Lima does not deny the journalist from the Público.

7) Discreet: totally averse to public exposure, it can be said that Fernando Lima is only known in political circles and communication (was director of the Daily News and had a long career as a journalist). This case proves its effective low profile: from the long silence of the way made the denial. "[The spin doctors] act, therefore, on the basis of greater informality, discretion, calculation. Thus, they don't have increased pressure capacity on journalists as their actions hardly leave traces" (Ribeiro, 2013, p. 297). Only lightly, as the Público treated it, which led to the harsh intervention of the provider, and the subsequent disclosure of email meant as if he knew that he was the source of the newspaper; on the side of Fernando Lima, the conditions were gathered so that you never knew who was the author of the attempt of spinning were gathered.

3.5 Implications for the Público newspaper

We believe that the approach to the involvement of the Público newspaper in this case just not beyond the scope of the work to the extent that there has been collaboration (conscious?) Newspaper, one could speak in double spin doctor: Fernando Lima and the newspaper itself.

24 Guerreiro, Catarina e Henriques, Graça, "Cavaco confirma desconfianças e vai pedir mais informações", Diário de Notícias, 19/9/2009

http://www.dn.pt/especiais/interior.aspx?content_id=1366263&especial=Caso%20das%20escutas&eccao=POL%CDTICA (consultado a 29/6/2015)

25 "Declaração do Presidente da República", 29/9/2009,

<http://www.presidencia.pt/?idc=22&idi=31744> (consultado a 30/6/2015)

26 Lima, Fernando, "A minha verdade", Expresso, 20/1/2010 <http://expresso.sapo.pt/actualidade/a-minha-verdade=f558857> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

For lack of information, it is not, however, strictly speaking Público conscious collaboration in the manipulation of Público opinion. We remain therefore at the point where the newspaper was misled by the source.

Still, they note that there are interventions from the Joaquim Vieira provider the following questions:

- "The Público allowed the script of the research was dictated by the Presidency of the Republic"²⁷;

- The "suspicious" of the tapping was not heard for drafting the text, which motivated the complaint to the provider that triggered the entire controversy remaining, that although Rui Paulo Figueiredo had already disproved the "content (...) fanciful and totally false" to the journal²⁸. Joaquim Vieira reveals that "requested by the provider to explain why the data collected for a year and a half by Tolentino de Nóbrega, and that somehow contradicted the version of the advisor of Belén, did not enter the news about the "spy" of S. Benedict nor José Manuel Fernandes or Luciano Alvarez responded"²⁹; "In a matter of this result in what would become crucial to hear the main protagonist, the provider records the apparent little desire to find Rui Paulo Figueiredo, telephoning at the end of the day (which presumably he would no longer be working) and to the local that the journalist knew to be wrong"³⁰.

- The two news comes 17 months after the contact of the source, "but throughout this almost year and a half, the same source showed no tangible evidence of the existence of these tapping"³¹;

- The newspaper worked "by what the provider realized only [with] a source, which is always the same presidential employee who took the initiative to speak to the Público in 2008"³², although this is disputed by the author of the two news³³, yet thus insufficient to Joaquim Vieira to change opinion ³⁴;

- "The only minimally objective data that the source of Belén, which transmitted the information to the PÚBLICO, had advanced to substantiate such a serious accusation in the operation plan of our democratic system of a "suspicious" behavior of a prime minister's deputy who had been part the official delegation's visit of Cavaco Silva to Madeira, a year and a half ago. Explanations were grotesque - the deputy was sitting

27Vieira, Joaquim, "A questão principal", Público, 20/9/2009 <http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/2009/09/questao-principal.html> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

28Vieira, Joaquim, "Subitamente neste Verão", Público, 13/9/2009 <http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/search/label/Cr%C3%B3nicas?updated-max=2009-09-27T18:40:00-07:00&max-results=20&start=16&by-date=false> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

29 Idem, ibidem

30Vieira, Joaquim, "A questão principal", Público, 20/9/2009 <http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/2009/09/questao-principal.html> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

31 Vieira, Joaquim, "Subitamente neste Verão", Público, 13/9/2009 <http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/search/label/Cr%C3%B3nicas?updated-max=2009-09-27T18:40:00-07:00&max-results=20&start=16&by-date=false> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

32 Idem, ibidem

33 Vieira, Joaquim, "Assuntos internos", Público, 27/9/2009 <http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/2009/09/assuntos-internos.html> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

34 Idem, ibidem

where he was not and had spoken to journalists - but accepted as valid by PÚBLICO journalists, that did not cite any source in this passage of news (although they used the conditional) ³⁵;

- "The PÚBLICO news rocked the national political means, and the Prime Minister himself commented them considering its contents "summer nonsense." The subject was as serious enough for the PÚBLICO, as the newspaper that launched the story, to confront its source in Belén with an alternative: either producing more concrete evidence about the alleged surveillance of which the Presidency was a victim was (that ever emerged) or would have to conclude that it was all a political low blow aimed at putting St. Benedict in check." ³⁶.

In the face of all this, Joaquim Vieira concludes the newspaper's behavior, "which resulted in an objective attitude of protection of the Presidency, source of news about the political effects that the 18 and 19 August headlines eventually come to have. And this, regardless of the accumulation of serious journalistic errors committed in this process (including, in addition to those referred to above, to allow the PÚBLICO investigation guide was dictated by the source of Belén), leads to the worrying question, which cannot fail to put: will there be a hidden political agenda in the activities of this newspaper?" ³⁷;

In addition to the provider, others spoke.

The then president of the Ethics Council of the Journalists Union said, "taking as true the email content of the DN yesterday reproduced in full (...) the relationship between Luciano Alvarez and advisor to the President of the Republic, Fernando Lima, raises doubts". "In the case of an organized source, professional, greater care must be had by the journalist," he told DN ³⁸.

Already the Regulatory Authority for the Media, analyzing a complaint of Rui Paulo Figueiredo, considered that "the newspaper Público neglected basic duties of journalistic activity, a loss of exemption and rigor to which it is legally and ethically bound; The Regulatory Council, in accordance with its duties and responsibilities defined statutorily, decides to recommend to the newspaper Público to fulfill the duty of impartiality and rigor, particularly the observance of the adversarial principle in respect for the rights of the target in the journalistic pieces that publishes" ³⁹.

And among many texts published on the net, we highlight the view of the old provider of Público the readers, Joaquim Fidalgo: "If that negotiation [between Fernando Lima and the Público] nothing had result (as happened at first, in April 2008) all would be well: the source tried to bring 'water to their mill', as it has every

35 Vieira, Joaquim, "A questão principal", Público, 20/9/2009

<http://provedordoleitordopublico.blogspot.pt/2009/09/questao-principal.html> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

36 Idem, ibidem

37 Idem, ibidem

38 Marques, Marina, "Relações com fontes preocupam Conselho Deontológico", DN, 19/9/2015

http://www.dn.pt/especiais/interior.aspx?content_id=1366303&especial=Caso%20das%20escutas&eccao=POL%20CDTICA (consultado a 29/6/2015)

39 Conselho Regulador da Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social, "Deliberação 5/CONT-I/2010 que adopta a Recomendação 4/2010", Lisboa, 8 de abril de 2010

<http://www.erc.pt/pt/deliberacoes> (consultado a 29/6/2015)

right to do, the journalists would have taken note but did additional work that was their duty, and nothing has been proven, nothing is published. But over a year later, and continuing to nothing to prove, there were published suspicions that the source relayed ... So it seems that even without any evidence, the source always managed to bring water to its mill, with the apparent complicity (active or passive) of journalists⁴⁰.

The various statements and questions, especially from Joaquim Vieira provider point in the sense that, by acts and / or omissions, the newspaper cooperated, consciously or unconsciously, with the spinning operation of the Presidency.

Only the future will clarify how things happened in the drafting of the Público that August 2009 and why they happened this way. But it is not excluded, as stated by Powell (2010: 204), citing the English press in Tony Blair's time, the newspaper has, himself, decided to put their own spin on the story. Also because in no time the newspaper understood to report the source, a situation referred to in paragraph 6 of the Code of Ethics of Journalists: "*The journalist should use as a fundamental criterion to identify the sources. The journalist shall not disclose, even in court, their confidential sources of information, or to disregard the commitments unless the attempt to use to channel false information (...)*".

The year 2009 will not finish without José Manuel Fernandes leave, at his request, the Público direction, just as Joaquim Vieira at the end of 2009 stopped to be the provider of the newspaper readers, more here for having achieved the limit provided of two years.

3.6 Notes for discussion

The characterization of this "case of tapping" seems to leave no room for doubt that this is a case of spinning.

They are, in fact, so many features that are known, with a high degree of certainty that it may become a study case.

Fernando Lima was spin doctor when he talked to the journalist of the Público and the two news of this newspaper eventually turn into a spinning.

The first in Portugal? Clearly not.

But by August / September 2009 I was not aware of another case so complete, so well documented, so "perfect."

It is, indeed, very little is missing to better understand this case. Even if the then President of the Republic will speak about it in the future or that Fernando Lima presents a different version of that exposed the Expresso newspaper, that - is the surest - only increase the level of spin doctoring of the case.

Two final notes:

- It will be correct to mention the existence of a double spin doctor in this case (Fernando Lima and the newspaper Público)? To answer this question missing

40 Fidalgo, Joaquim, "Dúvidas no 'caso das escutas'", Mediascopio, 20/9/2009 <https://mediascopio.wordpress.com/2009/09/20/duvidas-no-caso-das-escutas/> (consultado a 30/6/2015)

elements, particularly those relating to journalists who were at least directly involved in the news concerned.

- We want to believe that you can continue to coexist the press secretary and spin doctor, without it to take completely the space of that.

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ANNEX

The email such as reported by the Daily News of 18/9/2009 (including any magpies) (<Http://www.dn.pt/dossiers/politica/caso-das-escutas/noticias/interior/o-email-que-denuncia-as-escutas-transcricao-1365657.html>)

From: Luciano Alvarez

Posted: Wednesday, April 23, 2008 14:18

To: Jose Tolentino Nobrega

Subject: Read

Dear Tolentino

I will make this conversation by email, not by phone because the situation is so serious that it is better not to take risks to be heard. As you will see more frequently, the President of the Republic men risk talking about it by phone. It may be paranoia from them, but the truth is that it is better not to take risks.

First warning: read this mail sitting.

Second warning: the story will not be easy to do, but if achieve that, it can be the atomic bomb.

Let's do it by steps

1- On the evening of Tuesday the Fernando Lima, PR, phoned me to say he needed to talk to me this morning in a discreet location. We meet today at 9 am in the morning in a discreet café on the Avenue of Rome and was soon down to it, was there to talk to me at the request of the President of the Republic, that the matter was serious and that had chosen to talk to me because he thought I was a serious journalist (this would be to flatter me) and why the presidency would think that the PÚBLICO is the only Portuguese newspaper that is not sold to power.

2. The subject was the following (you sitting?): The president of the republic thinks that the prime minister's office spies and the great proof had been given in Madeira where the Prime Minister had sent a guy who works for the MAI only to spy on the steps of the President and the men of his cabinet. (Even if it is a lie that no more than a PR of paranoia you are viewing the seriousness of the fact that the President think that the PM is spying). You see how will the relations between them and the opinion that the PR has about the PM)

3- Once handed me a file on a Rui Paulo da Silva Figueiredo that is legal deputy of the PM, works for the MAI, has passed through the offices of several ministers and, according to Fernando Lima, have been trying to get to the SIS but failed.

This Rui Paulo accompanied the visit of the PR, it is not known how and according to Lima "sought to observe," as inside as possible, the steps of the President's visit and the internal operation of the presidential staff ". The staff PR noticed that quite early and redoubled their care.

5- I am contacting you because this story, which may be a bomb or nothing, must start with Madeira with all the care and because I know I can count on your discretion and professionalism usual (this is not flattering).

6- The Lima assured me that this such Rui Paulo was placed on the table of PR advisors in the dinner hosted by the Representative of the Republic in the Palace of St. Lawrence and was also invited to the dinner that the Garden offered on the last day at Quinta da Velga . This is true and easily verifiable.

7- The Lima suggests and I think well two questions for the beginning work (even because they also interests you that this starts in Madeira and does not seem that it was Belén who passed this information, but someone on the Garden)

8 Questions suggested by Lima: Ask the Doctor. Helena Borges, office of the chief representative of the republic if she knows and if it is true that, at the dinner hosted by the representative at the Palace of St. Lawrence he was at the table of PR advisors (we already know it's true but we pretend not we know) and why he was at this table without first being notified to the staff of PR. Question 2: Ask Paulo Pereira, responsible for Garden office information, why Rui Paulo was invited to the dinner the Garden offered on the last day at Quinta de Veiga.

9 Now I say: who put this guy in the visit and in which party did he entered.

10- As I told you all this may be paranoia of the PR and Lima, but even being paranoid, be sure to be serious that the PR think this and I will pass the information to the PÚBLICO expressing a great desire to see the story come to the Público (you are viewing the scolding). I also think that if we get that there was a guy of MAI and the PM's office stuck to the visit of PR is already a beginning of history.

11- The Lima suggested that I dealt with him (Lima) this story by email because they are afraid of eavesdropping.

12- This story is only of the knowledge of PR, Lima, mine, Zé Manuel Fernandes (who asked me not to tell anyone, but I have to tell you so you will have the full knowledge of what we're talking about). I ask you for it all discretion.

13- The Lima passed me a full dossier on this Rui Paulo.

14- I'm off, I just came to take care of this newspaper and go home. I'm no computer at home (my wife took it to her work). When you have finished reading the email we speak by phone.

A hug and go to them