

NYT to Challenge Von der Leyen on Missing Pfizer Texts

By Free West Media

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Text messages between Ursula von der Leyen and Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla could shed light on billion euro deals to purchase Covid-19 shots. An American newspaper is challenging the European Commission in court to release them.

The New York Times will be taking the European Commission to court over the failure of its president to release the messages between herself and Bourla.

"The newspaper will face off against EU lawyers in the bloc's highest court, arguing that the Commission faces a legal obligation to release the messages, which could contain information on the bloc's deals to purchase billions of euros worth of Covid-19 doses," *Politico* reported.

The case was lodged on January 25 and published on the European Court of Justice's public register on Monday, but the NYT declined to comment on the matter. In a statement it said: "The Times files many freedom of information requests and maintains an active docket. We can't comment at this time on the subject of this lawsuit."

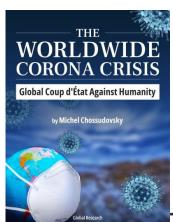
The Commission has claimed that it did not identify any text messages falling under a request for information since the communication did not "generally fall under its internal criteria for recording in its document register, due to the 'short-lived' nature of their content".

Therefore, "the Commission President's personal office was not required to identify any text messages". The Ombudsman subsequently took the view that this constituted maladministration.

The German tabloid *Bild* had previously filed a series of lawsuits against the Commission seeking the disclosure of documents related to negotiations to purchase the mandated jabs, but information on von der Leyen's prior contacts with Bourla were not disclosed.

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