

# The teleSUR email in English

By **Juan Cristobal Nagel** - October 19, 2014

Sent: Thursday, 25 September 2014 15:38:02

Subject: Re: the farewell that wasn't

If anyone still doesn't believe how things are done around here, Telesur contracted a firm to do that the firm had casually found on the Internet, and which has already been used for lots of pu Ramadan.I forgot to share this.

Here you go.

Regards

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Exactly one month ago, I landed in my country rushing to attend the burial of my mother. For t situations, I wasn't in the mood to bid everyone farewell.

Of course, I received the letter from Abraham, who in addition to being a notable professional, his commitment to real revolutionary values which, and don't take this personally, are sorely la commitment).

I'm writing this because of the nonsense that was being said, and for those who stand by me, t work there, because beyond a small group of institutionalized, uncreative and uncommitted pec with the vast majority.

To begin with:

Everyone knows what my salary was, because someone inside that small circle consisting of Pa Andrés Gómez la Rosa filtered it down to the rest of the channel in August, to generate an unb "spontaneous" signature drive organized by a person very close to the president, which impress response for the absurdly miserable salaries of my coworkers.

I arrived on April 25th. It only took me a week to take in the panorama of my situation. I litera office: "They brought me here three months before the launch of the new website, and once m home and Yeimy will return." I asked him to explain why they had made me resign from my job

Of course, I was asking the wrong person. In August when I returned to Caracas, I again asked to spend the last days together with my mother. To this end, I offered a resignation that I had signed. At the time, foreigners were accused of being criminals, as if we had been responsible for the trafficking operations of the Venezuelan military.

Facing a leadership with cohesion worthy of any institution having existed for nearly a decade, "dealing" wasn't an option. As such, I just focused on work and getting results.

I need to underline at this point that NEVER did I receive a single order from my immediate superior, Villegas, all of which I carried out, even when her apprehension of the launch date led her to reprimand Brangela Romero, which I'd already done exhaustively, helping her comprehend the differences between static and interactive HTML5 infographics.

As was the objective, I said all content would be included, and indeed everything was. The other employees earning \$90 a month and tell them that due to financial difficulties, they wouldn't have overtime, but the company needed them to double their efforts. They'd never experienced such a situation. Ortega and I delivered it, with very enclosed conflicts that we defused personally.

The only received instructions were from the then "adviser" Yeimy Avila, who I only saw twice and was unable to answer her phone. Because of which my first month was spent trying to get on top of the situation. Recognized the disaster that was the website project, all my suggestions for improvement were ignored. In the disaster, I refer even to the paid background design that wasn't original for Telesur, because it was a copy.

On more than one occasion I heard harrowing shouting from the fourth floor, about how things were going. Planning for a year. We really didn't perceive any planning at any stage, especially when the TF was launched after they were contacted online because we didn't have anyone to do it. Decisions like that are made in a hurry.

In spite of this, and the same firm advising that making the launch date would be almost impossible due to the delay throughout the launch by the incompetence of a totally inexperienced technical support team.

Such was the gravity of the situation that they destroyed the website half an hour prior to launch. Content that had been uploaded in previous weeks. It was swept under the carpet. Yeimy covered everyone's backs, if they had been responsible, they would have fired us (everyone knows that my team didn't sleep during the launch and even apply security measures).

As an anecdote, during those days the line from the top was that we should prepare for any type of attack from the gringos that were going to hack the website. Evidently they didn't even try, because the access was so simple and one only had to know the initials of any multimedia employee, and enter "gm123456". It was during the launch and weeks leading up to it that we were that vulnerable. It was planned this poorly.

I highlight this because I never received a single negative observation about my work. To the contrary, I was praised by Cordero and Villegas. Cordero just operated behind the scenes.

And I highlight it because, as one can see, a website with regular functions, that isn't even responsive on small devices (like smartphone screens) after a year of planning, and that isn't integrated with its multimedia platform, and the errors, which we're all aware of due to the complaints from producers of the programs, are all errors which I

Just a month prior to the launch, the hostilities ceased, because they knew they had made a mistake.

I need to add another factor here. Prior to my arrival I was alerted by Yeimy that my Spanish director would have to be hard-nosed if she was ever going to respect me. This attitude of trying to get the best out of myself persisted until my last day, and at all times the absurd hostility from Yeimy towards Glenda included sabotaging maneuvers aimed at those who sent directions to their "collaborators" (now known as producers) so that they would commit monumental errors and ruin Glenda's work. The hostilities towards her, at least until

Glenda's departure would truly be a loss for any company. I have nothing but gratitude for her for her time in the confines of Caiza, in an unknown city and a new job. I never met anyone so upstanding in my life, so demanding. She was always a tireless worker with the highest standards, with a superior knowledge of the field, she could stimulate a team, a great organizer with unyielding loyalty, even for an institution which never

When I speak of her multimedia knowledge, I merely refer to the results of her work, without taking into account the issues with the few tools available, which fixed videos of all kinds, attracting 5,000 views in short time, at a millionaire annual cost, and with...seven views. With the truth I offend no-one, and fear no

Telesur let someone like that go. Of course the institution will continue moving forward, we are not going to stop. It keeps this in mind. But one supposes that in search of excellence, all companies seek to preserve

In spite of this, the website launched, with all the difficulties and planning errors.

I must reconstruct events to relay another mistreatment of a work colleague that took place in

Adriana Orejuela were witnesses.

I always strongly criticized the way the team in Quito was organized, and how Greg managed it. When I went to Quito, I encountered a different picture, because the vast majority were capable in direction, and many questioned the leadership of Greg as director.

Cordero, Villegas, Yeimy and I shared these same observations. In spite of this, and this is some situations to reinforce his position and empower him, despite the situation in Quito heading in the

In the same way, I contested the criticisms of Cordero from the staff in Quito, who were complete. I told them that they had the privilege of the VP with them in the office, they told me he was not deflected by citing his logistical obligations in the development of the building.

I also had to overcome accusations about enormous overcosts of equipment, often very important of my job to defend my nominal superior.

Days before the launch of Telesur English, after a committee meeting about content there was a meeting with Villegas, Orejuela and myself, about the chaos in Quito. Orejuela and myself acted as witnesses of his ineptitude, and at that point Villegas gave the order to get him on a plane to Caracas immediately so that Greg arrived in Caracas without clothes, and even without telephone.

This was how Greg ended up in limbo in Caracas, answering emails and doing what he could. My decision, which I ignored because the truth was that, in spite of everything, I wasn't going to play that game.

What Villegas can't deny is that she came to my office on July 25th to tell me various things: 1, "I will make efforts to make the launch despite everything; 2, to ask me that in a year's time, I make a cake for you, because you is now your child"; and 3, "Find Greg a position here."

In between relieving him of his duties and switching them, there was a mediation. We spoke with him to have, since Greg had personally contracted practically all the Quito staff, the correspondents, a decision, an error admitted by Villegas herself, because his departure could have sparked a rebellion. But because of his executive capabilities, Orejuela and I agreed about Greg's intellectual capacity, his dedication, and his work. Orejuela was the person who took this to the presidency.

I want to clarify that various people in Quito had notified me weeks before, that Greg had asked

people who told me this, it's hard for me to doubt it, but I want to make it clear that my conclusion is a solution.

## **The previous week**

There were some episodes during the days prior that I should mention.

Villegas came by my office to see how things were going, just as I was in a meeting with Glenda Alejandra del Palacio and Jeannette Bustamante. Villegas and I went into Glenda's office to speak about the low production rate of articles. I told her that during my time in Quito, I had 10 articles per day, getting paid 2,000 dollars a month, while in Caracas they do eight per day, getting paid 1,000 dollars a month.

It was the first time Villegas challenged me, saying this was nonsense, because the official exchange rate was 1,000 dollars to the bolivar, so Caracas actually paid more than 1,000 dollars a month. There was to be no more argument. I brought it to your attention because two and half weeks later, she would use my own arguments to back up her vultures of Telesur.

Another episode was the evidence of differential treatment. After a meeting, I had a discussion with Glenda Alejandra del Palacio for smoking all the time outside the entrance to the building, and that evidence was despite her responsibilities. I wasn't going to agree, because she was a member of my team and I didn't want to, because I don't mess with anyone's staff. Villegas started shouting at me, backing up Consuelo.

She didn't have the same attitude when Cordero, after I hadn't left the channel to sleep or eat, started shouting at me because of 16 lost banners. Directors and people from an external publicity firm, started shouting at me because of 16 lost banners, even less so in front of the board of directors, and least of all in the presence of people. It was an absence of manliness, because as far as I know, real men shout in your face and bear the consequences. I put up a finger and played dumb, despite protests in solidarity from many directors, letting her know that I wasn't going to. All those banners were finished, and then lost by someone in Web Services who had only been there for a few days.

During those days I received a notable kindness from colleagues, but the best thing was to see Glenda Alejandra del Palacio until dawn, throwing everything into getting the website up, not just the Spanish but also the English. The website wasn't launching with the required multimedia content. This is not a criticism, since this was real work. The team's efforts really were outstanding, because we spent nights filled with great mysticism.

If anyone believes I stayed awake because it was a job for which I was paid 6,000 dollars a month, that's a different story.

understand what it means to love a profession you've been in for 24 years. Money doesn't keep trade and your ideals.

After having been characterized as a criminal by Villegas, they could have tripled my salary and doubt it, you can see how with similar salaries in other places, I refused to do it.

And if you still can't understand that this was not about money, my team stayed behind because I labored with Glenda by our side. This was the reason, because in the end, when they were paid McDonald's combo (not an exaggeration, I saw the payslips). I say this because the presidency which I often gave bus money, because their salaries couldn't stretch. But the best work was done and are just unquantifiable. Staff whose observations by HR were about serious errors they published as evidence of orchestration by Yeimy in order to sabotage Glenda and myself, or just a triumph of socialist values.

## **The criminals**

After the launch, there was only radio silence until the foreigners were summoned.

Since there were no operational criticisms to make of me, the maneuver started from a different angle. I underwent an operation on July 24th, the very day of the launch. I didn't go to Buenos Aires, because I simply couldn't abandon the ship at that moment.

On July 25th I asked Villegas, as she returned from the second floor to her office, whether she could let me know the expected movements ahead of any eventuality that could happen to my mother. A scene prepared to intimidate us, with a HR assistant and La Rosa. Talking of absurd accusations might do as part of a retaliation. I have the information and necessary means to defend myself from my duties, and I'm at peace with those who give me peace.

In an infantile maneuver, they sought to frame me as the leader of an illegal currency exchange and even I was not the first to arrive at the channel, and in fact the rumors of clandestine currency exchange in the channel even included questions of Andrés Izarra. I don't pay attention to these comments, because of the dedication of the current Minister of Popular Power for Tourism.

There are no legal places open to exchange money, and the response was "they are going open in this way is absolute absurdity. I would sincerely have preferred them to tell me "we'll do what

They said we were going to Los Roques. Let's see if they have a photo of me in Los Roques. I went with a colleague to Colonia Tovar one Saturday, in a shared taxi. Of course, with my salary I fancied, but in the end, I was working or too tired to even leave my house.

They said they had photos and videos of us illegally exchanging dollars in the building. This was a personal warning for the foreigner in question, a disciplinary sanction for the Venezuelan counterpart, and a courtesy of showing the accused the relevant photo(s).

As I'd never, ever, exchanged dollars in the building, I would never have expected to be accused.

In any case, no-one knows about the exchange situation in Venezuela until they arrive. I wanted to open the shop but the shop was closed. Maybe one day we'll find out where other people, who weren't in that meeting, were photographed, change their money?

Unlike the rest, I can't allege that I knew nothing about the situation. I have the emails and Skype messages. I know how it would benefit me: "You can live like a king". This was in January, during my recruitment.

Nevertheless, in response to the accusation that we lived like the kings of the channel, because our colleagues earned 100 dollars a month, and that we were living the high life (going to Los Roques), I believe I speak for others when I say that:

-Nobody converts all their salary, they leave their country, family and friends, to prosper and succeed. We could have the absurd idea of modifying the contracts (outrageous) or not renewing them, and

-We all helped out family members. In my case, I paid my sister's college, and my mother's medical expenses. I had nothing to offer.

As for me, not even my rent was paid in Venezuela, instead dollars from my foreign account (just transferred to the Panamanian property owner in Panama). My rent was high, though adjusted to the situation. I was ignorant about, because when I mentioned it to Cordero, he thought the amount was annual, not monthly. In Venezuela to live in Petare or Catia, I wanted to live at least as well as in Buenos Aires, and I'm not the channel, who despite earning a humble salary in Bolivares because of her revolutionary vocabulary, has no assets.

I never changed more than 400 dollars of my paycheck. As such, the accusations are pure tripe.

less charitably, malicious bullshit.

I want to be clear about one thing. All my life I wanted to work at Telesur. In those conversations they would have accepted a writer position. I never negotiated my salary, they just offered it to me. 5,000 more, so they raised it by 1,000. Full stop. I would have been happy with anything. I only had a telephone so I could talk with my family at any time.

In any case, I am not ashamed to have earned that salary, if anyone would appeal to a Christian. I worked less than 12 hours a day, and was operational inside and out of the office. I collaborated and remember rightly, they didn't even realize they were being sold the same content produced in Ecuador. I warned them of this mess, though it wasn't my job to do so. I provided content, helped with production, and the content to use was created by myself and Stephany Montalán. And I think in situations such as that of the 2019 crisis, the presidency was correct, even if they didn't listen to me, and ended up paying a higher price.

However, I would offer any Venezuelan in the channel a job paying 5,000 Argentine pesos, which is a raise, to see if they would leave their country.

In that meeting the discourse was lowered further regarding the mess we caused for the revolution. They said we were notified they would be modifying our contracts.

This was the first fallacy, because the budget for the 15 salaries was already available until December. The "advisers" is also questionable.

If the financial stability of the revolution is really threatened by the salaries of 15 foreigners, I would say: if I were dead, strap ten cartridges of dynamite to his balls and detonate them.

In which case we can go over the cost of Tariq Ali talking to a sock, Laura Flanders, Bill Fletcher, and so on, compared to the page visits they generate (just one video produced by the Spanish team about the grand programs combined, added to the clicks of the columnists).

Our salaries were a marginal cost. Which reaffirms that the only thing planned during this entire process was a demonstration that the values and practices of capitalism and neoliberalism are far from being revolutionary. It was of the revolution, instead of mistreating its workers.

We began to perceive hostility from many coworkers regarding the salary difference, which of course



something about political conduct from places where I've worked for a long time, I know how to look for a planned solution, in order to capitalize politically, as in the case of "getting a 40% raise". The signatures is organized by someone in the confidence of the presidency. And especially when or accused us of criminality, a group of directors threatened a mutiny. We could see where the road

From that point onwards I resolved to resign to a place where I wanted to stay. In spite of ever take time. I respectfully disagree with the bit in Abraham's letter where he talks about believing like him, I believe in people.

I went to Venezuela to take on a life project. It's difficult, and nobody is warned that it's an odyssey you have to pay a year's rent up-front, for which you have to loan money, and thanks to the group up with debt instead of savings, that there's no alternative to changing money on the parallel market disaster and not because of 15 wretches, with those suffering being not the oligarchy but the people

I resigned for a job in the Argentine government, resigning to go home to Buenos Aires, to be valued and lend my experience, to learn and move forward. I didn't go to be miserably mistreated in a country I left everything behind. Sometimes I think my sin was being the one who refused to say that everyone applaud everything in a board meeting. Maybe this is required when you see unrepresentable pictures

Sure, Villegas will be able to sleep at night because "these are decisions that need to be taken" by the business owner in savage capitalism, except with an intellectual honesty that makes it more respectable

That absurd and violent meeting, in which a company threw all its weight at a small group, each in their own jurisdictions. In fact, while they brandish the values of 21st century socialism, they draw up guidelines in the most neoliberal country in South America: Colombia. It's really the first revolution I've known to be

Let it be known that this is not a liberal critique. I come from a family of combatants, kidnapped and disappeared, so I spit from a great height on those who believe in a socialism which avails itself as the Tupamaros to end crime in 23 de Enero.

But resignation had been circulating in my mind for a while. We had the meeting and I decided to be pointed out, I understood from early on how the game was being played, and I never deserved

Poor treatment was manifested in different instances. I warned my superiors on various occasions that the Palacio, was being subjected to unfavorable treatment and even discrimination by some English

Mexican. Because of this, I saw myself forced into a unpleasant confrontation with Quito that st because as leader of a group I have to protect its members.

After my visit to Quito, four colleagues, in the name of the rest, raised legal questions over the into four parts and forwarded to Dr. Garzón, to which in three months he never responded, des people. Fortunately they know I did everything possible, and understand how things are manag

I requested meetings with Villegas on four occasions, only wanting to know directly if they didn resign. I just wanted to be with my mother, instead of being dragged along for no reason. We a not personal, and that they can be resolved.

She never received me. She replied to an email telling me to wait a few days to meet with the I mother was in intensive care.

I ended up asking the clinic where my mother was being treated for a certificate verifying this f me. This certificate was delivered.

To all my requests, the argument was that she didn't have time. But evidently she had the time group, which I assume was more important than my absurd necessity.

When Cordero arrived in Caracas, I only expected two things. One, that he would be motivated didn't raise the topic. Two, that he would respond directly when I offered my resignation, becau leave and didn't want to them to waste my time. What I did raise with him is that since arriving never given me a order, not a single one, and nobody told me if anything I had done or decidec and tried to get things done as best I could.

He denied that the channel wanted to get rid of me.

Cordero and I shared an affinity for military definitions, talking of troops, battle fronts, etc. Our question of early starts. I think he expected to see me around 7 in the morning, whereas I norrr be leaving until 11pm or later, which isn't to say I wasn't working before I arrived. A Peron quo the purpose of the military was: "To be useless, but up early". I think this was the only obvious

At last the big meeting took place, where various topics were broached, and I was last, because for my resignation, although legally I had already been fired, because before had I resigned, th

telephone. Without being able to look me in the eyes, Villegas asked for my resignation and I d walked out. If there were reasons, they should have been communicated to me before, whethe professionalism, or other. As this never occurred, to ask the motives in that moment was just t denying the plain truth that it was a decision taken even before my arrival at the channel. What my mother still in intensive care after 33 days and suddenly they left me incommunicado.

I duly left this situation certified for legal reasons.

I will never understand why they subjected me to such hostility. It was never necessary.

Two days later my mother passed away. I miraculously arrived in time to attend the burial at th

I retain all this unnecessary pain, without understanding why they took someone aged nearly 4 work without direction, and despite offering my resignation due to the gravity of a mother in in unnecessarily. Don't be offended if one believes that only a son of a bitch is capable of such a t

Probably those most affected by this email will come out and say it's all a nonsense. It hardly n assassination plots.

This email is simply a internal critique of the channel. Rest assured that in public, I continue to for the people, which is unfortunately seen by some as a private preserve. These are not empty since returning home, and naturally they knew about my time at Telesur, and I said with compl over there.

I hope that they have abandoned the idea of underestimating me. As I said, with the truth I fear God. I'm at peace, and don't fear retaliation on top of everything they've already done. After sc down to it, I have what it takes to look after myself. This is not a warning. It's a notice.

My most sincere affections for those marvelous people I met over there, both in Caracas and Q

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