

■ Tekst 9

Who pays the piper?

Three years ago a German-American research team revealed in the journal *Circulation* that garlic powder, in tablet form, seemed to help prevent hardening of the aorta, the artery that carries blood to the heart. The finding was a plausible one. Garlic has consistently been linked to lower levels of heart disease. It was nevertheless a help to be told that the research was funded by Lichtwer Pharma GmbH, which manufactures garlic pills.

10 Last week *Nature*, the titan of science journals, announced that from October 1 it will expect all its authors to declare “any competing financial interests” with the research papers they submit. This is a welcome decision. Science is intimately linked with industry. Scientists go to agribusiness to finance research into plant science or genetic engineering; they go to pharmaceutical companies to get their backing for pioneering studies of promising molecules. And, increasingly, scientists themselves are involved in new companies, the cash-generating, research-financing enterprises of tomorrow. Don’t blame the scientists: blame the system. Successive governments have declared that science is intimately linked with national wealth. But there is always the suspicion that those who pay the piper have the power to call the tune. Or, to put it another way, it is hard to imagine that particular German-American research team reporting that garlic powder tablets make no significant difference to heart health (which would have been an equally plausible outcome). But scientists who use money only from the taxpayer, whose only obligation is to provide a result, would have no such inhibition.

35 If people are aware who pays for knowledge, and who will benefit most from it, they will also know how best to value it. Such frankness will help the scientist and the consumer. People with nothing to hide have everything to gain.

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- 1p **35** Wat suggereert de schrijver door te vermelden dat “the research was funded by Lichtwer Pharma GmbH, which manufactures garlic pills” (regels 7-9)?
- 2p **36** Op welke twee manieren zijn wetenschappers bij de industrie betrokken volgens regels 15-22 (“Scientists ... tomorrow.”)?
- 1p **37** ■ What is the “inhibition” (line 33) that certain scientists may suffer from?
They feel they cannot
- A go against obvious public health interests.
 - B report objectively on research results.
 - C waste taxpayers’ money.
- 1p **38** ■ Which of the following sentences illustrates what is meant by “Such frankness” (line 36)?
- A “Three years ... the heart.” (lines 1-5)
 - B “Last week ... they submit.” (lines 10-13)
 - C “Successive governments ... national wealth.” (lines 23-24)