When navigating Dutch websites to see if there was any update on the Hesdy Gerges situation I saw something that I really didn't want to see as a kickboxing fan. I saw an interview with Mayor Van der Laan of Amsterdam, pulling the whole "you see, I was right" act in regards to It's Showtime's Hesdy Gerges being arrested for possible cocaine trafficking.

Mayor Van der Laan had been talking the past year or so about cracking down on martial arts events in the city due to the unwanted criminal elements that would show up there. He was upset that while he and his administration are trying to clean up the city, these events would have prominent members of organized crime treated as VIPs and paraded around in front of people. Seeing as though Amsterdam is the center of the kickboxing scene in Holland, this is bothersome to many.

For It's Showtime it means not being able to run in their home city, in the Amsterdam ArenA as they have almost yearly now, drawing around 20,000 fans per event, if not more. Well, Van der Laan spoke on his Thursday AT5 show, "Conversation with the Mayor" about the Gerges situation. When prompted on the issue, "You see!"

This validated the point Van der Laan had been making about criminal activity in kickboxing events. "It was not a nice thought to have, but I thought to myself, I have him now."

It wasn't like Van der Laan needed a lot of proof, as last year Badr Hari went to prison for assaulting a doorman, and Ashwin Balrak was arrested for possessing and possibly trafficking

80kilos of cocaine. So this year, Hesdy Gerges, a fighter being pushed as one of the new stars being suspected of being involved in an international drug trafficking incident is another nail in the coffin.

To understand why It's Showtime is in a hard situation, think about this. There is an Act in the Netherlands, known as BIBOB. BIBOB is intended to keep criminals out of Government contracts and keeping things "clean." It is up to local municipality's in the end to approve or disapprove a company under the BIBOB Act. In this case, Van der Laan has made it clear that he will *not* approve of anyone involved with organized crime. What the process for BIBOB is, in a nutshell, is to get licensed in your municipality to serve the public, you need to fill out paperwork and submit the form to the government, they then vet your company for possible criminal ties and decide if you can do business or not.

You are guilty until proven innocent in most cases. You have the legal right to defend yourself and your company, but in the case of It's Showtime, that is three fighters, two of which are under direct management of the company, involved in serious, very public crimes. That helps explain what Simon Rutz was talking about recently in spending money to clear the company's name. [source]