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Chief rabbi staggered

By SILVAN SCHOONHOVEN

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AMSTERDAM - The well-known chief rabbi Binyomin Jacobs staggered because of the polishing of child abuse cases. An American prosecutor even accuses him of lies. Within the Jewish umbrella organization they are all done with the face of the Jewish Netherlands. It is called to retire.



Chief Rabbi Binyomin Jacobs, here on the right next to Archbishop Polycarp Aagin Aydin of the Syrian church, is under attack because of his position in a number of abuse cases.

Jacobs would have tried to sweep the events under the carpet in three sex cases or to send fact-finding evidence to his advantage. This is shown by research by De Telegraaf. Abuse victims and their parents call the bell about the role that Jacobs played.

Cheiderschool

Jacobs is besides 'interprovincial chief rabbi' also involved as vice president at the Jewish Cheider school in Amsterdam. In 2006, a school employee would have touched a 12-year-old student. Jacobs urged her mother not to file a report. "He has put me under heavy pressure and frightened me," she says. "It would be bad for the marriage of my daughter and for the school, they would take measures. Nothing has come of that. He only received a reprimand and is still in service. "

The issue was covered up. That does not apply to a big rape case on the Cheider that in 2012 did come big in the news. The lecturer who passed to at least five pupils will be brought to justice in April. Jacobs emphasized yesterday in a comprehensive statement that he always encouraged the parents to make a declaration.

Not true, say three of the affected parents. "Jacobs has advised against reporting", one of them told in 2012. "Because what would I do with it, and it was nothing." A second parent: "Jacobs had put me under psychological pressure. He has a lot of influence in the

community. "A third:" By causing hurt, we would cause damage to our children. "

As if the misery on the Cheider was not enough, a third abuse case keeps the emotions busy in the Jewish Netherlands. That case is playing in Nijmegen. Again the role of Jacobs is controversial. This newspaper revealed that the rabbi is accused of having touched two boys at a camp in America, while he was able to work in Nijmegen without hindrance later on. Since Wednesday he is 'exempt from work' on his own request.

The Jewish umbrella organization NIK wants the truth on the table about how the abuse rumors were tackled by Jacobs and the local synagogue. The agreement was that Jacobs would keep further away from this NIK research. But he did interfere with it, in an internal letter. "Against all instructions, he contacted the external adviser directly about his own interest in the investigation", chairman and secretary of the NIK write. "He tried to convince him of excluding research into his previous role in this matter, according to the advisor."

Jacobs states that he already thoroughly researched the Nijmegen case in 2011. According to him, the story of a 11-year-old boy who said he had been assaulted did not produce any criminal offenses. And, he told this newspaper, no other victims had ever reported to him.

'He's lying'

"Jacobs is lying about the facts", however, now appoints an American prosecutor and professor of criminology Benny Forer. Jacobs knew indeed that a second camper had reported with complaints about the Nijmegen rabbi L. Forer had himself reported this to Jacobs' son, who sought the matter for his father in the US. "It did not interest him," says Forer. "He said that they did their own research and determined that it was not true. Jacobs called me to explain and condone L.'s behavior. "

Jacobs emphasizes that he has made every effort to speak to other victims of the Nijmegen rabbi, but in vain. He says that he has acted "in good conscience" in all matters. For both Cheider affairs he relies on his secret of secrecy and the fact that one case is under the judge. He says he is not interested in the investigation. The NIK board officially declares that "the accusations against Jacobs must be sorted out".