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**CANADIAN BROADCAST STANDARDS COUNCIL**

**ATLANTIC REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**DECISION CONCERNING  
CKBC-AM BATHURST'S NEWS REPORT OF SEPTEMBER 17, 1991**

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*March 16, 1992*

**FACTS OF THE CASE**

The CKBC (AM) 8 a.m. news of September 17, 1991 reported on, among other news items, the City of Bathurst Council meeting of September 16, 1991. The report described the events of the meeting and the actions of one City Councillor in particular at the meeting.

The CRTC received a complaint dated October 8, 1991, regarding the above program, and referred it to the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council for resolution. In his letter, the complainant considered that the station "slants stories to suit themselves" and that the news announcer had taken "items out of context."

The CBSC Secretariat forwarded the complaint to the broadcaster for reply.

In its response to the complainant, CKBC denied that its news report was inaccurate or misleading. In his letter, the Vice-President of the station indicated that he had viewed a videotape of the city council meeting and felt that CKBC's "reporting reflects the events as they unfolded over the course of the meeting." According to CKBC, the news reporter was merely reporting the facts of the Bathurst Council meeting.

On December 3, 1991, the CBSC received the complainant's request that the matter be referred to the Atlantic Regional Council for resolution, as he was not satisfied with the broadcaster's reply. The Atlantic Regional Council met on February 12, 1992 to consider the complaint.

**CODE AT ISSUE**

The CBSC Secretariat determined that the complaint could be considered under the CAB Code of Ethics, clause 6 -- News, which reads:

*It shall be the responsibility of member stations to ensure that news shall be represented with accuracy and without bias. The member station shall satisfy itself that the arrangements made for obtaining news ensure this result. It shall also ensure that news broadcasts are not editorial. News shall not be selected for the purpose of furthering or hindering either side of any controversial public issue, nor shall it be designed by the beliefs or opinions or desires of the station management, the editor or others engaged in its preparation or delivery. The fundamental purpose of news dissemination in a democracy is to enable people to know what is happening, and to understand events so that they may form their own conclusions.*

*Therefore, nothing in the foregoing shall be understood as preventing news broadcasters from analyzing and elucidating news so long as such analysis or comment is clearly labelled as such and kept distinct from regular news presentations. Member stations will, insofar as practical, endeavour to provide editorial opinion which shall be clearly labelled as such and kept entirely distinct from regular broadcasts of news or analysis and opinion.*

*It is recognized that the full, fair and proper presentation of news, opinion, comment and editorial is the prime and fundamental responsibility of the broadcast publisher."*

## CBSC DECISION

The Council analyzed the content of the programming and the specific issues raised by the complainant as they might relate to this Code. The Council determined that the program was not "designated by the beliefs or opinions or desires of the station management, the editor or others engaged in its preparation or delivery." Thus, it was the Council's conclusion that this Code had not been contravened.

As the Atlantic Regional Council found that the broadcaster had not contravened the Code of Ethics, the broadcaster has the option of broadcasting the decision. The decision will be released to the Atlantic media.