
**CANADIAN BROADCAST STANDARDS COUNCIL
ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**DECISION CONCERNING
THE CFTO-TV (TORONTO) NEWSCAST OF AUGUST 7, 1991
91/92-0121**

October 22, 1992

FACTS OF THE CASE

On August 7, 1991, the CFTO-TV newscast contained a sports item regarding a bullfight in Poland.

The CRTC received a complaint dated February 3, 1992, about the newscast, and referred the complaint to the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC). According to the complainant, the newscast contained racist remarks, as the sports commentator indicated that the Polish spectators had "no brains". The complainant felt that this comment constituted a racist slur, unacceptable in the*context of the sports commentary.

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

In its response to the complainant, CFTO-TV indicated that the sports commentator had in no way implied that Polish spectators had no brains. the reference to Poland was simply to indicate the location of the bullfight. Thus, the broadcaster felt that the remarks were not racist or derogatory.

The complainant, unsatisfied with this response, wrote to the CBSC to have his complaint referred to a CBSC Regional Council. On September 30, 1992, the CBSC's Ontario Regional Council considered the complaint.

CODE AT ISSUE

The CBSC Secretariat determined that the complaint could be considered under the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' (CAB) Code of Ethics, clause 2 - Human Rights, which reads:

"Recognizing that every person has a tight to full and equal recognition and

to enjoy certain fundamental rights and freedoms, broadcasters shall endeavour to ensure, to the best of their ability, that their programming contains no abusive or discriminatory material or comment which is based on matters of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, marital status or physical or mental handicap. "

CBSC DECISION

The Council analyzed the broadcast and the specific issues raised by the complainant as they might relate to this code. The Council decided that the newscast did not contain "abusive or discriminatory material based on matters of national or ethnic origin" and did not, therefore, constitute any contravention of the code.

Because the Ontario Regional Council found that the broadcaster had not contravened the Code of Ethics, the broadcaster has the option of airing the decision, which will also be released to the Ontario media.