
APPENDIX

CBSC Decision 11/12-1750 CHKT-AM re心滿意屋 (*Home Sweet Home*)

The Complaint

The complaint of April 8, 2012 is addressed to Fairchild Radio, but it was sent to the CBSC with a covering letter:

Hello,

I am writing due to concerns I have following statements made by Mr. Christopher Ko on his program broadcast at 1 pm Sunday April 8th, 2012. My formal complaint is attached as a Word Document to this e-mail. If more information is required, please feel free to e-mail me.

Thank you.

His formal complaint was as follows:

Re: Complaint on False Statements Linking Christianity to the Symbol for the Red Cross

I am writing this letter as a formal written complaint over false statements that was [sic] made on a Cantonese radio program broadcast entitled *Home Sweet Home* (心滿意屋) at approximately 1:05 pm on Sunday April 8th, 2012. This program was hosted by Christopher Ko (高子威) and broadcast on FM88.9 and AM1430.

On that program, the host had made remarks that the emblem of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was based on the cross of the Christian faith in relation to the Easter holiday. He went on to say that the cross on which Jesus was crucified was changed and adopted to a symbol of medicine. This blatantly false statement is extremely offensive to members of all communities.

Article 18 [sic, actually 19] of Chapter VI of the *Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field* clearly states that “**Out of respect to Switzerland the heraldic emblem of the red cross on a white ground, formed by the reversal of the federal colors, is continued as the emblem and distinctive sign of the sanitary service of armies.**” This is the true origin of the symbol for the ICRC, proving that the statement made on air about the ICRC symbol being synonymous to the symbol of the Christian faith an absolute falsehood.

I take particular objection to the statement by Mr. Ko because it very much insults members of different communities. As a member of a religion other than Christianity, I am offended that Mr. Ko gives false credit to the Christian faith for a public good that is in actuality a combined effort of people from all different religious and cultural backgrounds. In the same lines, I am offended that Mr. Ko has spread false information about the ICRC, a secular international organization which is well known to be active in all parts of the world. The ICRC also runs the Red Crescent and Red Diamond organizations. Additionally, my social circle

includes many members who are of the Christian faith and I feel they would also be offended by the statements of Mr. Ko who changed the cross, a symbol of utmost suffering in the Christian religion, to one of medicine and healing.

As one of the trusted Cantonese radio broadcast individuals in the Toronto area, Mr. Ko has a responsibility to his listeners to say things that are true. The information about the symbol of the ICRC is easily researched and accessible. His apparent lack of diligence in researching the facts before making them on air is offensive. More importantly, it is dangerous due to the fact that a segment of his audience may not have the ability or knowledge to find this information and simply trust his false statement. This can be interpreted as religious propaganda, which is completely unacceptable.

As a Member of the broadcasting profession, Christopher Ko is in a position of power due to the fact his voice reaches many people through the medium of radio. His word is often taken at face value by older members of the Cantonese community. An error in a matter that is as simple as the symbol of the ICRC, which is a very well known organization with information that is easily researched and accessible suggests that there was absolutely no evidence of an attempt to ensure factual accuracy before making the statements. It is due to the offensive nature of the statements as well as the lack of diligence in fact checking that I make this complaint. A copy of this complaint has been forwarded to Canadian Broadcast Standards Council and CIRV Radio International.

I have included my e-mail and mailing address if you would like more clarification or wish to contact me.

Broadcaster Response

The broadcaster responded on April 27:

"Home Sweet Home (心滿意屋)" program broadcast on Fairchild Radio AM1430 on April 8, 2012

We refer to your letter emailed to us on 8th instant regarding a certain part of the "Home Sweet Home (心滿意屋)" Cantonese program aired on April 8, 2012 on CHKT AM1430 hosted by Christopher Ko (高子威).

First of all, thank you very much for taking the time to express your concern about our program. We have retrieved the archive program and have reviewed the segment in question which lasts for less than two minutes. The said program broadcasting every Sunday aims at providing information to audience on topics in relation to the real estate market and household design. As the program fell on Easter Sunday, a Canadian and many other countries' holiday, Christopher began the show by giving out the background of Easter including the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. He then said that the 救護車/十字車 (a common saying of ambulance in Chinese) has also dealt with life-saving too. At no time in the program did Christopher ever mention about the emblem of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as alleged. Having said that, we believe that the opinion formed by you that *"there was absolutely no evidence of an attempt to ensure factual accuracy before making the statements"* is not substantiated.

Last, but not the least, please rest assured that Fairchild Radio has always strived to observe our industry codes as well as to serve our audience in various communities to their best interests.

Thank you for listening to our broadcast and your support to our programs.

Additional Correspondence

The complainant submitted his Ruling Request via the CBSC webform on April 27:

I am not satisfied by the response from the broadcaster. Instead of addressing the issues, they are claiming that what I heard was never said. I strongly believe that I remember quite accurately to what was said. I was not alone at the time and all of us had a similar reaction to the statement about Jesus' cross and the cross on an ambulance.

Additionally, I feel the response that was given actually makes my points stronger. I have e-mailed my response to [the Administration and International Language Program Manager] of Fairchild Radio Toronto as well as [the Communications Coordinator] of the CBSC.

Please feel free to contact me. Kind regards.

The complainant also sent the following e-mail and attachment directly to the CBSC's Communications Coordinator:

Thank you for the reply. Today, I received an e-mail from [the Administration and International Language Program Manager] of Fairchild Radio in regards to my complaint dated April 8th, 2012. Unfortunately, the reply I received was completely unsatisfactory. I noticed that the response from Fairchild Radio Toronto was also sent to you. As such, I am attaching my response to the correspondence I received which explains why I find the response completely unacceptable. I have sent a copy of my response to [the Administration and International Language Program Manager] as well.

I now request that the CBSC rule on this issue due to the inadequate response I received. I have submitted a Ruling Request Form that I filled out online.

Please feel free to contact me in regards to this issue. I appreciate your efforts in helping me resolve my complaint with what was broadcast.

Attachment:

Re: Complaint on False Statements Linking Christianity to the Symbol for the Red Cross (CBSC File C11/12-1750)

Thank you for the response dated April 27th, 2012 in regards to my concerns about the broadcast on April 8th, 2012 of the program *Home Sweet Home*. I appreciate you taking the time to address my letter of complaint. Sadly, I am extremely disappointed with the response. Your response only haphazardly addresses one of my concerns and ignores the others.

In response to your claim of what was said by Mr. Christopher Ko on the program, I am certain of what I heard and, although I do not have a recording of the broadcast in question, I am certain I heard him say, translated from Cantonese, "Jesus' cross is also used as a symbol of healing, as in the cross on an ambulance". This statement is wrong. There were others with me at the time and we heard what was said. Even by your admission of what was said demonstrates my point is valid [*sic*]. In your response, you claim that Mr. Ko explained

the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus during Easter and then explained, or implied, that the Christian religious symbol is related with healing and is used on ambulances. I once again refer you to the Geneva Conventions and the *Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field* where all of this is clearly outlined and shows that the symbols used on ambulances are laid down by the International Community of the Red Cross (ICRC). Mr. Ko's statements about the cross on the ambulance as being a symbol of healing during an Easter broadcast is completely inappropriate as they have nothing to do with each other. Not all crosses are the same. It is exactly the fact that the symbol on an ambulance was discussed and the ICRC was not mentioned that is at the root of my grievance. Additionally, according to your argument, you claimed that an ambulance is commonly referred in Cantonese as a (救護車/十字車). If these were translated literally, they mean "saving car" and "symbol for number ten car" respectively. The reason for the latter direct translation is due to the symbol resembling the Chinese character for the number ten. This means that the symbol relates closer to the Chinese character than the religious symbol. By your own admission, the symbol on the ambulance does not refer at all to the Christian faith.

Your response fails to address my concerns that ambulances are secular and that other symbols, such as the Red Crescent or the Red Diamond, are used as Protective Symbols as well and appear on ambulances throughout the world. My concerns about the linking [of] a secular organization (or ambulance) to a religion was never addressed in your reply. My concern about the program broadcasting what can be perceived as religious propaganda in relation with linking Jesus (or the cross) to healing (or an ambulance) was never addressed.

Speaking about Jesus and the cross as the symbol of Christ during the Easter holiday is understandable and acceptable. However, bringing up the symbol on an ambulance in conjunction with Easter is not. Your response has failed to address my concerns and your given explanation is inadequate. Due to my dissatisfaction with your response, I have now referred the matter to the CBSC for a ruling.