
APPENDIX

CBSC Decision 12/13-1134 CTV News Channel re news reports (“Clashes Erupt in West Bank”)

The Complaint

The CBSC received the following complaint on March 5, 2013:

In light of CTV’s failure to respond to our concerns, we would like to ask the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council to arbitrate our concerns.

For full information about our grievances, please see our February 25 and 27 emails appended below that were sent to [the] President of CTV News.

If you require any additional information, please don’t hesitate to contact me directly.

Honest Reporting Canada

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Sent: February-25-13 8:44 PM

Subject: Time Sensitive: Request For CTV News On-Air Correction

I am writing to request that CTV News issue an immediate on-air correction to remedy a serious error that was stated today at 1:20 and 2:19 pm (EST) by CTV anchors Amanda Blitz and Sandie Rinaldo.

The following was stated by your anchors: “Here’s some stories we’re following today: Thousands of mourners marched today in a funeral procession for a **Palestinian detainee who died in an Israeli jail**. The death has caused widespread clashes and is stoking concern in Israel that a new uprising could erupt. **The prisoner died while taking part in a hunger strike.**”

To view these reports online please [click here](#) and [here](#).

Contrary to what CTV has twice reported today, the Palestinian inmate who died **WAS NOT taking part in a hunger strike**. He was just simply an inmate who died of what Israeli authorities suspect may have been a heart attack while Palestinians accuse (without evidence) that he was “tortured”. Here’s the Israeli Health Ministry’s statement on Arafat Jaradat’s death which was released yesterday:

Health Ministry Statement on the Autopsy on Arafat Jaradat

This afternoon (Sunday, 24 February 2013), at the National Center for Forensic Medicine, an autopsy was performed on the body of Arafat Jaradat by Prof. Yehuda Hiss, in the presence of Prof. Arnon Afek, Director of the Health Administration at the Ministry of Health, and Palestinian pathologist Dr. Saber Aloul.

During the autopsy, no signs of external trauma were found apart from those pertaining to resuscitation [attempts] and a small graze on the right

side of his chest. No evidence of disease was found during the autopsy. Two internal hemorrhages were detected, one on the shoulder and one on the right side of the chest. Two ribs were broken, which may indicate resuscitation attempts. The initial findings cannot determine the cause of death. At this stage, until microscopic and toxicology reports are in, the cause of death cannot be tied to the autopsy findings.”

CTV has made a serious error by falsely claiming that a **Palestinian hunger striker died in Israeli jails** whereas it's believed that a standard Palestinian detainee died of what is believed to be a heart attack or natural causes.

It would be insufficient for CTV to simply contend that it took immediate measures to ensure the correct information was being reported as the story progressed. In keeping with CBSC standards, an unequivocal on-air correction is required and on behalf of our over 30,000 members, we call on CTV News to set the record straight by swiftly issuing two on-air correctives to be aired tomorrow afternoon at 1:20 and 2:19 pm (EST).

I look forward to your prompt reply and action.

Honest Reporting Canada

Sent: February-27-13 12:10 PM

Subject: Re: Time Sensitive: Request For CTV News On-Air Correction

We ask again for a prompt reply and action from CTV News in remedying this serious error.

Honest Reporting Canada

Broadcaster Response

CTV News Channel responded on March 12:

We have investigated your complaint about a story covering the death of Arafat Jaradat on CTV News Channel on Feb 25th.

It was a voice over segment that read, “Thousands of mourners marched today in a funeral procession for a Palestinian detainee who died in an Israeli Jail. The death has caused widespread clashes and is raising concern in Israel that a new uprising could erupt. The prisoner died while taking part in a hunger strike.”

We later learned that he was not among several Palestinian prisoners that were participating in a hunger strike.

The source of the error was copy contained in an NBC report. Although we did not air further reports on Mr. Jaradat other than the two instances that played in that hour, when we discovered the error, we promptly took steps to ensure an accurate account was posted on our web site, CTVNews.ca.

You can view the online story here:

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/world/rocket-fired-from-gaza-at-israel-is-first-in-3-months-1.1171954#ixzz2NFSXFqBf>

Our policy is to quickly correct errors when they are discovered and we did that in this instance.

Additional Correspondence

The complainant sent the following email on March 12 requesting that the CBSC pursue the matter:

While we appreciate that CTV has now replied to our concerns, we are not satisfied with the contents of this reply and ask that the CBSC arbitrate our concerns.

It's important to note that CTV has acknowledged communicating an error, though it tried to pass the buck to NBC News even though it ultimate bears responsibility for all content broadcast over its national airwaves.

I anticipated in my original complaint that CTV would "contend that it took immediate measures to ensure the correct information was being reported as the story progressed." [CTV's Editor, Journalistic Policy and Practices] has done just that by saying: "Although we did not air further reports on Mr. Jaradat other than the two instances that played in that hour, when we discovered the error, we promptly took steps to ensure an accurate account was posted on our web site, CTVNews.ca." While [CTV's Editor, Journalistic Policy and Practices] claims "Our policy is to quickly correct errors when they are discovered and we did that in this instance" and that an article was posted to the CTV website time-stamped the day after receiving our complaint, CTV has not respected CBSC standards by issuing an unequivocal on-air correction which is the only platform which would allow for proper redress of CTV's serious error.

Any fair-minded person would expect that if a serious error was broadcast on TV, it should also be corrected on TV – not the internet. CTV's failure to properly correct this error shows not only a failure to be an accountable and responsible broadcaster, it shows a flaunting of its obligations as a CBSC member to act in ethical accordance with your standards.

We hereby reiterate our request that CTV News must air an unequivocal on-air correction to set the record straight.