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CRTC
Ottawa, OT
Canada, K1A 0N2

To whom it may concern;

I am submitting this letter as an addendum to my complaint Case ID 422625.

In many of my previous complaints concerning The Miracle Channel, as well as the one noted above, I have made specific reference to violations of the Religious Broadcasting Policy CRTC 1993-78, section "IV. Guidelines on Ethics for Religious Programming", under the heading of "Programming Practices", point 2, which states, "No group shall be targeted for the purpose of conversion or proselytism".

To date, The Miracle Channel has not addressed this violation in any of the responses they have provided to myself or the Commission over the past four or five years; nor has the Commission provided a determination concerning same.

As noted in my complaint, a specific group, the First Nations, was targeted for the purpose of conversion and/or proselytism on November 5, 2008 at 8:11 CST. In Mr. Klassen's response, he also quotes the specific verbiage that was used by the guest to attempt to convert this group, yet he does not address my concern. As justification, Mr. Klassen has chosen to use only The Miracle Channel's internal fundraising policy, which does not supersede CRTC policy, but rather is subject to it; He did not respond in light of CRTC policy. I would again like to point out that the guest is introduced as the CEO and Chairman of the Board of The Miracle Channel. As such, I trust he would be quite familiar with CRTC regulations, guidelines, policies and past Commission determinations. He would have also been the individual responsible for the content, accuracy and approval of Mr. Klassen's response to my complaint.

I perceive statements/admonitions such as "pray to our god" and "if you don't know Jesus, accept him" as being blatant attempts of conversion. As well, the guest qualifies his statements by saying he was a Buddhist learning to be a monk and since his conversion to Christianity now considers his pre-Christian (Buddhist) state as being

“heathen”. So within this segment, the guest has targeted not only the viewing audience, but also First Nations peoples, Buddhists and heathen.

Mr. Klassen noted there is a First Nations leader involved with The Miracle Channel. I find this point completely irrelevant to this specific issue. Conversion or proselytism is not race specific but rather belief specific. It is a known fact the individual Mr. Klassen speaks of is a professing Christian and as such would no longer believe in or follow his historic spiritual culture or practices. As a prime example, just because I am Caucasian, it does not mean I am representative of my entire race. This should be obvious to Mr. Klassen as he has made it a consistent point in his responses to speak of my own differing beliefs, personal views or “theological and spiritual differences”.

Again, any statement that tells viewers they need to submit to Jesus or the god of The Miracle Channel or that they must pray to, accept or come to him for any reason is a blatant attempt at conversion. This type of programming is no longer educational, informational or balanced. The Miracle Channel prides themselves on the number of people who call in as a response to this type of appeal and commit their lives to Jesus. They refer to these as “salvations” or people who are “saved”. They make it a point to report, as a result of their appeals, the number of “salvations” that are occurring during the campaign.

These types of statements and appeals are interspersed throughout the entire fundraising broadcasts, though I may have only cited one or two within this complaint.

I ask the Commission to consider the point of conversion/proselytism as a separate item within my complaint so we have a clear understanding of what this means and how it applies in relation to CRTC Policy and Miracle Channel broadcasting practices and programming. It should be noted that this point has been completely overlooked in the Miracle Channel’s internal fundraising policy and being the fact that conversion is part of their mandate, I doubt they have addressed it in any other policy.

In addition, I would like to have clear definition as to what the term “group” means within the CRTC Policy. It is not clearly stated if the word “group” applies only to a specific group, such as an identifiable or visible minority or whether it applies in the broader sense using the generally accepted definition of the word “group”, meaning two or more individuals or things considered together because of similarities, such as all viewers of the station which would comprise a “group of viewers”; though either definition is applicable in this instance as it involves First Nations people. Personally, I don’t feel this definition should be restricted to a visible or minority group. Even if it’s a specific religious, cultural or racial group (which may not be visibly identifiable) with their own unique beliefs or only an individual who is targeted, the social impact is the same.

I would also like to point out that The Miracle Channel is an over-the-air broadcaster and is not a “specialty” or “discretionary” service. I would hope this requires them to be even more diligent in their efforts to adhere to CRTC regulations and policies.

As a note of clarification, in my original complaint, I stated that the live segments were rebroadcast 2 more times following the live segment, thus tripling the violations. This is incorrect. The fact of the matter is that each 6-hour live segment is rebroadcast 3 times simultaneously to fill a 24 hour broadcast day, which actually quadruples the number of violations in a 24-hour period.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Thibault