

Timeline proves ABC sacked Australian journalist Antoinette Lattouf at behest of Zionist lobby

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Evidence to hearings of the Fair Work Commission industrial tribunal has established beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) sacked journalist Antoinette Lattouf in response to a politically motivated campaign by Zionist lobby groups hostile to her critical attitude towards the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

Lattouf initiated proceedings alleging that her December termination constituted political and racial discrimination. In addition to hostile attacks on journalists perceived to oppose the Zionist regime, Lattouf has noted the sidelining of reporters such as herself, who are of Middle Eastern descent. The hearings concluded last week and Fair Work is due to hand down a determination.

In January, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that Lattouf was fired after a barrage of vexatious complaints to ABC management by Lawyers for Israel, coordinated through a secret WhatsApp group. Robert Goot, the vice president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ), was involved. His role showed that ECAJ, while claiming to be a representative body of the Jewish community, functions as an aggressive lobby group for the Israeli state.

Despite lame and contradictory denials, the evidence shows that ABC management was acting at the behest of these forces. Perhaps most explosively, a senior manager directly involved in Lattouf's termination has acknowledged he does not know if the journalist violated the social media policy that was the basis for her termination.

Sydney Morning Herald and *Age* journalist Calum Jaspan compiled the evidence to establish a timeline that is a damning indictment of ABC management.

Lattouf began a five-day short-term position on December 18, filling in as a host of ABC Radio's Sydney morning program.

Jaspan's timeline shows that by 12:35 p.m. on Lattouf's first day, ABC managing director David Anderson had received a complaint accusing the public broadcaster of violating its impartiality charter by hiring Lattouf. The complaint alleged that the journalist had "biased views" about the Gaza war. The individual also forwarded to Anderson a missive she had sent to Michelle Rowland, the federal Labor government's

communications minister, containing similar accusations against Lattouf.

Notably, Jaspan wrote: "Key elements of the complaint to Rowland reflect the content in a number of 'call to action' templates shared around pro-Israel support and WhatsApp groups on the morning of Monday, December 18 and throughout that week."

Fifty-nine minutes after he had received the complaint, Anderson transmitted it to three of the other most senior managers at the ABC, news director Justin Stevens, chief content officer Chris Oliver-Taylor and acting editorial director Simon Melkman.

Less than fifteen minutes after he had received the email from Anderson, Oliver-Taylor sent a note to four other senior managers. Clearly foreshadowing a move against Lattouf, Oliver-Taylor wrote: "I am concerned her public views may mean that she is in conflict with our own editorial policies, but Simon and Sashka would be able to advise. Can we also advise why we selected Antoinette as stand-in host?" That was a reference to Sashka Koloff, the managing editor for standards and compliance in the content division.

At 1:52 p.m., still little over an hour after the initial complaint, the issue was brought to the attention of Elizabeth Green, ABC Radio Sydney's content director, and acting station manager Mark Spurway.

To describe management's response to a single complaint as lightning fast would almost be an understatement. Ordinary people with concerns about ABC content are directed to a complaints mechanism that goes nowhere. Since October, there have been hundreds of complaints to media regulators about the ABC's repeated promotion of crude Israeli war propaganda in its television broadcasting, online publishing and radio. They have had no impact whatsoever.

In this instance, a single individual targeting a journalist in a relatively lowly and temporary position immediately had access to Anderson, the managing director of the entire ABC. Despite the transparently political character of the complaint, it was treated as bona fide and deserving of the immediate attention by virtually all of the ABC's executive management. The clear

implication is that the complainant was not from the hoi polloi, but was a prominent and well-connected individual within the establishment.

On Monday afternoon, following discussions with Green, Oliver-Taylor reportedly accepted that there was “no issue” and that Lattouf could remain. The complaints, which ABC management must have known were being coordinated, continued to roll in.

On Tuesday evening, Lattouf shared to her personal Instagram account a post by the US-based Human Rights Watch, which alleged that Israel was using hunger and starvation as weapons of war in Gaza. Human Rights Watch is a conservative organization whose reports are frequently cited by the US and other allied governments. The ABC published two separate articles reporting on the same allegations against Israel that Lattouf transmitted via her Instagram.

On Wednesday morning, the *Australian's* media editor Sophie Elsworth posed questions to the ABC about Lattouf's employment. They included a reference to the many complaints that had been sent. The Murdoch publication has been in the frontline of a frenzied campaign to defend Israel's bombardment and to slander all opposition as antisemitism. In doing so, it has collaborated closely with the various Zionist outfits that were targeting Lattouf.

Early in the afternoon, Oliver-Taylor convened a meeting of other ABC managers. He then informed Anderson that with the Instagram post, Lattouf had “breached the ABC's editorial policies whilst in our employment... As a result of this, I have no option but to stand her down. Call me if you can, but if not possible, I will action within the hour.”

At 2:39 p.m., Lattouf's sacking was publicly revealed in an article published by the *Australian*.

While Oliver-Taylor's message to Anderson expressed certitude that Lattouf had committed a wrongdoing worthy of immediate termination, in testimony before the Fair Work Commission, the manager adopted a far more ambivalent tone. According to Jaspán, Oliver-Taylor told the tribunal, “I believed it was a breach of policy” and “it may have breached social media policy.” Those statements, from the manager most centrally involved in the firing of Lattouf, are a damning indictment of ABC management.

The timeline shows that the hardcore Zionists were gunning for Lattouf as soon as they found out she had been given the short-term position. It also demonstrates that senior elements of ABC management were undermining and discussing how to remove the journalist almost as soon as the first complaint came in. Despite their accusations of bias against Lattouf, any objective observer would have to conclude that it is ABC management that has a case to answer when it comes to bias.

The timeline also proves that Lattouf's Instagram post was simply a pretext. A day before she shared the Human Rights Watch posting, Oliver-Taylor, who would eventually sack her, had already questioned why Lattouf had been employed in the

first place.

The Lattouf case has generated considerable anger, including among principled journalists, because it is such a graphic example of how government and official institutions, acting in league with Zionist supporters of genocide, have sought to intimidate and suppress the mass opposition that exists to Israel's historic war crimes in Gaza.

Lattouf's commentary, including throughout the period of the genocide prior to her brief employment at the ABC, has always been scrupulously factual and objective. That is one of the reasons the Zionists went after her with such ferocity.

The week before she began the ABC position, Lattouf had co-authored an article published by *Crikey*. Based on forensic reports of video and previously unpublished police statements, it found there was no evidence that the slogan “gas the Jews” was chanted at a pro-Palestinian protest outside the Sydney Opera House on October 9. Instead, it appeared that the video of the incident produced and shared by Zionist outfits may have been altered, or presented in such a way as to indicate the chant was made when it was not.

The Opera House incident had been a key element of the claim that all opposition to Israel's onslaught on Gaza was really a veiled expression of Hitlerian antisemitism. The specific chant, which the *Crikey* article called into question, had been referenced by the Labor government as it supported Israel's bombardment as well as by prominent corporate publications here and internationally. Last month, New South Wales Police vindicated *Crikey's* analysis, confirming there was no evidence of the chant.

Given the evidence presented before the Fair Work Commission, Lattouf should clearly receive another vindication from the industrial tribunal, and ABC management a sharp rebuke. But that remains to be seen.



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