



2nd Floor, Spencer House, Spencer Row, off Store Street, Dublin 1.
Phone: 353 1 8170340 E-mail: info@nuj.ie Fax: 353 1 8170359
Irish Secretary: Séamus Dooley Irish Organiser: Nicola Coleman

Ms Beth Costa
General Secretary
International Federation of Journalists
IPC-Residence Palace, Bloc C
Rue de la Loi 155
B-1040 Brussels
Belgium

21st June 2013

Dear Beth,

I note that you have had a request from Razvan Martin of Active Watch in Romania regarding the circumstances in which accreditation was withdrawn from Romanian journalists Cerasela Radulescu and Nicoleta Balaci.

They had applied for accreditation from Andrew Kennedy at the IFJ Press Office who advised the Irish office of their application on May 25th 2013.

In a note to Evelyn Hanningan and myself Andrew stated.

“We have received a request for accreditation for the Congress from two Romanian journalists. I have advised that it’s fine for them to come along and that they should bring their Press Cards.”

The NUJ was directly responsible for accreditation policy and this was advised to the applicants on 31st May 2013 by Ms Helen Taylor.

This union grants accreditation to working media on production of a valid press card issued by an IFJ affiliate and this policy was applied to the IFJ Congress 2013. Andrew Kennedy had clearly advised the applicants that they would require a valid press card.

On the first day of the formal Congress I asked Cerasela Radulescu and Nicoleta Balaci to leave a private session of World Congress. They had in fact attended both the pre-Congress conference in Dublin Castle and the official opening ceremony the previous day, because credentials were not checked for the pre-congress session.

With a colleague I invited both journalists to meet me in the office of the IFJ secretariat where they were asked to produce a valid press card. They could not do so and admitted that they were not trade union members.

On the basis that they did not meet the criteria clearly set out their accreditation was withdrawn.

General Secretary: Michelle Stanistreet Deputy General Secretary: Barry Fitzpatrick
Headland House, 308-312 Gray’s Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP
Phone: 0044 20 7843 3700 E-mail: info@nuj.org.uk Fax: 0044 20 7837 8143
Website: www.nuj.org.uk

In our discussion they expressed trenchant views in pejorative terms on the Romanian delegate to the Congress.

They confirmed they had requested the email addresses of all delegates from the registration desk so that they could circulate their own views about the trade union movement in Romania and not for a journalistic purpose.

This suggested that they were not present to act as independent journalists covering the event in an impartial and objective manner.

Outside the premises they behaved in an unacceptable manner towards delegates and towards the staff at Dublin castle. They behaved in a truculent and rude manner towards the General Secretary of the host union, the National Union of Journalists. As Irish Secretary of the NUJ and chief organiser I found myself unable to leave the conference centre without being shouted out. At one stage in attempting to leave the Printworks centre I was ambushed by the two journalists who claimed to be interviewing me live on air as I tried to deal with a query from a delegate.

They threatened to go on hunger strike before seeking to gain access to a private wine reception in another part of Dublin Castle, the Coach House, hosted by another organisation, the ETUC.

Their behaviour resulted in a complaint from staff at Dublin Castle and was a source of considerable embarrassment to the NUJ and IFJ, since the impression was given that they were associated with the IFJ World Congress.

This led to additional security measures the following day.

Many IFJ delegates felt the behaviour of the two journalists towards delegates was unacceptable.

The staff employed by the Office of Public Works, who manage Dublin Castle, felt their right to be treated with respect was undermined.

At my request access to the grounds of Dublin Castle was not restricted by the Office of Public Works and that access was abused by Cerasela Radulescu and Nicoleta Balaci.

Subsequently my IFJ colleague Andrew Kennedy received an apology from a representative of Romanian public radio:

----- Message d'origine-----

De: Andreea Spanily [<mailto:andreea.spanily@radioromania.ro>]

Date: jeu. 06/06/2013 11:31

À: Andrew Kennedy

Objet : Re: media0enquiries0ifj0congress0

Dear Andrew,

I am writing to apologize to you for the events that took place at the IFJ Congress in Dublin with our journalists. I just found out about what occurred and I just wanted to say that I had no idea this would happen.

I understand there are some disputes between some people in our

institution, but, honestly, I don't know the details.

Personally, I feel badly about this, and I would like to offer my sincerest apologies if you got in any trouble.

I hope you are ok and I hope you will receive my regrets.

With best wishes,
Andreea

Andreea Spanily
Senior Assistant
International Relations
Romanian Radio Broadcasting Corporation
Tel: +4 021 319 05 11 / +4 021 303 14 32
Mobile: +4 0755 140 774
e-mail: andreea.spanily@radioromania.ro

In these circumstances I was disappointed at the misrepresentation of events in sections of the Romanian media.

Our priority was to ensure that media accreditation was granted to eligible applicants.

At meetings with NUJ representatives Ms Radulescu and Ms Balaci sought to engage in debate on the legitimacy of the Romanian delegate to World Congress 2013. This was not an issue for the NUJ and had nothing to do with media accreditation.

It is regrettable that the motives of the host union have been misrepresented and that so much time and energy has been expended on this matter.

While I am happy to record events I am not prepared to engage in on-going correspondence on this issue.

Yours sincerely,



Séamus Dooley
Irish Secretary