



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 24/01 |
| 2. Advertiser | Plant Liquidators |
| 3. Product | Retail |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Race – section 2.1 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 13 February 2001 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Upheld – discontinued or modified |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The television advertisement portrays a man, dressed in desert garb and standing among plants, speaking to camera after sounds of cawing. He says, ‘It’s been hotter than an Arab’s armpit. (He raises his arm, sniffs and his expression registers distaste.) And next summer won’t be any better. (He looks upwards.) We’ve got the answer. Drought-tolerant, heat-resistant plants at cool prices. Bung ‘em in now, do the right thing this season, and next year they’ll run on the smell of a wet tissue.’ (He mops his perspiring face.) He goes on to mention, as they are shown on-screen with text, a variety of plants and their prices. Peeping through some plants, he concludes, with superimposed text as appropriate, ‘Next summer, this lot’ll almost take care of themselves. Tip the teapot on them, train Rover to wee on them, out they go, no sweat. Plant Liquidators, 70 Rundle Street, Kent Town. No sweat.’ The advertisement concludes with the cawing sound effect.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant made regarding this advertisement included the following:

‘I find it offensive that the man should be portrayed as an Arab when he is not. Portraying Arabs in this manner is vilifying their race.’

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (‘the Board’) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics (‘the Code’).

The Board determined that the portrayal of the man within the advertisement vilified the Arab community and, accordingly, breached Section 2.1 of the Code. The upheld the complaint on this basis.

Section 2.1 of the Code provides that:

‘2.1 Advertisements shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.’

In making this determination, the Board noted that the advertiser had modified the advertisement following receipt of complaints and commended the advertiser for its prompt response in this regard.

ADVERTISER’S STATEMENT

The intent of this advertisement was to promote heat resistant plants. There was never any intention to vilify Islamic people. We have removed the reference concerned.