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Russia bans America's ABC TV news team

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0508/050803-basayev.html>

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3 August, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Russia bans America's ABC TV news team

BNE: Russia's government has blacklisted America's ABC TV news channel from reporting inside Russia. This follows the network's broadcast of an interview with the notorious Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev, Russia's most wanted man. He has a \$10 million bounty on his head in connection with multiple charges of terrorism inside Russia. He has admitted responsibility for many high profile atrocities, including the sieges at a Moscow theater in 2002, in which 129 people died, and at the school in Beslan in 2004, which resulted in 320 deaths. The Russian Foreign Ministry is furious at ABC for providing Basayev the opportunity to spread his propaganda around the world and for abetting terrorism.

The Russian news agency Interfax posted the Foreign Ministry's press release on its website. It said: "Taking into account all of the circumstances surrounding the broadcasting of an interview with an internationally recognized terrorist, including the clear fact of supporting terrorist propaganda and direct calls to perpetrate acts of violence against Russian citizens, Russia has made the decision that the accreditation of this TV company will not be extended." In the interview, Mr. Basayev confirmed he was plotting further attacks against Russia. The statement also said: "We will continue to act openly with the press, but this channel will not be invited to the Defense Ministry and no interviews will ever be given to it." ABC said it had no regrets about having aired the interview.

WARM-UPS

1. INTERNATIONAL REPORTER: You are an international news reporter. Your job is extremely dangerous. You are in a very dangerous part of the world. You have a secret interview with one of the world's most famous terrorists tomorrow. Walk around the classroom and talk with the other "international news reporters" about your job, the dangers, why you do it and tomorrow's interview.

2. CHECHNYA SEARCH: Your job is to find out as much information as you can in five minutes about Chechnya. Ask as many students as you can (and your teacher) for information. Once the five minutes is up, sit down with your partner(s). Share and talk about what you found out. Discuss what information was new, interesting, worrying, pleasing etc. What information are you happy you found out?

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Russia / blacklists / ABC TV / international news networks / Chechnya / atrocities / propaganda / interviews with terrorists / freedom of the press / regrets

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. PROPAGANDA: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "propaganda". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. A REPORTER'S LIFE: Would you like to be an international news reporter? In pairs / groups, answer this question. Discuss what you think life as a globe-trekking journalist is like. Some of the following words may be useful in your conversations:

- Daily duties
- Other TV / newspaper companies
- Passport
- Dangers
- Friends and enemies
- Terrorism
- Reporting the truth
- Loneliness
- Adventure
- Other

Change partners and compare what you talked about.

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think being a war correspondent and interviewing terrorists is an important job. Students B think being a war correspondent and interviewing terrorists is a totally crazy job. Change partners often.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Russia has ordered a U.S. news team to leave the country. | T / F |
| b. ABC TV news reporters interviewed Russia's most wanted man. | T / F |
| c. ABC paid Russia's biggest terrorist \$10 million for a TV interview. | T / F |
| d. Russia's government accused ABC of spreading terrorist propaganda. | T / F |
| e. Russia's Foreign Ministry took into account many circumstances. | T / F |
| f. The terrorist told ABC his violent activities had ceased. | T / F |
| g. Russia's Foreign Ministry will continue to talk to other news networks. | T / F |
| h. ABC has expressed regret for airing the interview. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| a. blacklisted | helping |
| b. notorious | planning |
| c. bounty | reward |
| d. atrocities | commit |
| e. abetting | barred |
| f. taking into account | broadcast |
| g. perpetrate | horrors |
| h. accreditation | weighing up |
| i. plotting | license |
| j. aired | infamous |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. the notorious | all of the circumstances |
| b. a \$10 million bounty | around the world |
| c. in connection with | profile atrocities |
| d. high | attacks |
| e. spread his propaganda | multiple charges of terrorism |
| f. Taking into account | openly with the press |
| g. perpetrate acts | Chechen warlord |
| h. plotting further | aired the interview |
| i. We will continue to act | on his head |
| j. no regrets about having | of violence |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

Russia bans America's ABC TV news team

BNE: Russia's government has _____ America's ABC TV news channel from reporting inside Russia. This follows the network's broadcast of an interview with the _____ Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev, Russia's most wanted man. He has a \$10 million _____ on his head in connection with _____ charges of terrorism inside Russia. He has admitted responsibility for many high profile atrocities, including the _____ at a Moscow theater in 2002, in which 129 people died, and at the school in Beslan in 2004, which _____ in 320 deaths. The Russian Foreign Ministry is _____ at ABC for providing Basayev the opportunity to spread his propaganda around the world and for _____ terrorism.

The Russian news agency Interfax _____ the Foreign Ministry's press release on its website. It said: "Taking into _____ all of the circumstances surrounding the broadcasting of an interview with an internationally _____ terrorist, including the clear fact of supporting terrorist propaganda and _____ calls to perpetrate acts of violence against Russian citizens, Russia has made the decision that the accreditation of this TV company will not be _____." In the interview, Mr. Basayev confirmed he was _____ further attacks against Russia. The statement also said: "We will continue to act openly with the press, but this channel will not be _____ to the Defense Ministry and no interviews will ever be given to it." ABC said it had no _____ about having aired the interview.

abetting
bounty
blacklisted
resulted
sieges
notorious
furious
multiple
invited
recognized
extended
posted
regrets
direct
account
plotting

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'black' and 'list'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "FREEDOM OF THE PRESS" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about Russia banning ABC and freedom of the press.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| • inside | • account |
| • notorious | • recognized |
| • bounty | • perpetrate |
| • profile | • accreditation |
| • resulted | • openly |
| • spread | • regrets |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What were your initial thoughts on this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of Russia's decision?
- d. What do you think of ABC airing the interview?
- e. Do you think such an interview could do any international harm?
- f. Do you think ABC abetted terrorism in any way by broadcasting the interview?
- g. What do you think of the fact that ABC TV could find Mr. Basayev but Russia's elite specialist anti-terrorist forces cannot?
- h. Do you think the ABC reporters had a duty to capture Mr. Basayev?
- i. What do you know about Chechnya?
- j. What do you know about Vladimir Putin's dealings with Chechnya?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think Russia's decision violates the freedom of the press?
- d. Do you think TV companies should be allowed to air interviews in which terrorists send messages to their supporters?
- e. Do you think ABC has anything to regret or apologize for?
- f. Do you think there is a degree of hypocrisy in ABC condemning terror but also providing a mouthpiece for a known terrorist?
- g. How would your government act in a similar situation?
- h. Would you like to be a reporter covering terrorism?
- i. What are your biggest regrets?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

INTERVIEW WITH A TERRORIST: You are an international correspondent. Tomorrow you have an interview with Shamil Basayev / Osama bin Laden / Other internationally wanted fugitive (please choose one). In pairs / groups, write down eight questions you want to ask the terrorist.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

After you have finished, speculate on the possible answers.

Change partners and share and compare your questions. Explain what you discussed with your previous partner(s). Speculate again with your new partners.

Change partners again and role play the international journalist and terrorist.

After the role play, talk about what you said while you were in your roles.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the banning of ABC from reporting inside Russia. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. CHECHNYA: Make a poster about Chechnya. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

4. DIARY / JOURNAL: Imagine you are an international war correspondent. Write the entry in your journal / diary for one day in your life. Read your diary / journal entry to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. F d. T e. T f. F g. T h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. blacklisted	barred
b. notorious	infamous
c. bounty	reward
d. atrocities	horrors
e. abetting	helping
f. taking into account	weighing up
g. perpetrate	commit
h. accreditation	license
i. plotting	planning
j. aired	broadcast

PHRASE MATCH:

a. the notorious	Chechen warlord
b. a \$10 million bounty	on his head
c. in connection with	multiple charges of terrorism
d. high	profile atrocities
e. spread his propaganda	around the world
f. Taking into account	all of the circumstances
g. perpetrate acts	of violence
h. plotting further	attacks
i. We will continue to act	openly with the press
j. no regrets about having	aired the interview

GAP FILL:

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