[RO] Aggressive Father Christmas

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Mariana Stoican
Journalist, Bucharest

In early December 2001, the Romanian supervisory authority for the electronic media, the Consiliul National al Audiovizualului (CNA), criticised a mobile telephone advertisement and, in a communiqué, condemned its makers for disparaging the image of Father Christmas.

The TV commercial, which was produced in Romania by a mobile phone company publicising a special offer for the month of December, depicted three Father Christmases who, as "kung fu experts", fought with each other for the chance to hang their own mobile phone on the Christmas tree. After a few blows were traded, the "strongest" of them managed to drive away his competitors and give away his "presents".

In the CNA's opinion, such a portrayal of Father Christmas damaged the traditions and expectations connected with Father Christmas and could cause public disappointment and displeasure. The supervisory authority referred to Article 3 of CNA Decision No. 65/2000 on advertising regulations, under which "harming the interests of minors should be avoided". The CNA consequently wrote to the TV broadcaster, criticising the commercial as an "over-aggressive portrayal of Father Christmas" and urging the company to comply with the guidelines concerning the protection of minors. However, the advertisement was not actually banned. The public television company stopped showing the commercial after receiving the communiqué.

Communiqué of the CNA of 3 December 2001

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