

CBS Settles with Trump Over Infamous Kamala '60 Minutes' Segment

In an agreement announced late Tuesday night, CBS parent company Paramount agreed to settle with President Donald Trump for \$16 million over their editing of then-Vice President Kamala Harris' interview on "60 Minutes" last October.

The move, which came as Paramount is looking to merge with Skydance Media, marks the third major settlement that Trump has made with major media conglomerates since the 2024 election.

The money will go toward Trump's presidential library fund, not to him or co-plaintiff Rep. Ronny Jackson of Texas.

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The suit, according to The Washington Post, aimed to hold CBS News liable under the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act for election interference; the suit claimed that the network had engaged in "malicious, deceptive, and substantial news distortion" that was intended to "confuse, deceive, and mislead the public."

As late as a June 23 court filing, CBS had continued to maintain the suit was "meritless" and "[attempted] to evade bedrock First Amendment principles establishing that public officials like themselves cannot hold news organizations like CBS liable for the exercise of editorial judgment."

The suit took aim at how the network handled Kamala Harris' answers during an interview aired on "60 Minutes" in early October 2024. In particular, one answer involving whether the

Biden administration had “sway” over Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was aired in longer form on Sunday morning show “Face the Nation.”

Remember Kamala’s word salad answer about Israel on 60 Minutes? It’s gone.

This is what many Americans will now see.

– MAZE (@mazemoore) October 8, 2024

The “Face the Nation” version was significantly longer and included more of the trademark rambling and halting that Americans had come to know and loathe from the candidate:

The network maintained that the clip was edited for time, not for clarity.

The full transcript was only released in February, and it showed that numerous Harris responses were edited substantially by the network, especially in regards to Netanyahu.

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Trump’s legal team said in a statement that the settlement represented “another win for the American people” as the president “holds the Fake News media accountable for their wrongdoing and deceit,” Axios reported.

The settlement, the Post reported, isn’t just monetary; it also requires “60 Minutes” to release transcripts of future interviews with presidential candidates “after such interviews have aired, subject to redactions as required for legal or national security concerns.”

The move comes amid concerns from the left that CBS and Paramount might be handing Trump another win.

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Via the Post:

The network had been under pressure – from its own journalists, from journalism advocates and even from members of the U.S. Senate – not to settle the case. In May, three Senate Democrats wrote a letter to [Paramount controlling shareholder Shari] Redstone putting her on notice that settling the case in an effort to smooth the merger could put the company at risk of violating bribery law. It followed an earlier letter written by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont), who argued that settling the case would be “a grave mistake” that would “capitulate” to a “dangerous move to authoritarianism.”

The Freedom of the Press Foundation, a Paramount shareholder, has already threatened to sue the company’s board over a potential settlement, arguing that it would damage the institution’s reputation and do harm to its journalists.

However, CBS News staffers had already anticipated that a settlement was nigh.

“I know there’s going to be a settlement. I know there’s going to be some money exchanged,” said “60 Minutes” reporter Lesley Stahl in a May podcast, adding that she was angry with Redstone and questioned “whether any corporation should own a news operation.”

Furthermore, it’s not as if CBS News is alone here, either.

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ABC News also settled with Trump in December over a 2024 interview George Stephanopoulos conducted with GOP Rep. Nancy Mace in which he claimed that Trump had been “found liable for

rape” and “defaming a victim of rape” in a suit brought by writer E. Jean Carroll. Due to misstating – repeatedly – what Trump had been found liable for, the network ended up settling with Trump for \$15 million, again going toward his library.

In addition, Meta – parent company of Facebook and Instagram – agreed to pay \$25 million to settle a lawsuit over a suspension of Trump’s accounts in the wake of the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol incursion. That money will, again, go toward his library. Dare I call it a big, beautiful library?

As for CBS News, what can one say – other than the fact that this couldn’t happen to a better bunch of people?

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