

Chinese lawyers sue CNN for damages over comments

Fourteen Chinese lawyers have filed a lawsuit seeking damages from CNN after one of its commentators called the Chinese 'goons' and 'thugs'.

The plaintiffs from the Beijing Huanzhong and amp; Partners law firm demanded in the suit filed Monday with the Chaoyang Court here that CNN and its commentator Jack Cafferty issue a public apology and pay each of them 100 yuan (\$14.30) in compensation for causing them mental distress.

It is not immediately known if or when the court will hear the case.

During an appearance on 'The Situation Room,' a programme aired April 9, Cafferty, speaking about the US trade deficit with China, used words like 'goons and thugs' to refer to the Chinese.

'We continue to import their junk with the lead paint on them and the poisoned pet food and export, you know, jobs to places where you can pay workers a dollar a month to turn out the stuff that we're buying from Wal-Mart,' Caffer said.

'So I think our relationship with China has certainly changed,' he said, 'I think they're basically the same bunch of goons and thugs they've been for the last 50 years.'

CNN issued a statement last week in which it said Cafferty had made critical comments about many governments, including the US. 'On this occasion Jack was offering his strongly held opinion of the Chinese government, not the Chinese people,' said CNN in the statement.

Liu Jing, one of the plaintiffs, said the statement lacked sincerity and would never be treated as an apology.

She said the remarks made by Cafferty gravely infringed upon her reputation and dignity as a Chinese and had caused severe spiritual and psychological harm.

She said that Cafferty's remarks violated the Chinese constitution and the General Principles of the Civil Law, which state that human dignity should not be infringed upon.

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