

January 12, 2021

Abby Goldstein
President & Executive Director
Public Radio Program Directors Association

Dear Ms. Goldstein,

Thank you for reaching out. We are enormous admirers of the work and mission of public radio and we see it as a privilege to be included in your programming. We do not take that lightly and I appreciate the opportunity to address your concerns.

Please also be assured that our standards are the same in audio as they are across all of The New York Times. When we make mistakes we own up to them as we did by correcting the record with “Caliphate.”

We’ve been transparent with the findings of a thorough review that was conducted by a team of senior newsroom leaders. We published a traditional [editors’ note](#), a front page [investigation](#) of Shehroze Chaudhry, the subject of the podcast, in addition to an [audio correction](#) that has been appended on every “Caliphate” episode page across platforms. We voluntarily returned multiple awards including a Peabody. And our executive editor [Dean Baquet gave an extended interview to NPR’s David Folkenflik](#).

We believe we’ve handled what was a significant journalistic lapse with accountability. We are deeply committed to continuing to pursue ambitious audio journalism and have already begun implementing changes that will make our audio report even stronger.

To address your questions on Michael Barbaro, Times leadership asked Michael -- as the most prominent voice associated with NYT Audio -- to participate in the audio correction with Dean in a conversation that served to narrate the findings of the senior newsroom leaders’ review. This was an audio version of our editors’ note, not an accountability interview, which Dean had already given to NPR. With that understanding, we did not see a need to make reference to Michael’s relationship with Lisa Tobin, the Executive Producer of the Audio team.

After the “Caliphate” editors’ note, Michael sent private messages through social media that may have made recipients feel that their criticism was unwelcome. Michael deeply regrets that. Editors have discussed their expectations with him going forward.

You also referenced allegations of Andy Mills’ misconduct, which we take very seriously. We thoroughly review all complaints received, and will take any appropriate corrective action.

We've been asked why "The Daily" ran an episode featuring Andy, who was a producer on "Caliphate," so soon after the editors' note. The timing of that episode was a mistake and sent an unintended signal that undermined the gravity of the "Caliphate" editors' note. The episode, the first in a two-week package of programming scheduled to air over the holidays, had been pre-recorded and previously scheduled for that day. In light of "Caliphate," we should have changed plans.

We are committed to producing audio journalism of the highest integrity and fostering a workplace culture that is fair and respectful for all employees. It is essential to fulfilling our journalistic mission.

Sam Dolnick
Assistant Managing Editor
The New York Times