

TV Anchor Fired for Finger Gesture

November 27, 2011

The  Moscow Times

An anchor for the country's leading independent TV channel was fired after making an obscene gesture when mentioning U.S. President Barack Obama in a live newscast, but insisted that it was meant for the crew, not him.

Tatyana Limanova, an award-winning journalist and host of a news show on the Ren-TV private channel, waved her middle finger when presenting last week a story about the APEC summit in the United States, a moment after mentioning Obama.

The video went viral on the Internet, with many viewers speculating the gesture had been meant to insult the U.S. president, who met his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev on the sidelines of the summit.

Limanova insisted Thursday that she was gesturing to the crew to raise the teleprompter higher, and called the story "a ridiculous incident," RIA-Novosti [reported](#).

"I'm very loyal toward President Barack Obama, and my gesture was in no way intended for the respected president of the United States," said Limanova, who complained about the YouTube video garnering dozens of supportive comments from "racists."

“I realize that I’ve failed the channel and possibly offended some of the viewers,” Limanova said, adding that she was undecided on her career plans.

Ren-TV is broadcast across Russia and the former Soviet Union. It is owned by tycoon Yury Kovalchuk, believed to be close to Russia’s paramount leader, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

But the channel is widely regarded as relatively free and unbiased in a country where the government has a tight grip on much of the media.

(Reuters, MT)

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