

Hello Cordless Larry. Thank you for your explanation of why you removed some edits to Matthew Parish. I appreciate your setting out your reasons. But can you explain why you think the edits are less than neutral?

I am not an expert in Wikipedia, but I did read the biography of living persons policy which explicitly states that great care must be taken with contested records of criminal offences. In particular, where there is more than one judgment of a court, going in different directions (as there are in the Matthew Parish case), it is essential to discuss both of them. In this case, the court proceedings had lots of problems. I realise I am probably anonymous to you, or at least that my name means nothing; I am a quiet person. But I am one of the world's legal experts in Kuwaiti politics (outside Kuwait) and I think my edits ought to be taken at face value unless another person with knowledge of Kuwaiti politics comes along and says that they are wrong. I spent great effort trying to make the introductory paragraph neutral, because in its current form it gives the impression that Matthew Parish is in prison which is not true. In fact that court judgment is not being executed at all. Now I don't expect you to know all of these details; but I did cite good quality secondary and primary sources (legal documents) for all the things I said. I made every effort for these amendments to be neutral and to represent the balance of the matter in good faith. There I would be grateful if you could reverse your "undo" actions. Surely that is better than my doing it and then you re-doing it and then we on forever! The issues are serious because we are dealing with serious and contested defamation (and actually it's false. and misleading) in the second sentence of the first paragraph of a living person's biography.

One idea I had to solve this problem is to give my amendments a period of one month during which we will see whether anyone edits them and whether there is really a contents war. Right now I don't see that there is a contents war - there's just your impression, which I will very much respect, is not based upon your expertise in the subject area (if you are in fact a Kuwait scholar, then I apologise and withdraw that remark!) This is a remarkable political affair, which has attracted hundreds of thousands of hits to articles in various fora, mainly because people in Kuwait can't read about this because all commentary upon it is banned. Hence it's not just a question of maintaining the living persons biography rules, but also about getting documented information into the public domain that people can debate and comment.

If you accept my approach then we might delete the ===Legal Issues=== section which is just repetitive. Or we could remove the entirety of the text from the first paragraph to form a

new and replacement ===Legal Issues=== section.

I have another issue. Please can you look at

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draft:Kuwaiti_videos_affair. I moved this article into drafts, which was very time consuming and document-heavy to write, a few days ago. I then wrote round to people and asked whether anyone had any comments. Nobody had any of substance. One administrator queried whether it was a conflict of interest. Another administrator appeared to disagree because the article was apparently neutral (and I made every effort to make it neutral); so after a few days I published it. That was done this morning. During the course of today a different administrator (not you) reversed it as being an "obvious COI" and used offensive language in the commentary. I don't think being discourteous helps, even in tense or difficult situations such as this one where we are debating the nuances of a foreign country's senior politics. Courtesy aside, if I've already received the clear from an administrator to publish notwithstanding COI concerns, then why was it reversed by a different administrator? There are some references that need to be tidied up, to avoid what Wikipedia calls "reference rot" (an engaging phrase). But that can be done at one's leisure. It's not a reason to hold up an important article about an important subject. I or someone more knowledgeable than me can get round to that.

Please let me know your thoughts. I understand your philosophy as an administrator; and I am sure you will respect mine as one of several players amidst a complex Middle Eastern political minefield. — Preceding [unsigned](#) comment added by [Pandypandy](#) ([talk](#) • [contribs](#)) 16:01, 11 February 2022 (UTC)

Because I'm not an expert in Wikipedia coding, could you please acknowledge that you've read this and therefore I know I've got it right how to write to you.pandypandyPandypandy ([talk](#)) 15:43, 11 February 2022 (UTC) — Preceding [unsigned](#) comment added by [Pandypandy](#) ([talk](#) • [contribs](#))

Receipt acknowledged, [Pandypandy](#). The lack of neutrality comes from that fact that your edits added text expressing opinions in Wikipedia's voice, the most obvious example being "the integrity of the Geneva courts was brought into disrepute by a report in Swiss publicly owned media". Wikipedia can report opinions but they need to be [attributed](#), e.g. "according to author X, the integrity of the Geneva courts was brought into disrepute by a report in Swiss publicly owned media". Your edit also included the text "He is assumed to be a member of the British Secret Intelligence Service" with no indication of who is doing the assuming (and as far as I see, the source doesn't support this assertion). On your one-month proposal, the issue at present isn't [edit warring](#) but the need for [consensus](#). Your proposal goes against the process by which consensus is reached on Wikipedia,

which is explained at [WP:BRD](#). As it seems clear that you have a conflict of interest, I suggest that you make requests for changes to the article using its talk page, where they can be discussed before being implemented if there is consensus. [Cordless Larry \(talk\)](#) 17:39, 11 February 2022 (UTC)

Dear [Cordless_Larry](#), thank you very much for taking the time to reply. Firstly I appreciate that you are a volunteer, and I acknowledge that Wikipedia is a substantial exercise the public interest. So thank you for your work. Just because we have some difficulties, does not detract from the wider value of what you are doing.

While I am grateful for your explanation, I do nevertheless find some confusions in it that I don't follow.

1. Your primary proposition is that the recent amendments to this article, that you have reversed, is not neutral because it contains the assertion "the integrity of the Geneva courts was brought into disrepute by a report in Swiss publicly owned media". You say that this attributes an opinion to Wikipedia; but in fact it does not. It is written in the passive tense, and it cites a reliable sources, namely an article on the Swiss national public media website. That article is in French; but the language of the article does not change the level of its reliability. It's pretty uncontroversial that right-thinking people would call into question the integrity of the Geneva courts by virtue of a report of a payment of a US\$1 million bribe. I used the passive tense in my text to express the generality of the assertion that it looks pretty unsatisfactory if people are paying US\$1 million bribes to achieve litigation outcomes. Now I can change the text to "According to the principal Swiss public media outlet, ...". The idea that paying a bribe does not call into question the integrity of legal proceedings is fanciful, and I don't there's a neutrality issue here.

2. As to the intelligence service issue, there are in fact three sources. One is a court document that implies a relationship. The second is a court conviction that implies a relationship. The third is a book that implies a relationship. All these sources seem pretty solid to me. One could change the language "It might be inferred that ...". This might assuage your concerns.

3. Your taking issue with minor issues of linguistic construction, relating to the use of the passive tense, can surely not be grounds for erasing the entirety of the amendments, including the observation that Matthew Parish is a well-known academic in the field of constructivism that sat on the entry for a long time but then was removed and replaced with the "imprisonment" story. To put this another way, and I think you acknowledge this, you should have filleted the amendments by changing the use of the passive tense that you did not like rather than by deleting all the amendments in their entirety a substantial number of

which go to the question of whether the biography of living persons policy is being complied with in presenting "the other side of the argument" in relation to a court conviction that all the evidence suggests is being ignored. The implication of the second sentence in the first paragraph of the article as you have reverted it to is that Matthew Parish is serving a prison sentence, which is manifestly false given for example the following academic website article - the website publishes articles from officials related to (present or past) government.

<http://www.transconflict.com/2022/02/an-essay-on-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-3-why-is-the-diplomacy-failing/> 

4. I therefore say to you with all respect that a "pruning" approach would have been more appropriate, to ensure compliance with the biography of living persons policy which is intended to shield the Wikimedia foundation and its editors from defamation actions. I am not threatening you with such an action; but you will observe upon rereading of that policy that the policy explicitly states that this is its purpose. The other course you could have pursued would be to suspend / delete the article entirely, pending resolution of the defamatory allegations which subsequent to my amendments it was apparent to you was contested.

5. Nevertheless, and I am very grateful for this, you have proposed a way forward, and that is professional of you and I appreciate it. I will follow your advice.

6. I don't quite understand the concept of "consensus" as you refer to it. Consensus between whom? I assume between you and me. Anyway I will assume and rely upon your good faith.

7. You did not respond to my complaint about the removal in offensive terms ("ducking" meaning "++cking) of the "Kuwaiti videos affair" article. Could I kindly ask you what you intend to do about that, or what I should do. There seems to me both that there is a procedural error here (I was informed that the COI issue was resolved and then when I published the draft article it was immediately removed again for an "obvious" conflict of interests); and a decency error (writing so offensively to an editor who, it can at least be conceded, spent substantial time writing a complex article about a difficult subject). I am also a volunteer in this process. Nobody is paying me and nobody is being paid in connection with any of the things this post discusses. What I am trying to do is to get out into the public domain an important issue of public interest for discussion and wider knowledge. I am doing this because I think it is in the greater good. Whoever the editor was who wrote to me in terms I found offensive, I would prefer not to have any further dealings

with, particularly when she (I assume it's a she) cited as her grounds for withdrawing the article an issue which I thought had already been resolved. Please let us consider whether administrators may sometimes overstep the proper bounds of their own discretion.

8. More generally, the concept of "conflict of interests" concerns me in the way it is being applied. It is normal for all sorts of people to have interests in a matter. If Wikipedia had a rule that nobody with an interest in a matter could write about it, it would probably be much the poorer as an encyclopaedic institution. But "conflicts of interest" arise only where the interest of the author / editor is inconsistent with the interests of the Wikimedia Foundation which as I understand it is to publish an international encyclopaedia discussing the balanced truth. That is also what I am trying to do. You will note that I am not trying to delete all defamatory material about Matthew Parish; I am merely trying to ensure that statements on Wikipedia about a very controversial subject are balanced. The reasons it is important to get the balance right here (and I have done my best to achieve that, so I am sorry if you consider those efforts lacking) is to promote the public interest, not to defraud the public.

9. Thank you for your ongoing voluntary work, which I now understand a little more clearly. You must be a saint to do all of this without payment. I can express to you that compliment with ease.

10. Please consider whether the "Kuwaiti videos affair" administrator ought to have her administrative privileges removed for using offensive language, as would an editor. What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

11. As an aside, I think the policy against legal threats (and I am not making a legal threat in this text) is quite misguided. Everyone is bound by the law: you, me and the Wikimedia Foundation. Legal threats can be helpful, because they are attempts to prevent legal actions that are devastatingly costly if pursued. The correct way to respond to legal threats, if they are made, is not to ban the person making the threat - they might have a good point and to do so might be seen as evidence of malice. Instead the correct way to respond to a legal threat is to write in a rational and calm way, as you have done to me.

12. In conclusion, I will add the revised "Matthew Parish" text to the talk section of that page so that you and I can agree it; and I ask you to look again at the reasons why the "Kuwaiti videos affair" was peremptorily taken down notwithstanding a period of due process, with a view to your agreeing in consensus with me the process to have that detailed and neutral article restored.

With kindest regards,

[Pandypandy \(talk\)](#)

Sorry please again acknowledge receipt because I do not know whether I am adequately adding a digital signature using the correct coding protocols. That's just because I'm not an expert in the coding protocols and I mean no disrespect to you. [Pandypandy \(talk\)](#) 20:43, 11 February 2022 (UTC)

Reply

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