



Balance of power sold out to foreign interests in CanWest/Goldman Sachs deal

For immediate release

Ottawa – November 20, 2007 – The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) is in Ottawa/Gatineau today urging the CRTC to reject the American-financed bid by CanWest MediaWorks for the broadcasting assets of Alliance Atlantis Communications. The WGC calls on the CRTC to maintain the health and integrity of the Canadian broadcasting system and keep it Canadian.

Maureen Parker, Executive Director, Writers Guild of Canada, says, “Follow the money in this deal and it will lead you to the backroom of a New York bank – that’s not where we want decisions made that affect the state of Canadian broadcasting.”

The WGC does not object in principle to CanWest’s acquisition of the AAC specialty channels – it is the particulars of the deal that the WGC finds objectionable. Despite CanWest’s attempt to abide by the letter of the law, says Parker, “no amount of legal manoeuvring can obscure that a foreign partner has control in fact and will set the strategic direction of the new company. Had CanWest chosen to partner with a Canadian investor, or even a foreign partner with less than 50% of equity and debt, we would not be here today,” says Parker.

“Alliance Atlantis is a Canadian broadcasting success story written in part by the Canadian taxpayer, who sustains the government programs, incentives and protections that have helped AAC grow strong,” added Parker. “To allow these assets to become an economic driver for a foreign bank is a betrayal of those taxpayers.”

CanWest’s move to grow its business and stay competitive should not be taken at the expense of the Canadian public’s interests.

For more information, please contact David Kinahan, Director of Communications, Writers Guild of Canada, at 416-979-7907 or 1-800-567-9974, or by email at d.kinahan@wgc.ca

The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) represents more than 1,800 English-language professional screenwriters across Canada who create the distinctly Canadian entertainment we enjoy on our televisions, movie screens, radios and computers – such as dramatic TV series and movies, feature films, documentaries, animation programs, comedy and variety series, children’s and educational programming, radio drama, corporate videos and digital media productions.

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