



## **Rogers-backed CityTV Joins the Simulcast Pile-on.**

### **For Immediate Release**

**June 2, 2009 – Toronto** – The Writers Guild of Canada was disappointed to see Rogers-backed CityTV boast in a press release about their ‘unprecedented’ new Fall Schedule ‘with over 16 hours of U.S. network simulcasts in prime time.’ The WGC only wishes it was unprecedented – unfortunately, conventional broadcasters spending big to buy American is all too common.

“We’ve come to expect the annual trumpeting by CTV and Global as they hand over the best time slots on Canadian television to U.S. programming,” says Maureen Parker, Executive Director, Writers Guild of Canada. “And now CityTV has joined the choir, taking the deep pockets of Rogers and following the pack to Hollywood. This at the same time as Rogers works to get two CityTV stations out of a condition of licence to air a Canadian movie or two each week. Don’t Canadians deserve some integrity in the Canadian broadcasting system?”

With Rogers, consolidation in the industry is making for some dynamic corporate doublespeak. In April of this year, Rogers went before the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage and criticized fee-for-carriage as an attempt to fund out-of-control bidding wars for U.S. programs. Rogers Vice Chairman Phil Lind called it a “sad fact” that most of the money CTV and Global spend on programming goes straight to Hollywood. And here it is just a month later and Rogers, wearing the CityTV beard, presents itself in Hollywood as yet another Canadian bidder.

The CityTV announcement of its new raft of U.S. programming underlines a problem in Canadian broadcasting that is only intensifying. In May, the WGC called on the CRTC to stem the tide of spending on U.S. programming with regulations that will restore a balance to the Canadian broadcasting system, and keep it Canadian. The WGC was encouraged by the CRTC’s recognition of the imbalance in spending between quality Canadian and U.S. programming, and is looking forward to addressing this with the commission at the policy review in the Fall.

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