



## **The CRTC sells out Canadian Talent in Order to Placate Shaw and Vidéotron**

For immediate release

**Toronto, July 3, 2007** – The CRTC Task Force celebrated our country's 140th birthday by telling Canadian screenwriters, directors and performers that they can't deliver audience pleasing programs.

The CRTC decided to review the Canadian Television Fund's governance and funding after Jim Shaw, of Shaw Cable and Pierre Karl Péladeau of Québecor complained about having to contribute to the Fund. The report was released on June 29<sup>th</sup>, with a number of recommendations the most disturbing of which says that in order to garner an audience, programs need non-Canadian talent.

The Broadcasting Act of this country requires that all Broadcasting Distribution Undertakings (BDUs) contribute to the production of Canadian programs. In fact, they are required to make maximum use of Canadian creative and other resources in the making of Canadian TV shows. Jim Shaw has been making noise about having to uphold this part of the Broadcasting Act, even though he of course expects to retain all of the benefits provided to a business operating in a competition free environment, by saying that nobody watches Canadian TV shows. Sadly, it seems that the CRTC bought what Shaw is selling.

"Why are we perpetuating this myth that Canadians can't make TV shows that we want to watch, about the country we live in. According to Jim Shaw and our regulators, Canadian talent and market success is inherently incompatible", said Maureen Parker, executive director of the Writers Guild of Canada (WGC).

Shows created by Canadians for Canadians draw great audience numbers when promoted and financed – i.e. "Corner Gas", "Little Mosque on the Prairie", "Degrassi: Next Generation", "Rick Mercer Report", "Trailer Park Boys", our TV movies like: "One Dead Indian" and "The Man Who Lost Himself." When shows aren't fully developed, have cheap production values, aren't promoted and are scheduled on Saturday evenings, they won't draw an audience. "But what the CRTC fails to understand is that Canadian screenwriters can't be held accountable for poor broadcasting decisions. Why is it that on our nation's birthday our regulators are reinforcing the negative stereotyped that Canadians aren't good enough?" said Parker.

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Writers Guild of Canada

The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) represents more than 1800 professional screenwriters across Canada who create the distinctly Canadian entertainment we enjoy on our televisions, movie screens, radio 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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