

7 November, 2005

Dear

I am writing to protest recent changes in content objectives on CBC Radio One, and call upon you to invoke the responsibilities of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as outlined in the Broadcast Act.

According to a recent Globe and Mail article, the CBC has recently announced plans to begin broadcasting a significant quantity of mainstream popular music on Radio One, such as Madonna, Elton John, and other Top 40 music, with the intention of attracting listeners with background music "at work, dentist offices, and retail" outlets (Kelly Ryan, host of *Freestyle* as quoted in "*CBC Radio revamp aimed at offices*", The Globe and Mail, 1 November 2005). In doing so, our public broadcaster is significantly reducing the Canadian cultural content on our airwaves, diminishing the CBC's integral role in the expressing and supporting the unique Canadian identity, and failing to provide the high level of program content of which it is capable. The talents of many dedicated and world-class Canadian composers, writers, producers, and artists are being further replaced by commercial content that can be found on any number of mass audience radio stations.

According to the Broadcast Act, the CBC is mandated to provide programming that is "distinctively Canadian," "actively contribute(s) to the flow and exchange of cultural expression," and to "make maximum use of Canadian creative and other resources in the creation and presentation of programming." Increased commercialization of CBC Radio One, which we fear foreshadows changes to Radio Two and is driven by their Arts and Culture Research study, means that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is failing in its responsibility to "safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada." In his Remarks to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage (October 27, 2005), CBC President Robert Rabinovitch stated that the CBC's mission is "audacious, distinctive programming." In addition, the CBC is neglecting its responsibilities as "a public service essential to the maintenance and enhancement of national identity and cultural sovereignty," and minimizing "educational and community programs". By reducing content provided by Canadian artists and cultural contributors and replacing it with mainstream pop music content and less in-depth subject matter, the CBC is reducing its significance to Canadians, and merely becoming more like commercial broadcasters on the radio dial.

I implore you to remind the CBC of its responsibilities as public broadcaster, to encourage their meaningful consultation with Canadian creators, and to enforce their mandate as outlined in the Broadcast Act.

Sincerely,

cc:

Liza Frulla, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Minister responsible for Status of Women

Robert Rabinovitch, President, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CBC Board of Directors

Jennifer McGuire, Executive Director of Programming, CBC
Mark Steinmetz, Head of Radio Music, CBC