

# Intervention, observation ou réponse de l'intimé / Intervention, comment or answer by respondent

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**Cas / Case:** 212822

**Demande à comparaître à l'audience publique / Request to appear at the public hearing:** Non/No  
**Intimé / Respondent:** Non/No

## Commentaire / Comment

B.C.

FEDERATION

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February 26, 2014

Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission

Ottawa, ON

K1A 0N2

RE: Application Number 2014-26

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to you on behalf of the B.C. Federation of Labour and the 500,000 workers we represent. I am concerned with the alarming developments regarding the future of ethnic programming in Canada. Rogers Media is currently applying to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), to renew its OMNI television broadcast licenses on terms that will dramatically reduce or eliminate minimum guarantees of ethnic community and third-language programming. As you may be aware, this comes on the heels of last year's cuts to OMNI stations in Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton, when 21 programs were axed and more than 60 jobs cut.

The B.C. Federation of Labour commends Rogers in providing ethnic and third-language programming geared to our newcomer and immigrant communities. A vibrant media connects us to our communities, and gives us the tools to participate in a democratic life.

Unfortunately, Rogers has requested the CRTC to go even further and scrap regulations guiding OMNI programming in its Conditions of License. Specifically, Rogers wants to:

- Cut back on foreign language programming so as to make way for U.S. comedy and entertainment shows, perhaps NHL hockey too, especially during the day and evening;
- Eliminate conditions that require stations to broadcast a diverse range of third- language programming;

- Amend the license so as to limit the number of broadcasts aimed at distinct ethnic groups (from 20 to as few as 10, without saying which communities are being targeted); and
- Lower community content minimums.

When pressed for more detail on what the elimination of ethnic programming minimums will mean and why they are needed, Rogers literally says in their legal brief, "trust us."

They provide no details of what will be cut and no business plan to support their claim that by scrapping minimums of community programming it will all end well.

Rogers says their current OMNI business model is unsustainable, but they don't provide any verifying information that a standard business statement or shareholder report would require.

The case for ethnic programming goes beyond dollars and cents. Community ethnic programming is an act of citizenry, required by Canada's Broadcasting Act. Of course it costs money. But through OMNI and its mainstream TV stations, Rogers is given privileged access to public airwaves and shelter from intense U.S. competition to deliver programs that matter to Canadians. That's why they are a \$12 billion media success. In return, Rogers must act on its responsibility to be a steward for Canada's media policy objectives regarding Canadian content, local programming and ethnic broadcasting.

Sincerely,

JIM SINCLAIR

President

JS/mz

0500-14let-js-crtc

**Copie envoyée au demandeur et à tout autre intimé si applicable / Copy sent to applicant and to any respondent if applicable: Oui/Yes**

#### **Information du client / Client information**

**Nom / Name:** Jim Sinclair

**Titre / Title:** President

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