



March 26, 2014

Senator Dennis Dawson  
Chair  
Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communication  
Senate of Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A4

Dear Chair,

*Mr Dawson,*

We have received the March 6<sup>th</sup> notices from the Clerk of the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communication for four witnesses to appear before the Committee:

Remi Racine, Chair of CBC/Radio-Canada's Board of Directors

Peter Mansbridge, Chief Correspondent of CBC NEWS and host of THE NATIONAL

Pierre Tourangeau, Ombudsman for Radio-Canada

Ester Enkin, Ombudsman for CBC

The Clerk's notices state that these requests are in the context of the Committee's study, authorized by the Senate December 9, 2013, "*to examine and report on the challenges faced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in relation to the changing environment of broadcasting and communications.*"

We would like to take this opportunity to respond to all four requests.

Mr. Racine is available to meet with the Committee to discuss the role and responsibilities of the Board of Directors. We will consult with the Clerk on the arrangements.

We must decline your invitation to Mr. Mansbridge. It is not appropriate for journalists, whose job includes reporting on the activities of Senators, to be questioned by those same Senators at a Parliamentary Committee. As you know, some Senators have already been using the current study to pursue Mr. Mansbridge's presentation of Senate expense stories; the salary he earns from the Corporation; and the terms of his public speeches. Journalists, any journalists, must be allowed to do their job, free of political interference.

With regards to our ombudsmen, Mr. Tourangeau and Ms. Enkin can certainly provide the Committee with expertise about how their respective offices handle complaints from the public. Since they operate independently from the Corporation, the Clerk will have to

contact them directly. However, we do not believe it would be appropriate for an ombudsman to appear in order to discuss the complaint made by one of the Committee's Senators about CBC News coverage of his Senate expenses or, the Ombudsman's ruling on that complaint.

CBC/Radio-Canada has the utmost respect for the work of Parliament. As you know, the Corporation has been working with the Senate Committee and sharing detailed information about its audiences, viewing habits and the effect of changing technology. I have met with the Committee; I look forward to doing so again. The Corporation has been organizing visits to CBC/Radio-Canada locations at the Committee's request.

As I said during my appearance, CBC/Radio-Canada is facing significant challenges. Rapid changes in broadcasting, new technologies, changing viewing habits, challenges to advertising revenue are all testing CBC/Radio-Canada's ability to serve Canadians in the manner they expect. We would urge Senators to focus on understanding these challenges, as reflected in the terms of reference authorized by the Senate of Canada. CBC/Radio-Canada stands ready, as always, to assist the Committee in this work.

Sincerely



Hubert T. Lacroix  
President and CEO  
CBC/Radio-Canada

c.c Daniel Charbonneau, Committee Clerk