



Hon./L'hon. Mauril Bélanger, P.C., M.P. / c.p., député
Ottawa-Vanier

OPEN LETTER

January 11th 2008

Lynton Ronald Wilson, O.C.
Competition Policy Review Panel
280 Albert Street, 10th Floor
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0H5

Re.: Cultural Policies in support of Canadian Cultural content

Dear Mr. Wilson,

On May 30th of 2006, the House of Commons adopted the following motion by a vote of 155 to 121:

“That, in view of the ratification by Canada of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the House insists that the government, its departments and agencies maintain the program policies and regulations in support of Canada's artistic sector and cultural industries, in particular, by maintaining or enhancing: (a) existing Canadian cultural content requirements; (b) current restrictions on foreign ownership in the cultural sector; and (c) financial support for public broadcasting in both official languages.”

Now I learn that your Competition Policy Review Panel which you preside over has been asked to review the restrictions that are currently in place on foreign and domestic ownership in specific industry sectors including cultural industries and broadcasting.

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Successive governments in our country have put in place a series of cultural policies aimed at supporting, nurturing, and disseminating Canadian cultural content. The Panel's work reintroduces the threat of foreign ownership and loss of our cultural sovereignty. This risk to our national identity cannot be minimized. A laissez-faire attitude to foreign ownership of cultural industries will have devastating effects on our ability to produce, protect, and make accessible Canadian cultural products.

In my capacity as the Heritage Critics for the Official Opposition, I invite you to consider in your deliberations and recommendations the will of the majority of the elected representatives of the people of this country.

Sincerely,

Mauril Bélanger, P.C., MP
Ottawa-Vanier
Official Opposition Heritage Critic