

Canadian entertainment industry urges Trudeau, Joly regulate media giants

270+ creatives demand Google, Facebook, Netflix & Amazon play by Canadian rules

MONTREAL, September 25, 2017 (QEPC): Over 270 members of Canada’s creative community in Quebec and across the country – including David Suzuki, Xavier Dolan, Alanis Obomsawin, Atom Egoyan, Erik Canuel, Meg Tilly, Tracey Tekahentakwa Deer and Philippe Falardeau – have sent the federal government an open letter asking it to even the playing field amongst all industry players, including increasingly popular web-based media giants.

“We simply want Netflix, Amazon and others to play by the same rules as Canadian media,” said Suzuki, an iconic broadcaster and environmentalist, “and not take money out of Canada without contributing to Canadian programming.”

These artists and entrepreneurs are asking Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Canadian Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly to treat all industry players fairly by regulating Google, Facebook, Netflix, Amazon and other multinational media giants just as Canadian media companies are. Members of Canada’s creative community say the future of Canadian program production, and the sovereignty of the broadcasting system itself, is at risk in the digital era.

Just days ago, the European Commission [approved France’s plan](#) to impose a tax on streaming and video-sharing services, with proceeds going toward French productions.

“If we give away control of our broadcasting system, what’s left? What country do we leave to our children?” said Kirwan Cox, Executive Director of the Quebec English-language Production Council (QEPC).

The open letter states these multinational companies “have created an unregulated sector within the broadcasting system...consuming the revenues of the regulated Canadian sector and taking billions of dollars out of Canada each year.”

“We need to protect our market so we can tell our own stories, reflective of both the Indigenous and Canadian experience. Otherwise, we will only see the world through American eyes,” said Tracey Tekahentakwa Deer, creator and director of APTN’s *Mohawk Girls*.

“Unlike regulated Canadian companies, these foreign companies do not provide any information on their activities in Canada, as required by CRTC regulations. They do not pay any

taxes. They do not pay a 5% Canadian content levy. Nor are they required to spend a minimum of their content expenditures on Canadian programming.”

The signatories of the open letter request these American media giants be regulated and reject negotiating a voluntary agreement, no matter how promising that agreement may seem.

“If we can no longer regulate the broadcasting system, we no longer have sovereignty over it,” the signatories added.

“In the shadow of a Hollywood juggernaut, Canadians developed a broadcasting system to ensure we see our stories on our screens,” said ACTRA National Executive Director Stephen Waddell, “Foreign internet broadcasters are generating hundreds of millions in Canadian revenue, but they’re exempted from that system. This isn’t sustainable or fair.”

The 274 artists and producers join over 30 industry organizations, as well as Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre and Quebec Culture and Communications Minister Luc Fortin, in publicly stating these media giants are getting a free ride, and must be regulated and taxed like their Canadian competitors.

For further information or interview opportunities:

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About the QEPC

This letter is issued by its signatories, and initiated by the **Quebec English-language Production Council** which represents the English-language production industry in Quebec. Our members include major producers of English-language television programs, feature films, and other media, as well as ACTRA-Montreal. Together, we have over 2,500 members representing about 80% of the people working in the English-language industry in Quebec.